

Notes on the
Revelation of Jesus

(including an analysis of Daniel)

Peter A McGowan

The Revelation of Jesus

by Peter A McGowan

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Preface

It is one of the great ironies of history that the book intended to reveal has earned a reputation for being the most difficult to understand! This has been compounded by the unfortunate connotations of Revelation's Greek title - Apocalypse ("a revealing") which has come to mean a disaster! Much of this misunderstanding is due to the style of literature and thought which is now quite unfamiliar to modern minds.

It is the purpose of this little book to help unlock this apparently mysterious text of Revelation - to reveal the divine message of hope it contains. It is not the purpose to provide an exegesis (interpretation) but to provide the tools to facilitate this. These tools include diagrams and tables to elucidate the literary structure, cross references to allusions in the Old Testament ideas, historical data and the theological context of the work.

Most works of this type have either been so shallow as to be useless for the serious student; or so detailed as to make such a work inaccessible to all but professional theologians. The intention here is to provide something between, for serious Bible students, but without too much theological (technical) jargon.

In theological circles, there is much theoretical, conjectural humbug which has served to confuse rather than enlighten the message of the Biblical text - especially Revelation. The method here is to allow the text to interpret itself as it is read in the most natural way - as John himself might have understood it. It is therefore appropriate that we use a paradigm (model) of similar material used elsewhere in Scripture that is fully explained (interpreted), namely that of Daniel. An appendix is devoted to Daniel's prophecies.

I would like to thank my wife, Loree, for encouraging me to complete this work and providing the time to allow me to do it.

It is my earnest hope that this will facilitate the study of the important text of Revelation and so help people to better know its author and subject - Jesus.

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Chapter 1. Literary Form and Style of Revelation

While written in Koine Greek, the form and style of Revelation is distinctly Hebraic. This is scarcely surprising considering its author, John the disciple, apostle and theologian, was the last surviving connection to the Old Testament. Because this type of literature is now unfamiliar (it was far more common in the first century) this section examines some of its salient literary devices and features.

Author

There is no reason to doubt the assertions of the opening verses of the book of Revelation (and the uniform witness of early church tradition), that John “the Theologian” (who was almost certainly the evangelist and author of the Gospel of John) was its author very late in the first century AD, during the reign of Domitian. Further, we are either forced to accept that he wrote under divine inspiration (Rev 1:1, 4) or believe that the work is an elaborate hoax because it cannot even be truthful about itself.

Purpose and Audience

Again, there can be little doubt about John’s intention for Revelation – it was intended for church members’ edification, Rev 1:3, 11. That is, the book was not intended for general consumption by non-Christian readers. Further, Rev 1:3 implies that it was also intended for public reading in churches.

The title “Apokalupsis” means *Revealing*.

Style

Revelation’s distinctive, mysterious and highly symbolic style has ensured it a controversial but fascinating place in the canon of Scripture. It has also ensured a continuous stream of ill-founded, wild speculation; some of which has, unfortunately, caught the public imagination, for which it was not intended. What is it that is so distinctive about the apocalyptic style? There are at least several elements:

- * Extensive use of symbolism borrowed from the culture of the author – see below. [Contrast this with other Scripture where symbols are more rare, but where they are used, they are easily deciphered.]

- * The scenes described are, in any other context, bizarre, startling, surreal, rapid and often on a grand, at times, cosmic scale. [Contrast with other prophecy where scenes are of commonplace items.]

- * The subject matter is usually of national and cosmic significance – at the interface between the supernatural and the natural, where God deals directly with people. There are numerous instances where events in heaven produce profound consequences on earth.

- * The literature often seems to predict events and issues far into the future by discussing time periods – sometimes as the focus of an extended passage.

- * Poetry is rare. Exceptions include the short hymns of praise that recur throughout Revelation. [Contrast with other Scripture where Hebrew poetry is more often used, eg, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, etc.]

Despite its striking style, Revelation is not the only such apocalyptic piece of literature. Indeed, such works were numerous in the first century and in the Old Testament. In fact, the genre was well established in Old Testament times and merely imitated thereafter, except for John’s Revelation as it was written under inspiration. The more significant Old Testament examples of apocalyptic literature include: Daniel 2, 7-12, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. Non-canonical apocalyptic works include The Book of Enoch, The Apocalypse of Baruch and 4 Esdras – all from the pseudepigrapha.

Let us now examine the literary devices and features of John’s Revelation.

Old Testament Allusions

All the symbols and some of the scenes in Revelation are taken from the Old Testament, especially the apocalyptic literature of Daniel, Ezekiel and Zechariah - see chapter 5 & 6 of this book.

Chiastic Structure

The enclosed outlines, especially the second, demonstrate an approximate chiastic structure of Revelation - most strikingly seen in the parallels between the trumpets and bowl plagues. Many phrases are also display a chiastic distribution. However, the chiastic structure is imperfect and incomplete – many important phrases do not display a chiastic distribution as seen from the outlines.

A number of sub-sections display a striking chiastic structure - the recognition of which helps the interpretation: it is well known that Hebrew writers placed the most important point at the centre of the chiasm. A later section will demonstrate these structures.

Anticipatory Passages

Several passages in Revelation provide a clue to what comes next. For brevity, the same nomenclature is used as that shown in the first outline.

3:10 Jesus promises to keep the Philadelphian church from the hour of trial sent to test the whole earth. This anticipates the following church, Laodicea, which means, Judging the People.

3:20 “If anyone hears my voice and open’s the door, I will come in and eat with him and he with me.” Anticipates the great banquet in 19:1-10.

3:21 “I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.” anticipates the enthronement section of chapters 4 & 5 where Jesus sits down at the right hand of the Father on His throne; and the enthronement of saints (to judge) in 20:4.

6:10 “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” anticipates 11:18 when the time for judging the dead is announced, the seven trumpets and seven bowl plagues (16:6); and completed in 19:2, and 20:4.

6:17 “Who can stand in the day of wrath?” anticipates chapter 7 on the 144,000 sealed and the innumerable multitude.

7:17 “The Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd” anticipates the next mention on the 144,000 in 14:1-5. “God will wipe away every tear from their eyes” anticipates Rev 21:4 and the New Jerusalem.

11:2 The people of God are collectively described as the Holy City which anticipates the time when the literal Holy City would descend from out of heaven to come to earth (21:2).

11:18 This verse effectively introduces the next several sections as, “the nations were angry” (Cosmic Conflict), “your wrath has come” (seven bowl plagues), “the time has come for the judging of the dead” (The judge on the great white throne), “and for rewarding your servants” (The New Jerusalem).

12:17 The dragon making war on the remnant (“remainder”) of the woman’s offspring anticipates the sea and land beasts. The offspring who obey God’s commandments and have the testimony of Jesus anticipates the 144,000 in 14:1-5.

14:3 “They sang a new song . . . No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth” anticipates the song of Moses in 15:3, 4.

15:1 7th part of Cosmic Conflict anticipates the seven bowl plagues.

16:19 The punishment of Babylon (actually the consequences of her own duplicity) anticipates the detailed description in ch 17 of how the 10 kings turn on her.

Antithesis Passages

The following pairs of passages speak of the same thing using symbols that are the opposite of each other. In each case, John hears one thing and sees something apparently different.

1. Rev 1:10 Voice like a trumpet	Rev 1:12 7 lampstands and one “like the Son of man”
2. Rev 5:4 Lion of the tribe of Judah Root of David	Rev 5:5 Lamb looking as if it had been slain standing in centre of throne
3. Rev 6:1, 3, 5, 7 Voice of living creature	Rev 6:2, 4, 5, 8 Horses of various colours
4. Rev 7:4 - 8 144,00 sealed saints from 12 tribes of Israel	Rev 7:9 - 10 An innumerable multitude from all nations
5. Rev 14:13 Blessed are the dead . .	Rev 14:14 White cloud with Son of Man
6. Rev 17:1 Prostitute sits on many waters	Rev 17:3 Scarlet woman rides on the beast

Theme

Revelation’s theme is stated explicitly in 1:1 - “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” and continues the same theme as that of Daniel - as stated in Rev 1:7, 8 - the imminent second Advent of Jesus and His eternal Deity. See chapter three for a more detailed analysis of Revelation’s themes.

Introduction of New Characters

Each time a new character arises, John takes a little time to introduce it by providing a description and some background. For example, Rev 12:1 - 4 introduces the woman and the dragon. Rev 13:1-3 introduces the sea beast. Rev 13:11, 12a introduces the land beast, etc. The beast from the abyss (11:7) has no introduction unless this is provided by 8:10, 11 (see 12:9, 13)

and 9:1-11. This can be a helpful tool when interpreting the text because John provides useful background material that does not necessarily fit into the chronological flow of the main narrative. See the section below for further information about this literary feature.

John's Perspective

John is an active participant in the vision unfolding before him. As such, he is sometimes carried to some point in the future and views events as though they are in the past, even though they were still future in the first century. At other times, John moves through time with the sweep of history. In recognising John's perspective, a useful framework is established which greatly aids the interpretation of the text.

One of the best guides to John's perspective are the verbs: Those in the aorist tense have already occurred (from John's perspective) while the main part of a prophecy is in the present or future tense. This also provides important information about chronological flow. The table below summarises this for several passages in Revelation.

- 7 Churches: Introductory vision (Rev 1:12-18) is aorist, while the messages to the 7 churches are in present tense
- 2 Witnesses: 11:3-6 is aorist and so forms a background to that which follows; 11:7-10 is future tense; 11:11-13 is aorist but is introduced with "after the 3½ days" suggesting the passage follows that in v7-11.
- Woman and the Dragon: 12:1-17a in the aorist tense while 12:17b is future tense.
- Sea Beast: 13:1-7 is aorist while v8 is future.
- Land Beast: 13:11 is aorist while 12-18 is future.

Taken together, these last three suggest that the aorist sections are parallel (chronologically) and the future passages are those yet to unfold from the perspective of 12:17 (ie the last days).

Multiple Names

Despite the apparent profusion of characters in Revelation, there are actually relatively few - multiple names are used for characters, for example:

Jesus is called the Son of God, the Son of Man, the Lamb, priest, Michael, the rider on a white horse, the judge on the throne, etc. (See chapter 3 of this book for a more complete list of these.)

The beast from the land (Rev 13:11, 13) is also called the false prophet (Rev 19:20).

The beast from the abyss (Rev 11:7, 17:8) is also the dragon, the devil and Satan (Rev 12:9).

The righteous are called a great multitude, saints, grain, souls under the altar, 144,000, etc.

Not only do characters have multiple names, but some things also have multiple symbols; for example, comparing Rev 17:1, 3, 9 we find that the harlot who sits on many waters (the Euphrates), the beast's seven heads and the seven mountains are all referring to the same thing.

Another manifestation of Revelation's polynomial habit is the antithesis passages above.

Polynomialism is distinctly Hebraic. It also emphasises that Revelation is not a code to be deciphered, else, these titles would be applied uniformly.

Numerical Features

Some commentators make much ado about Revelation's numerical features as though they were unique. However, such features are common in Hebraic literature (and later in baroque music of the 18th century). In Revelation, numerical features are both implicit (seven major sections, each having seven sub-sections, seven blessings, seven hymns of praise, etc.) and explicit (Rev 5:11, 6:11, 7:4, 9:16, 13:17, 18, 20:2, 20:8, seven churches, seven trumpets, 12 gates in the City, etc.).

Some have also argued for more subtle numerical features such as the frequency of occurrence of certain terms or even the arithmetic sums of letters etc. All such speculation is dangerous - the only safe course is that which the text itself explains.

Time Elements

An extension of the numerical features are the frequent use of time elements such as (see Glossary for details): 1260 days, 42 months, 3½ years, 10 days, hour, day, month year, day and night, etc. See the glossary for more details on these features. See also chapter 3 for a discussion of the relative timing of different parts of Revelation's message.

Parallel Structure

The layout and text (see outline) with its repetitive structure (eg, multiple groups of seven, or septets) is reminiscent of Daniel's parallel literary structure - see appendix 2. This suggests that, like Daniel, at least some of the major septets are partially parallel in fulfilment. That is, each section covers a similar time scale but from a different perspective. This will be expanded later and made more specific. In fact we will see that this is true of the first three septets (churches, seals and trumpets) and of the fourth

section, but in a slightly different sense. The last three sections are parallel in that they all deal with end-time events; however, they are chronologically almost sequential.

Counterpoints

All major items, whether places or beasts etc, in Revelation have duals that act as literary counterpoints of each other. Identifying such opposites can greatly assist their interpretation. In most cases these counterpoints play the role of true vs counterfeit. An extensive list is given in the next section on thematic structure.

Such counterpoints provide useful dramatic contrasts, which, while a feature of nearly all literature, is a notable characteristic of Hebrew and especially apocalyptic literature.

Participation vs Observation

John participates in his visions to a greater extent than Daniel (in the Old Testament) but in a different way. Six times he mentions himself in the vision rather than just observing it, four of these at the beginning of a vision of seven parts with the phrase "in the spirit" in 1:10 (7 churches), 4:2 (7 seals), 17:3 (7 judgements which eradicate the evil institutions including Babylon) and 21:10 (the New Jerusalem). The other two places are in Rev 10 where the seven thunders are heard and again when he eats the little book. However, in most cases, John simply reports what he is shown in these spectacular visions.

Chapter 2. Outline of the Book of Revelation

SEVEN CHURCHES	SEVEN SEALS	SEVEN TRUMPETS	COSMIC CONFLICT	SEVEN BOWLS	EVIL DESTROYED	NEW JERUSALEM
<u>Christ in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (1:9-20)</u>	<u>Enthronement of the Lamb</u> * Worship scene (4:1-11) * Crisis, resolution & celebration (5:1-14)	<u>A view of trumpets, the altar of incense & the end of intercession: (8:2-6)</u>	<u>The Ark of the Covenant is seen (11:19)</u>	<u>God's glory fills the temple; no one can enter (15:5-16:1)</u>	{The angel guide (17:1, 2) [from the temple (15:6)]}	<u>Jesus on the great white throne makes all things new (20:11-21:8)</u>
1. Ephesus: the passionless church (2:1-7)	1. The white horse: victorious conquest (6:1, 2)	1. Land struck by hail, fire & blood (8:7)	1. The woman and the dragon (12:1-17)	1. Bowl poured on the land: Sores on those with the mark of beast (16:2)	1. Harlot in the desert & the beast from the abyss (17:1-18)	1. The New Jerusalem's origin & layout. (21:9 – 14)
2. Smyrna: the persecuted church (2:8-11)	2. The red horse: war (6:3, 4) given sword	2. Burning mountain thrown into the sea (8:8-9)	2. The beast from the sea (13:1-10)	2. Bowl poured on the sea: blood (16:3)	2. The destruction of Babylon (18:1-24)	2. The City's dimensions (21:15-17)
3. Pergamum: the tolerant church (2:12-17)	3. The black horse: famine (6:5-6)	3. Embittering star falls on the rivers and springs (8: 10-11)	3. The beast from the land (13: 11-18)	3. Bowl poured on the rivers and springs: blood (16:4-7)	3. Celebration in heaven and earth over Babylon's fall (19:1-5)	3. The City's materials (21:18-21)
4. Thyatira: the compromising church (2:18-29)	4 The pale horse: death & pestilence (6:7-8)	4. Third of sun, moon & stars darkened (8:12) Warning of 3 woes (8:13)	4. The 144,000 with the Lamb on Mt. Zion (14:1-5)	4. Bowl poured on the sun: scorching fire (16:8-9)	4. Celebration anticipating the wedding banquet of the Lamb: bride is ready! (19:6-10)	4. The City's source of light (21:22 – 24)
5. Sardis: the dead church (3:1-6)	5. The cry of the martyrs from under the altar (6:9-11)	5. Smoke from abyss darkens the sun & sky (9:1-11) 1st to 2nd woe (9:12)	5. The three angels' messages (14:6-12)	5. Bowl poured on the throne of the beast: Its kingdom darkened (16:10, 11)	5. Judge on the white horse leads heavenly armies to destroy beast & false prophet (19:11-21)	5. The City's character (21:25-27)
6. Philadelphia: the loving and zealous church (3:7-13)	6. The final events: a. The wicked: heavenly signs, the wrath of the Lamb (6:12-17)	6. The final events a. The wicked: 4 angels at Euphrates released (9:13-21)	6. Harvest of the earth a. The righteous grain is harvested (14:13-16)	6. The Euphrates dries up a. The wicked: 3 demonic spirits gather kings for Armageddon (16:12-14,16)	6. The 1000 years a. The wicked dragon thrown back into the abyss (20:1-3)	6. The City's source of life (22:1, 2)
7. Laodicea: the lukewarm church (3:14-22)	b. The righteous: 4 angels hold 4 winds while 144,000 sealed (7:1-8) & an innumerable multitude (7:9-17)	b. The righteous: The little book . (10:1-11) & two witnesses . (11:1-13) 2nd to 3rd woe (11:14)	b. The wicked vintage is crushed outside the city (14:17-20)	b. The righteous: conditions for blessing (16:15)	b. The righteous enthroned with Christ to judge (20:4-6)	7. The City's government (22:3-5)
PROLOGUE Imprimatur (1:1-3) Three-fold blessing greeting, dedication, theme & authority (1:4-8)	7. Silence in heaven (8:1)	7. The mystery of God is finished (10:7); Christ claims His everlasting kingdom. (11:15-18)	7. The saved beside the sea of glass sing the song of Moses and the lamb (15:1-4)	7. Bowl poured into the air. "It is done". Babylon falls, plague of hail (16:17-21)	7. The destruction of Satan. (20:7-10)	EPILOGUE The book validated (22:6-19) Closing Benediction (22:20-21)

Comments on Outline

The outline just given warrants some further comment. There is little debate over the divisions required in the book of Revelation in the first half (the first three sections or septets) - it is the second half which occasions differences between commentators. In placing the various divisions as shown, I have used the following principles:

(1) The two halves of the book form a literary unit - that is, both are constructed along similar lines

(2) Therefore, the remaining sections should be similarly divided into seven parts, each of which begins with a temple allusion as a backdrop. (The sixth section has no introductory vision to match the other sections. However, it does have a temple scene beginning each sub-section.)

(3) The parts composing each section are usually consecutive (or perhaps occasionally parallel if the text suggests this as some might argue for the dragon and the sea beast, and, the seals).

(4) Since the seven bowl plagues form an obvious section, the space between them and the seven trumpets logically forms another section (Cosmic Conflict) which naturally divides into seven parts. The title of this section is taken from the numerous references to heavenly war between the woman defended by Michael, and the beast trinity.

(5) The last two sections are the most contentious. The arrangement here provides a consistent structure for the final half of the book - that is, a subsequent section begins in the sixth and seventh parts of the previous section.

Some have argued that Rev 17 and 18 belong with the seven plagues and are an enlargement of their final judgments. In support of this view is the fact that one of the angels with the seven bowls is the guide for the following parts of the book (and the three beasts appear throughout the second half.) However, this could be said of all the remaining sections and only serves to demonstrate its unity. Further, if divisions are made elsewhere, the important distinction made between the righteous and wicked in part 6 is lost.

But the message should never be slave to the literary structure and better reasons must be found to justify the proposed arrangement. The clue for a sectional division between 20:10 and 20:11 is the destruction of the final wicked mentioned twice in different contexts - with Satan's destruction and the other as a result of final executed judgment from the great throne. Since

Satan is destroyed after the wicked, their judgment pronounced in 20:11-15 would be a chronological reversal unless, as elsewhere, a sectional division occurs.

The judge on the great white throne re-appears in the final section and so forms the backdrop for the section on the permanent establishment of God's kingdom - His Holy City of redeemed saints.

Finally, the last section has been divided into seven parts to maintain consistency - although it is not difficult to find seven parts.

It could be argued that the second half should not be subdivided but that it consists entirely of the seven plagues. In this case the section on Cosmic Conflict becomes an introduction, and the last two sections (as listed here) become an extended denouement and explanation. In support of this position, the second half has a far more consecutive feel to it than the first half and is more unified: One of the seven bowl-plague angels introduces new sections (17:1, 21:9). While this is a credible and supportable position, the occurrence of the phrase, "in the spirit" in 17:3 and 21:10 suggests a new section as it does (chiastically) in 1:10 and 4:2. However, it is not actually necessary to choose between these two positions - both are probably correct. Thus, while we will retain the sectional divisions as listed, the last four section can be seen in the same way as first three - a single vision covering the Christian age from the time of the prophet to Jesus' return.

This last observation on the occurrence of the phrase, "in the spirit" near the beginning of a vision or section division provides the clue for four of the sections; the other three, the plagues, the trumpets and (the remaining) section on Cosmic Conflict occur naturally.

The purpose of an outline in a work such as this is twofold: to help betray some of the author's hidden biases, and to provide a broad framework around which to organise the work. On this last basis, the outline is more a convenience.

The outline just presented will be used as a basis of discussion throughout this work because it best suits the purpose here. It also has the advantage of placing Jesus and His sanctuary ministry as Revelation's unifying theme in its' introductory sanctuary scenes. However, other outlines are possible and help illustrate other literary features of Revelation's divinely inspired message. Another such outline is shown next.

Another Outline of Revelation

A: Rev 1:1 – 8	Prologue
B: Rev 1:9 – 3:22	The Church on Earth – the Seven Churches
C: Rev 4:1 – 8:1	Celebration in Heaven over the Sealing of God’s People
C1: Rev 4:1 – 4:11	Worship Scene in the Throne Room of Heaven with 24 Elders and Four Living Creatures
C2: Rev 5:1 – 14	Jesus’ Inaugural Enthronement with the Father and Celebration – Preparation to Open the Seven Seals
C2: Rev 6:1 – 8:1	The Church Attacks the World on Four Horses – The Seven Seals
C1: Rev 7:1 – 17	The Righteous 144,000 are Sealed causing Celebration in Heaven with 24 Elders and Four Living Creatures
D: Rev 8:2 – 13:18	The Origin, Work and Conduct of Satan and his Followers
D1: Rev 8:2 – 11:18	Judgements on the Wicked – Seven Trumpets including Three Woes
D2: Rev 10:1 – 11	The Bitter-Sweet Book
D2: Rev 11:1 – 13	The Beast From the Abyss attacks the Two Witnesses
D2: Rev 11:19 – 13:18	The Righteous Woman and the Beasts from the Abyss, the Sea and the Land
E: Rev 14:1 – 15:4	The Work and Destiny of the Righteous
E1: Rev 14:1 – 5	The Righteous 144,000 Sing a New Song with the Lamb on Mt Zion
E2: Rev 14:6 – 12	The Three Angel’s Final Messages to the World
E2: Rev 14:13 – 20	The Three Angels Harvest the Righteous Grain and Gather the Wicked Grapes
E1: Rev 15:1 – 4	The Righteous Saved Sing the Song of Moses and the Lamb on the Sea of Glass
D: Rev 15:5 – 18:24	Final Judgements on Babylon and the Wicked
D1: Rev 15:5 – 16:21	Final Judgements on the Wicked – the Seven Last Plagues
D2: Rev 17:1 – 6	The Great Harlot and the Beast from the Abyss Prophecy
D2: Rev 17:7 – 18	The Great Harlot and the Beast from the Abyss Explanation
D1: Rev 18:1 – 24	Babylon’s Final Destruction with Three Double Woes
C: Rev 19:1 – 20:15	Celebration in Heaven over the Salvation of God’s People and the Destruction of Babylon
C1: Rev 19:1 – 10	Celebration in Heaven over Babylon’s Destruction with 24 Elders and Four Living Creatures
C2: Rev 19:11 – 21	A Heavenly Army on White Horses Attacks the Worldly Powers
C2: Rev 20:1 – 6	The Righteous Exercise Judgement for 1000 years While Satan is bound
C1: Rev 20:11 – 15	Jesus Enthroned to Execute Final Judgement
B: Rev 22:1 – 22:5	The Church Triumphant – The New Jerusalem on Earth
A: Rev 22:6 – 21	Epilogue

This outline clearly demonstrates the chiastic structure of Revelation and is thus a valid outline. It is unnecessary to choose between the two outlines given here as both demonstrate the ordered layout of this ingenious literary work: Both (and others) are valid! However, for the sake of clarity, convenience, and the reasons stated previously, the first outline will be used most often in this book.

Other Literary Structures of Revelation

Apart from those listed above, there are many other literary structure in Revelation. A few will be listed here which will not occur in the analysis chapter.

Introductory Visions

1. Jesus among the Lampstands:	On Earth
2. Enthronement of the Lamb:	In Heaven
3. Angel at the Altar of Incense	In Heaven – Censer cast to earth
4. Ark of the Covenant in the Temple:	In Heaven
5. Angels ex-temple with bowl plagues	In Heaven – bowls poured on earth
6. -- * (7 visions)	In Heaven
7. Judgement on Earthly powers	On Earth

* There is no introductory vision to the 6th section of Revelation – each sub section has its own introductory heavenly vision.

Vision Action

If we examine the location of the action of each vision as a whole, we get an enlarged picture of the above pattern:

	Introduction	6 parts	7th Part
1.	Earth	Earth	Earth
2.	Heaven	Earth	Silence in Heaven
3.	Heaven	Earth	Voices in Heaven
4.	Heaven	Earth	Heaven on sea of glass
5.	Heaven	Earth	Voice from Heaven – “It is Done”
6.	--*	Earth*	Fire from Heaven
7.	Earth	Earth	Earth

* There is no introductory vision to the 6th section of Revelation – each sub section has its own introductory heavenly vision such as the angel from the temple in the first part, etc.

This means that the middle five sections are distinguished from the first and last section by several features:

- The introductory visions are in heaven
- They have a heaven-earth-heaven chiastic structure
- The sixth sub-section is divided between the righteous and wicked

Action Cause

There is also a consistent pattern to the origin and cause of the action in each section of Revelation that also forms a chiastic structure:

1. Churches:	Messages from Jesus on Earth
2. Seals	Divine action in Heaven causes results on Earth
3. Trumpets	Angelic action in the air causes results on Earth
4. Cosmic Conflict	Mixed but mostly Terrestrial
5. Bowl Plagues	Angelic action in the air causes results on Earth
6. Final Judgements	Divine action in Heaven causes results on Earth
7. New Jerusalem	Jesus lives with saints on Earth

Thus, the action cause in the seven sections forms a chiastic structure.

Numerous other structures are found within Revelation – some of these will be listed in chapter 4 of this book. Still further structures are found in the Glossary in the occurrence of some phrases or words, eg, day (with numerical adjective), descend, follow, send, serpent, spring, wrath, etc.

Chapter 3. Thematic Structure of Revelation

The themes of Revelation may be classified according to the sub-headings listed below. This material should be read in conjunction with the Outline of Revelation in the previous section.

Common Themes

The following themes occur repeatedly, throughout the whole book.

1. Revelation's theme is stated explicitly in 1:1 - *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, as tabulated below, He is the subject of all Revelation's visions.

- 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ
- 1:5 Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness
- 1:5 The faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead
- 1:5 The ruler of the kings of the earth
- 1:7 Look, He is coming with the clouds
- 1:13-16 One like a Son of Man among the seven lampstands
- 2:1 He who holds the seven stars and walks among the seven golden lampstands
- 2:8 First and Last who came to life again
- 2:12 He who has a sharp two edged sword
- 2:18 Son of God whose eyes are blazing fire and feet like burnished bronze
- 3:1 He who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars
- 3:7 He who is holy and true who holds the keys of David
- 3:14 Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation
- 5:6-14 Lamb looking as if it had been slain
- 6:16 Him who sits on the throne and the wrath of the Lamb
- 7:9-17 The Lamb on the throne who spreads his tent over His saints
- 8:3-5 Another angel with the golden censer acts as intercessor in the sanctuary (see Heb 4:14-16)
- 10:1-9 Angel with one foot on land and sea with the little scroll (cf ch 1)
- 11:15 World's kingdoms have become the kingdoms of Christ
- 12:4&5 Male Child who will rule with an iron sceptre
- 12:7 Michael fights the dragon (the devil, Satan)
- 12:10 Salvation power through Christ
- 12:11 Saints overcame by the blood of the Lamb
- 12:13 Male Child, the son of the woman
- 13:8 The Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world
- 14:1-5 Lamb on Mt Zion with 144,000

- 14:12 Saints keep the commandments and remain faithful to Jesus
- 14:14 One like a Son of Man
- 15:3 Saints sing the song of Moses and the Lamb
- 18:1 Angel lights the earth with His glory
- 19:7 Wedding of the Lamb
- 19:9 Wedding supper of the Lamb
- 19:10 The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy
- 19:11-16 Rider on the white horse: King of Kings and Lord of Lords
- 19:19 Rider on the white horse
- 19:21 Rider on the white horse
- 20:1 Angel descends to imprison Satan in the Abyss
- 20:4 Saints enthroned with Christ
- 20:11 Him who was seated on the great white throne for judgement
- 21:2 New Jerusalem the bride beautifully dress for her husband
- 21:5 He who was seated on the throne
- 21:22 Lord Almighty and the Lamb are the temple in the city
- 21:27 The Lamb's book of life
- 22:3 The throne of God and the Lamb
- 22:7 Behold, I am coming soon
- 22:12 Behold, I am coming soon
- 22:13 I am the alpha and omega, first and last, beginning and the end
- 22:16 I, Jesus . . . am the root and offspring of David, the bright and morning star
- 22:20 Behold, I am coming soon. Come Lord Jesus
- 22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus be with God's people, Amen.

Thus Jesus is symbolised by the following titles:

- Jesus (Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua = Jehovah saves)
- The Christ (Messiah of the world)
- The faithful witness, firstborn from the dead
- Ruler of the kings of the earth (King of kings)
- Son of Man (among the lampstands, ie, priest in the temple)
- Son of God (as part of the eternal Godhead)
- First and Last, the beginning and end, the Amen, etc
- The Lamb who was slain (the means of our salvation) but who sits on the throne, who leads the 144,000 on Mt Zion
- An Angel (ie, messenger to the church - see also Rev 1:1)
- Male Child who would rule with an iron sceptre (ie, King)

Michael the prince who leads the heavenly armies
Rider on the white horse - King of Kings and Lord of Lords
Judge on the great white throne
The ruler of God's creation

Notice that these titles of Jesus appear to be piled upon each other as one proceeds through the book. The Lamb appears in ch 5 and repeatedly thereafter, although some, such as Michael the rider on the white horse, appear only in one section.

This all-pervasive theme of Jesus strongly suggests a spiritual rather than political purpose to the book of Revelation

2. The book of Revelation continues the same (all-pervasive) theme as that of Daniel - as stated in Rev 1:7, 8 - the imminent second Advent of Jesus and His eternal Deity. Note the number of times in the above list Jesus says, "I am coming soon" - or one of its variants (5 times). Each of the major sections concludes with the second advent of Jesus or (in the case of the last two) the events surrounding it or flowing from it.

3. If there is a single over-arching theme it is that stated in Ps 73:16-19, *"When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!"* (NIV) It is Jesus' ministry in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 4:14-16) that John closely associates with earthly events - and the way God will ultimately resolve them. Each section of the seven major sections of Revelation begins with an introductory vision associated with the heavenly sanctuary (this is true of each subsection of section six), which can be better understood in the light of the Old Testament tabernacle services.

Further, these temple allusions naturally divide into the two halves of Revelation: those before 11:18 only mention first apartment (Holy place) furniture; those after 11:19 only mention second apartment (Most Holy Place) furniture. And thus the seven sections form a symbolic temple sequence of how God will deal with the earth. See appendix 1 for more details on the sanctuary theme of Revelation.

Revelation's sanctuary theme appears to be intimately bound up with the salvation of mankind: when the process is completed in the New Jerusalem, there is no need for a temple. God's dwelling is with men.

The Greek word for temple (ναός naos) occurs 16 times throughout Revelation: 3:12, 7:15, 11:1, 2, 19(x2), 14:15, 17, 15:5, 6, 8(x2), 16:1, 17, 21:22(x2). See the Glossary for a discussion of this term.

4. Closely related to the above is the concept of ultimate justice or vindication. In this regard, Revelation is the natural sequel to the book of Daniel [Hebrew for *God is (my) Judge*] - see appendix 2. This vindication theme occurs in two forms to be listed below. This theme is seen at the end of each of the major sections (eg, "The Lord has begun to reign" etc) but particularly in Rev 20. Words for judgement and condemnation appear frequently in Revelation (see glossary), and, while judgement is always executed in the second half of the book (after 11:19, see below), it is mentioned in anticipation in the first half. See the Glossary (ch 6) for an extended discussion of the judgement/vindication theme.)

5. As a consequence of this judgement concept, the second-last subsection of the central five major sections has a further sub-division that separately deals with the righteous and the wicked. It is as though the distinction between the two classes of people finally occurs and is acted upon.

6. The sacrifice of Jesus is assumed as the enabling event upon which all others in the book hinge. It is the slain Lamb who sits on the heavenly throne to judge. See the references to Jesus in the above list. The Lamb was enabled to open the seals because He had been slain and had been victorious; the righteous follow (are joined to and are alike) the Lamb on Mt Zion. Thus, Jesus is portrayed as the servant, sacrificial leader and King of kings.

7. Another theme of Revelation, often missed, is the giving of the law at Sinai and the law itself, the Ten Commandments.

1:10 "A voice like a trumpet" is an allusion to Ex 19:16, 19 - at the giving of the law at Sinai. It also alludes to Isa 58:1, which introduces a passage about (among other things) the Sabbath.

4:1 "A voice like a trumpet" - see above.

4:5 "thunder and lightning" is an allusion to Ex 19:16, 20:18 before and after the giving of the ten commandments.

8:5 "thunder and lightning" see above.

8:8 "A mountain ablaze" is a strong allusion to Ex 19:18, 24:17, Deut 5:4, 22, 23, Heb 12:18 which describes Mt Sinai at the giving of the Ten Commandments.

9:20, 21 This passage lists several commandments and their transgression from which the wicked refuse to repent: idols, murder, adultery stealing, false gods.

10:6 “who created the heavens and the earth...” is a quote from the Sabbath commandment in Ex 20:8-11.

11:19 “thunder and lightning” and the Ark of the Covenant again implies not only the giving of the commandments but also the commandments themselves (See Ex 40:20, 34:28).

12:14 “taken to the desert on eagle’s wings” is an allusion to Ex 19:4 at the giving of the ten commandments at Mt Sinai.

12:17 “they that keep the commandments of God.”

13:16 “on the forehead and on the hand” is an allusion to the giving if the law as recorded in Deut 6:8, 11:18.

14:7 “Worship him who created the heavens and the earth...” is a quote from the Sabbath commandment in Ex 20:8-11. This reference is particularly interesting because it is surrounded by a number of other allusions to false worship intended to break the law such as the first commandment (13:4 – worship the dragon, 13:8 – worship the beast, 13:15 – worship the image to the beast), the second commandment (13:15 - an image is worshiped), the third commandment (13:1, 5, 6 – beast has blasphemous names). Thus, the Sabbath command is set in contrast to the false calls to worship by the false trinity.

14:9 “on the forehead and on the hand” is an allusion to the giving if the law as recorded in Deut 6:8, 11:18.

14:12 “they that keep the commandments of God.”

16:18 “thunder and lightning” is an allusion to Ex 19:16, 20:18 before and after the giving of the ten commandments.

20:4 “on the forehead and on the hand” is an allusion to the giving if the law as recorded in Deut 6:8, 11:18.

Interestingly, the word law (νόμος nomos) does not appear in Revelation.

8. Worship is major theme of Revelation. The Greek word for worship (προσκυνέω proskuneo = to fall prostrate) occurs 24 times: 3:9, 4:10, 5:14, 7:11, 9:20, 11:1, 11:16, 13:4(x2), 8, 12, 15, 14:7, 9, 11, 15:4, 16:2, 19:4, 10(x2), 20, 20:4, 22:8, 9. It describes the worship of both true and false gods. (Interestingly, there are also 24 elders who worship God on the throne.)

9. Conflict and confrontation occurs between the forces of good and evil, and between the various forces of evil:

2:16 Jesus threatens to fight the unrepentant with the sword of His mouth

7:1-8 angels restrain winds to protect the saints until they are sealed

9:7 an army of demonic locusts torment unsealed humanity

9:13-21 angels release a large army to destroy a third of unsealed humanity

11:7 beast from the abyss attacks the two witnesses

12:7 Michael and His angels battle the dragon and his angels

12:17 the dragon makes war on the woman

13:4 Who can make war with the (sea) beast?

13:6 sea beast blasphemes and taunts God

13:7 sea beast makes war on the saints

16:14 three frog-like demons gather people for Armageddon

17:14 ten kings and beast war with the Lamb and His followers

19:11, 19 beast and armies battle the rider in the white horse

20:7-9 Satan, Gog & Magog gather to attack the city of God

10. Revelation contains a number of literary counterpoints that add to its dramatic material. These form matched pairs of true vs counterfeit:

Mt Zion	Armageddon (Mount of Meggido)
Woman of Rev 12	Prostitute of Rev 17
Marriage of Lamb to Bride	Prostitute and Kings of earth
Holy Trinity	Beast Trinity (see Glossary)
God the Father	The beast from the abyss (dragon)
Jesus	The beast from the sea
Holy Spirit	The beast from the land
Authority of God	Authority of dragon & beast
Angels of God	Angels of the Devil
Seal of God	Mark of the Beast
Harvest of Grain (righteous)	Gathering of Grapes (wicked)
144,000 sealed	Those with mark of beast
Redeemed of the earth	The inhabitants of the earth
New Jerusalem	Babylon the Great City
River of the water of life	Euphrates
River of life from God	River of destruction from dragon
The saints’ (bride’s) fine linen	Babylon’s fine linen
Kingdom of God	Kingdoms of the earth
Remainder of righteous	Remainder of wicked
God the Creator	Satan the destroyer
Mystery of God	Mystery, Babylon the Great
Gold of Jesus	Babylon’s cargoes (plated gold)

Jesus' power & authority	Beast's power and authority
Wine of the seals	Babylon's intoxicating wine
Two witnesses = prophets	False prophet = land beast

For references and more detailed discussion on the above, see the Glossary. These counterpoints show the true and counterfeit and are often (but not always) contrasted in the two halves.

Themes of Each Half

The book of Revelation naturally divides itself into two halves as shown in the table below.

Revelation before 11:18

Introductory visions concern the regular daily ministry in the tabernacle service by using first apartment furniture

Jesus is intercessor.
(Judgements anticipated)

Visions concern the entire Christian age

Plagues are partial - quarters and thirds of earth.

Crowns are always **στέφανος** (stephanos) - a victory crown given as a reward in a contest.

Events mostly concern people such as the church, righteous and wicked.

Seal of God only occurs in first half of Revelation

Revelation after 11:19

Introductory visions concern the annual service of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) by using second apartment furniture – the Ark of the covenant.

Jesus is judge.
(Judgements witnessed)

Visions concern end-time events.

Plagues are complete and cover the whole (wicked) earth.

διάδημα (diadema) crowns appear - the symbol of kingly office

Events mostly concern powers such as the three beast powers and the two women.

Mark of the beast only occurs in second half of Revelation

See the glossary (section 6) for more detailed discussion of these issues.

Themes of the Major Sections

Despite the common themes listed above and the parallel nature of the various visions in Revelation, each of the seven major sections has a specialised theme. These will only be briefly introduced here and documented in greater detail later. However, it is useful to have a broad-brush view of Revelation's main themes in each section.

Seven Churches: These messages are obviously written for both the righteous and unrighteous within the church, that is, members generally. They are not intended for unbelievers. They record spiritual strengths and weaknesses, encouragement and rebuke and demonstrate that Jesus loves everyone in His church. We thus see Jesus ministering as intercessor in the sanctuary (or temple) for the people of His church.

The next two sections are more difficult to characterise and have been much disputed.

Seven Seals: The introductory vision describes the enthronement of Jesus and His actions following from it. Jesus' authority to open the seals is based directly on His titles (the Lion 5:4), His pedigree (root of David 5:4) and His victory (5:4). Further, we observe that this passage in Rev 4 & 5 is a strong allusion to Eze 1 and Isa 6 where a prophet was initiated into ministry. There is also a reference to a scroll written on both sides (5:1) which alludes to Eze 2:9, 10, Zech 5:1-3. In both case the scroll contained dire woes, which the prophet would be involved in during his ministry. In Revelation this appears to be the sinful condition of mankind for which Jesus' sacrifice as the Lamb of God was provided.

In the seven seals, following His inauguration as our high priest (Heb 4:14, 15) Jesus moves to take an active role in leading His saints. Notice that a seal (**σφραγίς** sphragis, see glossary) when used to describe people, invariably refers to the seal of God and hence the righteous (see Rev 7:3). Therefore, the seals are different from the seven churches because the seals refer to the righteous while the churches refer to both righteous and wicked in the church. Several other features of the text also suggest the same: The white horse (6:1,2) anticipates Jesus in Rev 19; The word "follow" ((6:8) always refers to something connected with the righteous (see glossary); the purpose of the sealing process is found in Rev 7 where the sealed are obviously the saved saints who sing praises to God and the Lamb. It will also be shown later that the language and message of the seven seals parallels that of Jesus' eschatological sermon as recorded in Matt 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. This idea is further strengthened by noticing that the horses clearly allude to those in Zech 1 and 6 which were messengers of God who go throughout the earth, Matt 24:14.

With this in mind, the seven seals present a series of scenes showing war (*sword*), *famine or drought*, and *plague or pestilence*. Such scenes occur repeatedly in the Old Testament and always refer to efforts by God to encourage His erring people to greater faithfulness. For example, see Lev 26:14-45, Deut 32:24, 25, 2 Sam 24:12, 1 Chr 11, 12, 2 Chr 20:9, Jer 14:12, 21:7, 9, 24:10, 27:8, 13, 17, 18, 32:24, 36, 34:17, 38:2, 42:17, 22, 44:13, Eze 5:12, 17, 6:11, 12, 7:15, 12:16, 14:21, etc. (Some describe these as the consequences of breaking the covenant promises.)

We conclude that the seals portray the enthroned Jesus' efforts to encourage imperfect saints in the time between Jesus' first and second advents. This is nothing less than the record of the progress of the Gospel message and the problems the saints encounter (from within and without) in their evangelistic endeavours. This process is described as the sealing of the faithful as they receive (necessarily) greater portions of the gift of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 4:30) as the distinguishing seal (or mark) of God's people. [Significantly, the seal is applied to the forehead (mind or character) of the saints in Revelation.]

Unlike the trumpets, there is little (if any) sense of the passage of time in the seals. While some quite properly understand the seals as successive, it is also possible to imagine at least the first four or five seals as concurrent - there have always been imperfect saints during the Gospel's progress as well as martyrs.

Seven Trumpets: However one understands the seven trumpets, it is clear that they record events which (1) largely but not exclusively affect the wicked "inhabitants of the earth", 8:13, 9:4 (those who do not have the seal of God), especially in the later trumpets, (2) occur as a result of the devil leading forces against the wicked! 8:9, 12, 9:1, 11, especially in the 5th trumpet, and, (3) are sent (allowed?) by God as partial (one third) punishments in an attempt to have the wicked repent, 9:20. The last three are called woes on the inhabitants of the earth (the wicked). [Elsewhere in Scripture, woes (condemning the wicked) are invariably pronounced on the doomed.] It is in the trumpets that mass killings occur most often, especially in the fifth and sixth trumpets.

The trumpets are arranged, according to the objects of their disasters, in the reverse order of creation week (Gen 1), namely, earth (or land), sea, rivers and springs, sun moon & stars, darkness (no light), waters of Euphrates, voices in heaven. Further, in Rev 11:18, God promises to destroy those who destroy the earth - a fitting comment on the current destruction of the environment by uncaring, vested interests. This suggests that the "undoing" of creation could be understood as those who either destroy the earth or ignore God's creative power. [The leader of the locust army under

the fifth trumpet is called destroyer, Rev 9:11.] The seven trumpets could thus portray a growing attitude that God is irrelevant. There is certainly a continuing sense of the passage of time in the trumpets - the woes are counted off as each passes.

Thus, there are several references to suggest that the trumpets are concerned with the wicked:

- The trumpets also use language suggesting imitations of the true, ie, counterfeits. locusts have something like breastplates (9:9); the angel from the abyss falls on the springs of water (a symbol of Jesus' teaching - John 4:14) and embitters them, etc; the locusts also wear false golden crowns (9:7)
- the angels restrained under the 6th seal (7:1-3) are released in the 6th trumpet (9:14)
- The last three trumpets are woes which are always pronounced against the doomed
- The last few trumpets are directed entirely at the unsealed wicked
- The trumpets are arranged in reverse order of creation; etc.

The above suggests that the seven trumpets trace the history of the wicked during the Christian era during times of growing wickedness and disregard for God's sovereignty and law.

Cosmic Conflict: This section clearly records the raging (spiritual) battle between the righteous woman (usually understood as the true church) and the trinity of beasts from the abyss, sea and land. While the section clearly covers the whole of the Christian age, its main focus is on the crescendo of trouble brewing in time before Jesus' Second Advent. It thus forms a suitable bridge between the first and last three sections of Revelation. It is shown in the glossary that the three beasts form a counterfeit trinity called Babylon that attempts to deceive the world to prevent the worship of the true (divine) trinity.

Because this section shows seven scenes about contrasting loyalties to the true vs false trinity, it could be called the seven contrasts.

Unlike the sections before and after, some parts of this central section appear to be more parallel than sequential as evidenced by the same extended time period, 1260 days (12:6, 14), 42 months (13:5), appearing in the first two parts. However, the land beast must follow the 42 months of the sea beast, and the three angels' messages come just before the harvests of the earth. Further, the Lamb being followed on Mt Zion by the 144,000 who have the seal of God in their foreheads is probably parallel to the first three parts (compare Eph 2:6).

Seven Bowl Plagues: These closely parallel the seven trumpets in both a literary sense (they follow the same sequence - the reverse of creation), and

in their purpose (they are intended to induce repentance from the wicked, Rev 16:5–7). However, the plagues differ from the trumpets in two important respects: (1) the seven plagues cover the whole earth (not thirds of the earth as in the trumpets), and, (2) occur in the time just before Jesus' second advent. This continues the trend begun in the previous section as the sections deal with end-time events. These widespread "punishments" are again given (allowed?) in an attempt to have wicked people repent and are thus concerned primarily with the wicked, but are contrasted with the righteous in Rev 16:15.

The bowl plagues appear to be given under the last two of the seven cosmic conflicts. Such an arrangement is strongly suggested in the anticipatory passage Rev 15:1. Thus begins a pattern that continues for the remaining sections.

Destruction of Evil: This section records the final destruction of the powers and institutions (Babylon - the short-lived coalition of the three beasts, the sea beast, the land beast and the dragon) introduced in the section on the Cosmic Conflict. [Note that the wicked people are not finally judged until the beginning of the last section on the New Jerusalem.] We should pause to note that the final destruction of these evil institutions does not occur until after a series of "punishments" or warnings - the seven plagues.

This destruction of evil appears to occur under the 6th and 7th plagues as these describe the preparations and outcome of the battle of Armageddon without describing the battle itself. Further preparations for the battle of Armageddon is described in Rev 17:12, 13. The actual battle occurs in Rev 19:17–21, and is directed by Jesus on a white horse. It is interesting to note that the battle of Armageddon does not occur until after the waters of the Euphrates, where Babylon sits, are dried up. Since the many waters represent people, Babylon's destruction occurs after the masses have recognised her deception and turned against her. Jesus' justice is thus transparent.

There is another interesting feature of this section: unlike the other sections which begin with an introductory vision of Jesus, this section does not, but instead has a new picture of Jesus in each of the parts. Notice that Jesus is an angel who lights the earth with His glory, (18:1), the lamb (19:7), the rider on the white horse (19:11, 21) and an angel who imprisons Satan

(21:1) the judge on the throne (20:4), etc. Further, there is no direct picture of Jesus in the first and last parts of this section.

The New Jerusalem: This is the purpose of the whole book of Revelation - the ultimate victory of Jesus, His saints and their reward. The saints are only rewarded after the wicked have their reward given by way of judgement - eternal destruction.

Therefore, this final section begins with the final judgement of all people, which occurs under the 6th and 7th parts of the previous section.

Timing

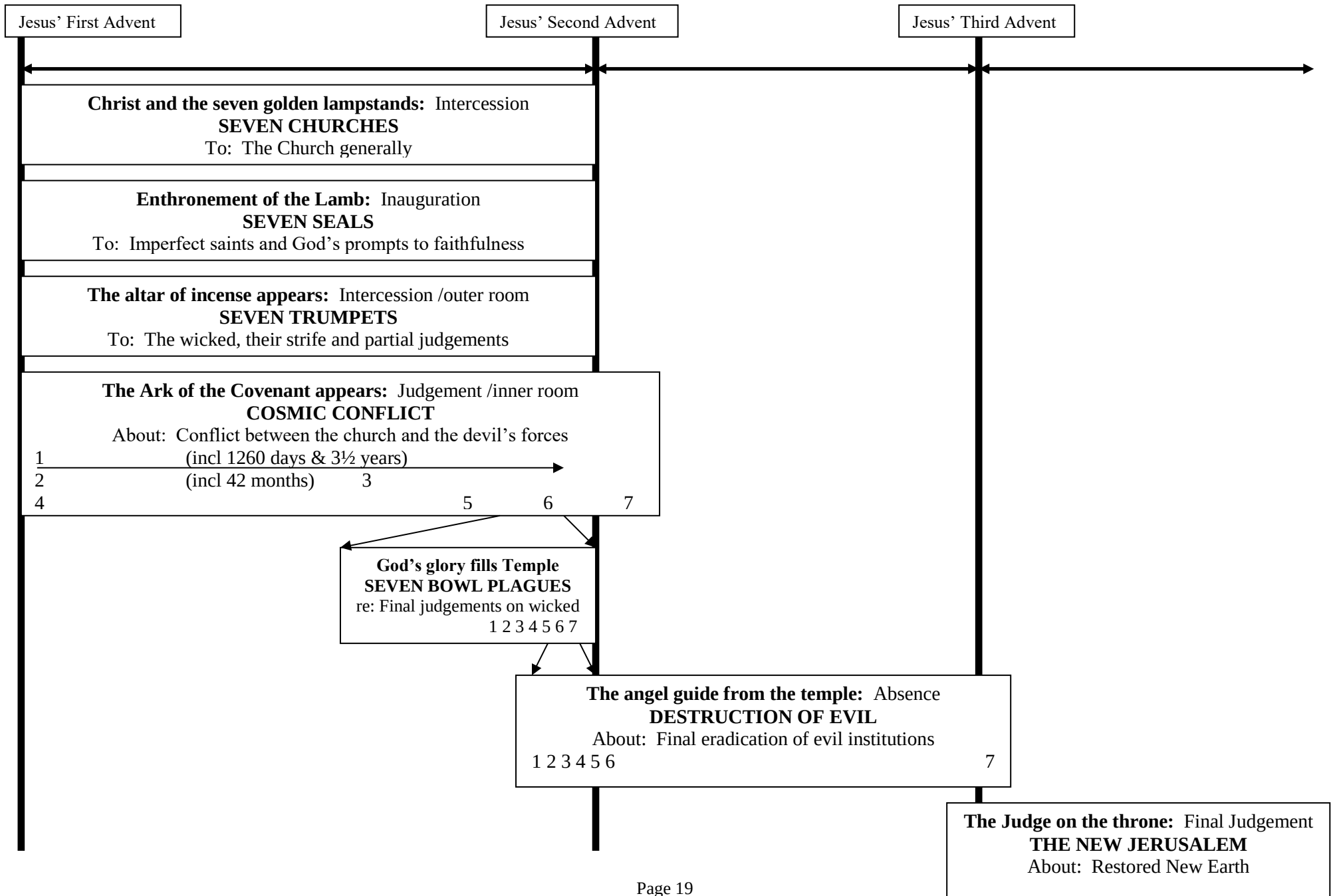
Notice that the first three sections are parallel visions covering the whole Christian age between Christ's first two advents. (This is suggested by the reference to the voice like a trumpet (1:10, 4:1) and being in the spirit (1:10, 4:2) at the beginning of both the vision of the churches and seals.) Such an arrangement is common in Old Testament apocalyptic literature – see appendix 2 on Daniel.

The fourth section covers the same period but focuses on end-time events and the cosmic conflict between God and Satan. Further, the central section clearly contains parts that are not sequential because two contain time elements that are parallel (1260 days and 42 months). Those who follow the Lamb wherever He goes on Mount Zion presumably suggests the state of God's people throughout the Christian era which is clearly parallel to the first two parts. This central section is thus an appropriate pivot between the two halves of the book.

All subsequent sections are set within the final parts of the preceding section and thus represent an increasing magnification of end-time events. This can be seen from the recurrence of the phrase *in the spirit* which always introduces a new section (1:10, 4:2, 17:3, 21:10) but in the second half the events described are an amplification of those in the last two parts of the previous section.

The above comments are summarised on the next diagram. Note that in the Cosmic Conflict section, while the seven parts are diagrammed sequentially, the first four are probably parallel with the last three occurring sequentially.

Thematic Structure of Revelation – Summary



Chapter 4. Detailed Analysis of Revelation's Scenes

In this chapter we will examine each section and scene in Revelation to discover its literary structure and theme. Too often, interpreters read passages without due recognition of these structures, which provide important clues about the emphasis the author wished to convey. It should be observed that each section has its own style, which while consistent with the remainder of Revelation, is still different from other sections.

Where a translation appears, I generally use a (sometimes overly) literal rendering of the Greek to demonstrate the structure.

PROLOGUE Rev 1:1-8

Revelation's Imprimatur: 1:1, 2

A: [A] Revelation of Jesus Christ

B: which God gave to him

C: to show His servants things to occur soon

D: and He signified sending [it] via His angel (messenger)

C: to His servant John who testifies

B: [about] the Word of God

A: and the testimony of Jesus Christ (the things he saw)

[Note: The point of emphasis is placed in the centre of a chiasm]

Three-fold Blessing: 1:3

Blessed: - is the one who reads [singular]

- are the ones hearing [plural]

- are those who take it to heart [plural]

because the time is near

[Notes: 1. This appears to suggest a local early church where the elder would read aloud to the congregation each Sabbath.

2. For the other six blessings of Revelation, see 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14.]

Three-fold (Trinitarian) Greeting: 1:4, 5a

John, to the seven churches of Asia: Grace and peace to from:

God the Father - who is, and was, and is coming

Holy Spirit - the seven spirits before His throne

Jesus Christ - the faithful witness

- the firstborn from the dead

- the ruler of the kings of the earth

Three-fold Dedication to Jesus and Doxology: 1:5b, 6

- To the one who loves us

- And freed us out of sins by His blood

- And made us a kingdom of priests (for) His God and Father

To Him be glory and might forever and ever, Amen.

Three-fold Theme: 1:7

- Behold! He is coming in the clouds

- Every eye will see Him and those who pierced Him

- All the tribes of the earth will wail over Him.

Yes, Amen!

Three-fold Authority: 1:8

- I am the alpha and the Ω (omega), says the Lord God

- The one who is, and was, and is coming

- The almighty.

4.1 The Seven Churches of Revelation

Introductory Vision of Jesus - Rev 1:9–20

<i>A: John the author:</i>	1:9	John - your brother, companion in suffering, kingdom, patient endurance, on the Island of Patmos, because of the Word of God
	1:10	In the Spirit on the Lord's Day and hears a voice like a trumpet behind him
<i>B: The instruction to write:</i>	1:11	Told to write to churches in Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea
<i>C: Function of Jesus:</i>	1:12	Someone walking among the seven golden lampstands
<i>D: Title of Jesus:</i>	1:13a	like a Son of Man
<i>E: Description of Jesus: (Centre and purpose of vision)</i>	1:13b	Dressed in a robe down to the feet Wearing a golden sash around the chest
	1:14	Head and hair like wool - as white as snow Eyes like blazing fire
	1:15	Feet like burnished bronze glowing in a furnace Voice like the sound of rushing waters
	1:16	In His right hand He held seven stars Out of His mouth came a sharp two edged sword Face shining like the brilliant sun
<i>A: John's Reaction:</i>	1:17a	Falls down at Jesus' feet as though dead
<i>D: Titles of Jesus:</i>	1:17b, 18a	Jesus is: First and Last, the Living One (was dead and now alive forever)
<i>C: Function of Jesus:</i>	1:18b	Jesus holds the keys of death and hades
<i>B: The instruction to write:</i>	1:19	Write what you have seen now, and later
<i>F: Explanation of symbols:</i>	1:20	Seven stars are the angels (messengers) to the seven churches Seven lampstands are the seven churches

The Messages to the Seven Churches of Revelation

1. Name	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamum	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
2. These are the words of . . . (description or title of Jesus)	* Holds 7 stars in right hand * Walks among 7 golden lampstands	*first & last *died and came back to life	*He who has the sharp two edged sword	*Son of God *eyes of blazing fire *feet like burnished bronze	*holds 7 spirits of God and 7 stars	*holy and true *holds keys of David *shuts & no-one opens, opens & no-one shuts	*Amen *faithful & true *ruler of God's creation
3. I know your . . . (commendation)	Deeds: *hard work *perseverance *intolerant of wicked *tested false apostles *endured hardships *not wearied *hate Nicolaitans	Afflictions: *poverty (yet rich) *slander by Jews of Satan's synagogue	Where you live *live where Satan's throne is *did not renounce faith (eg, Antipas) *remain true to my name	Deeds: *love *faith *service *perseverance *doing more than initially	Deeds: *few people who have not soiled their cloths	Deeds: *little strength *kept my word *not denied name	Deeds: —
4. Nevertheless . . . (reproof)	*forsaken first love	—	*(few) teachings of Balaam, ie, eat food offered to idols and sexual immorality *some Nicolaitans	*tolerate Jezebel, ie, sexual immorality, food offered to idols, unwilling to repent	*reputation of alive but actually dead *deeds incomplete	—	*lukewarm (will spit you out) *"I am rich" but wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, naked
5. Counsel	*do things you did at first *repent *remember the height from which you fell	*do not be afraid of suffering *devil will imprison *suffer persecution for 10 days *be faithful to death	*repent or I will fight you with the sword of my mouth	*hold to what you have 'till I come (those not of Jezebel)	*wake up! *strengthen what remains *remember *obey *repent	*hold on to what you have. *I am coming soon so that no-one will take your crown	*buy refined gold *buy white clothes *buy eye salve *be earnest *repent *open door to me
6. To him who overcomes I will give . . . (rewards)	*right to eat from the tree of life in paradise	*crown of life *not hurt by second death	*hidden manna *white stone *new name known only by receiver	*authority over nations *morning star *rule with iron sceptre *dash nations to pieces like pottery	*will walk with me *dressed in white *not erase name from book of life *acknowledge before Father *acknowledge before angels	*pillar in God's temple *never leave temple *write God's name *write name of God's city *write my new name *kept from hour of trial	*right to sit with me on my throne
7. He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches							

The Seven Churches of Revelation - Historical Background

Church	Ephesus	Smyrna	Pergamum	Thyatira	Sardis	Philadelphia	Laodicea
Meaning of name	first or desirable	myrrh or sweet smelling	height or power or elevation by marriage	sweet savour of labour	those escaping or that which remains	brotherly love	judging the people
Notes on ancient city	*main sea port of Asia and principal city of Asia minor *Nicolaitans = Gnostic sect	*centre of emperor worship *excellent sea port	*fortress city on elevated escarpment *centre of Satan worship (from Babylon) *invented parchment for library	*weaving and dying industry using wool and linen *centre of trade guilds	*destroyed by earthquake in 17AD and rebuilt with royal money	*very beautiful city called "little Athens" *destroyed by earthquake in 17AD and rebuilt with royal money	*banking city and very wealthy *black wool garments made locally *made Phrygian powder for eyes *had warm springs *destroyed by earthquake in 60AD but refused royal help to rebuild
A Traditional Historical Interpretation:	Church during first cent., ie, apostolic times	Church during 2nd and 3rd cent of persecution, especially that started by Diocletian in 303 and ending in 313 with the edict of Toleration (Milan) issued by Constantine.	Compromising church of 4th and 5th cent.	State church during dark ages 6th to 15 cent.	Reformation church of 16th and 17th cent.	Missionary church of 18th and 19 cent.	Church of the end of time

General Trends:

1. Steady decline in faithfulness, spirituality; increasing wickedness and tolerance of error
2. As churches become weaker, rewards for overcomers increase
3. Note chiastic structure of the seven messages
4. The title chosen by Jesus is appropriate for message and condition of church
5. The order of cities (& churches) is that taken by traders entering Asia minor



4.1 The Seven Seals

Introductory Vision to the Seven Seals - Rev 4 & 5

Introduction:

4:1 Open door and a voice like a trumpet

Seven Elements of the Heavenly Throne Room:

4:2 Throne in heaven with rainbow encircling it

4:3 Someone sitting on it like jasper and carnelian

4:4 24 Thrones with 24 elders with white robes and gold crowns

4:5a Flashes of lightning and peels of thunder

4:5b Seven lamps blazing are the seven spirits of God

4:6a Sea of glass clear as crystal

4:6b Four living creatures: lion, ox, man and flying eagle

Worship Scene:

4:8b Hymn of praise to God by four living creatures

4:9 Description of worship scene by four living creatures

4:10 Description of worship scene by 24 elders

4:11 Hymn of praise to God by 24 elders

Crisis:

5:1 Scroll with seven seals on right of Him on throne

5:2 Who is worthy?

5:3 No one found to be worthy

Resolution - Description of The One Worthy:

5:5a Lion of the tribe of Judah

5:5b Root of David

5:6a Lamb apparently slain

5:6b Stands in the centre of the throne

5:6b Seven horns

5:6c Seven eyes are seven Spirits of God

5:7 Takes scroll and is worshipped by 4 living creatures & 24 elders

Worship Scene:

5:9 Hymn of praise to Lamb by 4 living creatures and 24 elders

5:11 Description of worship scene

5:12 Hymn of praise to Lamb by many angels

Conclusion:

5:13 Hymn of praise to God and the Lamb by every creature

The Seven Seals - Rev 6:1 to 8:1

1. Voice like thunder from lion: White horse, rider holds bow and crown, rode out to conquer and keep conquering [6:1, 2]
2. Red horse: rider holds sword, given power to take peace from earth and to make men kill each other [6:3, 4]
3. Black horse: rider holds scales, told that wheat and barley expensive but do not damage oil and wine [6:5: 6]
4. "Green" (chloros) horse: rider named death, hades followed, quarter of earth killed by sword, famine, plague and wild beasts [6:7, 8]
5. Martyrs under the altar: "How long 'till you judge?"
"Wait a little longer" [6:9-11]
6. *The Wicked:* Seven heavenly signs of wrath of the Lamb [6:12-16]
* earthquake, * sun darkened, * moon turns blood red, * stars fall
* sky rolls up, * mountains moved, * islands moved.
People request death and hide from the wrath of the Lamb
The Righteous: Heavenly dwelling and divine protection [7:1-16]
4 angels at 4 corners of earth hold back 4 winds
Angel from the east with seal of God: "Hold the 4 winds until the servants of God sealed"
144,000 sealed from every tribe of Israel
Great multitude from every nation before throne and the Lamb
wearing white robes and with palm branches in hand
Worship Scene:
Hymn of praise to God and Lamb by multitude
Description of worship scene
Hymn of praise to God by angels and 4 living creatures
Identity and characteristics of the righteous multitude:
* came out of great tribulation
* washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb
* serve God day and night in the temple
* God & Lamb spreads His tent over them
* Never hunger and thirst
* Sun will not beat on them nor any scorching heat
* Lamb is their shepherd to springs of living water
* God wipes every tear from their eyes
7. Silence in Heaven for half an hour [8:1]

Chiastic Structure of the Seals

In addition to the above structures, the seals appear to be constructed chiastically. This literary structure emphasises the central importance of Jesus and His sacrifice for our salvation.

- 4:1 A: Prelude – Door standing open in heaven, voice invites John to look
- 4:2-6a B: Throne and the 24 elders dressed in white
 - [Also seven lamps blazing = 7 spirits of God]
- 4:6b-8a C: Four living creatures, lion, ox, man, flying eagle
- 4:8b-11 D: Worship of the 4 living creatures and 24 elders
- 5:1a E: Location – on the right of the one sitting on the throne
- 5:1b F: A Scroll (written on both sides) and sealed with 7 seals
- 5:2 G: Who is worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals?
- 5:3 H: No one able to open the scroll or look at it (John wept)
- 5:4 H: No one found worthy to open the scroll or look at it
- 5:5a G: Lion of Judah, Root of David has triumphed (is worthy)
- 5:5b F: (He) will open the scroll and its 7 seals.
- 5:6 [The Lamb's description: sacrificed, seven horns, seven eyes are seven spirits sent out to all the earth]
- 5:7 E: Lamb takes the scroll from the right of the one sitting on the throne
- 5:8-14 D: Worship of the 4 living creatures and 24 elders, and all creatures
- 6:1-8 C: Four living creatures call out the four horsemen
- 6:9-7:8 [5th seal with souls under altar, 6th seal of judgement on wicked, four winds held from righteous, and 12 tribes.]
- 7:9-17 B: Throne and multitude dressed in white who sing praises to God and the Lamb
- 8:1 A: Postlude – Opening of 7th seal, Silence in heaven

The Seven Seals and Their Relation to the “Synoptic Apocalypse”

Note: This chart should not be taken to imply that the seven seals are an exact parallel to Jesus sermon recorded on Matt 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21. Rather, that the two passages have many parallels which throw light on each other.

Seal Description	Reference	Theme	Matthew	Mark	Luke
1. White Horse Bow, crown, conquering conquest	Rev 6:1, 2	Gospel Progress	24:13, 14	13:10, 11, 13	21:15, 18, 19
2. Red Horse Take peace, men kill each other, large sword	Rev 6: 3, 4	War	24:6, 7, 21	13:7, 8	21:9, 10, 24
3. Black Horse Scales in hand, measuring out expensive (exorbitantly priced) food	Rev 6:5, 6	Famine	24:7	13:8	21:11
4. Pale (chloros = green) Horse Death & grave (hades) followed, kill by sword, famine, plague, wild beasts	Rev 6:7, 8	Pestilence	24:7	13:8	21:11
5. Souls under the Altar “How long . . . until you judge?” told to wait a little longer	Rev 6:9 Rev 6:10 Rev 6:11	Persecution Vengeance Delay	24:9, 10 — 24:6, 8	13:9 — —	21:12, 13 21:22 21:9
6. Great Earthquake signs in sun, moon and stars signs in the sky and earth nations distressed Jesus returns to judge angels gather elect (saints have passed through tribulation)	Rev 6:12 Rev 6:12, 13 Rev 6:14 Rev 6:15, 16 Rev 6:17 Rev 7:1-3 Rev 7:14	Earthquakes Sun Moon & Stars Nations morn Who can stand? Angels gather elect Tribulation	24:7 24:29 24:21, 30 — 24:31 24:10, 21, 22	13:8 13:24, 25 13:19 — 13:27 13:19	21:11 21:25, 26 21:23, 25, 26 21:36 — 21:23, 24
7. Silence in Heaven	Rev 8:1		—	—	—

4.2 The Seven Trumpets

Introductory Vision Rev 8:2-6: “And I saw...”

- A: ...the seven angels who stood before God and there were given to them seven trumpets
 B: And another angel came and stood on the altar having a golden censer
 C: And there was given to him much incense(s) so that he will give [it] with the prayers of the saints
 D: all on the golden altar before the throne
 C: And the smoke of the incense(s) went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel
 B: And the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar,
 and cast [it] into the earth and there occurred thunders and rumblings and lightings and [an] earthquake
 A: And the seven angels having the seven trumpets prepared themselves to trumpet.

Agent of Trumpet

Object of Trumpet

Result of Trumpet

Three Trumpets of Fire

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Hail and fire mixed with blood
Rev 8:7 | Hurled on the land | * One third of earth burned
* One third of trees burned
* All green grass burned |
| 2. Something like (=ὥς) a huge mountain ablaze
Rev 8:8, 9
. (Note, ὥς usually introduces a counterfeit.) | Hurled into sea | * One third of sea turned to blood
* One third of sea creatures die
* One third of ships destroyed |
| 3. Great star (Wormwood) blazing like a torch falls from
heaven to earth.
Rev 8:10, 11 | One third of rivers and
springs of waters | * One third of rivers turned bitter
* Many people die of the bitter waters |

Celestial Trumpet

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 4. [Divine decree?]
Rev 8:12 | One third of sun
One third of moon
One third of stars | * One third of sun darkened
* One third of moon darkened
* One third of stars darkened
* One third of day without light
* One third of night without light |
|---------------------------------|---|--|

The Seven Trumpets, cont.

Agent of Trumpet	Object of Trumpet	Result of Trumpet
<u>Three Trumpets of Woe</u>		
5. Star (angel and king of locusts) fallen from heaven to earth with key to abyss opens it. Smoke rises as from a great furnace. Rev 9:1–11 Locusts from smoke torture for five months are like: * horses prepared for battle * crowns of gold on their heads * faces like human faces * hair like women's hair * teeth like lion's teeth * breastplates like breastplates of iron * sound of wings like the thundering of horses and chariots rushing into battle * tails and stings like scorpions (See the more detailed chiastic structure on next page)	Earth	* Sun and air darkened
6. Voice from the horns of the golden altar commands the four angels bound at the Euphrates to release an army of 200,000,000 mounted troops, prepared for the hour, day, month & year (Rev 9:13–21) which looked like: * breastplates fiery red, dark blue and sulphur yellow * horses' heads like lions' heads * horses' mouths issued fire, smoke and sulphur * authority of horses in their mouths and tails * tails like snakes with heads to inflict injury (Interlude on righteous: 10:1 – 11:14, see next section)	Euphrates River	* One third of mankind killed by fire, smoke and sulphur * Remainder of mankind not killed by three plagues: - did not repent of works of their hands - did not stop worshipping demons and idols - did not repent of murders, sorcery, fornication, thefts
7. Loud voices in heaven proclaim Rev 11:14–18 [Note the identical sequence of objects, land, sea, rivers etc, is repeated in the plagues of Rev 16.]	Kingdoms of this world	* Kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of God and of His Christ * 24 elders worshipped God and gave thanks * God begins eternal reign * Nations angry * Judgement begins

The Seven Trumpets, cont.

Detailed Structure of the Fifth Trumpet Rev 9:1-11

A: The Star (Angel) of the Abyss (Satan) 9:1, 2: “And the fifth angel trumpeted.”

And I saw a star out of heaven having fallen to the earth, and it was given the key to the shaft of the abyss, and he opened the shaft of the abyss and smoke went up out of the shaft like smoke from a great furnace. The sun and the air were darkened by smoke from the shaft.

B: Stings Like Scorpions with Authority to Torment for Five Months 9:3-6

And out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth. They were given authority like the authority of scorpions of the earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the earth nor any green thing, nor any tree except the people who have not the seal of God on their foreheads. They were given [authority] not to kill them but to torment them for five months. And their torment is like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a person. And in those days, people will seek death but death but will not find it; and they will long to die but death flees from them.

C: Locusts like Horses in Battle 9:7a

And the likeness of the locusts is like horses having been prepared for battle

D: Armour of Locusts 9:7b

And on their heads were something like crowns similar to gold

E: Description of Locusts 9:7c, 8

And their faces were like faces of people

And they had hair like women's hair

And their teeth were like lion's teeth

D: Armour of Locusts 9:9a

And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron

C: Locusts like Horses in Battle 9:9b

And the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle

B: Stings Like Scorpions with Authority to Torment for Five Months 9:10

And they have tails and stings like scorpions; and with their tails they had authority to torment people for five months

A: The Angel (Star) of the Abyss (Satan) 9:11

They have a king over them, the angel of the abyss whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek Apollyon.

Similarities between the 5th and 6th Trumpets

- Both have horses
- Both have breastplates
- Both have the appearance of lions
- Both inflict injury with their mouths and tails
- Both affect the wicked (unsealed) only

Differences between the 5th and 6th Trumpets

- The 5th has horses while the 6th has riders on the horses
- In the 5th no one is killed; in the 6th 1/3 of humanity is killed
- In the 5th, the army comes from the smoke from the abyss; In the 6th the army comes from the river Euphrates

The Trumpets cont. – Sixth Trumpet Interlude

The Little Book and the Seven Thunders (10:1 – 11)

- 10:1 A: Angel – strong, from heaven, clothed in cloud, rainbow on head, face like the sun, feet (lower legs) like pillars of fire
10:2 B: Angel stood on land and sea held a little book having been opened in his hand
10:3 C: Seven thunders sounded as angel shouted in a loud voice like a lion roaring
10:4 C: Seven thunders to be sealed – John told by voice from heaven not to write them down
10:5 B: Angel standing on land and sea raised right hand to heaven
10:6, 7 A: Angel swears by Him who created heavens and all things, that: there would be time no longer, the mystery of God will be finished in the time of seventh trumpet as per the prophetic record
10:8a C: Previous voice out of heaven instructs:
10:8b B: Instruction to John: Take the book having been opened from the angel who stands on the sea and on the land
10:9a D: Angel instructs John to eat the book. It will turn the stomach bitter,
10:9b E: but will be sweet as honey in the mouth
10:10a B: Took the book and ate;
10:10b E: it was sweet as honey in the mouth,
10:10c D: but turned the stomach bitter.
10:11 F: They say to John, “You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings.”

The Two Witnesses (11:1 – 13)

Introduction and Background of the Two Witnesses:

- 11:1 A: John told to take a reed and measure the temple and count the worshipers (Judgement)
11:2a B: Exclude the outer court as it is given to the nations (Gentiles)
11:2b C: They will trample the holy city for 42 months
11:3 C: 2 witnesses prophecy with divine power for 1260 days clothed in sackcloth
11:4 B: These are 2 olive trees, 2 lampstands that stand before the Lord of the Earth
11:5, 6 A: If anyone tries to harm them fire comes from their mouths – this is how anyone who harms them will die. They have power to shut up the sky during their prophesying, turn the waters to blood and strike the earth with plagues (Judgement)

Work of Witnesses:

- 11:7 A: After their testimony, the beast from the abyss attacks and kills them
11:8 B: Their bodies lie in the street of the great city (Sodom & Egypt) where their Lord was crucified
11:9, 10 C: During 3½ days, bodies seen by all people who gloat by exchanging gifts because of the plagues with which they tormented people
11:11 C: After 3½ days, breath of life enters, they stand on their feet and terror fill those who watch
11:12 B: Voice from heaven calls “come up here”, the ascend to heaven in a cloud
11:13 A: Great earthquake – 1/10th city collapses, 7000 killed, survivors terrified and give glory to God of heaven.

4.4. Cosmic Conflict

Notes on Cosmic Conflict

Several features distinguish this central section of Revelation:

1. It is the first not to be explicitly divided into seven parts. However, implicitly it easily divides into seven natural segments.

2. While it is thematically and logically linked to the remaining three sections (with a focus on end time events) it covers the same time span - the entire Christian era from the birth of Jesus to His second advent.

3. It's **Introductory Vision** (11:19) breaks with the pattern of the first three, which have dealt with furniture and Jesus' activities in the outer room of the Sanctuary. This fourth section introduces the only Sanctuary piece of furniture in the inner, Most Holy Place - the Ark of the Covenant. Thus while the first three sections show Jesus as mediator and intercessor, the final four sections portray Him as judge. (see Lev 16) by introducing the second (Most Holy Place) apartment of the sanctuary.

1. The Woman and the Dragon - Rev 12:1-17

Introduction:

12:1, 2 The woman introduced and described

12:3 The dragon introduced and described

Overview:

12:4a A: Dragon sweeps one third of stars to earth

12:4b, 5 B: The dragon opposes the woman who gives birth to male child (Jesus) swept up to God

12:6 C: The woman flees to the desert for 1260 days

Detail:

12:7-12 A: War in heaven between dragon and Michael (Jesus) dragon and angels thrown to earth

Interlude - hymn of praise and warning to the faithful

12:13 B: Dragon pursues the woman who had given birth to male child

12:14-16 C: Woman flees to desert for 3½ years, dragon pursues the woman with water but earth helps

Message to the Faithful:

12:17 Dragon, enraged at failure, goes away to summon help against woman and her remnant seed who keep the commandments of God and faith of Jesus.

2. The Sea Beast - Rev 13:1-10

Introduction:

13:1, 2a The sea beast introduced and described (similar to the dragon)

Overview:

13:2b, 3a Dragon gave power, throne and great authority to sea beast whose fatal wound that had been healed

Detail:

13:3b A: Whole earth astonished and wondered after the sea beast

13:4a B: They worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the sea beast

13:4b C: They worshipped the sea beast - who can make war against him?

13:5a D: Sea beast given mouth to speak blasphemies

13:5b E: Sea beast exercises authority for 42 months

13:6 D: Sea beast opens mouth to blaspheme God, His dwelling place and those in heaven

13:7a C: Sea beast makes war on saints and conquers them

13:7b B: Sea beast given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation

13:8 A: All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast except the faithful

Message to the Faithful:

13:9, 10 If anyone has an ear, let him hear: If anyone leads into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he will be killed*. Here is the perseverance and faith of the saints.

[* Note: These two clauses on captivity and sword execution is one of the very few times I prefer the Textus Receptus over either the Majority Text or the UBS4 Text, simply because the latter two offer a meaningless tautology.]

3. The Beast from the Land - Rev 13:11-18

Introduction:

13:11a Description of beast from the land

Detail:

13:11b A: Land beast speaks like a dragon

13:12a B: Exercised authority of sea beast

13:12b C: Makes inhabitants of earth worship sea beast
whose fatal wound was healed

13:13 D: Does great signs causing fire from heaven

13:14a D: Great signs deceive inhabitants of earth

13:14b C: Tells inhabitants of earth to set up an image to
the beast whose fatal wound was healed

13:15a B: Gives breath to image of sea beast

13:15b A: Image speaks so that:
- those not worshipping the sea beast are killed
- all people receive a mark on the forehead or hand
- no buying or selling without mark or number of beast

Message to the Faithful:

13:18 Number of sea beast is man's number - 666.

4. The Lamb and 144,000 - Rev 14:1-5

Description:

14:1 Lamb on Mt Zion with 144,000

Lamb's name and His father's name on their foreheads

Sound From Heaven:

14:2 Roar of rushing water, pearl of thunder, many harpists

14:3 Sing a song before the throne and elders

No-one could learn the song except 144,000 redeemed

Characteristics of Redeemed:

14:4 Did not defile themselves with women

They are virgins

Follow Lamb wherever He goes

Purchased from among men

Offered as first fruits to God and Lamb

14:5 No lie in their mouths

Blameless (unblemished)

5. Three Angel's Messages - Rev 14:6-12

First Angel:

14:6 Eternal gospel to all people, namely

Fear God, keep His commandments, judgement has come

14:7 Worship God who created all things

Second Angel:

14:8 Fallen, fallen is Babylon who made all nations drink the
maddening wine of her adulteries

Third Angel:

14:9 All who receive the mark of the beast will:

* drink the wine of God's anger undiluted

14:10* tormented with sulphur before angels and Lamb

14:11* smoke of torment rises forever

* have no rest forever

Message to the Faithful:

14:12 Call to patient endurance and obedience to commandments
and faith in Jesus

6. Harvest of the Earth - Rev 14:13-20

The Righteous:

14:13 A: Heard - blessed are dead who die from now on

14:14 B: Looked - Son of Man with sharp sickle

14:15 C: Angel from the temple instructs to reap

14:16 D: Righteous reaped

The Wicked:

14:17 B: Angel with sharp sickle

14:18 C: Angel in charge of altar fire instructs to gather

14:19a D: Angel reaps grapes (wicked)

14:19b A: Grapes thrown into winepress of God's anger

14:20 Blood flow becomes a torrent

7. Destiny of the Saints Rev 15:1-4

15:1 Seven angels with seven plagues anticipated

15:2 Sea of glass with fire have victorious saints beside
(saints are those who gain victory over beast and his image)

15:3 Saints sing song of Moses and the Lamb

Revelation's Central Chiasm

“Like wheels intersecting wheels” (Eze 1:16) are the literary structures in Revelation. Each one adds a new dimension and a corresponding insight and understanding. Overlaid on all the previous structure of the central section of Revelation, is yet another.

11:19	A: Temple in heaven and the Ark of the covenant
12:1, 2	B: Sign in heaven – Woman (church), pregnant and clothed in the sun and the moon under her feet
12:3, 4	C: Sign in heaven – Red dragon (an angel) who drew 1/3 of the stars of heaven
12:5-9	D: Male child (Jesus) rules with iron (1 st Advent), who is snatched up to God and His throne. Jesus banishes devil and angels
12:10-16	E: Voice from heaven: Rejoice heavens, Woe to earth
12:17	F: Saints who keep the Commandments and have the Testimony of Jesus
13:1-8	G: Sea beast's blasphemy
13:9, 10	H: Warning to saints (about Babylon)
13:11-13	I: Land beast and deception – fire from heaven (= false Elijah message)
13:14-18	J: Image of beast and the mark on forehead and hand of the wicked
14:1-5	J: Lamb with followers on Zion and the Father's name on their foreheads
14:6, 7	I: Eternal Gospel, judgment, worship (1 st angel) (= true Elijah message)
14:8	H: Babylon has fallen (2 nd angel)
14:9-11	G: Sea beast's blasphemy (3 rd angel)
14:12	F: Saints who keep the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus
14:13	E: Voice from heaven: Blessing to the faithful saints
14:14-21	D: Son of man (Jesus) judges (2 nd Advent)
15:1	C: Sign in heaven – 7 angels
15:2-4	B: (Sign in heaven) – saints beside the sea of glass sing the song of Moses
15:5	A: In heaven: Tabernacle of the Testimony

- Notes:
1. This chiasm could be extended further by including the trumpets before and the plagues after. (Recall that the list of the objects of judgment in the trumpets and plagues is the same: land, sea, rivers and springs, sun, darkness, Euphrates, world/air.)
 2. The existence of such a remarkable chiasm does not negate the existence of the interleaved structures previously listed. There are almost certainly many more such structures waiting to be discovered.

4.5 The Seven Bowl-Plagues

Introductory Vision to the Seven Bowl-Plagues Rev 15:5 – 16:1:

As is always the case, the introductory vision to each section consists of technically superb chiasm. Here is a very literal translation directly from the Greek to show how detailed John's language has become.

15:5a Transition: After these things, I looked,
15:5b A: and was opened the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven, from which came -
15:6a B: the seven angels
15:6b C: having seven plagues
15:6c D: out of the temple, (having been clothed in linen bright and clean)
15:7 E: One of the four living creatures gave the 7 angels 7 golden bowls filled with the wrath of God (who lives for ever and ever.)
15:8a F: And the temple was filled the smoke of the glory of God and His power
15:8b D: no one could enter the temple until the completion
15:8c C: of the seven plagues
15:8d B: of the seven angels
16:1a A: And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying
16:1b E: to the 7 angels, "Go pour out the 7 bowls of the wrath of God onto the earth."

Note the reverse of one of John's literary trademarks here: "I looked (15:5) ... I heard (16:1)"

REFERENCE	OBJECT OF PLAGUE	RESULT OF PLAGUE
1. Rev 16:2	Land	* Ugly, painful sores on those with mark of beast who worshipped his image
2. Rev 16:3	Sea	* Sea turned to blood like a dead man. Everything in the sea died
3. Rev 16:4	Rivers and springs	* Rivers and springs of water become blood
INTERLUDE: Celestial Proclamation Rev 16:5–7 God is just in these judgements on those who persecuted the saints and prophets by shedding their blood.		
4. Rev 16:8, 9	Sun	* Sun scorched people by its fire and intense heat * People blaspheme the Name of God because of plagues * People refused to repent and Glorify God
5. Rev 16:10, 11	Throne of the Beast	* Beast's kingdom plunged into darkness * Men gnawed their tongues in agony * Blaspheme God because of pain and their sores * Refused to repent of what they had done
6. Rev 16:12 – 16	Wicked (at Euphrates):	* Water of Euphrates dried up to prepare the way for the kings of the east (lit. sun rising) * Three unclean (evil), demonic spirits like frogs from mouths of dragon, beast and false prophet * Frogs perform miraculous signs to impress kings * Gather kings of world together for battle of God Almighty to battle of Armageddon
	Righteous: (encouragement)	* Jesus is coming like a thief * Blessed is he who remains alert and ready (not naked)
7. Rev 16:17 – 21	Air	* Voice from Temple, "It is done" * Lightning, thunder, earthquake * City splits into three parts * Cities of nations collapse
		* Cup of Babylon's wrath filled with wine of God's fury * Every island fled away, mountains not found * Hailstorm with hailstones about the weight of a talent * Wicked blaspheme God because of hail

Note the almost identical list of plague objects here compared to those listed under the seven plagues.

4.6 The Destruction of Evil

1. Harlot in the desert & the beast from the abyss (17:1-18)

- 17:1, 2 A: Angel introduces the harlot sitting on many waters
17:3-6a B: Woman on scarlet beast with 7 heads & 10 horns
17:6b, 7 B: Vision of woman and beast explained
17:8 C: Explanation of beast
17:9-11 C: Explanation of seven heads
17:12-14 C: Explanation of the ten horns
17:15-18 A: Angel explains harlot on many waters

2. The destruction of Babylon (18:1-24)

- 18:1-3 A: Angel declares Babylon fallen, fallen
18:4-8 B: Message to faithful: leave Babylon, repay her evil
18:9, 10 C: Woe, woe to kings of earth
Babylon's judgements come in one hour
18:11-17a C: Woe, woe to merchants of earth
Babylon's wealth destroyed in one hour
18:17b-19 C: Woe, woe to sailors etc
Babylon made desolate in one hour
18:20 B: Message to faithful: rejoice at judgement!
18:21-24 A: Angel illustrates Babylon's fall with millstone

3. Celebration in heaven over Babylon's fall (19:1-5)

- 19:1 A: Voice of a great multitude shouting
B: Hallelujah! Glory & power to God
19:2 C: Harlot destroyed!
19:3,4 B: Hallelujah! they shouted again, twice
19:5 A: Voice from the throne instructing servants to praise God

4. Wedding banquet of the Lamb (19:6-10)

- 19:6 A: Great multitude & thunder shouts, "Hallelujah!"
19:7 B: Announcement of wedding of Bride of Lamb
C: Bride is ready
19:8 C: Bride in fine linen (=righteous deeds of saints)
19:9 B: Blessed are those invited to the wedding banquet
19:10 A: Message to John & faithful (multitude.)

5. Rider on white horse defeats beast & false prophet (19:11-21)

Jesus as the rider on white horse (introduction of new character):

- 19:11 A: Called (named) faithful and true; Judges with justice and makes war, eyes of fire, many diadems
19:12b B: Name known only to Him: Robe dipped in blood
19:13b B: Name is the Word of God
19:14 C: Heavenly armies in fine linen follow on white horses & sharp sword out of mouth to strike the nations
19:15 C: Rules nations with an iron sceptre and treads wine press of the fury of the wrath of God
19:16 A: Name is King of Kings and Lord of Lords

Battle of (H)Armageddon

- 19:17 A: Birds summoned to God's banquet by angel standing in the sun
19:17b B: Earthly army composes great supper of God
19:18 C: Beast and earthly armies assemble to battle rider
19:19 C: Beast & false prophet captured and thrown into lake of fire
19:20 B: Armies killed by sword from mouth of rider on white horse
19:21 A: Birds gorged on flesh of armies

6. The 1000 years (20:1-6)

The wicked:

(20:1-3) The dragon thrown into the abyss, chained & locked for 1000 years

The righteous:

(20:4-6) The resurrected martyrs and faithful enthroned with Christ in heaven to reign and judge for 1000 years

7. The destruction of Satan. (20:7-10)

- 20:7a A: After the 1000 years:
20:7b B: Satan is released from prison
20:8 C: He goes out to deceive peoples of earth – Gog & Magog
20:9a D: They make war on the City of God's people
20:9b C: Fire comes out of heaven to destroy the deceived
20:10a B: Satan thrown into lake of fire
20:10b A: Satan is tormented day and night forever

4.7 The New Jerusalem

Introductory Vision: Jesus' Judgement on the great white throne is the basis of New Jerusalem (20:11-21:8)

- 20:11a A: Great white throne and the one who sat on it
- 20:11b B: Earth and heaven fled – no place found for them
- 20:12, 13 C: Dead judged according records of books including the book of life.
- 20:14, 15 C: Death, grave and wicked thrown into lake of fire, which is the second death
- 21:1-4 B: New heaven and new earth (no more sea) and New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God
- 21:5-7 A: Announcement from (the one seated on) the throne: Dwelling of God is with people, no more tears
- 21:6-8 C: Wicked excluded from city – thrown into lake of fire burning with sulphur, which is the second death.

1. The City's origin and layout (21:9-14)

Origin: From Heaven, glorious like a jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal, great high wall
12 gates, 12 angels at the gates, 12 names of tribes, (3 gates on east, north, south and west), 12 foundations, names of 12 apostles

2. The City's dimensions (21:15-17)

12,000 stadia in size, city wall 144 (12 x 12) cubits in size,

3. The City's materials (21:18-21)

Walls of jasper, city of gold pure as glass
12 foundation stones: jasper, sapphire, chalcedony, emerald, sardonyx, sardius, chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprase, jacinth, and amethyst.

4. The City's source of light (20:22–24)

No temple – God and Lamb are the temple
No sun or moon – Glory of God and the Lamb are its light. Nations walk by light and kings bring glory to city

5. The City's character (21:25-27)

No night – gates never shut. Nations bring glory and honour to city: nothing impure allowed – only those in Lamb's book of life.

6. The City's source of life (22:1, 2)

River of life, clear as crystal, from the throne of God and the Lamb, flows through the city
The tree of life spans the river of life, which runs down the main street of city and used for healing of nations

7. The City's government (22:3-5)

No curse; citizens serve God and the Lamb; citizens have the Lamb's name on their foreheads; the saints reign forever.

Epilogue Rev 22:6-22

A: Introduction: The chain of Revelation and Imprimatur 22:6

And he said to me, “These words [are] faithful and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel to show his servants things that occur quickly [ie, soon].”

B: Imperative Eschaton 22:7a

And behold, I am coming quickly [ie, soon].

C1: Words of the Prophecy of this Book: Blessing & personal testimony 22:7b-9

“Blessed [is] the one keeping the words of the prophecy of this book.” And I, John, am the one hearing and seeing these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell [down] to worship before the feet of the angel showing me these things. And he told me, “See that you do not do it. I am a fellow servant [like] you and the prophets who keep the words of this book.”

C2: Words of the Prophecy of this Book: Instructions on Use and Urgency 22:10

And He told me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book for the time is near.”

D: Wicked and Righteous Destiny 22:11

The one acting unjustly, let him continue to act unjustly; and the filthy one, let him continue to act filthily.

And the righteous one, let him continue to do righteousness; and the holy one, let him continue to be hallowed.

B: Imperative Eschaton 22:12, 13.

And behold, I am coming quickly [ie, soon], and my reward is with me to render to each man according to his work. I am the alpha and the Ω [omega], the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

D: Righteous and Wicked Destiny 22:14-17

Blessed are the ones washing their robes that they might have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and those who lie. I, Jesus, sent my angel to witness to you [plural] about these things to the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, the bright morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let the one who hears say, “Come!” And let the thirsty come. And whoever wishes let him take the water of life freely.

C1: Words of the Prophecy of this Book: Warning against additions 22:18

I testify to everyone hearing the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book.

C2: Words of this Book of Prophecy: Warning against subtractions 22:19

And if any one takes away from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take his part from the tree of life and out of the holy city which are written in this book.

B: Imperative Eschaton 22:20

The one testifying to these things says, “Yes, I am coming quickly [ie, soon].” Amen: Come Lord Jesus.

A: Conclusion: Benediction 22:21

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all [saints].

Chapter 5. Old Testament Parallels in Revelation

While Revelation never formally quotes from the Old Testament, there are numerous parallels and allusions consisting of scenes and figures of speech, etc. The list below cannot hope to be exhaustive but will greatly assist the interpreter grasp the significance of any passage. References in bold type are extended parallels.

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference	Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
1:5	firstborn from the dead (Col 1:18)	Ps 89:27	2:18	eyes like blazing fire and his feet like bronze	Dan 10:6
1:6	kingdom of priests	Ex 19:6	2:20	Jezebel (1 Kings 16:31)	2Ki 9:22
1:7	coming in the clouds	Dan 7:13	2:23 I am He who searches hearts and minds	and rewards according to works	Jer 17:10
1:7	see him, the one they pierced and mourn	Zech 12:10		(Compare 1 Chr 28:9, Ps 7:9, Rom 8:27)	
1:10	voice like a trumpet (Isa 58:1) as God's voice	Ex 19:16, 19	2:26	authority over the nations	Da 7:14, Ps 2:8
1:12	seven golden lampstands	Ex 25:36, 37	2:27 He will rule them with an iron sceptre	He will dash them to pieces like pottery	Ps 2:9
	Ex 37:23,	Num 8:1-4	2:28	Morning Star	Rev 22:16
1:13	like a son of man (John 5:27)	Dan 7:13	3:3	Jesus comes like a thief (Matt 24:43)	1 Thess 5:2
1:13	sash of gold	Dan 10:5	3:5	erased from the book of life (Ex 32:32, 33)	Ps 69:28
1:14 his head and hair were white like wool,	as white as snow (Isa 1:18)	Dan 7:9	3:7 key to the house of David. What he opens,	no one can shut, what he shuts no one can open	Isa 22:22
1:14 eyes like blazing fire		Dan 10:6	3:9	wicked bow at feet of righteous	Isa 45:14, 60:14
1:15 his feet like bronze		Dan 10:6	3:12	pillar in the temple	1 Ki 7:21
1:15	voice like the sound of rushing waters	Eze 1:24, 43:2	3:17	"I am rich and wealthy"	Hos 12:8
1:16	face like the shining sun	Matt 17:2	3:19	those I love I discipline	Prov 3:12
1:16	from mouth came sharpened sword	Isa 49:2	4:1	a voice like a trumpet	Isa 58:1
	[Note: sword is rhomphaia in Rev and marchaira in Isa]		4:2	throne in heaven & God seated on it	Ps 103:19,
1:17	I am the first and the last	Isa 44:6, 48:12		Ps 47:8, 123:1, Isa 6:1, Eze 1:26	
		Isa 41:4	4:3	rainbow around the throne	Eze 1:28
1:17	Speechless, prostrate and then raised	Dan 8:18	4:5	thunder and lightning	Ex 19:16, 20:18
1:20, 2:1	seven golden lampstands	Ex 25:36, 37	4:6	four living creatures around the throne	Eze 1:5
	Ex 37:23,	Num 8:1-4	4:7	lion, ox, man, eagle	Eze 1:10
2:7	tree of life in paradise	Gen 2:9	4:8	six winged creatures around throne	Isa 6:2
2:8	the first and the last	Isa 44:6, 48:12	4:8	covered in eyes	Eze 1:18
2:9	tree of life	Gen 2:9	4:8	Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty	Isa 6:3
2:10	tested for ten days	Dan 1:12, 14	5:1	scroll written on both sides in the hand	Ez 2:9, 10
2:14	Balaam and Balak (Num 31:16, Jude 11)	Num 22-24			
2:17	new name	Isa 62:2			

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference	Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
5:1	scroll written on both sides	Zech 5:1 – 3	7:1	four winds of earth	Mk 13:27
5:1	sealed scroll (Isa 29:11)	Dan 12:4,	7:1	four winds (Matt 24:31) and sea	Dan 7:2
5:5	Lion of the tribe of Judah	Gen 49:9	7:3	seal (or mark) on the foreheads of righteous	Eze 9:4
5:5	Root of David	Rev 22:16	7:9	palm branches in the hand	Jn 12:13
5:6	Lamb that was slain (John 1:29)	Isa 53:7	7:14	washing (cleansing) with blood	Heb 9:14, 22
5:6	seven eyes sent to all the earth	Zech 4:10		[see also Gen 49:11, Lev 14:14, 17, 25, 28, 16:19]	
5:8	prayers likened to incense	Ps 141:2	7:15	spread his tent over them	Isa 4:5
5:9	sang a new song to God	Ps 33:3, 144:9	7:16	never hunger or thirst, sun not beat on them	Isa 49:10
5:10	kingdom of priests	Ex 19:6	7:17	Lead beside springs of water	Isa 49:10
5:11	Thousands upon thousands . . .	Dan 7:10	7:17	God will wipe away tears	Isa 25:8
	ten thousand times ten thousand		8:1	silence after judgement	Amos 8:3
5:12	Lamb that was slain (John 1:29)	Isa 53:7	8:2	seven trumpets of God	Josh 6
5:12	to receive power, glory, wisdom, strength etc	1 Chr 29:11	8:3	prayers likened to incense	Ps 141:2
5:13	all creatures in heaven, earth, sea rejoice	Ps 96:11, 69:34	8:3	golden altar of incense [Ex 30:1-10]	Ex 39:38,
6:2	white horse	Zech 1:8, 6:2		40:5, 26, Num 4:11, 1 Chr 28:18, 2 Chr 4:19, Heb 9:4	
6:4	red horse	Zech 1:8, 6:2	8:4	prayers likened to smoke of incense	Ps 141:2
6:4	take peace & sword (machaira)	Matt 10:34	8:5	censer filled with fire from the altar	Num 16:46
6:5	black horse	Zech 6:2	8:5	thunder and lightning	Ex 19:16, 20:18
6:8	death and the grave (hades) with a scourge	Isa 28:15, 18	8:6	seven trumpets	Josh 6
6:8	sword, famine, death (plague), wild beasts	Eze 5:17, 14:21	8:7	plague of hail, blood and fire	Eze 38:22
	[sword, famine and plague: 2 Chr 20:9, Jer 14:12, 21:7, 9,		8:7	trees burned by fire	Judg 9:15
	24:10, 27:8, 13, 17, 18, 32:24, 36, 34:17, 38:2, 42:17, 22,			Jer 11:16, Eze 15:6, 20:47, Joel 1:19	
	44:13, Ez 5:12, 17, 6:11, 12, 7:15, 12:16, 14:21]			(also Matt 3:10, 7:19, Luke 3:9)	
6:9	under the altar (of burnt offering)	Ex 38:4	8:8	a mountain ablaze with fire [Heb 12:18]	Ex 19:18, 24:17
6:10	how long? (overheard conversation)	Dan 8:13, 12:6		Dt 5:4, 22, 23, 9:15	
	[also: Ps 6:3, 13:1, 35:17, 79:5, 80:4, 90:13, 94:3, Isa 6:11		8:8	a mountain thrown into the sea	Ps 46:2
	Hab 1:2, Zech 1:12]		8:10	star fallen from heaven to earth [Luke 10:18?]	Isa 14:12, 15
6:11	white robe	Mk 16:5	8:11	bitter (poisoned) water	Jer 9:15, 23:15
6:12	great earthquake at time of God's wrath	Eze 38:19	8:12	sun, moon and stars darkened	Eze 32:7, 8
6:12	sun darkened, moon turns blood red	Joel 2:31	9:1	star falls from the sky to earth [Rev 8:10]	Isa 14:12, 15
6:13	stars fall as from a fig tree	Isa 34:4	9:2	smoke rising as from a furnace	Ge 19:28,
6:14	sky rolled up like a scroll	Isa 34:4			Ex 19:18
6:15	hiding in the rocks from God's judgement	Isa 2:9, 10	9:2, 3	locusts obscuring the sun	Joel 2:10
6:16	fall on us and hide us	Hos 10:8	9:4	seal (or mark) on the foreheads of righteous	Eze 9:4
6:17	great day of the Lord has come	Zeph 1:14	9:6	men seeking death that eludes them	Job 3:21
6:17	who can stand before the wrath of God?	Ps 76:7, Mal 3:2	9:7	locusts like horses	Joel 2:4

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
9:8	locusts with lion's teeth (Ps 58:6)	Joel 1:6
9:9	locusts sounding like chariots in battle	Joel 2:5
9:13	horns of the golden altar	Ex 30:1-3
9:17	red and blue fabric	Ex 25:4, 5
		Ex 35:6,7,23
9:17, 18	fire and smoke comes from their mouths	2 Sam 22:9
		Ps 18:8
9:17, 18	fire smoke and sulphur (Luke 17:29)	Gen 19:23-28
9:17, 19	lions and snakes	Isa 30:6
9:20	idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood (compare Ex 25:3)	Dan 5:4, 23
9:20	idols that cannot see, hear or walk (Isa 44:13-20)	Ps 115:4-7
		Ps 135:15-17
10:1	cloud and rainbow	Gen 9:13-16
10:1	face shone like the sun	Matt 17:2
10:1	legs like pillars	SS 5;15
10:4	seal up (the vision) Dan 8:26, Dan 9:24	Dan 12:4, 9
10:5	raised his right hand to heaven (Deut 32:40)	Dan 12:7
10:6	take oath by raising hands to heaven	Gen 14:19, 22
10:6	created the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them	Ex 20:11
	Neh 9:6, Psa 146:6, Acts 4:24, 14:15.	
10:7	God announces plans to servants the prophets	Am 3:7
10:8	eat the book in the hand of the angel	Eze 2:8
10:9	book tasted sweet as honey in the mouth	Eze 3:3
11:1	measure the temple with a measuring rod	Eze 40:1, 3, 5
11:1	measure a building & people (judgement)	Amos 7:7, 8
11:2	Gentile nations in outer Temple court	Luke 21:24
11:3	two witnesses	Dt 17:6, 19:15
11:4	two olive trees and lampstand before God	Zech 4:2-14
11:5	fire comes from their mouths (Ps 18:8)	2 Sam 22:9
		Jer 5:14
11:5	fire devours enemies	2 Ki 1:10, 12
11:6	shut sky so that it will not rain	1 Ki 17:1
11:6	turn waters into blood	Ex 7:17
11:6	strike the earth with every kind of plague	Ex 9:14-16

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
11:8	Sodom and Egypt	Gen 13:10
11:9 & 11	three and a half days [years]	Lu 4:25 Ja 5:17
11:11	breath of life entered (given)	Eze 37:5, 9
11:12	caught up to heaven	2 Ki 2:11
11:13	give glory to God (in trial) (John 9:24)	Josh 7:19
11:15	Christ's kingdom will last forever	Dan 2:44, 7:14
11:19	the Ark of the Covenant in the temple	Heb 9:3-5
11:19	thunder and lightning	Ex 19:16, 20:18
12:1	woman clothed in (bright as) the sun, with the moon, crown of (majestic as) stars	SS 6:10
12:2	woman in agony of labour [Isa 26:17, 18, 66:7, Matt 24:8, Mark 13:8, John 16:21]	Mic 4:9, 10
12:3	ten horns on beast	Dan 7:7, 20
12:4	stars from the sky flung on the earth	Dan 8:10
12:5	rule with an iron sceptre	Ps 2:9
12:7	Michael [Jude 9]	Dan 10:13, 21, 12:1
12:9	ancient serpent . . . who leads astray	Gen 3:1-7, 14
12:10	Satan accuses people	Zech 3:1
12:14	taken to safety on eagle's wings	Ex 19:4
12:14	time, times and half a time	Dan 7:25
12:17	Dragon (devil) angry with woman	Gen 3:15
13:1	beast(s) from the sea	Dan 7:3
13:1	ten horns on beast	Dan 7:7, 20
13:2	leopard, bear and lion	Hos 13:7, 8
13:2	beast like a leopard	Dan 7:6
13:2	beast like a bear	Dan 7:5
13:2	beast like a lion	Dan 7:4
13:5	mouth which uttered proud words	Dan 7:8, 20
13:6	usurps heavenly authority [2 Thess 2:4]	Dan 7:25, 8:25, Dan 11:36
13:7	makes war on saints and conquers them	Dan 7:21, 8:24
13:7	world-wide authority	Dan 7:23
13:8	Lamb that was slain (John 1:29)	Isa 53:7
13:8	Book of Life	Ps 69:28
13:9	captivity to captivity, sword to sword	Jer 15:2, 43:11
13:11	Ram with two horns	Dan 8:3

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference	Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
13:13	performed great (and miraculous) signs	2 Thess 2:9, 10	16:12	Euphrates dried up to prepare the way for the kings of the east [Dan 5]	Isa 45:1-3
13:13	fire comes down from heaven in view of men	1 Ki 18:38	16:13	plague of frogs	Jer 50:38, 51:36
	1 Chr 21:26, 2 Chr 7:1,		16:15	Jesus comes like a thief (Matt 24:43)	Ex 8:6: 7
13:15	threat of death if image not worshipped	Dan 3:6, 11, 15	16:16	battle of Armageddon	1 Thess 5:2
13:16	on the forehead and on the hand (Ex 15:16)	Dt 6:8, 11:18	16:18	thunder and lightning	1 Ki 18:19-21
14:1	Lamb on Mount Zion	Gen 22:1-18	16:19	drink the wine from the cup of God's wrath	Ex 19:16, 20:18
14:1	writing on forehead distinguishes righteous	Eze 9:4		Isa 51:17, Eze 23:32-34, Zech 12:2.	Jer 25:15
14:2	I heard a sound like the roar of rushing water	Eze 1:24	17:1	prostitute (Babylon) sits on many waters	Jer 50:38, 51:13
14:5	no deceit in their mouths	Isa 53:9	17:3	beast with ten horns	Dan 7:7
		Zeph 3:13	17:4	golden cup in the hand	Jer 51:7
14:7	give glory to God (in trial) (John 9:24)	Josh 7:19	17:6	drunk with blood (Eze 39:19)	Jer 51:7
14:7	made heavens, earth, sea & fountains	Ex 20:11	17:8	Book of life	Ps 69:28
	(Ps 146:6)		17:12	the ten horns are ten kings	Dan 7:24
14:8	Babylon is fallen, is fallen	Isa 21:9	17:14	King of Kings and Lord of Lords	1 Tim 6:15
14:8	nations drink Babylon's maddening wine	Jer 51:7	17:17	Coalition of many nations oppose Babylon	Jer 50:9
14:9	on the forehead and on the hand	Dt 6:8, 11:18			Isa 13:4
14:10	drink the wine from the cup of God's wrath	Jer 25:15	18:2	Babylon is fallen, is fallen	Isa 21:9
	Isa 51:17, Eze 23:32-34, Zech 12:2.		18:2	a place for wild beasts	Zeph 2:15
14:10	burning sulphur	Isa 34:9	18:3	nations drink Babylon's maddening wine	Jer 51:7
14:11	smoke rises forever	Isa 34:10	18:4	come out of Babylon my people	Jer 50:8, 51:6, 45
14:14	like a son of man (John 5:27)	Dan 7:13	18:5	Babylon's sins (judgement) reaches to heaven	Jer 51:9
14:15	harvest the ripe grain with a sickle	Mk 4:29	18:6	repay her double for her deeds	Isa 40:2
14:18	reap the ripe harvest of grapes with a sickle	Joel 3:13	18:7	do to her as she has done to others	Jer 50:15, 29
14:20	treading the winepress of God's wrath	Isa 63:3	18:7	she says "I am not a widow"	Isa 47:8
15:3	Song of Moses	Ex 15:1-18	18:8	plagues overtake her in one day	Isa 47:9
		Dt 31:30-32:43	18:9	smoke of destruction and burning	Isa 47:14
15:4	All nations will worship before you (Ps 86:9)	Isa 66:23		(Josh 8:21, 20:38-40, Isa 9:18, 19)	
15:5	Tabernacle of the Testimony	Ex 38:21	18:9-20	cargo list and great trade,	Eze 27
	Num 1:50, 53, 10:11, Acts 7:44			lament by merchants at loss of city	
15:8	glory smoke - no one could enter the temple	Lev 16:13, 17	18:18	smoke of destruction and burning	Isa 47:14
	[Ex 40:34, 35, 1 Ki 18:10, 11, 2 Chr 5:13, 14]	Isa 6:4		(Josh 8:21, 20:38-40, Isa 9:18, 19)	
16:1	temple noise as God punishes wicked	Isa 66:6	18:20	Heaven rejoices over Babylon's fall	Jer 51:48
16:2	plague of painful sores	Ex 9:9-11	18:22	Music of harps heard no more	Eze 26:13
16:4	plague of blood in the rivers killing fish	Ex 7:20, 21	18:24	Babylon falls because she killed many	Jer 51:49
16:6	oppressors drink blood as they deserve	Isa 49:26	19:2	blood of the servants avenged	2 Ki 9:7
16:10	plague of darkness around saints' oppressors	Ex 10:21-23			

Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference	Rev	Phrase or Theme	Reference
19:3	smoke rises for ever	Isa 34:10	21:6	drink from the water of life	John 4:10
19:5	Praise God all His servants	Ps 134:1	21:12	twelve gates named after the twelve tribes	Ez 48:30-34
19:6	roar of rushing waters	Eze 1:24, 43:2	21:18, 19	Twelve precious stones with gold	Ex 28:17, 39:10
19:10	heaven standing open	Mk 1:10		(See also Eze 28:13)	
		John 1:51, Acts 7:56	21:21	street of gold	Zeph 9:3
19:13	garments dipped (spattered) in blood	Isa 63:3	21:23	sun and moon's light replaced by God's	Isa 60:19, 20
19:13	the Word of God	Jn 1:1	21:24	nations and kings walk by its light	Isa 60:3
19:15	rules nations with an iron sceptre	Ps 2:9	21:24	kings and nations bring splendour to city	Isa 60:5
19:15	treads the winepress of anger	Isa 63:3	21:25	no night in city	Zech 14:7
19:16	King of Kings and Lord of Lords	1 Tim 6:15	22:1	river of the water of life	John 7:38
19:18	birds called to eat flesh of condemned & eat flesh of mighty men, horses and their riders	Eze 39:17-20	22:1	river flows from the throne (sanctuary)	Eze 47:12
	(Gen 40:19)		22:2	both banks which bear fruit each month with leaves for healing (Ps 46:4)	Eze 47:12
19:19	kings of the earth assemble to battle God	Ps 2:2	22:2	tree of life	Gen 2:9
19:20	beasts thrown into fire for destruction	Dan 7:11	22:2	tree beside river bearing fruit with leaves	Ps 1:3
20:4	on the forehead and on the hand	Dt 6:8, 11:18	22:4	writing on forehead distinguishes righteous	Eze 9:4
20:5	first resurrection (of righteous)	Lk 14:14	22:5	city gates never shut	Isa 60:11
20:8	Gog and Magog	Eze 38:2	22:5	no more night in new Jerusalem	Zech 14:7
20:9	fire from heaven to destroy	2 Ki 1:10,12,14	22:6	nations bring honour to city	Isa 60:5
	Gen 19:24, Luke 9:54, 17:29		22:7	nothing will defile the city (Jerusalem)	Isa 52:1
20:9	fire on Gog and Magog	Ez 38:22, 39:6	22:12	rewards/judgement according to conduct	Jer 17:10, 32:19
20:10	eternal fire of punishment	Jude 7		Ps 62:12, Prov 24:12, Matt 16:27, Rom 2:6	
20:12	rewards/judgement according to conduct	Jer 17:10, 32:19	22:14	tree of life	Gen 2:9
	Ps 62:12, Prov 24:12, Matt 16:27, Rom 2:6		22:16	Root of David	Rev 5:5
20:14	death destroyed	1 Cor 15:26	22:16	the bright and morning star	2 Pet 1:19
21:1	a new heaven and a new earth	Isa 65:17	22:18, 19	do not add or subtract from the words	Deut 4:2
21:6	thirst buy water of life without cost	Isa 55:1	22:19	tree of life	Gen 2:9

Major Structural Parallels

This section lists Revelation's major, extended parallels with the Old Testament, many of which can be observed in the previous list. However, some do not use any common phrases which exclude them from the previous list. Therefore, this list includes those parallels which share a common theme as well as extended phraseology. Again, this list is not exhaustive.

Revelation	Description	Reference	Comment
Rev 1:12 – 20	Introductory vision of Jesus glorified	Dan 10:4 – 19	The description in both is similar
Rev 4:1 – 11	God on His throne worshipped by heavenly beings	Eze 1:4 – 28	Elements of this and later visions reappear
		Isa 6:1 – 6	Parts of this vision are blended with those above
Rev 6:1 – 17	Seven seals describing war, persecution, famine etc	Matt 24:4 – 35	These three passages are often called the synoptic -
		Mark 13:5 – 31	apocalypse. See the analysis showing the detailed -
		Luke 21:8 – 36	comparison in section 4.2.
Rev 6:1 – 8	Four (coloured) horsemen as messengers of God	Zech 1:7 – 11	Four horses as God's servants, that is, called and -
		Zech 6:1 – 8	instructed by God.
Rev 7:1 – 8	Sealing (distinguishing) of the righteous (Note the link with the vision of Rev 4)	Eze 9:1 – 11	The marking of the righteous prevents their destruction. (Note the link with Eze 1)
Rev 8:6–9:21, 11:15–18	The seven trumpets	Gen 1:2 – 31	The object of the trumpets reverses order of creation.
Rev 9:1 – 11	Locusts symbolise God's judgement	Joel 1:2 – 2:25	Locusts used as God's call to repentance.
		Jer 51	Locusts with Destroyer as leader against the Babylon
Rev 12:1 – 17	Origin and work of Satan	Isa 14:12 – 15	Satan falls from heaven and aspires to deity.
Rev 13:1 – 8	Sea beast – origin, persecution and blasphemy	Eze 28:12 – 17	Reason for Satan's fall is his pride.
Rev 16:1 – 21	Seven last bowl plagues as instruments God's judgement	Dan 7:2 – 27	Sea beast is an amalgam of Daniel's beasts.
		Ex 7:14 – 12:50	Egypt's plagues were God's judgements.
		Gen 1:2 – 31	The object of the plagues reverses order of creation
Rev 16:12 – 14	6th plague dries up Euphrates to conquer Babylon	Isa 44:27 – 47:15	This predicts how Cyrus would divert the Euphrates -
		Jer 50:1 – 51:64	in order to over-throw Babylon.
		Dan 5:1 – 31	This describes the final hours of Babylon.
Rev 18:1 – 24	The final destruction of mystic Babylon	Isa 13:1-14:23, 21:1-12	The prophets lamented the legendary - wickedness of Babylon and its ultimate destruction.
		Jer 50 & 51	See also above.
Rev 18:9 – 20	Great trade of Babylon and lament by merchants	Eze 27	Tyre's trade and lament by merchants
Rev 21:1 – 22:6	The glorious new Jerusalem after the millennium	Isa 60-66	Isaiah's prediction of the restored Jerusalem.

Chapter 6. Glossary of Words and Symbols in the Apocalypse

Revelation 1:1 tells us that, “He signified” (ἐσημαίνειν esemanen) the message. This section on Revelation’s words and symbols shows where and how they are used both in the apocalypse and compares their meaning to that used elsewhere in the Bible. Numbers in parentheses, eg, (4) refer to the occurrence of the word or symbol in the Greek text. This glossary is not exhaustive.

2: See Two Witnesses.

3½ Days (2) 11:9, 11. The time period during which the two witnesses lie dead in Sodom and Egypt. See **Day**.

3½ Years (1) 12:14. See 1260 days. The time period of 3½ years occurs in various ways in the Bible apart from the 1260 days prophetic period. Jesus’ ministry lasted 3½ years, Elijah’s drought lasted 3½ years (Luke 4:25, James 5:17). Daniel also has this same 3½ year period in Dan 7:25, 12:7.

4 (18) Explicitly, there are four living creatures (4:8, 5:6, 8, 14, 6:1, 6, 7:11, 14:3, 15:7, 19:4), four angels (7:1, 2, 9:14, 15), four corners of the earth (7:1, 20:8), four winds (7:1), four horns of the altar (9:13 – a textually uncertain occurrence). Implicitly, there are four septets (churches, seals, trumpets and bowl plagues). [The numeral four also occurs in other numbers such as 24, 144 and 144,000, which see.]

5 Months (2) 9:5, 10. These refer to the duration that the locusts from the abyss are given to torture and torment the unsealed of the earth. The only other places where such a period is described is in Luke 1:24 where Elizabeth was secluded for five months during her pregnancy; Gen 7:24, 8:3 the duration of the flood (actually, 150 days here).

This is a notoriously difficult passage to interpret. Whatever one makes of it, we must see the forces of the devil (the angel from the abyss) attacking and torturing the unsealed (unsaved) alone. The sealed (ie, saved) are completely immune from this aggression. Thus, whatever the locust army is it can distinguish between God’s elect and the condemned! One possibility is the insecurity and guilt which being unsaved induces. This could have been associated with the rise of atheism in the 18th century whose effects lasted about 150 years and caused immense (spiritual) pain to its followers. The rise of atheism was necessarily accompanied by a rise of secularism where people (generally) for the first time in history began to deal with life as though God were irrelevant.

This movement has been supplanted (but not entirely extinguished) by the rise of the occult and spiritism in the latter 19th and 20th century.

7 (54) Explicitly, there are, seven churches (1:4, 11, 20), seven lampstands (1:12, 20, 2:1), seven stars (1:16, 20, 2:1, 3:1), seven angels to the seven churches (1:20), seven spirits of God (3:1, 4:5, 5:6* this last is debatable), seven lamps or torches (4:5), seven seals (5:1,5, 6:1), seven horns on the Lamb (5:6), seven eyes of the Lamb (5:6), seven angels with seven trumpets (8:2, 6), seven thunders (10:3, 4), seven heads on the dragon (12:3), seven crowns on the dragon (12:3), seven heads on the sea beast (13:1), seven angels with seven plagues or bowls (15:1, 6, 8, 16:1, 17:1, 21:9), seven bowls (15:7), seven heads on the beast from the abyss (17:3, 7, 9), seven mountains (17:9), seven kings (17:9, 11).

Implicitly, there are seven sections of seven parts (by the outline contained here), seven blessings, etc. [Such an implicit arrangement is also a characteristic of John’s Gospel: seven miraculous signs, seven days at the beginning and end of Jesus’ ministry, etc.] “Seven” occurs more often in Revelation than in the remainder of the New Testament (just 33 times).

10 (9) The number ten is always associated with persecution:

2:10 10 days of persecution

12:3 10 horns of dragon which wars with the saints

13:1 10 horns of beast which persecutes the saints

17:3,7,12,16 10 horns of beast ridden by harlot to persecute saints

17:12 10 kings give power to beast briefly.

No such persecution pattern associated with the number 10 is found in the rest of the New Testament.

12 (10) The number twelve is always associated with the kingdom of God or the New Jerusalem. Explicitly, there are:

12:1 A: 12 stars in the crown of the good woman

21:12 B: 12 gates in the New Jerusalem

C: 12 angels at the gates

D: 12 names of the tribes of Israel

21:14 D: 12 foundations in the New Jerusalem

C: 12 names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb

21:21 B: 12 gates are 12 pearls around the New Jerusalem

22:2 A: 12 fruits on the tree of life in the New Jerusalem

Notice that this numeral always occurs in the second half of the book and mostly in the last section on the New Jerusalem. Despite this, the occurrence as listed above forms a chiasmic structure when the reference in 12:1 is included.

[See also 24, 144, 12,000 & 144,000]. The rest of the New Testament shows a similar pattern: the occurrence of 12 is associated with the 12 apostles, 12 tribes of Israel, 12 patriarchs, or the 12 disciples., or, occasionally others such as: 12 men who spoke in tongues (Acts 19:7), 12 days worship in Jerusalem (Acts 24:11).

24 (6) 4:4(x2), 10, 5:8, 11:16, 19:4. This always enumerates the elders or their thrones around the great throne in heaven.

Elsewhere, this numeral only occurs in the Old Testament:

Num 7:88 24 fellowship offerings

2 Sam 21:20 24 fingers and toes on Goliath (& 1 Chr 20:6)

1 Ki 15:33 Baasha reigned 24 years

1 Chr 24:1-19 24 orders of priests

1 Chr 25:1-31 24 orders of musicians

There is an interesting occurrence of the 24th day of the month in several passages as well:

Neh 9:1 24th of 7th month – people assembled at temple

Dan 10:4 24th of 1st month – Daniel's vision

Hag 1:15 24th of 6th month – Temple construction begins

Hag 2:10 24th of 9th month – Haggai's vision re temple

Hag 2:18 24th of 9th month – Haggai's vision re temple

Hag 2:20 24th of 9th month – Haggai's vision re temple

Zech 1:7 24th of 11th month – Zechariah's vision

Thus, the number 24 is most often associated with the temple services and those who serve in it. [Interestingly, the word *worship* occurs just 24 times in Revelation.]

42 Months: See 1260 days

666 (1) 13:18. Note that the Greek text of the oldest manuscripts up to about the ninth or tenth century uniformly have this number written out in full, namely, ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἑξ hexakosioi hexekonta hex, six

hundred sixty six. [Jerome's Vulgate also follows this practice.] Contrast this with the Textus Receptus [the basis of the KJV] and the Majority Text which have, χξς' 666. This later notation, which uses the Greek letters invested with numerical values, arose centuries after John and was therefore probably unknown to him. Despite this, and possibly in view of the Textus Receptus, the traditional interpretation of 666 was to find various names whose numerical value summed to 666. These included *VICARIUS FILII DEI*, *Λατεινος*, and many others; all of which were unsatisfactory for various reasons, quite apart from the leap of exegesis that a letter/numerical system foreign to John required. The safest approach is to interpret the text in the way John might have understood it. The connection between Babylon and Rome was already well established in John's time on theological, historical and philosophical grounds. See appendix 4.

1000 years (6) 20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. These all refer to the millennium when the saints will be enthroned in heaven with Jesus judging the world. During this time, Satan is bound on earth.

1260 days (5) This time period occurs in various forms as shown below. [Note that 1260 days = 3½ years x 360 days per year = 42 months x 30 days in prophetic usage.]

11:2 42 months gentiles trample on the holy city

11:3 1260 days two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth

12:6 1260 days woman flees to the desert to escape the dragon

12:14 3½ times (years) woman out of dragon's reach

13:5 42 months beast blasphemes & exercises defiant authority

These references are reminiscent of Daniel's "times":

Dan 7:25 3½ years saints persecuted by little horn

Dan 12:7 3½ years' end marks the beginning of the end of time

A comparison of these suggests that in prophetic time, a year consists of 12 months of 30 days each. A comparison of other prophetic passages suggests that this day for a year principle is quite common (Num 14:34, Isa 34:8, 61:2, 63:4, Eze 4:5, 6. see also Job 10:5, 15:20, 36:11, Ps 39:5, 61:6, 90:10, 15, Eze 22:4). See appendix 2.

The above descriptions of this 1260 day/year period could be summarised as follows: the true church is persecuted and suppressed by a blasphemous, counterfeit religious power for more than 1000 years. Further, this counterfeit religious power must be an international political power as well. Only one such appears in history: The Roman Catholic church. In 2000, this church even issued an apology for all the lives it

took during its medieval reign. From appendix 3 it is not difficult to determine some appropriate dates for this period: 538 AD to 1798 AD.

1600 Stadia (1)14:20. This is the distance that blood flows from the winepress of God's judgement outside the city – a huge flood caused by the destruction of the wicked.

7000 (1) 11:13. 7000 names of people who were killed by the earthquake after the two witnesses were taken to heaven.

10,000 [μυριάς murias] (2) 5:11, 9:16. The idea of a myriad (=10,000) appears frequently in the Scriptures and usually means a very large number (as in modern idiom).

12,000 (13). These references enumerate the number of righteous from each of the 12 tribes of Israel (7:5–8) and the size of the New Jerusalem, 12,000 stadia (21:16). See also 144,000.

144,000 (3) 7:4, 14:1, 3. This group of people receive the seal of God in their foreheads, dressed in white robes and hold palm branches (compare Jesus' triumphal entry, John 12:13), come out of the great tribulation, have their robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb, serve God continually in the Temple, follow the Lamb as their shepherd where ever He leads, stand on Mt Zion, sing a new song which only the 144000 know, are redeemed from the earth, have kept themselves pure, appear in Revelation depicting the time before the second Advent; while in Rev 14 they represent the righteous throughout the Christian era, see 1 Cor 3:16, 17, 1 Pet 2:5.

200,000,000 (1) 9:16. The Greek here is actually, two (times) ten thousand (times) ten thousand (= two myriad myriad) – an unimaginably large number, even today. Compare Dan 7:10 and Rev 5:11. See **10,000**.

Abaddon [Ἀβαδδών] (1) 9:11. This is the Hebrew title of Satan meaning *destroyer* and acts as a counterpoint to God the creator (Rev 4:11). See also **Apollyon**.

About to happen [μέλλω mello] (13) 1:19, 2:10(x2), 3:2, 10, 16, 6:11, 8:13, 10:4, 7, 12:4, 5, 17:8. The occurrence of this anticipatory verb is another indicator that we are dealing with predictive prophecy in the book of Revelation.

Abyss [ἄβυσσος abussos] (7) All references are connected with either demonic powers or the origin or destiny of Satan, the dragon or the devil: 9:1, 2, 11 Origin of the locust plague whose leader is destroyer 11:7 Origin of one of Revelation's beast trinity, the Devil 17:8 Origin of the beast who is ridden by the prostitute Babylon 20:1, 3 Satan is thrown back into the Abyss.

Souter's pocket lexicon says, "an especially Jewish conception, the home of the dead and of evil spirits." In the Septuagint the abyss is used as a euphemism for the earth in its chaotic, Godless state, eg, Gen 1:1, etc. Such an understanding is consistent with all the references in Revelation as most easily seen in the last reference. In the rest of the NT this word only occurs in Luke 8:31 & Rom 10:7 conveying the same meaning as above.

Afar [μακρόθεν makrothen] (3) 18:10, 15, 17. These all describe the remoteness from which observers see the destruction of Babylon– afar off! Thus Babylon falls and there is none to help (cf Dan 11:45) despite the laments of those who watch!

Afraid – see **Fear**.

Air [ἀήρ aer] (2) 9:2, 16:17. The first refers to the air being darkened by the swarm of locusts under the fifth trumpet; the second refers to the seventh bowl-plague when the bowl is pored into the air. Most other references in the NT (Acts 22:23, 1 Cor 9:26, 14:9, 1 Thess 4:17) are used literally. However, Eph 2:2 clearly refers to Satan in describing him as "the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient." It is in this last sense that the two Revelation texts appear to be used. The ancients, unlike the moderns made no distinction between the atmosphere (air or sky), stellar or "outer" space and heaven. Thus, "air" could be used in the sense of the realm of the supernatural generally.

Alpha and Omega (3) A phrase which always refers to Jesus and is modified by an appended phrase, so as to leave no doubt that Jesus is both fully divine, eternal, more important than anything or anyone.

1:8 who is, who was and is to come, the Almighty

21:6 the beginning and the end

22:13 the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Altar [θυσιαστήριον thusiasterion] (8) 6:9, 8:3, 5, 9:13, 11:1, 14:18, 16:7. There were two altars in the temple/tabernacle – the altar of burnt offering in the outer court, and the altar of incense which stood before the curtain separating the Holy from the Most Holy Place. See Appendix 1 for a more complete description of this symbol.

Amethyst [ἀμέθυστος amethystos] (1) 21:20. This is the last of the precious stones forming the foundation of the New Jerusalem. These stones allude to those used on the ephod of the high priest. Thus, the New Jerusalem is depicted as being founded on the high priesthood of Jesus.

Amen [ἀμήν] (9) 1:6, 7, 3:14, 5:14, 7:12, 19:4, 22:20, 21. This word is used in two different ways: as exclamation of affirmation about the passage immediately preceding, always concerning Jesus and/or God (1:6, 7, 5:14, 7:12(x2), 19:4, 22:20, 21), and, as a title of Jesus, “the Amen” (3:14). In this final sense, Jesus is the embodiment of truth. The remaining 8 form a fascinating chiasmic pattern as shown below:

1:5,6 A: {John} To Him who loved us and freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a kingdom of priests...**Amen**.

1:7 B: {John} Look, He is coming in the clouds...**Amen**.

5:14 C: {Every creature} To Him who sits on the throne and the Lamb be praise...4 living creatures say, “**Amen**” & 24 elders fall to worship

7:12 (x2) D: {Great multitude} Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. All angels, elders and living creatures say, “**Amen!** Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honour, power & strength be to our God for ever and ever. **Amen!**”

19:4 C: {Great multitude} Hallelujah! (= praise the Lord). 24 elders and 4 living creatures say, “**Amen**, Hallelujah!”

22:20 B: {John} **Amen**. Come Lord Jesus.

22:21 A: {John} The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. **Amen**.

[Note: This last instance is disputed. According to the UBS4 and NA27, “amen” does not form part of the text here, but it is well attested in several ancient manuscripts. I also observe that “grace” is parallel to “loved us and freed us from our sins by His blood...”]

Angel [ἄγγελος angelos] (67) Literally *messenger*. For the most part, Revelation’s angels are those of God in heaven. However, several other angels are apparent: the messengers to the seven churches could have been human, the angel of 8:2-5 and 10:1-11 is Jesus, Satan is described as an angel in 9:11, there are angels (from heaven) who are now loyal to Satan 12:7, 9. Thus all angels have their origin in heaven, including (figuratively) the messengers to the churches.

Anger [ὀργή orge] (6) This word is distinct from wrath (θυμός thumos **Wrath**, which see) as it denotes an settled feeling. Its occurrences may be classified as follows (* denotes that wrath is associated with anger):

6:16 the anger of the Lamb

6:17 the great day of their (Lamb ad God) anger has come

11:18 The anger of God has come

*14:10 wine of God’s wrath in the cup of anger

*16:19 cup of the wine of the wrath of Gods anger

*19:15 winepress of the wrath of the anger of God

Notice that all anger is from God and where anger occurs with wrath it is associated also with the symbol of wine.

Angered [ὀργίζω orgizo] (2) 11:18, 12:17. Both are passive, *were angered*: the first refers to the nations and the second to the dragon. Both are angered due to their evil intentions being frustrated. Thus, one of the characteristics of evil powers is their lack of patience to be contrasted with the patience of the saints (14:12). Nowhere are the saints angered – only God is described as angry – see above.

Another [ἄλλος allos] (18) Most of these refer to another angel (7:2, 8:3, 10:1, 14:6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18, 18:1). Of the remainder, we have another burdern (2:24), another horse (6:4), another sign (12:3, 15:1), another beast (13:11), another not yet come (17:10), another voice (18:4), another book (20:12).

This word ἄλλος allos (another of the same sort) should be distinguished from ἕτερος heteros (another of a different sort) which is not used in the book of Revelation.

Apollyon [Ἀπολλύων] (1) 9:11. The Greek title of Satan meaning *destroyer*. This stands as a counterpoint to God the creator Rev 4:11. See also **Abaddon**.

Ark of the Covenant [κιβωτὸς τῆς διαθήκης kibotos tes diathekes] (1) 11:19. This phrase introduces allusions to the second apartment (Most Holy Place) of the heavenly sanctuary. Up to this point in Revelation, all the tabernacle furniture has been from the first apartment (Holy place) or the courtyard. Such a transition should clearly signal a corresponding change in our interpretation of the text. The first apartment was concerned with the daily ministry, while the second apartment was concerned with the yearly ministry in the earthly sanctuary.

Such a transition is anticipated in the previous verse where, at the conclusion of the seventh trumpet, the 24 elders announce that (1) Jesus has begun to reign (2) the nations are angry because the time of judgement has arrived and for dispensing rewards. See **Judgement**.

Heb 9:4 also mentions the Ark of the Covenant alongside the tables of the covenant, the ten commandments, which are closely related, being the basis of judgement (Rev 12:17, 14:12, James 2:8-10).

Armageddon [Ἀρμαγεδών Harmagedon] (1) 16:16. This place is where demonic spirits from the beast trinity gather the wicked forces for the final battle (showdown) with the forces of the Lamb. The battle is not

recorded here but actually occurs in 19:11- 21. The demonic spirits, from the mouths of the beast trinity, are defeated by the sword from the mouth of the rider on the white horse. Thus, the battle of Armageddon is a battle between two sets of powers whose principle weapons come from the mouths of their leaders. According to the text, Armageddon is a transliteration from the Hebrew; it should therefore be understood as *Har-mageddon*, that is *the mountain of Megiddo*. It is well known that no such place or mountain of this name has ever existed: the old town of Megiddo is on a plain. The safest way to understand this term is to seek a parallel allusion to some event/place in the Old Testament which involved a similar conflict between God and the wicked - not a difficult task. The most conspicuous mountain when standing in Megiddo is Mt Carmel on which another showdown occurred between God's faithful and Satan over the issue of worship. See 1 Kings 18. On Mt Carmel, Elijah (*Jehovah is my God*) reintroduced the worship of God and defeated the worshipers and priests of Baal. (H)Armageddon is a counterpoint of Mt Zion (Rev 14:1).

Army – see **Troops**.

Authority [ἐξουσία *exousia*] (21) 2:26, 6:8, 9:3, 10, 19, 11:6, 12:10, 13:2, 4, 5, 7, 12, 14:18, 16:9, 17:12, 13, 18:1, 20:6, 22:14. All these talk about God's and Christ's authority (sometimes delegated), except for those in Rev 13 & 17 which discuss the corresponding authority of the dragon and the sea beast. This again suggests that these two authorities are counterpoints of each other.

Avenge [ἐκδικέω *ekdikeo*] (2) 6:10, 19:2. The first is a request by the martyrs under the fifth seal for God to avenge their blood. The second is where God claims to have done just that. Thus a link is provided between Babylon (the killer of martyrs) and the fifth seal. The vengeance of God is thus executed in such a way as to provide a transparently obvious connection – spiritual wickedness has physical consequences.

Elsewhere (4 times), Jesus told a parable on this topic (Luke 18:1–8), and Paul offers advice (Rom 12:19, 2 Cor 10:6).

The use of this word in the Old Testament is very instructive. In all cases (Lev 26:25, Dt 32:35, 43, 1 Sam 14:24, 24:12, 25:31, 2 Sam 3:27, 4:8, 2 Ki 9:7, Est 8:13, Ps 58:10, 79:10, Isa 1:24, Josh 10:13, Jdg 9:24, 11:36, etc.) the word means to kill and completely destroy. The word literally means “out of or from judgement”. Thus, God answers the plea of the martyrs (Rev 6:10) by killing the great prostitute by means of the 10 kings who turn against her and burn her (Rev 17:16). Rev 19:2 is an

allusion to Deut 32:43 (the Song of Moses and their triumph over the Egyptian forces) and 2 Kings 9:7 the promise of the destruction of Ahab (the 7th king of Israel) and Jezebel the great “prostitute”. Thus, God will destroy the powers of evil by the means they will use to establish themselves.

Babylon (6) 14:8, 16:19, 17:5, 18:2, 10, 21. The sudden appearance of Babylon in Rev 14:8 suggests that the origin and introduction of this power has already been given. The remaining references show (compare 16:13, 14 with 18:2) that Babylon (the prostitute) is a short-lived coalition of three powers – the beasts from the abyss, sea and land, which were introduced in ch 12 & 13, form an apostate trinity which wars against the church (16:13 etc). See **Beast**. Later the same political powers (compare 17:15 with v16) hate and destroy Babylon, splitting it into three parts (16:19). Babylon is always described in Revelation as *great* or *the great city*. The description and condemnation of Babylon in Revelation has strong allusions to similar language in Isa 13 of historic Babylon and Eze 27 of old Tyre. In both cases, these cities' wickedness and wealth were legendary. Revelation's Babylon is thus a defiant, arrogant, religio-political power that peddles false worship, salvation, and hope. Its character can be most clearly seen in its cargoes (18:11-13), each one of which is a parody of the temple service or of a false power from a false Holy Spirit.

In New Testament times, the actual city of Babylon had been in ruins for some time. The name Babylon was used as a code name for Rome (1 Pet 5:13). Babylon was founded by Nimrod (Gen 10:10) but brought to its zenith during the time of Daniel under Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2:37-40, 4:30). Its overthrow by the Medo-Persians is recorded in Dan 5, and prophesied in Isa 45:1-5 and Jer 50 & 51. The great city of Babylon forms a counterpoint to God's city of Jerusalem. See also **Blasphemy**, and, **City**.

Balaam & Balak (1) 2:14. A symbolic reference to the apostasy, recorded in Num 22-24, which occurred under the corrupt prophet Balaam at the behest of king Balak of Moab. Specifically, the Israelites were enticed to idolatry and fornication - a reference to the church's spiritual behaviour involving false gods (literal idol worship and/or legalism) and illicit unions (probably with the state).

Banquet [δείπνον *deipnon*] (2) 19:9, 17. These two banquets are clearly different and form counterpoints of each other. The first is the wedding banquet of the Lamb and is a celebration of the union of Jesus' with His

church. (A promise of this is contained in the message to the seventh church, Laodicea, in 3:20) The second banquet is a celebration of Jesus' defeat of the beast and false prophet

Barley [κριθή kriteh] (1) 6:6. This is the only occurrence of this word in the New Testament. (A related word meaning made of barley is found in John 6:9, 13.) Since it occurs in connection with other grain (ie wheat) see **Wheat**.

Battle – see **Fight**.

Bear [ἄρκος arkos] (1) 13:2. This reference describes the feet of the sea *beast* (which see) as resembling those of a bear. It is the only occurrence of this word in the New Testament. It is an allusion to Dan 7:5 involving a prophetic, symbolic bear. Since feet were used idiomatically of locomotion, the feet of a bear may signify a slow moving sea beast.

Beast [θηρίον therion] (39) [Note: many modern versions omit the uncertain occurrence in 18:2] With the possible exception of Rev 6:8 and the uncertain 18:2, only three distinct beasts are discussed in Revelation - distinguished by their origin. These three form an unholy alliance (Babylon) to oppose the pure woman of Rev 12 (v17). See also Rev 16:13.

Beast from the abyss: (11:7, 17:8) A comparison of the references listed under *Abyss* suggests that this beast is the seven headed dragon, namely the devil or Satan (12:9 & 20:2), of 12:3, who comes from and is thrown back into the abyss (20:3). The fact that this beast is mentioned in 11:7 without further explanation, suggests that it has already been introduced (in 9:1, 11 and 8:12) - a consistent pattern elsewhere in Revelation. A comparison of 12:9, 13 with 8:10, 13, 9:1 - fallen from heaven to earth - lends weight to this view. Isa 14:12 and Eze 28:8, 13-17 records in allegorical form the origin of Satan in heaven, his descent to earth and his ambition to be worshipped like the Most High. At the beginning of the millennium he is thrown back into the abyss, 20:3. Despite the beast from the abyss being positively identified as the devil and Satan, it is still apparent that he often operates through secular & government powers such as his attempt to destroy Jesus (12:4, 5). [That is, the devil used the Roman authorities in the guise of Herod to attempt to destroy Jesus.] This will presumably be repeated in Rev 17 when the false religious coalition (Babylon) rides (ie controls) the beast from the abyss; that is, an illicit (but brief) union of church and state.

Beast from the Sea: (13:1-10) This is Revelation's most notorious and blasphemous beast whose distinguishing mark is administered by the land

beast on the forehead or hand (13:17, 20:4). This beast is the one usually intended when *The Beast* is mentioned without further explanation (eg, 16:13, 19:20, 20:10 etc). The close parallels between Dan 7 and Rev 13:1-8 strongly suggest the same power (see Appendix 2). The centrality of this beast to Revelation's eschatology requires a more definite identification, which, is fortunately not difficult. We merely note the specifications: The sea beast -

- arose in a populous place (from the sea) 13:1
- body strong as a leopard, feet slow as a bear, and mouth rapacious as a lion 13:2
- derived its power and authority from the devil (or at least his civil authority at the time, Rome) 13:2, 3
- becomes an international political power 13:3, 7
- is a false religious power which is blasphemous (offers a false means of salvation) 13:4, 5, 8
- sets itself up to challenge and usurp God 13:6
- is a persecuting power by tyrannising and killing the saints 13:7
- lasts 42 months, 1260 days (years)
- is fatally wounded but miraculously recovers 13:3

There is only one power in history that fits all these specifications – the medieval church of Rome. See appendix on the history of Rome.

Beast from the Land (or Earth): (13:11) This third beast completes the unholy trinity and is called from the land to help the dragon fight the woman by assisting the sea beast, 12:17, 13:1, 11. In Rev 16:13, 19:20, 20:10, this land beast is also called the *false prophet* as can be seen by comparing 19:20 with 13:13. As the false prophet, the land beast acts as a counterpoint to the (true) two prophets of 11:10. The land beast is mentioned by name just once - otherwise only by pronoun. The land beast creates a sea beast like organization called the image to the beast that is used to help enforce (under death threat) worship of the sea beast and its image.

In Revelation this coalition of three beast powers forms an apostate trinity, called Babylon (which see), as shown below.

TRUE (DIVINE) TRINITY	APOSTATE TRINITY of BEASTS
<i>God the Father (the Most High)</i> (Heb 7:1, Acts 7:48, 16:17, etc)	<i>Satan = Beast from the abyss</i>
is, was, & yet will come (Rev 11:17)	“like the most high” (Isa 14:12-14) was, now is not, yet will come (Rev 17:8, 11)

Creator (Ps 33:6, 9, Rev 4:11)	Destroyer (Rev 9:11)
Has power and authority (Rev 12:10)	Has power and authority (Rev 13:2)
River of life comes from God (Rev 22:1)	River to kill woman from dragon (Rev 12:15)
<i>God the Son, Jesus</i>	<i>Beast from the Sea (13:1-8)</i>
Jesus like the Father (Jn 14:9)	7 heads & 10 horns like dragon
Slaughtered Lamb (Rev 5:6)	Slaughtered and lived (Rev 13:3)
Receives throne from Father (Rev 5:7, Matt 28:18)	Receives throne from dragon (Rev 13:2)
Jesus ministry lasts 3½ years	Beast reigns 42 months (Rev 13:5)
<i>God the Holy Spirit</i>	<i>Beast from the Land (13:11-17)</i>
Spirit like blazing lamps (Rev 4:5, Acts 2)	Calls fire from heaven (Rev 13:13)
Brings glory to Jesus (Jn 16:14,15)	Gives glory to sea beast (Rev 13:14)
Gives seal of God (Eph 4:30)	Gives mark of beast (Rev 13:16)
Inspires prophets (2 Pet 1:19-21)	Is the false prophet (Rev 19:20 etc)

In Rev 17:11 and Dan 7:17, 8:20, 21, beasts are equated with kings or kingdoms.

Elsewhere in the New Testament **θηρίον** therion occurs only 7 times (Mark 1:13, Acts 11:6, 28:4, 5, Tit 1:12, Heb 12:20, James 3:7) and only in Acts 11:6 is it used figuratively of peoples generally.

Black [μέλας melas] (2) 6:5, 12. The first describes the third horse in the seals; the second instance describes the darkened sun under the sixth seal. Elsewhere, the word is only used as an adjective in Matt 5:36: it is also used in the neuter form as a noun to denote ink (2 Cor 3:3, 2 John 12, 3 John 13). In New Testament times, ink was made of pure carbon obtained from soot (as it still is) and mixed with gum to make a liquid slurry. It is noteworthy that John had the choice of other Greek words to denote blackness or darkness (eg, γνόφος gnophos Heb 12:18, ζόφος zophos 2 Peter 2:4, 17, Jude 6, 13), both of which carry the idea of spiritual foreboding and doom. But he chose not to use these; instead he used a simple description of black (as soot). It is difficult to know if there is any significance to this black (as soot) colour following the (fiery) red horse. However, it is probably more significant that the word *black* is a homophone for writing *ink* (2 Cor 3:3, 2 John 12, 3 John 13). It

was certainly the true church who went to such trouble to preserve the Scriptures, risking their lives to write them etc.

Blaspheme {verb} [βλασφημέω blasphemeo] (4) 13:6, 16:9, 11, 21. The first of these records the sea beast blaspheming God, His Name and dwelling place. The last three record the victims of the last seven plagues blaspheming God because of the plagues and refusing to repent. (This is an indirect evidence that the sea beast and the seven plagues' victims are connected if they both blaspheme.)

Blasphemy {noun} [βλασφημία blasphemia] (5) 2:9, 13:1, 5, 6, 17:3. The first of these record the blasphemies of the synagogue of Satan. Those in Rev 13 record blasphemies of the sea beast, written and spoken against God and His dwelling place. Rev 17 records blasphemous names on the beast ridden by the woman, Babylon. (This is indirect evidence that the beast of Rev 13 and 17 are somehow connected if they are the only ones in Revelation guilty of blasphemy.)

Elsewhere, we find that the following can be regarded as blasphemy: sinning defiantly (Num 15:30), ridiculing or insulting God (2 Ki 19:4-6, 22, Isa 37: 4-6, 23, Matt 27:39, 40, Mark 15:29, Luke 22:65, 23:39), forsaking God (Ezek 20:27), forgiving sins (Matt 9:2, 3, Mark 2:5-7, Luke 5:20, 21), claiming to be God (Matt 26:64, 65, Mark 62 - 64, John 10:30-36), God's name caused to be held in disrepute (Rom 2:17-24). All these definitions may be summarised by saying that anyone who usurps the place and prerogatives of God (including His exclusive provision of salvation) is guilty of blasphemy. This is demonstrated under the entry **Beast**, where the trinity of beasts acts as a counterfeit trinity.

Blessing [μακάριος makarios] (7) Revelation's seven blessings are:

- 1:3 those who read, hear and take to heart the words this book
- 14:13 the dead who die in the Lord from now on
- 16:15 those who stay awake with clothes on
- 19:9 those invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb
- 20:6 those who have part in the first resurrection
- 22:7 he who keeps the word of this prophecy
- 22:14 those who wash their robes

Blind [τυφλός tophlos] (1) 3:17. This is part of the description of the spiritual condition of the church of Laodicea. Thus, not only is Laodicea's condition desperate, this church does not even possess the insight to recognise it! See also **Eye**.

Blood [αἷμα aima] (19) Several sources of blood are used: of the lamb (1:5, 5:9, 7:14, 12:11, 19:13), of martyred saints (6:10, 16:6, 17:6, 18:24, 19:2), from heaven in a plague (8:7, 8, 11:6, 16:3, 4, 6), of the wicked (14:20). In all cases death is involved. The same is true in the rest of the NT where blood is used a metaphor for death (eg, Matt 23:30), unless it occurs in the phrase “flesh and blood” which is a metaphor for humanity as opposed to spirit beings (eg, Matt 16:17, 1 Cor 15:50 but never in Revelation).

Body [σῶμα soma] (1) 18:13. Except for some of the references in the New Testament to Jesus’ Body as the church (Eph 1:23, Col 1:18, 24), this word is always used literally. Thus, the trade in bodies and souls of people (as commodities) shows the lowered value placed on the individual by Babylon.

Book or Scroll John employs two different words for book which he uses somewhat interchangeably. They are listed below under their meanings:
The Book of Revelation itself [βιβλίον biblion] (8) - 1:11, 22:7, 22:9, 10, 18, 19.

The Book of Life [βιβλίον biblion] (5) - 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 21:27. [βίβλος biblos] (2) - 3:5, 20:15. (Compare Ps 69:28, Phil 4:3.) Note that this list exhausts the occurrences of the phrase, *book of life*. It contains the names of the saved and is used in the judgement.

The Book of Daniel [βιβλαρίδιον biblaridion] (3) - 10:2, 9, 10. [βιβλίον biblion] (1) - 10:8. (That this *little book* appears to be that of the prophet Daniel is apparent from the several allusions to it: Rev 10:4 - seal up (the vision) = Dan 8:26, 9:24, 12:4, 9; Rev 10:5 - raised his right hand to heaven = Dan 12:7.)

The Scroll sealed with seven seals [βιβλίον biblion] (7) - 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9. This scroll was written on both sides and alludes to Zech 5:1 – 3 and Eze 2:9,10 where a message of lament and doom is written, and is addressed to God’s people in an attempt to make them more faithful. Because the reference in Ezekiel goes on to describe him eating this book, a parallel to Rev 10, some have assumed that the sealed scroll in Rev 5 and the (little) book of Rev 10 are the same. However, the book of Daniel (see above) is not a book of laments but a little book (see above). If one needs a precedent, then the book of life is a better candidate. The book of life is used in the judgement to reveal to heavenly intelligence who God has saved and why. Its gradual unsealing could refer to the gradual revealing of the plan of salvation as the saints are sealed during salvation history.

The heavens roll up like a scroll [βιβλίον biblion] (1) - 6:14. This reference shows that John’s book was a scroll not a codex.

Bowl [φιάλη phiale] (12) Two different bowls, both golden and counterpoints of each other, are described in Revelation and naturally fall into the two halves. In 5:8 are described the bowls of incense held by the 24 elders. The incense (which see) represents the prayers of the saints.

15:7 A: 7 angels with seven golden bowls of God’s wrath

16:1 A: 7 angels told to pour out 7 bowls of God’s wrath

16:2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 17 B: bowls 1 to 7 poured out produce plagues on the wicked.

17:1 A: one of the 7 angels with the 7 bowls

21:9 A: one of the 7 angels with the 7 bowls

Thus, both the righteous and wicked are associated with bowls – the righteous with a bowl of incense representing prayer, and the wicked with the bowl plagues of judgement.

Breastplate [θώραξ thorax] (3) 9:9(x2), 17. The first two describe the likeness of iron breastplates on the locusts in the fifth trumpet obviously acting as armour. The third and last describes the red, blue and yellow breastplates on the riders in the sixth trumpet. The breastplate occurs metaphorically in Eph 6:14 and Isa 59:17 as a symbol of righteousness, and in 1 Thess 5:8 as a symbol of faith and love. A real breastplate was part of the soldier’s armour to protect against body piercing weapons (spears, swords and arrows etc.) Thus, the breastplate is never used literally in Scripture but only as a symbol of the Christian’s armour in the fight of faith. The warriors’ breastplates under the fifth and sixth trumpets only resemble the real thing and so symbolise counterfeit righteousness, faith and love.

Brother(s) [ἀδελφος adelphos] (5) 1:9, 6:11, 12:10, 19:10, 22:9. With the exception of the first reference to John, all these references are in the plural and all, including the first, refer to the saints of God in the afflictions the brothers (and sisters) endure.

Bronze [χαλκολίβανον chalkolibanon = burnished bronze] (2) 1:15, 2:18. Both these refer to Jesus’ feet while delivering the messages to the seven churches and Thyatira in particular. See **Light**.

[χαλκός chalkos] (1) 18:12. This is one of the cargoes of Babylon. Elsewhere it usually refers to low denomination money or coins (Matt 10:9, Mark 6:8, 12:41) and lovelessness (1 Cor 13:1). It is this latter sense which is presumably implied in Babylon’s cargo.

[χαλκοῦς chalkous] (1) 9:20. This refers to a cast idol of bronze for which the wicked in the 6th trumpet are condemned. This is the only occurrence in the New Testament.

Burn [καίω kaio] (5) 4:5, 8:8, 10, 19:20, 21:8. This word means to ignite or burn. It refers to the seven lamps of God, two of the blazing trumpets and the burning sulphur on the lake of fire. A related noun [καῦμα kauma], burning heat, occurs in 7:16 and 16:9.

[κατακαίω katakaio] (5) 8:7 (x3), 17:16, 18:8. This word means to burn completely or utterly (literally, to burn down). Notice that in the first half it is wicked forces who burn the righteous (8:7) but in the second half the kings burn Babylon (17:16) and thus execute God's judgement on her (18:8).

Elsewhere in the New Testament the word signifies a complete destruction (Matt 3:12, 13:30, Luke 3:17, Acts 19:19, 1 Cor 3:15, Heb 13:11), and is often associated with judgement at Jesus' Second Advent.

Buy [ἀγοράζω agorazo] (6) This word is used to describe the buying of gold from Jesus – a symbol of His pure righteousness (3:18), buying or redeeming people (5:9, 14:3, 4), buying objects and goods (13:17, 18:11). Since a person owns the goods once purchased, the goods signify the character whose nature depends on the origin of the goods purchased. It is these last two (13:17, 18:11) are the most problematic, and have caused much unnecessary anxiety about end-time events. The cargoes bought are clearly symbolic as can be seen in 18:13 where the bodies and souls of men are also traded. For the meaning of each of the cargoes, see the entry under each one herein. Another clue is provided by the phrase in 13:17, *buy and sell*. For this, see **Sell**.

Contrast this practice of buying gold (3:18) with the purchase, without cost, of the water of life (21:6, see Isa 55:1). Compare this with Matt 13:44, 46 where people buy valuable symbolic of eternal life.

Cargo [γόμος gomos] (2) 18:11, 12. The cargoes of Babylon and her trade in them are the source of her wealth and power. This trade also benefited the world's merchants who lament the fall of Babylon. The symbolic nature of these various cargoes helps to identify Babylon. The list below tabulates the symbolic use of each cargo; for a more detailed discussion on each item, consult its entry in this glossary. Items marked (*) occur only once in Revelation, while those marked (**) occur only once in the New Testament.

Gold and Silver*	Righteousness of sanctification
Precious stones	Presence of God

Pearls	Spiritual truth
Fine linen	Righteousness
Purple & Silk**	Symbols of honour and rank
Crimson	Symbol of royalty and priesthood
Citron* wood	Eternal life (cf. tree of life)
Ivory articles**	Symbol of wealth and rank
Vessels of precious wood	See Citron wood above
Bronze* & iron**	Articles of war symbolising lovelessness
Marble**	Symbol of wealth and rank
Cinnamon* & spice	Ingredient of holy anointing oil
Incense	Prayers
Myrrh*	Anointing oil for prophets
Frankincense*	Symbol of wealth and rank
Wine & oil	Holy Spirit (spiritual prosperity)
Fine [wheat] flour**	Spiritual food?
Wheat	Righteous saints
Cattle* & sheep*	Sacrificial animals & Christians
Horses & carriages*	Symbol of wealth and rank
Bodies and souls of men	Political power

Thus, Babylon presumes to trade in the items that God offers freely to those who are worthy. This is another reason for her great blasphemy.

We should observe that with the exception of the last two entries above, all these items were used in the Old Testament Sanctuary, either as construction materials (gold ... marble) or elements of the sacrificial system (cinnamon ... sheep). See Ex 25-40 and Leviticus. Thus, this false religious power presumes to sell and trade spiritual matters – another evidence of its blasphemy.

Censer [λιβανωτός libanotos] (2) 8:3, 5. The censer is carried by the angel (Jesus) in the introductory vision to the 7 trumpets. The censer was a carried on a chain, was made of bronze, and carried burning coals (or **Fire** – which see) and burning incense whose smoke (which see) represented the prayers of the saints, in the above references. Thus, this symbol of Jesus is significant: Jesus' ministry includes carrying that which produces the prayer life of the saints!

Chain [ἄλυσις halusis] (1) 20:1. The chain was used to restrain prisoners – the word literally means “not loosed”, ie, bound. (Mark 5:3, 4, Luke 8:29, Acts 12:6, 7, 21:33, 28:20, Eph 6:20, 2 Tim 1:16). A symbolic chain (presumably of divine edict) will restrain the devil for 1000 years.

Child [τέκνον teknon] (3) 2:23, 12:4, 5. The last two both refer to Jesus as the male child swept up to heaven. The first refers to the children of Jezebel (which see) whom God will strike dead. As elsewhere in Scripture, children take the nature and purpose of their parents; thus, the children of Jezebel would be daughter churches of similar character.

Church [ἐκκλησία ekklesia = lit. assembly, or, those called out] (20) 1:4, 11, 20(x2), 2:1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 23, 29, 3:1, 6, 7, 13, 14, 22, 22:16. This invariably refers to one or all of the seven churches in Asia Minor. These can be understood literally (they actually existed) and figuratively. In the latter sense, using the paradigm of Daniel's prophecies as outlined in appendix 2 and chapter 7, we may also understand these churches to represent seven phases of the history of the church. See chapter 2.1 (This was the interpretation adopted by most of the reformers.)

Cinnamon [κιννάμωμον kinnamomon] (1) 18:13. This aromatic spice was an ingredient of the holy oil used for anointing (Ex 30:30). Thus, Babylon presumed to trade in that which only the Lord decided.

City [πόλις polis] (27) Most of the references to a city refer to either the New Jerusalem (3:12, 20:9, 21:2, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 21:14, 19) (which see) or to [the great city of] Babylon (16:19, 17:18, 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21) (which see) which form counterpoints of each other. Both these are clearly figurative as would be expected. Both are also given alternate symbols of a woman (Rev 12:1, 2, 21:2, and Rev 17:1-3). The remaining references to a city are more problematic:

11:2 The gentiles trample the Holy City – a clear anticipation of the New Jerusalem without being that city itself. We presume this means the “Old Jerusalem” (for want a better title) symbolising God's church on earth before His return.

11:8 The great city figuratively called Sodom and Egypt – a notoriously difficult passage to interpret because no Old Testament precedent can be found. One possible interpretation, by counterpoint with the reference above is to assume that this refers to great city of Babylon (a symbol of a symbol?). See **Egypt**.

11:13 A tenth of the city collapsed. This city is presumably that mentioned in 11:8.

14:20 Trampled outside the city – depicting the punishment of the wicked at the Second Advent. Again, this is presumably a reference to Babylon.

Clean [καθαρός katharos] (6) 15:6, 19:8, 14, 21:18 (x2), 21. All these are used idiomatically to denote something pure, unadulterated and thus, sin-

free. Hence, the first three describe the shining linen that clothes the 7 angels with the bowl-plagues and the saints. The second three describe the purity of the gold composing the New Jerusalem. This is in contrast to the unclean (evil) which describes things from Babylon. See **Unclean**.

Clothe {verb} [περιβάλλω periballo: Literally, to put on or around] (12)

3:5, 18 the saints in white clothes

4:4 24 elders in white clothes

7:9, 13 the saints in white robes

10:1 Jesus clothed in a cloud

11:3 two witnesses in sackcloth

12:1 the (good) woman in the sun

17:4 the (bad) woman in purple and crimson

18:16 Babylon in fine linen, purple and crimson

19:8 The Lamb's bride in fine linen

19:13 Jesus' clothes dipped in blood

See also the noun below. In Revelation, the meaning of the act of clothing one's self can be judged by what clothes are worn. The saints and the 24 elders wear clean white clothes from Jesus (representing His righteousness); the good woman is gloriously clothed in the sun (representing her glory); the bad woman and Babylon is clothed in the pretentious (blasphemous) garments of royalty (imitating the sanctuary robes) of her own making to disguise her sin and filth, etc.

Clothes {noun} [ἱμάτιον himation] (7) 3:4, 5, 18, 4:4, 16:15, 19:13, 16.

The last two refer to the blood stained clothes of Jesus on the white horse leading the heavenly armies. The remainder refer to the clothes of the saints. The remainder of the New Testament uses this word in only the literal sense. It is significant that ἱμάτιον himation was an outer garment worn over other clothes. The clothes of the saints and Jesus are explicitly stated in 19:8, 14 as fine linen, which stands for righteous acts of the saints. Thus the saints have the righteous covering of Jesus. See also **Robe**.

Cloud [νεφέλη nephele] (7) 1:7, 10:1, 11:12, 14:14(x2), 14:15, 14:16.

With the arguable exception of 11:12, these all refer to Jesus at the Second Advent. This is consistent with the pattern elsewhere in the New Testament (Matt 17:5, 24:30, 26:64, Mark 9:7, 13:26, 14:62, Luke 9:34, 35, 12:54, 21:27, 1 Thess 4:17). 11:12 refers to the two witnesses ascending to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watch. Again, such an occurrence concurs with other interchanges of beings (divine or otherwise) to and from heaven (Acts 1:9, 1 Cor 10:1, 2). The only

exception to this is Jude 12. In the old Testament, the cloud often symbolised the presence of God: Ex 13:21, 22, 14:19-24, 1 Kings 8:10-12, etc.

Come up – See **Rise up**.

Coming Down – see **Descend**.

Commandments [ἐντολή entole] (2) 12:17, 14:12. This word always occurs in the phrase, *keeping the commandments of God*, (unique in Revelation) and is one of the distinguishing characteristics of God's faithful people. The word law [νόμος nomos] does not occur in Revelation, however, there are frequent allusions to the law as given on Mt Sinai – see section 3(7).

Column – see **Pillar**.

Corners [γωνία gonia] (2) 7:1, 20:8. This always occurs in the phrase, *four corners of the earth*, denoting the whole earth, that is, the people of the earth.

Covenant see **Ark of the Covenant**.

Create [κτίζω ktozo] (2) 4:11, 10:6. This is always used literally and is an unmistakable attribute of God.

Creation [κτίσις ktisis] (1) 3:14; [κτίσμα ktisma] (2) 5:13, 8:9. These words are used literally and are always said to be the work of God.

Creation – see also **Foundation**.

Crimson [κόκκινος kokkinos] (4) 17:3, 4, 18:12, 16. These references to royal colours describe the pretentious dress of the blasphemous woman, the colour of the beast from the abyss on which she rides, and the cargoes (of cloth) that Babylon trades. It is a characteristic of sinful people that when they do not possess a characteristic innately, the surround themselves with its trappings to obtain the glory by show and association. Thus, the woman declares herself not a widow and dresses like royalty. The only other references to this colour in the New Testament are found in Matt 27:28 (the ironic colour of Jesus robe of “kingly” mockery) and Heb 9:19 (royal coloured wool used in the sanctuary service).

Crown - two types [στέφανος stephanos] (8) 2:10, 3:11, 4:4, 10, 6:2, 9:7, 12:1, 14:14. This word describes a victory crown (usually a laurel or ivy garland) given as recognition in a contest (eg games, see 1 Cor 9:25, 2 Tim 2:5, 4:8, Jam 1:12, 1 Pet 5:4). In all except 9:7, this crown is worn by, or offered to victorious saints. However, the locusts' headwear (of 9:7) only resembles crowns and thus is a false or counterfeit crown of victory

[διάδημα diadema] (3), always the symbol of kingly or imperial office or dignity: 12:3 (on the dragon), 13:1 (on the sea beast), 19:12 (on the judge [Jesus] on the white horse). Διάδημα diadema occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

Crystal [κρυσταλλίζω krystallizo (1) & κρύσταλλος krystallos (2)] These are more words to denote the presence of God and are only used in Revelation. The glassy sea before the throne is described as clear (lit. pure) as crystal (4:6), as is the New Jerusalem (21:11), and so is the river of life (22:1). Such sparkling crystal in the presence of God is reminiscent of the sparkling ice above the throne of God in Eze 1:22. The association with the divine is via the concept of purity.

Cup [ποτήριον poterion] (4) 14:10, 16:19, 17:4, 18:6. Revelation presents two cups, counterpoints of each other: the cup of the wine of the wrath of God's fury (14:10, 16:19) and the cup of the abominations held by the great prostitute, Babylon (17:4, 18:6). In the New Testament, the cup, where it is not used literally, denotes either the cup of God's judgement (Matt 20:22, 23, 26:39, Mark 10:38, 39, 14:36, Luke 22:42, John 18:11), or the cup of the communion celebration (Matt 26:27, Mark 14:23, 1 Cor 10:36, 11:25-28). For Old Testament references to the cup acting as a symbol of God's judgement of the wicked, see Ps 75:8, Isa 51:17, Jer 25:15, Eze 23:32-34, Zech 12:2.

David (3) 3:7, 5:5, 22:16. These allusions to David always refer to Jesus as one who holds the keys of David (Isa 22:22), or is the root of David. Thus Jesus is King and inheritor of the promises made to David about the permanence of his throne.

Day [ἡμέρα hemera] (21) This word day, following the Hebrew (and modern English) usage, can mean an indefinite time, an era or a literal 24 hour period. The distinction can be readily ascertained (again following Hebrew usage) by noticing when the word is preceded or modified by a numerical adjective (a number). Following Daniel, (see appendix 2) we presumably must understand such numerically delineated days prophetically in the sense that a prophetic day symbolises a literal year.

* (6) Day modified by a numeral: (forms a triple chiasm or palistrophe)

2:10 A: 10 days of Smyrna's persecution

11:3 B: 1260 days witnesses wear sackcloth

11:9 C: 3½ days prophets dead

11:11 C: 3½ days prophets dead

12:6 B: 1260 days of dragon persecution

18:8 A: in one day the seven plagues come on Babylon

[Note: This elaborate chiasm becomes even more so when the 42 months are included from 11:2 and 13:5.]

* (6) Day and night – idiomatically meaning *constantly*

4:8 Living creature praise God

7:15 Saints serve God

12:10 Accuser (Satan) accuses the brothers

14:11 No rest for worshippers of beast

20:10 Beast and false prophet tormented

21:25 Gate of City not shut

* (6) Day meaning an indefinite time generally

2:13 Time of Antipas my servant

6:17 Great time of wrath (judgement)

9:6 At that time men will seek death

10:7 The time of the witnesses' prophesying

11:6 The time of the witnesses' prophesying

16:14 Great time of God (judgement)

* (3) Miscellaneous occurrences of *day* in Revelation

1:10 In the spirit on the Lord's day – possibly the Sabbath

8:12 one third of day darkened

9:15 The hour and day and month and year. (Idiomatically, this exact moment, or, this very time?)

Dead [νεκρός nekros] (13) This word is always used literally (with the exception of 3:1) and refers to the following groups:

Jesus and His resurrection (1:5, 1:18, 2:8),

As a simile of death (1:17, 16:3),

The righteous dead (14:13),

Judgement of the wicked dead (11:18, 20:5, 12(x2), 13(x2)),

The church of Sardis is actually dead (3:1). Thus, a functioning church (at least in form) is described as dead suggesting it has no substance of power to do the work which the church was called to do – tell of Jesus' love. It is significant that this should occur in the church following Thyatira where a similar literary device is used of death (which see).

Death (θάνατος thanatos) (19) Death is always used literally (except for 2:23), even when personified. These occurrences may be classified as follows.

Death and hades (4) 1:18, 6:8, 20:13, 14.

The second death (4) 2:11, 20:6, 20:14, 21:8.

Seeking death because of torture (2) 9:6.

Faithfulness of saints in the face of death (2) 2:10, 12:11.

The sea beast's deadly wound (3) 13:3, 12.

Death and sorrow (2) 18:8, 21:4,

Death of children of Thyatira (2:23). Thus, the medieval church of Thyatira is prophesied to have daughter churches (see 3:1 in Sardis) of similar character that would ultimately be struck dead (which see).

See also **Die**.

Descend [καταβαίνω katabaino] (10) This word occurs with a striking pattern as listed below. Note that in all cases, the origin of that which descends is explicitly from heaven.

3:12 A: New Jerusalem descending from God

10:1 B: A great angel descending

12:12 C: The devil descended to earth

13:13 D: Land beast causes fire to descend on the earth

16:21 E: great hailstones descending

18:1 B': Another angel descending – earth illuminated

20:1 B'': An angel descending with key to abyss

20:9 D': Fire descended to destroy Gog and Magog

21:2 A': New Jerusalem descending as a bride

21:10 A'': New Jerusalem descending from God

Desert {noun} [ἔρημος eremos] (3) 12:6, 14, 17:3. The place where the (pure) woman flees to escape the persecution of the Dragon for 1260 days, 3½ years. It is also the origin of the great harlot who rides the beast. That the true church was forced underground and endured widespread obscurity during the medieval times is well known history. Similarly, the false church was effectively banished to the political wilderness following its deadly wound. Thus Revelation predicts that the false church would rise from this obscurity to prominence once more by riding on a great political machine. [This should not be construed to suggest that the harlot is the same as the beast of Rev 13; quite the contrary. Rather, the deadly wound temporarily banishes organised apostasy only to have it re-emerge in a different guise – as the coalition of the three beast powers.] Thus the desert is a symbol of political obscurity because of its solitary nature, by contrast with a town or village. Elsewhere it denotes the desert to the south and east of Israel where Jesus and John the Baptist retired to be alone, or, simply a deserted place.

Desolate {verb} [ἐρημώω eremoo] (3) 17:16, 18:17, 19. These all refer to the act of making the harlot, Babylon, desolate. This is a remarkable irony: the harlot originates from the desert riding a beast, and this same beast ultimately makes her desolate.

Demon [δαίμόνιον daimonion] (3) 9:20, 16:14, 18:2. Demon worship appears to be an integral part of worship under the sixth trumpet and sixth plague for which the inhabitants of the earth and Babylon are condemned. That is, part of the last-day worship encouraged by Babylon and the sixth trumpet is demonic.

Devil [διδάβολος diabolos] (5) 2:10, 12:9, 12, 20:2, 10. This is a synonym for Satan and the dragon as 12:9 and 20:2 makes clear. The word means accuser or slanderer. (Compare Rev 9:11, Zech 3:1.)

Diadem – see **Crown**.

Die [ἀποθνήσκω apothnekso] (6) 3:2, 8:9, 11, 9:6, 14:13, 16:3. Except for the first instance, this verb appears to be used literally of both the righteous and wicked. The first instance appears to refer to the spiritual condition of the church of Sardis.

Dog [κύων kuon] (1) 22:15. Here, as elsewhere, a dog is a symbol of everything unclean and sinful, presumably on account of indiscriminate dietary habits. See Matt 7:6, Luke 16:21, Phil 3:2, 2 Pet 2:22.

Door [θύρα thura] (3) Rev 3:8, 20, 4:1. The first two references are to symbolic doors which the New Testament suggests is a symbol of Jesus (John 10:1-10 – the Greek for gate and door is the same.) and the decision to accept Him and Salvation (Matt 24:33, 25:10, Mark 13:29, Luke 13:24, 25, Acts 14:27, 1 Cor 16:9, 2 Cor 2:13, Col 4:3, Jam 5:9) It is significant that such references should only occur in the final stages of the church where the decision for Jesus is so urgent and yet so difficult to elicit! The final reference is to an entrance into heaven itself – thus Jesus is seen as the only way of entering Heaven.

Dragon [δράκων drakon] (13) 12:3, 4, 7, 9, 13, 16, 17, 13:2, 4, 11, 16:13, 20:2. The first and last of these references make it clear that the dragon is a consistent symbol of the devil or Satan. That the dragon is the same as the beast from the abyss (11:7, 17:8) is clear from its destiny (20:3) and common description (red, seven heads and ten horns) in 12:3 and 17:3. Its different titles could suggest its preferred way of working in different times: the dragon, devil and Satan while still largely in the abyss, and, the beast from the abyss during a more open working in the times before Jesus' second advent (Rev 11:7 & 17:3-11). The word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament.

Drunk (made~) {verb} [μεθύσκω methusko] (1) 17:2, [μεθύω methuo] (1) 17:6. Both of these are associated with the woman, Babylon, riding the beast. The woman makes the kings of the earth drunk, which in turn makes them commit adultery with her. [Compare Gen 19:30-38 and the

experience of Lot.] This is consistent with Eph 5:18 where Paul suggests that drunkenness leads to debauchery. This is presumably due to the clouding of the judgement and higher mental powers.

Dwellers see **Inhabiters**.

Eagle [ἀετός aetos] (3) 4:7, 8:13, 12:14. This word denotes an eagle or vulture that soars or floats on the wind (hence its derivation). The first reference describes the face of one of the living creatures (see Eze 1); the second refers to the bird that announces the last three woes during the seven trumpets; and the last describes the mode of escape of the woman via wings of an eagle to the desert. Elsewhere in the NT eagles or vultures occur in Matt 24:28 and Luke 17:37 (vultures gathering to devour carcasses) which is a figurative reference to the final judgements of God on the wicked. This use is consistent with those in Revelation and the OT (Job 39:28, 30 & Prov 30:17).

Ear [οὖς ous] (8) 2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22, 13:9. With the exception of the last reference, all these are part of the closing formula in the message to the seven churches; *he who has an ear let him hear...* The final reference uses the same phrase, which strongly suggests that the final one, while part of the description of the sea beast, is actually a message to the church as well. This same phrase occurs in the rest of the New Testament, eg, Matt 11:15, 13:9, Mark 4:9, 8:18, Luke 14:35, Rom 11:8. These and Acts 28:27 suggest that hearing and listening were two completely different functions. The listening was an anatomical function while hearing involved cognisance and understanding. Thus, Jesus' message to the church throughout Revelation is to listen and understand.

Earth – see **Land**

Earthquake [σεισμός seismos] (7) 6:12, 8:5, 11:13(x2), 11:19, 16:18(x2).

In all cases, the earthquake is a symbol (or instrument) of God's judgement on the wicked at or just before the Second Advent (Amos 1:1, 2). In the rest of Scripture, earthquakes are associated with God's presence (Judg 5:5, Ps 77:18, Nah 1:5, Matt 27:54, 28:2, Acts 16:26) most often His anger (2 Sam 22:8, Job 26:11, Ps 18:7, Isa 29:6, Eze 38:18, 19, Zech 14:5) and instruments of His judgement at the end of time (Matt 24:7, Mark 13:8, Luke 21:11). This is particularly significant in Revelation because the earth, when its people or inhabitants are in view, represent the wicked.

East [ἀνατολή anatole] (3) 7:2, 16:12, 21:13. The word literally means *rising*, and so became the idiomatic direction for origin of the sun moon and stars. The last reference is used with all the other compass points,

east...north...south...west. The other two occur in the phrase *the rising of the sun*. rendered in many versions as simply *east*. Clearly John intended some significance to this because all other instances in the NT the word sun is not used with ἀνατολή anatole to denote the easterly direction. The fact that the **sun** (which see) in Revelation is consistently used as a symbol of Christ and His imparted righteousness, and that in 7:2 and 16:12 it is the direction of the liberators of God's people suggests that John want to add this emphasis.

Egypt [Αἴγυπτος Aigyptos] (1) 11:8. This is a difficult reference to understand, especially when used in conjunction with Sodom. The only other such reference is in Gen 13:10 - a reference to places which opposed God's people and were notoriously wicked.

Elder [πρεσβύτερος presbuteros] (12) 4:4, 10, 5:5, 6, 8, 11, 14, 7:11, 13, 11:16, 14:3, 19:4. This word always occurs in the plural and invariably refers to the 24 elders. Five times the phrase *twenty four elders* occurs in Revelation. The identity of these elders is nowhere given, nor can it be deduced despite ingenious schemes devised by some. All that can be said is that they serve God around the throne in conjunction with the four living creatures.

Emerald [σμαράγδονος smaragdinos = made of emerald] (1) 4:3. [σμάραγδος smaragdos = emerald] (1) 21:19. Both these words denote or are associated with the personal and physical presence of God. While these are the only instances of their occurrence in the New Testament, the word occurs in the Old Testament with a similar connotation (Ex 28:18, 39:11, Eze 28:13).

Enemy [ἐχθρός exthros] (2) 11:5, 12. In both cases, the enemy is that of the two witnesses. These enemies are destroyed by fire and watch in astonishment when the two witnesses are taken to heaven. Following the resurrection and translation of the two witnesses, there is an earthquake, a tenth of the city collapses, 7000 people are killed and the enemies give glory to God. This is an eastern phrase that idiomatically means, *tell the truth* (see Josh 7:19, Isa 24:15, 42:12, Jer 13:16, compare John 9:24, 34). Thus, the wicked are finally forced to grudgingly admit their wickedness just before the return of the Lord (in the seventh trumpet). This is an excellent example of God's judgement – even the wicked will agree that He is just in His judgements (see Rev 16:5-7).

Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word is used of the Devil (Matt 13:39, Luke 10:19) and any one else who is opposed or hates God and His followers by opposing God's will or teaching.

Eternal [αἰώνιος aionios] (1) 14:6 The eternal Gospel. See also **Forever and ever**.

Euphrates [Εὐφράτης] (2) 9:14, 16:12. Historically, the Euphrates was the water supply for Babylon that flowed diagonally through the city. Since Babylon was essentially impregnable, the only possible entry point was via this river. Thus, Cyrus diverted the river and captured Babylon by marching under its walls where he found the river gates mysteriously unlocked. This is alluded to in 16:12 and described in Isa 45:1-3, Jer 50:38, 51:36 (see also Dan 5). The Euphrates appears to be a counterpoint to the river of the water of life which flows through the New Jerusalem (22:1, 2) in that both are a lifeline to the cities they irrigate. There is another possible reference to the Euphrates in 17:1. The *many waters* in which the harlot (Babylon) sits is the Euphrates as can be seen by comparison with Jer 50:38, 51:13. A further comparison with 17:3 & 9 shows that the Euphrates, the many waters and the beast's seven heads are all the same place where the harlot sits.

Ever - see **Forever and ever**

Exult [ἀγαλλιάω agalliao] (1) 19:7. Part of the boundless, exceeding joy and gladness at the wedding feast of the Lamb expressed by the saved saints – hope has reached its fulfilment! Elsewhere in the NT, the same verb is used to express the great joy associated with the hope and blessed assurance of salvation (Matt 5:12, Luke 1:47, 10:21, John 5:35, 8:56, Acts 2:26, 16:34, 1 Peter 1:6, 8, 4:13).

Eye [ὄφθαλμος ophthalmos] (10) This word occurs as follows:

- 1:7 every eye will see Him (Jesus)
- 1:14 eyes (Jesus') like blazing fire
- 2:18 eyes (Jesus') like blazing fire
- 3:18 Jesus' counsel to buy eyesalve for your eyes
- 4:6 four living creatures covered in eyes
- 4:8 four living creatures covered in eyes
- 5:6 seven eyes of the lamb (Jesus)
- 7:17 God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the saved
- 19:12 eyes (Jesus') like blazing fire
- 21:4 God will wipe away all tears from the eyes of the saved

It is clear that in all these references, the word eye is used symbolically with the possible exception of the first reference. The symbolic meaning of eye in most appears to be spiritual understanding – a meaning consistent with many other New Testament uses (eg, Matt 6:22, 23, 7:3-5, John 4:35, etc.) If 1:7 is also understood in this way then some might

suggest that this would support the idea of universalism (all will be saved). However, such an idea runs contrary to the rest of Revelation and the New Testament. All that can be inferred from 1:7 if it is taken symbolically is that the wicked will eventually see and acknowledge their sin.

On the other hand, it is possible to understand 1:7 literally by simply assuming that Jesus' return will be visible to all and that "those that pierced Him" involves a special resurrection. Again, a mixed understanding of this word is consistent with the rest of the New Testament (eg, see John 9:6 and onwards) and the principle of the economy of prophecy generally. It is also possible that John intended both meanings by the rule of the economy of prophecy.

Face [πρόσωπον prosopon] (10) The face was thought to be the radiance of the body: to see the face was to be in that person's presence. The word occurs as follows:

4:7 face of one living creatures like a man

6:16 wicked ask to be hidden from the face of God

7:11 all living beings fall on their faces in worship to God

9:7 locusts have faces like human faces

10:1 Jesus' (lit. an angel's) face shines like the sun

11:16 the 24 elders fall on their faces in worship to God

12:14 the woman flees from the face (idiomatically the presence) of the serpent for 3½ years

20:11 earth and sky flee from the face (idiomatically the presence) of God on the judgement throne

22:4 we will see the face (that is, be with) God in the new earth

Notice that the primary reward of the redeemed will be that they can share the presence of God and His character, and, unlike the current situation where, "no man has seen His face" (Ex 33:20, 23, John 1:18, 1 John 4:12), we will see His face.

False Prophet (3) 16:13, 19:20, 20:10. See Beast from the land.

Famine [λιμός limos] (2) 6:8, 18:8. Famine is one of the trials of the saints under the 4th seal. It is also one of God's judgements on Babylon. Both appear to be literal as all other references to famine in the New Testament are literal. The same is true in the Old Testament except for Amos 8:11 where famine is a symbol of hearing the words of God, ie, a spiritual famine. If the word is understood literally (it does not have to be) then we have an interesting example of spiritual wickedness causing physical

distress. This is consistent with God's judgement to demonstrate the consequences of His law.

Father [πατὴρ patros] (5) 1:6, 2:28, 3:5, 21, 14:1. All these describe God the Father as Jesus' Father.

Fear {verb} [φοβέομαι phobeomai] (6) 1:17 and 2:10 record the fear (or apprehension) of the saints in their current situation. 11:18, 14:7, 15:4, 19:5 record the fear, more correctly the reverence, of the saints for their Lord.

Fear {noun} [φόβος phobos] (3) 11:11 records the great fear that struck those who witnessed the resuscitation of the two witnesses. 18:10, 15 record the terror that seizes those who see the torment of Babylon. Thus, the fear described here is confined to the wicked alone – the righteous are immune!

Fellow-servant [σύνδουλος sundoulos] (3) 6:11, 19:10, 22:9. This term is used of those who work for the same master. Interestingly, an angel uses the term when speaking to John (19:10, 22:9). See also Matt 18:28-33, 24:49, Col 1:7, 4:7.

Figtree [συγή suge] (1) 6:13. The extreme regularity made the figtree's fruit very predictable. It was thus used as a metaphor of the nearness of Jesus' advent (Isa 34:4, Matt 21:19-21, 24:32, Mark 11:13-21, 13:28, Luke 13:6, 7, 21:29).

Fight {verb} [πολεμέω polemeo] (6) If there were any doubt that the book of Revelation should be understood figuratively, then the use of this word should dispel any lingering doubts. In every instance, the word is couched among highly figurative language as the list below shows:

2:16 Jesus fights with the sword of His mouth

12:7 Michael fights the dragon and the dragon fights back

13:4 Who can fight against the (sea) beast?

17:14 The 10 kings fight against the Lamb

19:11 Jesus fights with the sword of His mouth

The only fighting done here is clearly ideological (although that sometimes spills over into the physical realm).

Fight {noun} [πόλεμος polemos] (9) As for the verb, this is always used figuratively of an ideological battle.

9:7 Like locusts prepared for battle

9:9 Like chariots in battle

11:7 Beast from the abyss attacks the two witnesses

12:7 Dragon makes war with the remnant and her seed

13:7 (sea) beast makes war with the saints

16:14 Battle of Armageddon
 19:19 Beast and 10 kings make war on the Lamb on the white horse
 20:8 Gog and Magog make war on the Holy City
 Thus the battle involves a battle for the control of the minds of people.
 Converts are the booty of this war.

Fire [πῦρ pur] (26) Two apparently different uses of this word are found in Scripture which are less distinct than they first appear. Fire is used as symbol of the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, and, judgement or destruction as listed below. Those referring to *the presence of God in the person of the Holy Spirit (some refer to a *counterfeit spirit)*:

1:14, 2:18 Jesus' eyes like flames of fire
 3:18 Laodiceans to buy gold refined by fire
 4:5,7 lamps of fire before the throne are seven spirits of God
 8:5 fire on the altar in the heavenly temple
 8:8 mountain on fire (cf Sinai) thrown into sea
 10:1 Jesus' feet like pillars of fire
 13:13 *the beast miraculously causes fire to come out of heaven
 14:18 Angel in charge of the fire on the altar
 15:2 saints stand on the sea of glass mixed with fire
 19:12 Jesus' eyes like flames of fire

Fire is a symbol of destruction and judgement: (only in second half)

17:16 10 horns consume Babylon with fire
 18:8 Babylon consumed with fire
 19:20 Beast and false prophet thrown into the lake of fire
 20:9 fire from heaven devours Gog and Magog
 20:10 devil thrown into the lake of fire and destroyed
 20:14 death and grave thrown into lake of fire
 20:14 lake of fire is the second (final) death
 20:15 those not in book of life thrown into the lake of fire
 21:8 wicked thrown into the lake of fire which is the second death

*Fire is a symbol of both the (*counterfeit) spirit and judgement:*

8:7 *hail and fire...burns 1/3 of earth
 9:17 *from mouths of horses comes fire smoke and sulphur to kill
 9:18 *one third of man killed by plague of fire smoke and sulphur
 14:10 those with the mark of beast tormented with fire
 16:8 men burned with fire.

This pattern is consistent with the rest of Scripture. Fire is often used as a symbol of judgement (Matt 3:10-12, Mark 9:43-49, Luke 3:9-17, 12:49, John 15:6, 2 Pet 3:7, Jude 7), or the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3, 7:30, Heb 1:7,

12:18, 29). Thus it is quite consistent that a significant part of the punishment of the wicked is a realisation of the results of their own sinfulness and loss, which gives them a tortured conscience from which there is no escape except death.

Firstborn [πρωτότοκος prototokos] (1) 1:5. The phrase, the firstborn from the dead, refers to Jesus. This is the seventh such occurrence of this word in the New Testament that refers to Jesus (see Luke 2:7, Rom 8:29, Col 1:15, 18, Heb 1:6, 12:23). It is clear that this word should not be understood literally in Revelation – Jesus was not the first to be resurrected: recall Lazarus (John 11) and the many people (Matt 27:53) to name only some. Thus, the term must be understood idiomatically – Jesus was the most important person to be resurrected, as the apostle Paul says (1 Cor 15:14-19).

Firstfruits [ἀπαρχή aparche] (1) 14:4. Note that while the English is plural, the Greek is singular. The concept of the saints being the firstfruits of creation is a regular one in the New Testament (Rom 8:23, 11:16, 16:5, 1 Cor 15:20, 23, 16:15, 2 Th 2:13, Jas 1:18). In this sense, the redeemed are the showpiece of God's plan of salvation rather than chronologically first.

Flame [φλόξ flox] (3) 1:14, 2:18, 19:12. These all occur in the phrase describing Jesus, *eyes like a flame of fire*. Such a description presumably is intended to convey the brightness and intelligence of Jesus' appearance. See **Eyes** and **Fire**.

Flesh [σὰρξ sarx] (7) 17:16, 19:18(x5), 21. In all cases, this word occurs in the phrase, eat flesh, of either the great prostitute Babylon of the wicked. In all cases the eating of flesh signifies the destruction of what is eaten by the most ignominious method possible. Cannibalism was regarded as utterly detestable (Lev 26:29). Thus, the prostitute is destroyed by the kings which helped support her. Thus, Jesus uses the powers of evil to destroy itself! Again, another wonderful example of God's justice and poetic vengeance.

[There is an interesting reference to eating the flesh of the Son of Man, Jesus, in John 6:51-56 signifying the partaking of the divine nature. The use of flesh as a symbol of a person's nature is common (see Rom 8:3-9 etc.) However, there is no concept of final judgement involved here.]

Follow [ἀκολουθεῖω akolouthéo] (6) 6:8, 14:4, 8, 9, 13, 19:14. This set of references forms a triple chiasm in Revelation called a palistrophe:

6:8 A: Pale horse followed by death & hades - kill by sword
 14:4 B: The saints follow the Lamb wherever He goes

14:8 C: The second angel follows the first

14:9 C: The third angel follows the second

14:13 B: The deeds of the saints follow them

19:14 A: White horse followed by armies - sword comes from mouth.

Notice that with the debatable exception of 6:8, all occurrences are associated with the righteous. This is also true in the rest of the New Testament. ἀκολουθέω akoloutheo occurs 79 times in the Gospels (eg Matt 4:20, 22, 25, 8:1, 10, etc) and all except Mk 14:13 are of following Christ. The four occurrences in Acts (except 21:36) and once in 1 Cor 10:4 all refer to the righteous. This is indirect evidence that the fourth horse (Rev 6:8) concerns the righteous. Literally, ἀκολουθέω akoloutheo means to be joined or united in the way (of a leader).

Foot [πούς pous, ποδός podos] (11) 1:15, 17, 2:18, 3:9, 10:1, 2, 11:11, 12:1, 13:2, 19:10, 22:8. Those that refer to Jesus (1:15, 17, 2:18, 10:1, 2) only occur in the first half. The remainder refer to the feet of the saints (3:9, 11:11, 12:1), the sea beast (13:2) or an angel (19:10, 22:8). In all cases, worship either directly or indirectly is implied.

For ever and ever [εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων eis tous aionas ton aionon] (13) Literally *unto the ages of the ages, or, for as long as the object lasts*. Thus, when referring to God, this means eternally; while if it refers to a transitory object, it lasts as long as the object. Is used as follows:

1:6 glory and power to God the Father for ever and ever

1:18 Jesus dead but now alive for ever and ever

4:9,10 God on the throne who lives for ever and ever

5:13 praise, honour, glory and power to the lamb on the throne and God

7:12 praise, glory wisdom thanks, honour & strength to God

10:6 angel swears by Him who lives for ever and ever

11:15 Christ will reign for ever and ever

14:11 beast worshipers' smoke of torment goes up for ever and ever

15:7 God who lives for ever and ever

19:3 Babylon's smoke (from destruction) goes up for ever and ever

20:10 Devil, beast and false prophet tormented day and night

22:5 The saints reign for ever and ever

Most of these phrases refer to the eternal existence of God and so denote perpetual existence, as in the remainder of the New Testament (Gal 1:5, Eph 3:21, Php 4:20, 2 Ti 4:18, Heb 1:8, 13:21). The exception is 14:11 and 19:3 which allude to Isa 34:10 and the *desolation from generation to generation* which follows the destruction of Edom as its smoke rises

forever. Thus the effect (destruction) is eternal, not the burning! The same is true of 20:11. A similar word (αἰώνιος aionios) is used to describe the eternal fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in Jude 7, which again, was eternal in its effect not duration. It has been observed many times that the Bible only ever refers to eternal *punishment* and not eternal *punishing*.

Forehead [μέτωπον metopon] (8) This word occurs as follows:

7:3 No one to be harmed until the saints are sealed in their foreheads

9:4 Do not harm those sealed on their foreheads

13:16 Land beast marks the wicked on the forehead or hand

14:1 Lamb's name written on the foreheads of the saints

14:9 Worshipers of beast marked on forehead and right hand

17:5 Woman, Babylon with title written on forehead, "Mystery..."

20:4 Saints did not worship beast and did not receive mark on forehead

22:4 Righteous see the Lamb and have His name on their foreheads

Forehead only occurs in Revelation in the New Testament. However, the idea of a mark or writing on the forehead is taken from Eze 9:4, where it was used as a distinction for those who were to be executed. This is appropriate because the Old Testament depicts the forehead as closely associated with the memory (Ex 13:9, 16, Deut 6:8, 11:18) but more importantly it is associated with the will or power of choice (Isa 48:4, Eze 3:8, 9). Thus, people must be reminded (in their foreheads) to make right choices. Hence, the marks and seals in Revelation appear to be symbolic of people's spiritual choices, particularly regarding worship. Whether one gets a mark of the beast or the seal of God on the forehead is determined by whom one worships.

Fornication {noun} [πορνεία porneia] (7) There appears to be two different uses of this word that can be distinguished by whether the subject is people or institutions. Thus, 9:21 appears to be literal sexual immorality, while those below appear to be symbols of an illicit relationship between church and state which always involves Babylon the great prostitute (which see).

2:21 A: Jezebel leads many of God's servants to fornication

14:8 B: Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great who made people drunk with the wine of her fornication

17:2 C: The prostitute commits fornication with the kings of the earth

17:4 C: The prostitute holds the cup full of her fornication (from the kings of the earth)

18:2, 3 B: Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great who made people drunk with the wine of her fornication

19:2 A: God judges the great prostitute for shedding the blood of His servants.

Notice that with the exception of 2:21, all these references refer to conditions near Jesus' Second Advent. Thus, Jezebel (and her activities) appears to be a type of the great prostitute, Babylon.

Fornicate {verb} [πορνεύω porneuo] (5) 2:14, 20, 17:2, 18:3, 9. Those in the first half refer to the (heretical) teaching of Balak and Jezebel, while the three in the second half refer to the illicit relationship between the great prostitute, Babylon, and the kings of the earth. This suggests that the primary meaning here (as for the noun) is a symbol of the overly cosy relationship between church and state.

Fornicators [πόρνος pronos] (2) 21:8, 22:15. Both of these refer to those who are excluded from the New Jerusalem in order to keep its purity.

Foundation [καταβολή katabole] (2) 13:8, 17:8. This word always occurs in the phrase *foundation of the world* and has the idiomatic meaning of *creation of the world*. See **World**.

Fountain see **Spring**.

Frankincense [λίβανος libanos] (1) 18:13. This is one of the precious cargoes of Babylon. The Magi of Persia brought frankincense as a gift to Jesus (Matt 2:11). Because of its expense, its use was reserved for either royalty or those who wished to display their wealth.

Free Men [ἐλεύθερος eleutheros] (3) 6:15, 13:16, 19:18. This word always occurs in a list: *all men, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave*, denoting that it is all inclusive of the wicked.

Furlong – see **Stadia**.

Fury See **Wrath**.

Gather [τρυγάω trugao] (2) 14:18, 19. This verb is always used to describe the act of gathering grapes (see Luke 6:44 for the only other in the New Testament.) Here it is a symbol of the judgement of the wicked and forms a counterpoint to the harvest of the righteous in the same passage.

Give & Give Back – see **Repay**.

Glad – see **Exult**.

Glass [ὑάλινος hualinos = clear as glass] (3) 4:6, 15:2(x2), [ὑαλος hullos] (2) 21:18, 21. Both these words are unique to Revelation in the New Testament. In ancient times glass was rare and usually only possessed by the wealthy or the priestly class. As a clear (or sometimes translucent)

material, much larger pieces could be obtained than of clear precious stones. It is thus consistent that John describes the sea beside the throne (4:6, 15:2) as like glass. The adjective qualifying glass in 21:18 could be rendered pure or clear; in this context they are equivalent – only the pure enter the New Jerusalem.

Glory [δόξα doxa] (17) 1:6, 4:9, 11, 5:12, 13, 7:12, 11:13, 14:7, 15:8, 16:9, 18:1, 19:1, 7, 21:11, 23, 24, 26. With the exceptions listed below, all these refer to the glory of God or the Lamb (5:12, 13). The exceptions are the (glorified) kings of the earth in the New Jerusalem who give glory to God (21:24) and the (glorified) nations who bring their glory to God (21:26). Another debatable exception is when the earth is filled with the glory of the angel of 18:1. Comparison with the other references suggests that this is probably Jesus Himself.

This word occurs 159 times in the rest of the New Testament and nearly always refers to the Glory of God or Jesus, especially at the Second Advent.

In two instances, the word glory occurs in an idiomatic phrase, “give glory to God” (Rev 11:13, 14:7) and in both cases, a trial or judgement context is implied. This is a strong allusion to two other texts (Josh 7:19, John 9:24) where, during a court trial, someone is abjured to give glory to God, that, tell the truth. Thus, in Rev 14:7 the world is encourage to tell the truth about God during His celestial trial. See also **Remainder**.

Glorify [δοξάζω doxazo] (2) 15:4, 18:7. As above, the first refers to people glorifying God. The second records one of the reasons Babylon is punished: she glorified herself (rather than God and so blasphemed).

This word occurs 59 times in the rest of the New Testament.

Going to occur – see **About to happen**.

Gold [χρυσίον chrusion] (5) 3:18, 17:4, 18:16, 21:18, 21:21. A diminutive form of that below and sometimes denotes gold ornaments. The first of these describes the gold that the saints are instructed to buy of Jesus to overcome spiritual poverty (sanctification) as distinct from the raiment of justification to cover spiritual nakedness. The remaining four cases are all in the second half and contrast the gold overlayed on Babylon suggesting a sanctification that is not solid (see below on gold overlay suggesting false spirituality) with the solid gold of the New Jerusalem.

[χρυσός chrusos] (2) 9:7, 18:12. The first of these is a clear reference to false gold because the crowns on the heads of the locusts are like gold, not actually gold. Thus, the imitation gold appears to be symbolic of an imitation or false sanctification. The second is a record of one of

Babylon's commodities – gold cargoes. Thus righteousness was regarded as a tradeable commodity by the medieval Rome, where the righteousness of one could offset that of another or could be purchased.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, these words are used almost interchangeably to mean either money (Matt 10:9, Acts 3:6 etc) or a reference to the sacred articles in the Tabernacle (Heb 9:4). Thus, gold signified things valuable and in the sacred setting, articles belonging to the temple furniture or their counterfeits.

[**χρυσόω** chrusoo = to overlay with gold or to make golden] (2) 17:4, 18:16. Both these verbs are applied to the harlot, the great city of Babylon, who covers herself with gold rather than being solid gold as is the New Jerusalem. Thus the sanctified righteousness of Babylon is only a veneer rather than being innate as in the New Jerusalem. Hence Babylon is again attempting to imitate the New Jerusalem without actually using the genuine materials of solid gold, which comes from Jesus (Rev 3:18).

Golden [**χρυσούς** chrousous] (15) The occurrences of thing golden are as follows: temple lamps (1:12, 20, 2;1, sash on Son of Man and angels (1;13, 15:6), crowns on 24 elders and Son of Man (4:4, 14:14), bowls of incense and plagues (5:8, 15:7), censor (8:3), altar (8:3, 9:13), reed (21:15), city (21:18, 21). There are other golden things that are associated with Babylon: woman covered in gold (17:4, see above), her cup (17:4), her cargoes (18:12) and the great city covered in gold (18:16, see above). In all these cases, golden things are associated with the temple worship or counterfeits of them. This accords with the usage in Heb 9:4.

Gospel [**εὐαγγέλιον** euangelion] (1) 14:6. This word literally means *good message*, hence gospel. It is part of the final message to the world just before the end. The Good News proclaimed by Christians always derives from the fact that eternal rewards will far outweigh any trials endured in the mortal life. Thus, the saints do not fear for their lives.

Grain – see **Wheat**.

Grapevine [**ἄμπελος** ampelos] (2) 14:18, 19. A clear reference to people (in this case wicked who receive the wrath of God.) A similar *people* usage is found in John 15:1-8 and James 3:12. In Revelation this forms a counterpoint in the same passage to the harvest of the righteous grain. See also **Gather**.

Grass [**χόρτος** chortos] (2) 8:7, 9:4. The reference in 9:4 makes it clear that grass is a symbol of people and possibly righteous people. If true, the

righteous endure part of the calamities under the first trumpet but are completely immune under the fifth trumpet.

Grave - see **Hades**.

Green [**χλωρός** chloros] (3) 6:8, 8:7, 9:4. This also occurs in Mk 6:39. All these are used symbolically and refer to the colour of grass with the very debatable exception of 6:8. These all refer to the righteous and their fate. In the LXX it is used similarly and is used in conjunction with green vegetation. This is indirect evidence that the seals refer to the righteous saints and their activities.

(The) Great City (6) 11:8, 16:19, 17:18, 18:10, 16, 18. This phrase clearly refers to, and is a synonym for Babylon. It is a counterpart to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem.

Guide [**ὁδηγέω** hodegeo] (1) 7:17. This verb is used to describe how the lamb will lead the saints under the sixth seal. (There is a similar allusion in 14:4.) In all other instances in the New Testament, this word describes the guidance and leadership in a spiritual sense (Matt 15:14, Luke 6:39, John 16:13, Acts 8:31).

Hades [**ᾗδης** hades] (4) 1:18, 6:8, 20:13, 14. Here as elsewhere in the New Testament (Matt 11:23, 16:18, Luke 10:15, 16:23 (figuratively), Acts 2:27, 2:32), **ᾗδης** *hades* is the place of the dead, that is, the grave. Revelation almost personifies the term in each occurrence and so uses it to symbolise Jesus' victory over it. The word invariably occurs in conjunction with *death*. In the first occurrence, Jesus is said to have power over death and the grave – this is proved in the last occurrence where He destroys both.

Hail [**χάλαζα** chalaza] (4) 8:7, 11:19, 16:21(x2). These are the only occurrences of this word in the New Testament. However, the Old Testament has several instances of hail such as the plague of hail on Egypt (Ex 9:18-34, Ps 78:47, 48, 105:32, 33), during a battle of the Israelites with the Amorites (Josh 10:11, see also Psa 18:12-14), God's reserves for judgement in the last day (Job 38:22, 23), as an instrument of judgement generally (Ps 147:17, 148:8, Isa 28:2, 17, 30:30, 32:17, Eze 13:11, 13, 38:22, Hag 2:17). Thus, hail is a consistent symbol of God's judgement. This is appropriate in 11:19 for this form part of the introductory vision to the second half of Revelation which concentrates on God's judgement of the wicked.

Hair [**θρίξ** thrix] (3) 1:14, 9:8(x2). These two occurrences appear to be unrelated: 1:14 describes Jesus' hair as white like wool (a clear allusion to Dan 7:9 and Isa 1:18) signifying Jesus' purity. Human hair was

regarded as an expendable item and of minor importance (Matt 10:30, Luke 12:7, 21:18, Acts 27:34). Thus Jesus is pure down to the minutest detail.

9:8 describes the hair of the riders on the horses symbolised by locusts who have hair like women – presumably long (Luke 7:38, 44, John 11:2, 12:3, 1 Peter 3:3). This was considered inappropriate for men (1 Cor 11:3-10) as long hair was a symbol of being under authority. Thus, these riders are a contradiction – their hair suggests subjection but their gold crowns suggest victory. However, this is more apparent than real because the crowns are only like gold (not actually gold), thus they attempt to imitate the true worship of God. That they are limited by God is clear from their limited scope of damage (“do not touch the grass” etc) and their limited time frame (five months only).

Hallelujah [ἁλληλουϊά allelouia] (4) 19:1, 3, 4, 6. A transliteration of the Hebrew word for *Praise the Lord!* These exclamations are part of the heavenly celebration over Babylon’s fall.

Hand [χεῖρ cheir] (16) In three instances (1:16, 10:5, 13:16), this word occurs in the phrase, *right hand*. See **Right**. In other passages, something is pictured in the hand: scales held by a rider (6:5), palm branches held by the righteous, censor held by an angel, Jesus (8:4), the little book held by the angel, Jesus (10:2, 8, 10), a sickle held by Jesus (14:14), a golden cup held by the great prostitute Babylon (17:4), a key to the abyss held by the angel Jesus (20:1). In the remaining passages, the wicked are condemned for worshipping the works of their hands (9:20), God is praised for avenging the saints out of Babylon’s hand (19:2), the wicked receive a distinguishing mark (which see) on the forehead (which see) or hand (14:9, 20:4).

Thus, the hand is a symbol of works and human accomplishment and is thus an appropriate place for the mark of the beast. The mark in the forehead represents worship of the beast by choice while the mark on the (right) hand presumably represents worship of the beast by either force or cultural coercion.

Harlot – see **Prostitute**.

Harm [ἀδικέω adikeo] (11) 2:11, 6:6, 7:2, 3, 9:4, 10, 19, 11:5, 22:11. The word literally means to act unjustly but came to mean harm or hurt of any kind. With the exception of the last which occurs in the epilogue, all other occurrences occur in the first half of Revelation. Further, all such harm appears physical in nature (as opposed to its more varied scope elsewhere in the New Testament), and is directed or otherwise

constrained by Divine edict, including the activities of the demonic powers under the fifth and sixth trumpets.

Harp [κithάρα kithara] (3) 5:8, 14:2, 15:2. (This word might be better rendered Lute – a 10 stringed instrument.) These all concern the righteous, respectively the 24 elders, the sound accompanying those who follow the Lamb on Mount Zion, and the instrument possessed by the redeemed on the sea of glass. The only other place this word occurs in the New Testament is in 1 Cor 14:7 where spiritual gifts are discussed.

The Old Testament shows a very interesting pattern when using *harp*: The Harp was used to signal and/or facilitate the presence and Spirit of God such as when prophets prophesied etc: 1 Sam 10:5, 16:-23, 18:10, 19:9, 2 Kings 3:15, 1 Chr 25:1, 3, 6, 2 Chr 5:12, Isa 30:32. The second last case parallels that of Rev 15:2 where the harps play and no one can enter the temple. In such a symbolic place – associated with the presence and Spirit of God, the Harp was indispensable in the Temple worship and praise: 2 Sam 6:5, 1 Kings 10:12, 2 Chr 9:11, 1 Chr 13:8, 15:16, 21, 28, 16:5, 2 Chr 20:28, 29:25, Neh 12:27, Ps 32:2, 43:4, 49:4, 57:8, 71:22, 81:2, 92:3, 98:5, 108:2, 147:7, 149:3, 150:3. The Harp was also used by literal Babylon and other pagans in their false worship to induce a counterfeit spirit and engender an artificial atmosphere of praise: Job 21:12, Isa 5:12, 14:11, 23:16, 24:8, Dan 3:5, 7, 10, 15, Amos 5:23.

Harping (playing the harp) [κithαρίζω kitharizo] (1) 14:2. See **Harp**.

Harpist [κithαρωδός kitharosos] (2) 14:2, 18:22. See **Harp**. The second of these records Babylon’s failed attempts to get musicians and harpists especially to play. It is shown above that this represents the departure of the Spirit of God and thus, the failure of the city itself.

Harvest {verb} [θερίζω therizo] (3) 14:15, 16. This verb is always used to describe the reaping of grain (wheat, barley etc.). Here, it is used as a symbol of the end of the age when the righteous are taken to glory. Here it forms a counterpoint to the gathering of the wicked grapes; see **Gather**. This is consistent with its use in the rest of the New Testament: John 4:36-38, 2 Cor 9:6, Gal 6:7-9.

Harvest {noun} [θερισμός therismos] (1) 14:15. This noun is used to describe a harvest of grain representing the righteous. It is a consistent symbol of the judgement and end of the age in the rest of the New Testament: Matt 9:37, 38, 13:30, 39, Mark 4:29, Luke 10:2, John 4:35. In Revelation it forms a counterpoint to the *gathering* of the grapes, which represents the judgement on the wicked.

Head [κεφαλή kephale] (19) This word occurs in the following places.

Here *crown* denotes *stephanos*, while *diadem* denotes *diadema* in Greek.

1:14 Jesus' head and hair white like wool

4:4 crowns on the heads of the 24 elders

9:7 something like crowns of gold on heads of locusts

9:17 heads of horses were like lions

9:19 tails of horses like snakes with heads

10:1 Jesus head with a rainbow above it.

12:1 pure woman with a crown of 12 stars

12:3 dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns and 7 diadems on heads

13:1 sea beast with 10 horns, 7 heads and blasphemy on heads

14:14 Jesus with a crown of gold on His head

17:3 woman riding beast from the abyss with 7 heads and 10 horns

17:7 woman riding beast from the abyss with 7 heads and 10 horns

17:9 7 heads of beast are 7 mountains on which the woman sits

18:9 wailing Babylonian merchants throw dust on heads

19:12 Jesus' head has many diadems on it.

The reference in 17:9 suggests an explanation for the heads of beasts as mountains. This combined with the heads of beasts in Daniel (eg Dan 7 & 8) suggests that heads are parts of an empire with heads forming the coalition of kingdoms. It could also be understood to be historical phases of the main power.

Hear [ἀκούω akouo] (46) Some commentators have said that Revelation is a noisy book because of the numerous voices and noises heard. That John uses this verb so frequently, and often in association with the verb to see, shows that he fully participated in the vision.

Heaven [οὐρανός] (52) Modern culture distinguishes three heavens, the atmosphere, the stellar heavens ("outer space") and the abode of God and His throne. However, it is almost certain that the ancients did NOT so distinguish – everything above mountain-top level was the "heavens". Thus, the birds, stars and God appear to occupy the same space. In any case, heaven is described as:

The origin of the New Jerusalem 3:12, 21:1, 2, 10

The place of God's throne and government 4:1, 2, 11:13, 19, 13:6, 14:17, 15:5, 16:11

The location of sun, moon and stars 6:13

Origin of angels and judgements 8:10, (13), 9:1, 10:1, 4, 11:15, 12:4, 8, 10, 14:2, 13, 15:1, 16:21, 18:1, 4, 20, 19:1, 11, 14, 20:1, 9

Origin of weather (rain) 11:6, 16:21

Destination of martyrs 11:12

Signs of heaven 12:1, 3, 15:1

War between Michael and the Dragon 12:7

Counterfeit heaven 13:13

Idiom for very high or great 18:5

See also Heaven...earth...sea, and, Mid-heaven.

Heaven...Earth...Sea [οὐρανός...γῆ...θάλασσα] (7) There are of several different types:

Those which allude to the fourth, Sabbath, commandment:

10:6 He who created the heavens...earth...sea

14:6 Worship him who created the heavens, the earth, the sea, ...

Those that refer to the inhabitants of the entire universe:

5:13 every creature in heaven, on the earth, under the earth, on the sea

12:12 rejoice heavens, but woe to earth and sea

21:1 new heaven and new earth, no more sea

Incidental occurrences:

10:5 Angel standing on land and sea raised his right hand to heaven

10:8 Voice from heaven instructs John to take the scroll from the angel standing on land and sea.

Hebrew [Ἑβραϊστὶ Hebraisti] (2) 9:11, 16:16. Two Hebrew words are used in Revelation, one in each half: Abaddon, Harmagedon (Armageddon), which see. Such words help to confirm that Revelation should be understood in the light of the Old Testament.

Him who lives for ever and ever: (4) 4:9, 4:10, 10:6, 15:7. The last of these, Ps 90:2 and 1 Tim 6:15, 16 make it clear that this phrase refers to God the Father. See also, *For ever and ever*.

Holy [ἅγιος hagios] (25) is used: as a title of Jesus (3:7, 6:10), as a triple title of God (4:8), to describe the New Jerusalem as the Holy City (21:2, 10, 22:19), for the people of God collectively being persecuted by the Gentiles for 42 months and termed the holy city (11:2), for the people of God called *saints*, lit. *holy ones* (5:8, 8:3, 4, 11:18, 13:7, 10, 14:10, 12, 16:6, 17:6, 18:20, 24, 19:8, 20:9), a quality of those who serve God (20:6, 22:11). Thus the term is used most often to describe God's people. In all cases, holiness is conferred because of the presence of God - the Holy City is such because God lives there, the holy city in 11:2 is such because it is composed of saints who are sealed with the Holy Spirit (see *Seal*), etc.

A closely related verb, ἁγιάζω hagiozo in 22:11 means to make holy or sanctify, literally, to set apart.

Honey [μέλι meli] (2) 10:9, 10. Honey is used as a measure of the sweetness of the message given by John but which turned bitter in the stomach. See Eze 3:3.

Horn [κέρας keras] (10) are depicted on beasts and the altar:

5:6 horns on the slain Lamb

9:13 horns of the golden altar (of incense)

12:3 10 horns on the dragon (beast from the abyss)

13:1 10 horns on the sea beast and 10 crowns on the horns

13:11 2 horns on the land beast

17:3 10 horns on the beast from the abyss (the dragon)

17:7 mystery of 10 horns explained

17:12 10 horns are 10 kings who will reign with the beast

17:16 10 horns will hate the prostitute and ruin her

In the case of the beast from the abyss (at least), horns represent kings or kingdoms (17:12). The same is true in Dan 7:24, 8:21, 22.

Horse [ἵππος hippos] (16) The occurrences of this word may be classified as follows:

6:2, 4, 5, 6 describe the white, red, black and green (pale) horses in the first four seals. These are clearly alluding to the multicoloured horses in Zech 1 and 6, which were messengers of God throughout the earth, and thus servants of God – see Seal. This is another evidence that the seals and their horses are symbols of the saints' activity for God in Gospel evangelisation of the world.

9:7, 9, 17(x2), 19 describe the horses used by the invading armies under the fifth and sixth trumpets. By contrast with the seals, these horses are led by Satan himself and so form a counterpoint to the horses under the seals and in Rev 19.

14:20 – blood flowed to a depth of the horses' bridles (too deep for horses to wade through.)

18:13 – uses horses as a symbol of the wealth of Babylon and her trade

19:18 – uses horses as a symbol of the wicked in judgement

19:11, 14, 19, 21 describe the mounts of the heavenly army and their leader, Jesus, on a white horse.

Thus, while there are two opposing armies, those in Rev 6 and 9 are not recorded as ever battling with each other, unless this occurs in Rev 19:19-21.

Hour [ὥρα hora] (10) There are two types of usages of this word: those with and without an numerical adjective. Those without a numerical adjective, in the idiom of Revelation mostly suggests a point of time, or a

short duration of time rather than a literal interval of one hour: for example, the unknown hour of a thief (3:3), the hour of trial (3:10), at that very hour (11:13), the hour of God's judgement (14:7, 15).

In 9:15, despite other time periods of year month and day are used, the lack of a numerical adjective here suggests *this exact time*;

Those with a numerical adjective may imply a specific interval of time and may be symbolically intended: 17:12 where the kings of the earth receive authority with the beast for one hour, and Babylon's doom comes in one hour (18:10, 17, 19). If these one-hour periods are understood symbolically, then the day for a year principle would imply a 15 day time period. Thus, the three one hour time intervals required for Babylon's destruction could be reminiscent of the 45 day period implied in Dan 12:11, 12.

In 8:1 we have a closely related word, ἡμίωρον hemioron, half an hour, a period corresponding the time usually spent in silent worship in the temple during the burning of incense.

Hunger and Thirst [πεινάω και διψάω peinao kai dipsao] (1) 7:16. If this is understood in the symbolic sense (as per Matt 5:6, John 6:35, and possibly Rom 12:20) then the hungering and thirsting is after righteousness that can only be satisfied by Jesus. See also **Thirst**.

Husband [ἀνὴρ aner] (1) 21:2. The *husband* is a common New Testament symbol for Jesus, the bridegroom of God's true church (Rom 7:3, 4, 2 Cor 11:2, Gal 4:27, Eph 5:22-27).

Image [εἰκών eikon] (10) 13:14, 15(x3), 14:9, 11, 15:2, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4. This word always occurs in a sentence referring to the sea beast and denotes a derived likeness, (in this case of the sea beast) and is connected with the false worship associated with the sea beast. Further, the mark of the sea beast appears to be administered as a consequence of worshipping the image to the sea beast. The righteous are rewarded for gaining victory over the image of the beast and are enthroned with Christ; while the wicked are punished under the bowl plagues for worshipping the image of the beast and are called deluded and deceived. Thus this prophecy predicts that the land beast will create an institution just like the sea beast and use it as a puppet to compel people to worship the sea beast with the mark of the sea beast as the distinguishing identifier. If the sea beast is a false church then so is the image of the beast, which owes its origin and authority to the land beast.

Inhabiters (dwellers) [κατοικέω katoikeo] (13) 2:13(x2), 3:10, 6:10, 8:13, 11:10, 13:8, 13:12, 13:14, 17:2, 17:8, 18:2. In all but the first and last

this word is found in the phrase, *dwellers on the earth*: a technical phrase which always refers to the wicked. Note other similar occurrences: 1:7 (peoples of the earth mourn at the sight of the Son of Man), 2:13 (where you dwell is where Satan has his throne and dwells), 18:2 (the dwelling of demons). Thus κατοικέω katoikeo, or a variant, occurs 13 times in Revelation and always refers to Satan's dwelling and/or the dwelling of the wicked. Thus it acts as a counterpoint to tabernacle [σκηνή skene] or dwelling of God.

Incense [θυμίαμα thumiama] (4) 5:8, 8:3, 4, 18:13. The meaning of this symbol is explicitly stated in the first three references as *the prayers of the saints*. By contrast with the first three that are associated with the worship of God, 18:13 is associated with the worship in Babylon and thus implies prayers of the wicked. This is further reinforced by the latter part of the list of Babylonian cargoes that includes the bodies and souls of men (people). Thus Babylon is a worship system (among other things) that will be responsible for the loss of souls despite their prayers and religious devotion!

This word occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Luke 1:10, 11.

Iron {noun} [σίδηρος sideros] (1) 18:12. This is one of the cargoes of Babylon showing that it also traded in armaments (as well as precious cargoes). This is the only occurrence of the word in the New Testament.

Iron {adjective} [σιδηροῦς siderous] (4) 2:27, 9:9, 12:5, 19:15. In 9:9, the breastplates of the locusts are said to be like iron. In the remaining references, the word occurs in the phrase, *rod (sceptre) of iron*. See **Rod**. Iron was used primarily for military purposes – see its only other occurrence in the New Testament in Acts 12:10 (iron gates in a prison).

Israel (3) 2:14, 7:4, 21:12. The first of these clearly uses Israel in the literal, historical sense. The last two are clearly symbolic because, according to Gal 3:29, those who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Eph 2:11-13, Gal 6:14-16, Rom 9:6. [See Appendix 5 for a more detailed discussion of these issues.] This word always occurs in the phrase *sons of Israel*.

Jerusalem (3) 3:12, 21:2, 10. This city is always prefixed by the adjective new and described as the holy city of God which comes out of Heaven. It will be the home of the saved on the new earth. It is a counterpoint to Babylon. The new Jerusalem is also depicted in Heb 12:22, Gal 4:26. See also **City**.

Jews [Ἰουδαῖος Joudaios] (2) 2:9, 3:9. In both cases these people only claim to be Jews but are in fact of the synagogue of Satan and are thus

false Jews. According to Gal 3:29, those who belong to Christ are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. [See Appendix 5 for a more detailed discussion of these issues.] Thus, these Jews are seen to be counterfeit Christians.

Jezebel (1) 2:20 - see **Woman**.

Judge {verb} [κρίνω krino] (8) 6:10, 11:18, 16:5, 18:8, 20, 19:2, 11, 20:12, 13. In 6:10 the martyrs ask the question, *How long 'till You judge (or vindicate) our blood?* This is answered in 11:18; *The time has come for the judging of the dead*. In the second half of the book the judging is done in such a way as to vindicate the saints as confirmed by the declarations in 16:5 when the plagues are poured out, in 18:8, 20 during the judging of Babylon, and in 19:2 following the judging of the harlot. Finally, the rider (judge) on the white horse (19:11) and on the white throne (20:12, 13) is declared just in his judging. Thus, the first half of Revelation anticipates God's vindicating work while the second half witnesses it.

The object of God's judging is always the wicked in order to vindicate His plan and His saints.

Judgement {noun} (7) Occurs in two forms listed below.

[κρίμα krima] (3) 17:1, 18:20, 20:4. In the strict sense, this word refers to the act of judgement, ie, the verdict, decision or the execution of judgement.

[κρίσις krisis] (4) 14:7, 16:7, 18:10, 19:2. In the strict sense this word refers to the process of judgement, ie, the investigation (or trial).

Again, *judgement* only occurs in the second half of Revelation.

GENERAL NOTE: Of the two most common legal codes in existence today, the inquisitorial (rather than the adversarial) code most closely resembles the practice in Biblical times. This is because the judge was himself responsible for investigating the case, defending the guilty and administering any punishment. This is consistent with the New Testament model of the judgement process and outcome: Jesus is responsible for all judgement (John 5:22-30, Acts 10:42, 2 Tim 4:1, 8)

In addition to the above references, there are even more allusions to judgement. It will be observed that nearly all these references to judgement and judgement occur in the sixth and seventh parts of each section of Revelation.

3:10 The hour of trial to test whole earth

3:14 Laodicea = judging the people

6:5 Third seal features scales, a symbol of judgement

11:1 An allusion to Eze 40:1-3ff, and its measurement scene. Further, the act of measuring is always associated with the concept of judgement in the New Testament (Matt 7:2, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:38, 2 Cor 10:12)

On the above basis, Revelation appears to present three judgements plus a general expectation preceding the first as shown below:

Anticipation of judgement: 3:10, 6:10, 11:18 (Compare Acts 17:31, Rom 2:16, Heb 9:27, 10:27, 30, 13:4, James 2:12, 13, 2 Pet 3:7).

Pre-Advent or pre-millennial judgement: 14:7, 16:7, 17:1, 18:8, 10, 20, 19:2, 11 (Compare Dan 7:9, 10).

Millennial judgement: 20:4

Post-millennial judgement: 20:12, 13.

Furthermore, God's saints look forward to the day of judgement when their lives will be vindicated for the outcome is clear. (Rev 16:5-7, 18:20, 19:2. Compare Dan 7:22, John 5:22-30, 2 Th 1:5, 2 Tim 4:8, 1 John 4:17, 5:11, 12.)

Just [δίκαιος dikaios] (5) 15:3, 16:5, 16:7, 19:2, 22:11. This adjective is used in the rest of the New Testament in the sense of *righteous, obedient*. However, John's use is far narrower and legal in tone, therefore, just is a better English equivalent. In all cases, the term is used to describe God's acts of judgement.

Justice [δικαιοσύνη dikaiosune] (2) 19:11, 22:11. This noun is used in the rest of the New Testament in the sense of *righteousness, obedience*. However, John's use is far narrower and legal in tone; therefore, justice is a better English equivalent. In all cases the word is used to depict God's conduct of the judgement.

Key [κλεῖς kleis] (4) There are three keys in Revelation:

1:18 Jesus holds the key of death and the grave. Comparison with 1 Cor 15:14, 15, 1 John 5:11, 12 confirms that this key is the key to eternal life and heaven itself.

3:7 Jesus holds the key of David. This is a clear allusion to Isa 22:22 where Eliakim is promoted to chamberlain and is given the key to the king's private quarters. Thus only those whom Eliakim permits can enter. This key is thus seen to be a repetition of the first key above. See also Rev 5:5.

9:1 The star which had fallen from heaven (the Devil or Satan, see **Beast** from Abyss and **Star**) who is given the key to the shaft of the abyss from which springs to locust army. The abyss is a symbol of sinful

earth whom Satan is given temporary control to demonstrate how false were his claims about Jesus (see Isa 14:12-15.)

20:1 An angel (Jesus?) who was given the key to abyss to chain the devil or Satan. Jesus again uses His key to triumph over the powers of darkness. One assumes that this angel is Jesus for only God can have the power to contain Satan.

The New Testament also speaks of two other keys, the keys to the kingdom of heaven (Matt 16:19) and the key of knowledge (Luke 11:52) both of which Jesus delegated to the church.

Kill [ἀποκτείνω apokteino] (15) See also **Murder** and **Slaughter**. This verb is used for both righteous and wicked.

King [βασιλεύς basileus] (21) 1:5, 6:15, 9:11, 10:11, 15:3, 16:12, 14, 17:2, 9, 12, 14, 18, 18:3, 9, 19:16, 18, 19, 21:24. Only three of these refer to Jesus as King (of kings) (15:3, 17:4, 19:16). The remainder refer to the kings of the earth or a variant of the phrase.

Kingdom [βασιλεία basileia] (9) 1:6, 9, 5:10, 11:15, 12:10, 16:10, 17:12, 17, 18. The first five of these refer to the kingdom of priests belonging to God of Jesus. The last four refer to the various kingdoms of the wicked. The kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the earth act as counterpoints of each other.

Lake [λίμνη limne] (6) 19:20, 20:10, 14, 15, 21:8. This word only occurs in the phrase, lake of fire. As such it is a symbol of the second and final destruction of things evil. Interestingly, the evil institutions are destroyed in the lake of fire before the millennium, while the wicked people are destroyed in the lake of fire after the millennium. Thus, the lake of fire (into which the wicked are thrown) is a counterpoint to the sea of glass beside which the righteous stand (15:2). See also **Fire**. Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word only occurs (5 times) in Luke, and always refers to Galilee.

Lamb [ἀρνίον arnion] (29) 5:6, 8, 12, 13, 6:1, 16, 7:9, 10, 14, 17, 12:11, 13:8, 13:11, 14:1, 4, 10, 15:3, 17:4, 19:7, 9, 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27, 22:1, 3. With the exception of 13:11 this symbol consistently denotes Jesus. In 13:11, the land beast resembles a lamb because of the two horns. [The word ἀρνίον arnion, occurs in the New Testament in one other place - John 21:15. Elsewhere, NT writers prefer ἀμνός amnos: John 1:29, 36, Acts 8:32, 1 Pet 1:19.]

Lamp [λαμπάς lampas] (2) 4:5 seven lamps (or torches) blazing which represent the seven spirits of God. In 8:10 a star like a great blazing lamp (or torch) falls from the sky.

[**λυχνος** luchnos] (3) 18:23, 21:23, 22:5. This is a personal, portable light source or torch. The latter two state that in the New Jerusalem, Jesus and God are its light source, while the first says that Babylon will never be lit by a lamp again, signifying that it will never be inhabited, ie, totally and eternally destroyed as was ancient Babylon (Jer 50:13).

Lampstand [**λυχνία** luchnia] (7) 1:12, 13, 20(x2), 2:1, 5, 11:4. Rev 1:20 explicitly states that the seven lampstands represent the seven churches. This helps to identify the two witnesses of Rev 11 as the association of the church with lamps was made by Jesus: Matt 5:14-16, “you are the light of the world . . . people light a lamp to light the whole house ...let your light shine before men.” See also Luke 12:35, John 5:35. The seven lampstands are also an allusion to the seven-branched lampstand in the Hebrew Tabernacle, Ex 25:31-39. Note that these references to lamps in Revelation are only ever in the first half of the book (before 1:18) which only ever refers to the first apartment of the earthly tabernacle.

Land [**γῆ** ge] (82) This Greek word can be translated *land* or *earth*. Most modern Bible versions prefer *earth* but use *land* to distinguish from *sea* in 7:1, 2, 3, 10:2, 5, 8, 16:2, and sometimes 13:11 to differentiate the sea beast from the land beast. In nearly all cases where *inhabitants of the earth* (a technical term for the wicked, which see) are stated (either explicitly or implied) the wicked are symbolised (eg, 1:7, 9:1, 3, 13:3, 16:2, 18, 18:3, 9, 11, 23, 20:8, 9). However, 14:3 talks about the righteous who had been redeemed from the earth. In other cases, the earth as distinct from heaven is all that is implied, or the entire universe in the phrase *heaven earth and sea* (which see), or the whole planet in the phrase *sea and land* (which see).

This word occurs more often in Revelation than any other New Testament book.

Language [**γλῶσσα** glossa] (8) 5:9, 7:9, 10:11, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 16:10, 17:15. Except for 16:10, **γλῶσσα** glossa occurs in the phrase language, nation, people [and tribe], which see.

Language, nation, people [and tribe]: (7) 5:9, 7:9, 10:11, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 17:15. This phrase (in various orders) only occurs in Daniel 3:4, 7, 29, 4:1, 5:19, 6:25, 7:14 (also 7 times) and denotes large numbers of diverse people not necessarily righteous or wicked.

Lead see Guide.

Leaf [**φύλλον** phullon] (1) 22:2. The leaves of the tree of life beside the river of the water of life are for the healing of the nations. This verse alludes to Eze 47:12 and uses a symbol of the leave as verdant life and

prosperity (Gen 8:11, Psa 1:3, Prov 11:28, Isa 1:30, 33:9, 14, 64:6, Jer 8:13, 17:8, Dan 4:12, 14, 21, etc) and a harbinger of fruit (Matt 21:19, 24:32, Mark 11:13, 13:28).

Loeopard [**παρδάλις** pardalis] (1) 13:2. This is part of the description of the appearance of the sea beast and is the only occurrence in the New Testament. It is a clear reference to Dan 7:6, which makes the sea beast a compound beast of those listed (in reverse order) in Dan 7. In the Old Testament the leopard was distinguished for its speed (Hab 1:8), its hunting ability and fierce nature (Hos 13:7, Jer 5:6, Isa 11:6) and its distinctive markings, which are difficult (impossible) to alter (Jer 13:23). Thus the sea beast has all these characteristics.

Life [**ζωή** zoe] (17) This word always occurs in the genitive case as part of one of the following phrases:

Tree of life (4) 2:7, 22:2, 14, 19, an allusion to the tree of life taken from Eden (Gen 2:9) to be restored in the New Earth.

Crown of life (1) 2:10, the saints’ “ticket” to paradise.

Book of life (6) 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, 21:27, The record of those who have accepted Jesus offer of salvation. (See Ps 69:28, Phil 4:3.)

Springs of the water of life (2) 7:17, 21:6.

River of the water of life (1) 22:1. The lifeline of the New Jerusalem.

Water of life (1) 22:17. A reference to the springs and river of life. See also John 3:10-15 for Jesus’ claim to be the living water.

Spirit of life (1) 11:11. The text here says that this is out of (from) God.

Soul of life (1) 16:3. Better (idiomatically), *living thing*.

All these symbols of life are connected with our only source of life – Jesus. See 1 John 5:11, 12.

Lifted [**ἦρεν** eren] (2) 10:5, 18:21. In both cases, it is an angel who lifts either his hand (to proclaim a solemn message) or a large stone (to throw it into the sea).

Light {noun} [**φῶς** phos] (3) 18:23, 21:24, 22:5. It was Jesus who said in one of His great “I am” statements, *I am the light of the world* (John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46, 1:4). Thus, Jerusalem’s only source of light is that from God and Jesus (21:24, 22:5) and Babylon’s loss of the divine presence ensures its darkness (18:23).

[**φωστήρ** phoster = radiance or light] (1) 21:11. See above – the New Jerusalem shine with the radiance of the glory of God.

Light {verb} [**φωτίζω** photizo = shine or enlighten] (3) 18:1, 21:23, 22:5. The usage of the verb is similar to its corresponding noun (above), that

God and Jesus are the only source of light in the New Jerusalem and on earth (18:1).

Lightning [ἀστραπή astrape] (4) See **Thunder and Lightning** (and earthquake).

Linen, made of fine ~ [βύσσινος bussinos] (5) 18:12, 16, 19:8, 14. The meaning of this symbol is explicitly stated in 19:8 as standing for the righteous acts of the saints. With this understanding, the other four references take on a special significance: Babylon is recorded as trading in fine linen or righteous acts (18:12), and of being dressed in the same (18:16). This is a possible reference to the trade in indulgences and related practises where righteousness was regarded as a negotiable commodity; the righteousness of one person was regarded as capable of offsetting the wickedness of another; righteousness was also regarded as being for sale. By contrast, the bride of the Lamb was given fine linen to wear (19:8) and the armies of heaven wear fine linen (19:14). Notice that in this last instance, the earthly saints (the Lamb's bride) are described as the armies of heaven (Eph 2:6). This is parallel to that in 14:4 where the 144,000 are described as following the Lamb wherever He goes. Thus, these two groups in fine linen (Babylon's and Jesus') act as counterpoints of each other.

Fine linen [βύσσινος bussinos] does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. However, Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet in Matt 22:1-14 discusses a similar metaphor of wedding clothes which were given as a free gift to the guests by the host. Those who spurned this free gift were thrown out of the banquet. Thus, this symbol exactly parallels the fine linen as symbolising the righteous acts of the saints whose source is from Jesus Himself. Isa 61:10 also uses this same symbol of wedding garments as a robe of righteousness.

[λίνον linon] (1) 15:6. The dress of the seven angels with the seven plagues. (The only other place it occurs in the New Testament is Matt 12:20 which quotes Isa 42:3.)

Lion [λέων leon] (6) The lion is used in several ways:

- 4:7 The likeness of one of the living creatures
- 5:5 A symbol of royalty – the lion of the tribe of Judah (2 Chr 9:19)
- 9:8, 9:17 A symbol of cruelty used for judgement by reference to the lion's teeth and smoke from their mouths. (compare 2 Ki 17:25, 26, Ps 22:13, 58:6, Dan 6:7)
- 10:3 The roar symbolises God's voice of prophecy (Hos 11:10, Amos 3:8)

13:2 The sea beast has a mouth like that of a lion (an allusion to the Babylonian empire which had a lion as its symbol in the literal city, Dan 7:4). This presumably symbolised the rapacious nature of its teachings.

Living Creatures [ζῶον zoon] (20): 4:6, 7, 8, 9, 5:6, 8, 11, 14, 6:1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 7:11, 14:3, 15:7, 19:4 - creatures who surround the throne of God. Such an arrangement is reminiscent of other theophanies such as Eze 1, 9, 10, Isa 6, Ps 18, 80:1, 99:1, 2 Sam 22, Isa 37:16, etc. The Ark of the Covenant was also supposed to represent such an arrangement of God's throne (Num 7:89, 1 Sam 4:4, 2 Sam 6:2, 2 Ki 19:15, 1 Chr 13:6). Such a comparison of the above references has lead some to suggest that these living creatures were cherubim; however, in Isa 6 they are called seraphim and in Revelation they are simply called living creatures.

The four living creatures are the same four as in Eze 1 but in a different order: lion, ox (or calf), man, and eagle.

The usage in the rest of the New Testament is quite different where the word is used of animals for sacrifice (Heb 13:11) and as a description of brute, unreasoning men (2 Pet 2:12, Jude 10).

Locusts [ἀκρίς akris] (2) 9:3, 7. These are a symbol of the forces of evil, lead by Satan himself (Rev 9:1, 11) arrayed against the wicked! (an allusion to Isa 33:4.) Locusts are only mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament in Matt 3:4 and Mark 1:6 as part of the diet of John the Baptist.

In the Old testament we find the following occurrences:

Ex 10 :1-20 The eighth plague against the Egyptians

Deut 28:38, 42 The promised curse of God for Israel's infidelity

Jdg 6:5, 7:12 Israel's enemy (Midianites) numerous as locusts

1 Ki 8:37 (Solomon's prayer) Locusts a scourge of God for infidelity

2 Chron 6:28 As above

2 Chron 7:13 Locusts a promised scourge of God for infidelity

Ps 105:24 Recalling the eighth Egyptian plague

Prov 30:27 Locusts are small but extremely wise

Isa 33:4 Locusts (with Destroyer as leader, v1) like an invading army

Jer 46:23 Locusts likened to the scourge of the wicked (Egypt)

Jer 51:14, 27 Locusts (with Destroyer as leader, v1) likened to the scourge of the wicked (Babylon)

Joel 1:4, 2:25 Locusts used as a scourge of Israel for infidelity

Amos 4:9 Locusts used as a scourge of Israel for infidelity

Nah 3:15-17 Israel's enemies as numerous as locusts

Thus locusts had become a metaphor for a numerous enemy, which could not be counted, and one that was able to ruin its victim, whether they were unfaithful saints or the wicked.

Lord [κύριος kurios] (23). This word does not always refer (in both Revelation and elsewhere) to God or Jesus, but most often does. 7:14 refers to one of the 24 elders.

Lord God (1:8, 4:8, 11:17, 15:3, 16:7, 18:8, 19:6, 21:22, 22:5, 6)

Lord of Lords, referring to Jesus (17:14, 19:16 and only here in all the New Testament)

Lord Jesus (22:20, 21 and often in the New Testament)

Where their Lord was crucified (11:8). This makes 7 times referring to Jesus

Lord (4:11, 11:4, 11:15, 14:13, 15:4). Thus, Lord, when referring to God or Jesus, is always used literally.

Lord's Day [κυριακὴ ἡμέρα kuriake hemera] (1) 1:10 This phrase only occurs here in the whole New Testament. (The only other occurrence of the genitive “Lord’s” occurs in 1 Cor 11:20 Lord’s supper). The phrase has caused much discussion which can be summarised as suggesting one of the following: The Lord’s Day is an allusion to passages such as Ex 16:29, 20:10, 11, Isa 58:13, Matt 12:8, Mark 2:28, Luke 6:5, which identify the Sabbath as belonging to the Lord; An allusion to the Day of the Lord in places such as Isa 13:6, 9, Eze 13:5, 30:3, Joel 1:15, 1 Thess 5:2, 2 Peter 3:10, etc indicating the time of the end and God’s final judgement and destruction of the wicked. If we accept that what John prophesied was to take place “shortly” afterward, then he could not have been in vision on the day of judgement or the Day of the Lord. Therefore, we assume that he was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, the Sabbath. (During the late second and third centuries, the Lord’s day came to mean Sunday, but this was not the case in the first century. Any attempt to make this phrase equal Sunday is to judge John by what came later – an impossible hermeneutic!)

Love {noun} [ἀγάπη agape] (2) 2:4, 19 - both refer to the love displayed by two of the seven churches (Ephesus and Thyatira).

Love {verb} [ἀγαπάω agapao = principled love] (4) 1:5 & 3:9 refer to the love Jesus displays to His people (churches). 12:11 records that the brothers did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. 20:9 the New Jerusalem is the city that God loves.

[φιλέω phileo = deep affection or friendship] (2) 3:19 records that Jesus rebukes and disciplines those He loves. 22:15 condemns those who love

falsehood. (See John 21:17, where these two “love” verbs are used almost interchangeably.)

Man [ἄνθρωπος anthropos] (25) 1:13, 4:7, 8:11, 9:4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 15, 18, 20, 11:13, 13:13, 18, 14:4, 14, 16:2, 8, 9, 18, 21, 18:13, 21:3, 17. With the exception to the references to *a Son of Man* (1:13, 14:14) as Jesus, nearly all these references are in the plural and could be translated mankind or human-kind as distinct from angels and deity. Notice that the largest proportion occurs in the trumpets and bowl plagues which are judgements on wicked, unsealed people.

Manna [μάννα manna] (1) 2:17. This manna is described as having been hidden and offered as a reward to the overcomers of Pergamum. It is interesting that they were also offered a white stone with a name known only to those who receive it. This element of mystery is clearly related to the circumstances of the original manna given the Israelites in the desert (Ex 16) when they called it manna because they asked, “What is it?” (Ex 16:15). This material was also called grain of heaven and the bread of angels (Ps 78:24, 25), bread of heaven (John 6:31) and some was placed in a gold jar inside the ark of the covenant (Ex 16:33, 34, Heb 9:4). Jesus applied this symbol to Himself saying, “I am the bread of life”, referring to the manna that sustained the Israelites.

Many Waters (1) 17:1 - see *Sea*. In this reference, we have an allusion to the Euphrates (Jer 51:13). Hence, the Euphrates is a “sea” allusion.

Marble [μάρμαρος marmaros] (1) 18:12. One of the costly cargoes of Babylon. (This is the only occurrence of this word in the New Testament.) As with the other cargoes, they all depict the trappings of great wealth without the substance. By contrast, Jesus’ ministry was characterised by justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Matt 23:23).

Mark [χάραγμα charagma] (7) 13:6, 7, 14:9, 11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4. The mark is invariably that of the sea beast administered by the land beast. It serves as the distinguishing mark of the wicked at the end-time, and is given on the forehead or hand. It is closely associated with, but distinct from, the image to the sea beast. This mark of the beast is equated with the name [an eastern euphemism for character] of the sea beast and the number of its name (Rev 13:17). Thus, the mark of the beast stands in counterpoint to the seal of God and thus could be understood to represent a counterfeit spirit. The fact that the land beast uses the mark and the image as vehicles to deceive the world, and that it is distinctly reminiscent of “on the forehead and on the hand” at the giving of the law as recorded in Deut 6:8, 11:18, suggests that the mark of the beast is

some false law [10 commandments]. This is further strengthened by the strong literary parallels between Rev 13:1-8 and Dan 7 where the little horn power “thinks to changes times and laws.” We also note that in contrast to the apparent activity of the land beast to engender fidelity to a false law, are the warnings to the saints to keep the true law, Rev 12:17, 14:12, and Rev 14:7 (see also Rev 10:6) which quotes the Sabbath commandment. Hence on this basis, the false law is likely to be some false set of commandments generally and a false Sabbath in particular.

In Acts 17:29 (the only other NT use of the word) **χάραγμα** charagma is used to denote an image or idol. However, this is never the sense in Revelation: in Rev 9:20, John uses **εἶδωλον** eidolon, to denote an idol.

Literally, the **χάραγμα** charagma, *mark*, was a stamp or impress - with a similar meaning to **σφραγίς** sphragis, translated *sign*. Heb 1:3 uses a closely related word, **χαρακτήρ** karakter, from which our English word *character* is derived.

Measure {verb} [**μετρέω** metreo] (5) 11:1, 2 refer to the act of measuring the temple (which see) – an allusion to the measurement scene in Eze 40:1-3ff. Here, measurement is symbolic of judgement of the church and its saints, see Matt 7:2, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:38, 2 Cor 10:12.

21:15, 16, 17 refer to the measurements of the New Jerusalem. The idea is presumably that the Holy City is so immense and impressive as to be incapable of human construction – God alone builds it (Heb 11:10). Despite this, the New Jerusalem is based on judgement as seen from its introductory vision in Rev 20:11-21:8). Thus, the Holy City will be kept pure by excluding those unworthy to enter.

Measurement {noun} [**μέτρον** metron] (2) 21:15, 17. Both these are associated with the measurements (size) of the Holy City above. However, we glimpse a new and subtle meaning in John’s intent here because, unlike the verb form, the noun appears to be associated with the limitless gift of the Spirit (John, 3:34, Eph 4:7, 13, 16, etc.) This is another evidence that the immense proportions of the Holy city are symbolic of its divine origine and ability to accommodate all residents easily and comfortably.

Merchant [**ἐμπορος** emporos] (3) 18:3, 11, 15, 23. Interestingly, this word was used by the Romans (emporium) to denote the sort of traders John describes as dealing in a larger variety of precious things, including the bodies and souls of men (18:13) – as commodities. This word only occurs elsewhere in Matt 13:45 in another of Jesus’ parables.

Michael [**Μιχαήλ**] (1) 12:7. This name portrays Michael [Heb: *One who is like God*] as the leader or general of the heavenly host. A comparison with Jude 9, Dan 10:13, 21, 12:1 suggests that this Michael is Jesus.

Midair – see **Midheaven**.

Midheaven [**μεσουράνημα** mesouranema] (3) This word only occurs in Revelation and forms a chiasitic structure. All have something flying and with a loud voice, proclaim something to the earth:

8:13 A: An eagle flies and proclaims a triple woe on the earth

14:6 B: An angel flies & proclaims the eternal Gospel to the earth

19:7 A: Birds told (by proclaiming angel) to gather & eat kings etc.

Because the birds and angels are flying on or near the earth, some versions prefer the allowable translation, *midair*. In either case, the intent is clear – a worldwide message.

Might – see **Power**.

Mind [**νοῦς** nous] (2) 13:18, 17:9. This word is used when a difficult explanation is about to follow. Experience has shown that these two passages on the Beast’s 666, and the woman riding the scarlet beast are very difficult passages to interpret. The mind required is clearly that of Christ (1 Cor 2:16) inspired by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13, 2 Peter 1:21).

Month [**μήν** men] (6) This occurs as follows:

9:5, 10 Five months (which see)

9:15 Hour and day and month and year (see day)

11:2, 13:5 42 months (which see)

22:2 The tree of life bears fruit every month = constantly or always available harvest, ie, an unending supply or harvest.

Moon [**σελήνη** selene] (4) 6:12, 8:12, 12:1, 21:23. The Greek word is derived from the word for *brightness*. Notice that the virtuous woman of Rev 12 stands on (idiomatically, derives her authority from) the moon (12:1) and the New Jerusalem does not need the moon (21:23, Isa 60:19). Further, the activities of the wicked in the fourth trumpet cause the moon’s light to diminish by one third (8:12, compare Matt 24:29, Mark 13:24, Luke 21:25, Isa 13:10), while at the end of time the moon will be turned blood red (6:12, compare Acts 2:20, Joel 2:31). Because the sun (which see) is a symbol of Jesus’ robe of righteousness, the above references, as well as Ps 89:34-37 suggest that the moon could be a symbol of the Word of God as revealed in the Scripture.

Mountain [**ὄρος** oros] (8) 6:16, 15, 16 refer to mountains and their use by the wicked to hide from the wrath of God at His second advent.

8:8 is a mountain ablaze, an allusion to Mt Sinai (Ex 19, Heb 12:18), being cast into the sea. (Compare Jer 51:25)

14:1 is specifically named as Zion (which see), a reference to God's people generally as elsewhere in the New Testament. (Compare Isa 2:2)

16:20 is similar to those in Rev 6.

17:9 refers to the seven mountains: a comparison with 17:1 & 3 shows that these seven mountains, the many waters and the beast's seven heads are all the same place, where the harlot sits.

21:10 appears similar to 14:1 – the location of the New Jerusalem.

Thus mountains are always associated with worship.

For completeness we should include one other reference to a mountain in 16:16 – Harmagedon, Armageddon, which see. Since this and Zion are the only two named mountains, they act as counterpoints of each other.

Mouth [στόμα stoma] (22) In most cases, something is depicted as issuing from the mouths of various characters.

1:16, 2:16 Sword from the mouth of Jesus

3:16 Jesus spits out the lukewarm Laodiceans

9:17,18 fire, smoke and sulphur comes from the mouths of horses

11:5 fire comes from the mouths of two witnesses

12:15, 16 river of water comes from mouth of dragon

13:2 – 6 blasphemies come from mouth of sea beast

16:13(x3) frogs from the mouths of dragon, beast & false prophet

19:15, 21 Sword from the mouth of Jesus on white horse

In some cases, something is in the mouth:

9:19 Authority of horses is in their mouths

10:9, 10 little book is sweet as honey in the mouth

14:5 no lie in the mouths of those who follow the Lamb

In all cases, it appears that the mouth is the source of words to prophesy and teaching. In the New Testament (and Greek generally), words and thought (and by extension the mind) were interchangeable. Thus these allusions to the mouth are references to the exchange of ideas and symbolise the battle for the mind. Thus, the mouth is a symbol of doctrine or teaching.

Multitude [ὄχλος ochlos] (4) This refers to huge numbers of people of various identities:

7:9 The sealed multitude of righteous at the end under the sixth seal

17:15 The multitudes of wicked which the great prostitute rides

19:1 The heavenly multitude rejoicing at the condemnation of the great prostitute

19:6 The heavenly multitude who rejoice at the fact that Jesus has begun to reign with power, and at the wedding banquet of the Lamb

Murder [φόνος phonos] (1) 9:21. This is part of a list of sins committed by those in the 6th trumpet for which they receive judgement.

Murderer [φονεύς phoneus] (2) 21:8, 22:15. This is part of a list of those who will be excluded from the New Jerusalem.

Myrrh [μύρον muron] (1) 18:13. This is one of the precious cargoes of Babylon. It is interesting that in the rest of the New Testament this word always refers to the myrrh of nard that Mary used to anoint Jesus' feet and head (Matt 26:7, 9, 12, Mark 14:3-5, Luke 7:37, 38, 46, John 11:2, 12:3, 5), or to the anointing myrrh the other women intended for Jesus' embalming (Luke 23:56). Thus, the blasphemous Babylon trades in anointing oil to anoint false prophets and teachers.

Mystery [μυστήριον musterion] (4). This word could also be translated *secret*. It occurs as follows:

1:20 The mystery of the seven stars in Jesus hand

10:7 The mystery of God (compare 1 Cor 2:1, 4:1, Eph 3:9, Col 2:2, 1 Tim 3:16, etc.)

17:5 Mystery, Babylon the Great, mother of prostitutes

17:7 The mystery of the woman and the beast she rides (sits on)

Thus, the mystery of God and the mystery of Babylon are counterpoints to each other. The key to this type of language is given in Matt 13:11 where Jesus said that the mystery of the kingdom of heaven is given to you but hidden from others in parables. This presumably means that both Jesus' kingdom and that of Babylon require a definite mindset in order for each to make sense; and that both are mutually exclusive. (See 1 Cor 1:18, 21, 23, 25, 2:14, 3:19.)

Nation [ἔθνος ethnos] (23) 2:26, 5:9, 7:9, 10:11, 11:2, 9, 18, 12:5, 13:7, 14:6, 8, 15:3, 4, 16:19, 17:15, 18:3, 23, 19:15, 20:3, 8, 21:24, 26, 22:2. This denotes peoples both righteous and wicked. In 11:2, as often in the New Testament, it is probably best translated *Gentiles*. [The term Gentile can refer to non-Jews, Jews, or people generally.] Note the occasions where ἔθνος ethnos occurs in the phrase, *language, nation, people [and tribe]*, which see.

Nicolaitanes (2) 2:6, 15 Historically, this sect cannot be known for certain. However, a Gnostic sect (mystics who deny that the works of the flesh affect the spiritual life and deny that Jesus had a real physical body) by

this name was known in the second century and is reported by some of the early church fathers to have been founded by Nicolaus (Acts 6:5), one of the seven deacons. In any case, both words have a similar origin: νίκη + λαός (nike + laos) = victory + people. The word only occurs in Revelation.

Night [νύξ nux] (8). This word always occurs in proximity to Day [ἡμέρα hemera], which see.

Offspring – see **Seed**.

Oil [ἐλαίον elaiion] (2) 6:6, 18:13. Literally, olive oil. In all cases in the New Testament (Matt 25:3, 4, 8, Mark 6:13, Luke 7:46, 10:34, 16:6, Heb 1:9, James 5:14) olive oil is either a symbol of the Holy Spirit or His power in healing and anointing. Thus, the instruction to leave the oil unharmed (6:6) is not to attenuate the work of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, Babylon's trade in oil (18:13) apparently symbolises her selling of spiritual power, especially a false spirit. This is confirmed in the same verse (18:13) where Babylon is said to trade in the bodies and souls of people, for which she is roundly condemned with three double woes.

Notice here that oil always occurs with wine – a clear symbol of (spiritual) prosperity (6:6) while that from Babylon (18:13) is false spiritual prosperity.

Oil and wine is a joint symbol of prosperity and God's favour in the Old Testament (Deut 7:13, 11:14, 12:17, 14:23, 18:4, 28:51, 1 Chron 12:40, 2 Chron 2:10, 15, 11:11, 2 Chron 31:5, 32:28, Ezra 6:9, 7:22, Neh 5:11, 10:37, 39, Ps 104:15, Prov 21:17, Jer 31:12, 40:10, Hos 2:8, 22, Joel 1:10, 2:19, 24, Mic 6:15, Hag 1:11, 2:12). Oil and wine were also used as offerings in the Sanctuary service (Ex 20:40, Lev 23:13, Num 18:12, 1 Chron 9:29, 2 Chron 31:5, 13:5, 12.)

Omega - see **Alpha and Omega**.

One Another [ἀλλήλων allelon] (2) 6:4, 11:10. This reciprocal pronoun is used to denote the wicked who murder each other in the second seal, and those who celebrate at the death of the two prophets by sending each other gifts.

Open [ἀνοίγω anoigo] (26) This verb occurs in the following passages:

3:7, 8, 20 Door of David which only Jesus can open or shut

4:1 Heaven that had been opened

5:2, 3, 4, 5 Open the book sealed with 7 seals

5:9 Open the seven seals

6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 8:1 Sequentially opening the 7 seals

9:2 Open the shaft of the abyss

10:2, 8 The little book that had been opened in the Angel's hand

11:19 Temple of God in heaven opened

12:16 Earth opened its mouth to swallow the river

13:6 Sea beast opens its mouth to blaspheme

15:5 The Shrine of the tabernacle of testimony opened

19:11 Heaven opened

20:12 Books (of judgement) opened; and another book of life opened

Outer Court [αὐλή aule] (1) 11:2. An enclosed courtyard, palace, house or sheep fold. It is also used in Matt 26:3, 58, 69, Mark 14:54, 66, 15:16, Luke 11:21, 22:55, John 10:1, 16, 18:15. The context of this reference in Revelation 11:2 suggests that the temple is symbolic - probably of God's faithful people. The outer court would therefore be unconverted "gentiles" which have not joined the ranks of God's faithful.

Overcome [νικάω nikao] (17) This occurs in each of the messages to the seven churches in promises *to those who overcome* (2:7, 11, 17, 26, 3:5, 12, 21), Jesus who overcomes or wins (3:21, 5:5), the conquering white horse (6:2), the beast from the abyss overcomes the two witnesses (11:7), those who overcome by the word of their testimony (12:11), the sea beast who overcomes the saints (13:7), those who overcame the beast and his image (15:2), the Lamb overcomes the kings (17:14), those who overcome inherit all this (21:7).

The rest of the New Testament contains νικάω nikao in Luke 11:22, John 16:33, Rom 3:4, 12:21(x2), 1 John 2:13, 14, 4:4, 5:4(x2), 5. (The noun form [νίκη nike] occurs in 1 John 5:4.)

Paradise [παράδεισος paradeisos] (1) 2:7. A comparison with Luke 23:43 and 2 Cor 12:4 shows that paradise is heaven (which see), the home of the saved.

Patient Endurance – see **Perseverance**.

Pearl [μαργαρίτης margarites] (5). Apart from a literal use in 1 Tim 2:9, the pearl is used in the New Testament as a symbol of Jesus and His saving power (Matt 7:6, 13:45, 46). This is evidently the case in Revelation:

17:4 Babylon the great prostitute is dressed in pearls, which presumably represents spiritual heresies and a false gospel.

18:12 Pearls are one of Babylon's precious cargoes – she trades in spiritual heresies and false salvation as negotiable tender.

18:16 Babylon clothed in pearls – see on 17:4 above.

21:21 (x2) The holy city, New Jerusalem has 12 gates which are 12 pearls. Thus the redeemed must enter the holy city via Jesus alone.

People [λαός laos] (9) 5:9, 7:9, 10:11, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 17:15, 18:4, 21:3. Except for the last two, λαός laos occurs in the phrase *language, nation, people [and tribe]*, which see. The first two and final two (5:9, 7:9, 18:4, 21:3) specifically refer to My (God's) people. In the rest of the Bible, "the people" usually refers to God's people.

Persecution [θλιψις thlipsis] (5) 1:9, 2:9, 10, 22, 7:14. The word is always used literally and only in the first half of Revelation and always refers to the righteous and their persecution for the cause of Jesus. In two places (2:22, 7:14) it is qualified by the word great.

Perseverance [ὑπομονή hupomone] (6) 1:9, 2:2, 3, 19, 3:10, 13:10, 14:12. These invariably refer to the patient endurance of the saints under the trials of the Christian life. The last two references suggest that it is such patient endurance that leads to eternal life. This is a common theme in the New Testament (Luke 8:15, 21:19, Rom 2:7, 5:3, 4, 8:25, 15:5, 2 Cor 1:6, 6:4, 12:12, etc). Thus, the word is used literally.

Pillar [στῦλος stulos] (2) 3:15, 10:1. The symbolic use of this word in Gal 2:9 and 1 Tim 3:15 suggests that pillar is a symbol of church's senior leaders. Thus the overcomers in Philadelphia (3:15) are promised the reward of being pillars in the temple (which see, ie, God's church). Interestingly, Jesus' legs are like pillars (10:1), an allusion to SS 5:15.

Plague [πληγή plegē] (16) In most cases this refers to widespread pestilence of some kind over a wide part of the earth (9:18, 20, 11:6, 15:1, 6, 8, 16:9, 21, 18:4, 8, 21:9, 22:18); however, in a few cases (13:3, 12, 14) it refers to a single entity, the sea beast, in which case it is better rendered *wound*.

Poured out [ἐκχέω ekchew] (9) 16:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 17. These all refer to the poring out of the bowls to initiate the plagues except for 16:6 which refers to the pouring out (idiomatically shedding) the blood of the martyrs.

Power {noun}[δύναμις dunamis] (11) 1:16, 3:8, 4:11, 5:12, 7:12, 11:17, 12:10, 13:2, 15:8, 17:13, 18:3, 19:1. Power is the most frequent translation of this word, but it also translated, *might, force, deeds, strength, marvellous works* or better, *ability* [to do something, usually great]. In most cases here, this word is used as part of a hymn of praise to God or the Lamb rehearsing their greatness (4:11, 5:12, 7:12, 11:12, 12:10, 15:8, 19:1). 1:16 records that Jesus' face shines in its strength. 13:2 and 17:3 discuss the beast receiving power from the dragon and 10 kings; while 18:3 records that Babylon power of luxury made merchants wealth. The Philadelphian church has little strength in 3:8.

In the New Testament it is sometimes translated *miracle* (Matt 7:22, 11:20, Acts 19:11, 1 Cor 12:10, 28, 29, Gal 3:5, etc.)

{verb}[δύναμαι dunami] (10) 2:2, 3:8, 5:3, 6:17, 7:9, 9:20, 13:4, 17, 14:3, 15:8. This verb is often (correctly) translated *can*. Interestingly, the verb and noun occasionally appear in close proximity such as:

3:8 The door that no-one *can* shut and the Philadelphian church which has little *strength*.

15:8 The temple was filled with God's *power* so that no-one *can* enter.

Praise [αἰνέω aineo] (1) 19:5 Used to describe the attitude of those in heaven over Babylon's fall.

[εὐλογία eulogia] (3) 5:12, 13, 7:12. These refer to the praise, glory etc to the Lamb, God and the Lamb, and God.

Prayer [προσευχή proseuche] (3) 5:8, 8:3, 4. This word always occurs in the phrase *incense, which are the prayers of the saints*. See **Incense**.

Preach [εὐαγγελίζω euangelizo; lit. good message] (2) 10:7, 14:6. It is interesting that the only references to preaching in Revelation are in the context of the end of time, just before Jesus' second coming. However, the first speaks of Jesus preaching personally to his prophets and the second is the church, symbolised by an angel, preaching the eternal gospel to the world. There is thus a link between the first and last gospel the church must preach – they are the same, just as Jesus is.

Priest [ἱερεύς hierēus] (3) 1:6, 5:10, 20:6. In all cases the word occurs in the plural and refers to the saints as a kingdom of priests of God.

Prison [φυλακή phulakē] (5) This word shows an interesting pattern:

2:10 A: The devil will put some in prison for 10 days

18:2(x3) B: Babylon a prison for every unclean spirit, every unclean bird, every unclean beast.

20:7 A: Satan will be released from prison after 1000 years.

Note that Babylon is a place of confinement for all things evil (unclean); that is, what was once their home has become their prison. A similar situation exists for Satan – he wanted the earth and so is imprisoned for 1000 years while it is desolate!

Prophecy [προφητεία propheteia] (7) With two exceptions, John uses this word to describe his own work in the phrase, the words of this prophecy (1:3), or, the words of the prophecy of this book (22:7, 10, 18, 19). The two witnesses also utter prophecy (11:6), and, the testimony of Jesus is defined as the spirit of prophecy (19:10).

Prophecy [προφητεῖα propheteia] (2) 10:11, 11:3. These occurrences are both associated with John's experience of the little book tasting sweet but

turning his stomach sour. He was told to prophesy again (10:11) which is fulfilled via the two witnesses who prophesy for 1260 days clothed in sackcloth (11:3).

Prophet [προφήτης prophetes] (8) 10:7, 11:10, 18, 16:6, 18:20, 24, 22:6, 9. This word is always used literally and refers to the prophets of the Bible; in 22:9, John is classed as one of the prophets. An exception is 11:10, which refers to the two witnesses as two prophets in the last days. These appear to act as a counterpoint to the false prophet – the land beast.

Prophetess [προφήτις prophetis] (1) 2:20. This is **Jezebel**, which see.

Prostitute [πόρνη porne] (5) 17:1, 5, 15, 16, 19:2. This word invariably refers to Babylon (which see) the great prostitute – a religious coalition of the beast trinity. She is described as sitting on many waters (17:1), which are many people (17:15), and sitting and the beast from the abyss (17:3). She is described as a great harlot because she committed adultery with the kings of the earth and the wine of her adulteries have an intoxicating effect of the *inhabitants of the earth* (which see) – a technical phrase for the wicked (17:8). Thus, the righteous appear immune to her wine and allurements, but are not immune to her persecutions (17:6). Since a woman (which see) is a symbol of a church, she is condemned for the illicit relationship she has with the kings of the earth. Further, the product of this relationship, wine, intoxicates the wicked, which presumably permits the prostitute kill and murder the saints and thus become drunk on the blood of the saints. She is also described as the mother of prostitutes (17:5) suggesting that she inspires other such illicit relationships between church and state. Interestingly, despite her initially successful relationship with the kings of the earth, they grow to hate her and then kill and burn her (17:16). Thus, wickedness has within it the seeds of its own destruction. There is an interesting contrast: 19:2 says that God condemned the prostitute, but 17:17 says that God accomplished this by inciting the 10 kings to destroy the prostitute. See also **Fornication**.

Pure – see **Clean**.

Purple [πορφυροῦς porphurous] (2) 17:4, 18:16. This is one of the colours of the great prostitute, Babylon, with which she arrays herself to hide her sinful state. The only other places it occurs in the New Testament is John 19:2, 5 where it was used to mock Jesus' (rightful) claim to royalty and ultimately deity.

Purple Cloth [πορφύρα porphura] (1) 18:12. This is one of the precious cargoes of Babylon, which was a symbol of high rank or nobility for

those who wore it. See also Mark 15:17, 20 (Jesus' mock robe of honour), Luke 16:19 (the rich man's symbol of honour).

Queen [βασίλισσα basilissa] (1) 18:7. This term is applied only to Babylon, the great prostitute who rides the beast from the abyss. She sits defiant, arrogant, proud and blasphemous, determined that she is not a widow, ie, self sufficient and not dependent on anyone or anything else. Such an attitude is consistent with her blasphemous title – Christians realise that they are completely dependent on Jesus for salvation and all else.

Quick(ly) – see **Soon**.

Radiance – see **Light**.

Rage - see **Wrath**

Raise see **Lifted**.

Read [ἀναγινώσκω anaginosko] (1) 1:3. The book of Revelation was intended for reading in public worship.

Reap – see **Harvest**

Red [πυρρός purrhos] (2) 6:4, 12:3. This word comes from the word for fire, **πυρ** pur, hence, the description in some translations, “fiery red”. It is used to describe the colour of the second horse of the seals and the great dragon. The word only occurs in these two places in the entire New Testament. Similarly, in the Old Testament LXX, the word occurs appears only in connection with the horses of Zechariah. Thus, it is difficult to attribute any significance to this word because of its paucity of allusions, except perhaps, its allusion to fire and by extension, the Holy Spirit. Thus, the saints under the second seal were fired by the Holy Spirit. The word here has no connection (as some prefer to claim) with red as a colour for blood (as occurs in 6:12).

Redeem - see **Buy**.

Reign [βασιλεύω basileuo] (7) 5:10, 11:15, 17, 19:6, 20:4, 6, 22:5. All these refer to either the reign of God and/or Jesus, or the reign of the saints with Jesus. There are no references to the kings of the earth reigning.

Remainder [λοιπός loipos] (8) 2:24, 3:2, 8:13, 9:20, 11:13, 12:17, 19:21, 20:5. Two of these refer to things (3:2) and trumpet blasts (8:13). The other six refer to people – a righteous and a wicked remnant:

Righteous Remainder:

2:24 Thyatirans who do not hold to Jezebel's teaching.

12:17 Survivors of Satan's persecution who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus

Wicked Remainder:

9:20 Survivors of three plagues which kills one third of mankind, who refuse to repent of their false worship and sins.

11:13 Terrified survivors following collapse of one tenth of the city by an earthquake (which kills 7000) who give glory to God.

19:21 Wicked left after the destruction of the beast and false prophet who are killed by the sword out of the mouth of the rider on the white horse.

20:5 Entire wicked dead (as distinct from the righteous dead who are resurrected at the beginning of the millennium) who remain so for the 1000 years.

Now, all these will be readily classified as wicked or righteous with the exception of 11:13 where the remnant “give glory to God.” This remnant has been classified as wicked for the following reasons: (a) They form a group that oppose and are enemies of the two witnesses, (b) Those who give glory to God are always a group in the Old Testament who have been wicked and are forced to finally and grudgingly tell the truth (“give glory to God”) as an admission of guilt just before their final destruction (Josh 7:19, Isa 24:15, 42:12, Jer 13:16. Compare John 9:24, 34.) Thus, the remnant enemies of the two witnesses appear to finally recognise their evil ways (9:20) by admitting their guilt just before Jesus comes to reign (11:15).

Remnant – see **Remainder**

Render – see **Repay**.

Repay [ἀποδίδωμι apodidomi] (4) 18:6(x2), 22:2, 12. While this word is used extensively in the New Testament, these are the only places where John uses the word. Its use (as elsewhere) is varied: The first two denote judgements or consequences of the great prostitute – “give her back double from her own cup”; the third denotes the yielding of fruit of the tree of life; and the last is the giving of the reward to the righteous in the New Earth. In all cases, the repayment or giving is natural, expected and appropriate.

Rest {noun} [ἀνάπασις anapausis] (2) 4:8, 14:11. This word would be better rendered in the present continuous, *resting*. The first depicts the lack of rest or unceasing praise before the throne while the latter depicts the lack of rest for those who worship the beast and his image. Notice that in this last case, it is not the torment that is unceasing but just lack of rest and enjoyed by the people of God – see Heb 4:1-10 where the Sabbath is used as a symbol of God’s resting.

{verb} [ἀναπαύω anapauo] (2) 6:11, 14:13. Both of these are applied to the righteous: the first is the waiting of the martyred for vindication, while the second is the promised rest to the blessed who die in the Lord from now on.

Resurrection [ἀνάστασις anastasis] (2) 20:5, 6. Two distinct resurrections are portrayed – that of the righteous (first) before the millennium, and the wicked (second) after the millennium. This is consistent with New Testament teaching. (Luke 14:14, Acts 24:15)

Revelation [ἀποκάλυψις apokalipsis] (1) 1:1. Literally, “unveiling”, which appears frequently in the New Testament.

Reverence – see **Fear**.

Rider – See **Seated**.

Right [δεξιός dexios] (9) With the exception of 13:16 (the right hand of the wicked) all references to the *right* occur in the first half of Revelation and refer to either Jesus’ right hand (1:16, 17, 20, 10:2 (foot), 10:5), or the right of the one on the throne (5:1, 7).

The right of the royal throne was the place of the heir apparent and is thus used elsewhere of Jesus (Matt 22:44, 26:64, Mark 12:36, 14:62, 16:19, Luke 20:42, 22:69, Acts 2:33, 34, 5:31, 7:55, 56, Rom 8:34, Eph 1:20, Col 3:1, Heb 1:3, 13, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, 1 Pet 3:22.)

The right hand was also used to welcome and make pledges.

Righteous/Righteousness See Just/Justice.

Rise up [ἀναβαίνω anabaino] (13) This word is used to describe John coming up to heaven in the introductory vision to the seven seals (4:1), an angel coming up from the east (7:2), the rising of smoke (8:4, 9:2, 14:11, 19:3), the coming up of beasts from various places - sea, abyss, land (11:7, 13:1, 11, 17:8), the two witnesses coming up to heaven (11:12), the wicked coming up across the earth to attack the Holy City (20:9).

River [ποταμός potamos] (8) These form an interesting pattern:

8:10 A: Third angel of trumpets turns rivers to blood

9:14 B: Sixth angel of trumpets at the river Euphrates

12:15 C: Dragon unleashes river to harm the woman

12:16 C: Earth helps woman by swallowing Dragon’s river

16:4 A: Third angel of bowl plagues turns rivers into blood.

16:12 B: Sixth angel of bowl plagues at the river Euphrates.

22:1 D: River of water of life

22:2 D: Tree on either side of river of water of life

Since the many waters of the Euphrates flow through Babylon (17:1), the river of the water of life and the Euphrates can be seen as counterpoints

of each other. Further, since 17:15 tells us that the many waters (the Euphrates), where the harlot sits, represent people, it is possible that these other rivers also represent people.

Robe [στολή stole] (5) 6:11, 7:7, 13, 14, 22:14. Except for the last reference, these are all white robes given to the saints under the seven seals. Further, these robes are made white in the blood of the Lamb (7:14) and so are symbolic of the righteousness of Jesus, rather than their own. White robes appear to be associated with heavenly beings (Mark 16:5). See also **Clothes**.

Rock [πέτρα petra] (2) 6:15, 16. This is the well-known passage where the wicked seek death by asking the rocks (and the mountains) to fall on them when they become terrified at the second coming of Jesus. From its occurrence in the rest of the New Testament, it is possible to understand this word either literally (Matt 27:51, 60, Mark 15:46, Luke 8:6, 13) or symbolically of Christ (Matt 7:24, 25, Luke 6:48, Rom 9:33, 1 Cor 10:4, 1 Peter 2:8; see also Isa 8:14). In either case, the effect is the same – the wicked die at the brightness of His coming.

Rod [ῥάβδος rhabdos] (4) This word occurs with two distinct meanings: *Jesus' sceptre of iron* (3) - a symbol of His authority to rule firmly, which is an allusion to Ps 2:9 (2:27, 12:5, 19:15). Hebrews 1:8 quotes Ps 45:6, 7 to suggest that this sceptre is a symbol of Jesus' righteousness by which He rules so firmly. This is consistent with the advice given by Solomon for good government (Prov 14:34, 20:28, 25:4, 5, 28:2, 4, 12, 15, 16, 28, 29:2, 4, 14).

A measuring rod (1) used to measure the temple (11:1). See also Measure. As discussed there, the act of measuring signifies judgement (Matt 7:2, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:38, 2 Cor 10:12). Thus, if we associate the symbol of a rod used for measuring, we observe that the standard of judgement is the righteousness of Jesus (see above).

Root [ρίζα rhiza] (2) 5:5, 22:16. Both refer to Jesus and occur in the phrase, *the root of David*, except that the second has the extra (and apparently contradictory) idea that Jesus is also the offspring of David. Thus, Jesus both created and was descended from David.

Saints – see **Holy**.

Salvation [σωτηρία soteria] (3) 7:10, 12:10, 19:1. These three references all occur in anthems of praise to God and Christ to whom alone belongs salvation. Such a theme is consistent with the rest of Scripture (Isa 43:3, 11, 45:17, 21, Matt 1:21, Acts 4:12, 2 Tim 1:10, Tit 2:13, 2 Pet 1:1, 11).

Sand [ἄμμος ammos] (2) 12:18, 20:8. Despite both occurring in the phrase, “sand of the sea”, this word is used in two quite different ways. The first denotes the *location* of the dragon when he goes away to make war by summoning two helper beasts, one from the sea and one from the land. Thus, the dragon stands on the sand (or shore) of the sea being the border between the land and sea. See also Jer 5:22. The second denotes a vast uncountable *number* – a regular figure of speech in Scripture, see Rom 9:27, Heb 11:12, and in the OT, Gen 22:17, 32:12, 41:49, Josh 11:4, Judg 7:12, 1 Sam 13:5, 2 Sam 17:11, 1 Kings 4:20, 29, Ps 78:27, Isa 10:22, Jer 15:8, 33:22, Hos 1:10.

Satan [Σατανᾶς Satanas] (8) 2:9, 13(x2), 24, 12:9, 20:2, 7. The word is derived from the Aramaic for adversary or accuser. Revelation uses devil, serpent and dragon for the same being. For instances where Satan incites or accuses people, see 1 Chron 21:1, Job 1, 2, Zech 3:1.

(I) Saw [εἶδον eidon] (45) This word is the past tense of the verb ὁράω horao, I see. The large number of times that John reports that he saw something emphasises just that he simply recorded what he saw. That is, he did not invent it or imagine it, but observed the visions given him. Some have suggested that the occurrence of this verb in the formula [καὶ εἶδον, kai eidon] (32), *and I saw*, signals the beginning of a new section or subsection. While this is often true (especially in the seals) it is not always true: for example, 16:13, 17:3 and 17:6 are clearly not new sections or subsections. Further many other clear section breaks do not have this formula. Hence we conclude that (unfortunately) it is an unreliable section or subsection marker.

Scarlet - see **Crimson**.

Scorpion [σκορπίος skorprios] (3) 9:3, 5, 10. Scorpions only occur in the fifth trumpet where their sting is likened to the sting and authority of the locusts, which would only affect the wicked (those not having the seal of God on their foreheads) for five months.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word only occurs in Luke 10:19 and 11:12. In the second case the word is used in a parable in such a way as to show people's contempt of its sting. In the first case, the scorpion is likened to the enemy of God's people and Jesus granted His followers authority over them. In the Old Testament the situation is similar. If we exclude the occurrences of “Scorpion Pass” and literal usages, we are left with essentially two instances: Where Rehoboam threatens to scourge the Israelites with scorpions (1 Kings 12:11, 14, 2 Chron 10:11, 14) and

where the rebellious Israelites are likened to scorpions. Thus, scorpions are a symbol of harassment caused by the wicked and the devil.

Scroll – see **Book**.

Sea [θάλασσα *thalassa*] (26) Here, we will examine only those instances which do not occur in the phrase *sea...[and] land* (which see), or, those which do not occur in the phrase *heaven...earth...sea* etc (which see), or, *sand of the sea* (which see). Sea [θάλασσα *thalassa*] occurs in isolation 13 times with a variety of meanings.

4:6, 15:2 (x2): Sea of glass on which the saints stand before the throne of God. This symbolises the pure, calm government of God.

8:8 (x2), 9, 16:3 (x2): Burning mountain thrown into the sea turning it to blood and 1/3 of sea creatures die, bowl poured onto sea and all sea creatures die: appears to suggest that the sea here is where much of (unsealed) humanity resides.

13:1: The beast from the sea is again the place of (unsealed) humanity.

18:17, 19, 21, 20:13: All who earn a living at sea, ships on the sea and an angel throws a large stone into the sea to cause confusions, the sea gives up dead for destruction: again the sea is the symbol of (unsealed?) humanity.

Thus we have 11 references to sea being the origin of unsealed humanity and 2 to the order of God's government.

Sea...Land [θάλασσα...γε *thalassa...ge*] (11) These instances may be classified as follows. In 5:13, 10:6, 12:12, 14:7 and 21:1 we have Heaven...earth...sea, which see.

Land and sea:

7:1 Four winds not to blow on the land or sea

7:2 Winds that had power to harm the land or sea

7:3 Do not harm the land or sea

Sea and Land:

10:2 Angel with right foot on sea and left foot on land

10:5 Angel who was standing on sea and land

10:8 Angel standing on sea and land.

Thus, this phrase appears to describe all inhabitants of the planet.

Seal {noun} [σφραγίς, *sphragis*] (13) 5:1, 2, 5, 9, 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 8:1. This denotes one of the seals of the scroll that the Lamb opens. In 7:2 & 9:4 it is the seal [of the living] God and is applied to the foreheads (only) of the righteous. The fact that the seal of God is administered in the forehead and represents the Name of the Lamb and the Father (14:2),

strongly suggests that it is a sign of the character (and behaviour) of the recipients (Ex 13:9, 28:38, Eze 9:4, etc.)

Elsewhere this word occurs in Rom 4:11 (seal of circumcision), 1 Cor 9:2 (seal of apostleship) and 2 Tim 2:19 (the seal, "The Lord knows who are His"). Thus, when referring to people, a seal invariably refers to the righteous. A seal thus becomes the distinguishing sign of the righteous.

In the literal sense, a seal was a wax plug impressed with unique marks and applied in such a way that if the sealed device were tampered with, the seal would be broken. Thus seals were used to demonstrate the integrity of legal documents, closed buildings, etc.

Seal {verb} [σφραγίζω *sphragizo*] (8) 7:3, 4, 5, 8 applies to the righteous and except for the first case, in the past tense. In 10:4, 20:3, 22:10 it is used in the Roman legal sense of sealing something to ensure its integrity. (The word also occurs in 5:1 in compound form – had been sealed.)

Elsewhere this word occurs in Matt 27:66 (sealing Jesus tomb), Jn 3:33 (sealing that God is true), Jn 6:27 (the sealing of God), Rom 15:28 (sealing the fruit of Paul's labour), 2 Cor 1:22 (sealed us with the guarantee of the Spirit), Eph 1:13 (you were sealed with the Spirit), Eph 4:30 (sealed by the Spirit). Note that in this last instance, those sealed with the Spirit are warned against grieving the Spirit: thus, sealed people are still capable of sin.

Hence, both the verb and noun forms are always applied to the righteous and are primarily used to denote the gift of the Holy Spirit when applied to people. The seal of God stands in counterpoint to the mark of the beast.

In the OT, *seal* is not used to distinguish people, but a closely related word, sign is: Ex 13:9, 16 - a sign that God rescued Israel from Egypt, Ex 31:13, 17, Ex 20:12, 20 - Sabbath served as a distinguishing sign of God's people, etc.

Seated [κάθημαι *kathemai*] (33) Those that sit in Revelation either sit on a throne, a cloud, a horse, or ride a beast.

God sits on His throne (4:2, 3, 9, 10, 5:1, 7, 13, 6:16, 7:10, 15, 19:4)

Jesus sits on a cloud (14:14, 15) rides a horse (19:11, 19, 21) sits on the throne of judgement (20:11, 21:5)

4 horsemen (6:2, 4, 5, 8) in the first four seals

24 elders sit on 24 thrones (4:4, 11:16)

Riders on horses in the sixth trumpet (9:17)

Those who sit (live) on the earth (14:6)

The righteous who ride horses (19:18) as part of Jesus' army

The harlot who rides a scarlet beast (17:1, 3, 9, 15) sits as a queen (18:7)
In all cases, in eastern culture, one who sat was one in authority whether on a horse or beast (directing the animal) or on a judgement throne.

Second Death [θάνατος δεύτερος thanatos deuteros] (4) 2:11, 20:6, 14, 21:8. The second death occurs after the millennium and is final. The righteous are immune from the second death on the basis of their names being written in the Lamb's book of life. This has originated the saying that those who are born twice die once while those born only once will die twice.

Seed [σπέρμα sperma] (1) 12:17. This is the seed of the woman and requires the utmost care in understanding. In the remainder of the New Testament it has the following meanings:

Jesus Christ (Acts 3:25, 13:23, Rom 1:3, Gal 3:16, 19, 2 Tim 2:8)

The people of God or the saints – heirs of the promises (Rom 4:16, 9:7, 8, Gal 3:29, 1 John 3:9)

The Jews – descendants of Abraham and/or David (Luke 1:55, John 7:42, 8:33, 37, Acts 3:25, 7:6, Rom 4:13, 18, 11:1, 2 Cor 11:22, Heb 2:16, 11:11, 11:18)

Descendants or seed literally (Matt 22:24, 25, Mark 4:31, 12:19-22, Luke 20:28, Rom 9:29, 1 Cor 15:38)

Parabolically representing “the sons of the kingdom”, that is, the saints (Matt 13:24, 27, 32, 37).

Thus, if we exclude the literal occurrences and those referring to the Jews (see appendix 5) we are left with a choice between the saints (heirs of the promise) or Jesus. Since the woman's seed has been previously mentioned in Rev 12, the rest of her offspring would naturally be the saints or the true church which Jesus founded (see 1 John 3:9).

Sell [πωλέω poleo] (1) 13:17. This word occurs as part of the phrase, *buy or sell*, and the object bought or sold is not specified. This only occurs (symbolically or parabolically) in one other place – Matt 25:9 where the object traded is oil (which see), a symbol of the Holy Spirit (or a false holy spirit). This is entirely expected because the immediate context discusses the mark (which see) of the beast and (later in 14:1, 2) the seal of God (which see) represent the false and true Holy Spirit. Thus, the land beast (and the sea beast to whom the land beast gives honour) presume to have a monopoly on the power and work of the Holy Spirit by trading it as a negotiable commodity. Buying and selling are alluded to in the third seal (6:6) which, describes expensive grain – see **Wheat**.

Send [πέμπω pempo] (5) This verb (with one exception) forms a chiasmic structure as shown below:

1:11 A: Send this message to the seven churches

14:15 B: Send (ie thrust in) the sickle and reap [the grain]

14:18 B: Send (ie thrust in) the sickle and gather the grapes

22:16 A: Send this message to the churches

All these are associated with an angel instructing to send (or thrust).

The other occurrence is 11:10 (“send one another gifts”), which is debatable. The word πέμπω pempo, send, occurs here in the UBS4 text but not in the Majority text where it is δωρέομαι doreomai, give (“give one another gifts.” This word to give does not otherwise occur in the UBS4 text of Revelation.) Nor is this occurrence (11:10) associated with an angel.

Serpent [ὄφις ophis] (5) These references fall into two distinct categories distinguished by their occurrence in each half of Revelation:

9:19 The tails of the horses under the sixth trumpet are like snakes with heads with which they inflict injury.

This is a difficult reference to understand because so few precedents are available. It is presumably a continuation of the fifth trumpet where the scorpions have stings in their tails to inflict injury. Since scorpions are a symbol of the devil and the work of the wicked, we can presumably draw a similar analogy here. Isa 9:15 describes lying prophets as the tail. This is consistent with the other reference to serpents in Revelation – see below.

The remaining occurrences all refer to the devil:

12:9 A: The great dragon, that ancient serpent called the Devil or Satan

12:14 B: Woman flees to the desert out of the serpent's reach

12:15 B: The serpent spewed out water to overtake the woman

20:2 A: The dragon, that ancient serpent who is the Devil or Satan

Notice that the serpent is unambiguously identified and also called ancient – a clear reference to Gen 3:1-15 where the devil or Satan is disguised as an ancient serpent who deceives. See also Isa 14:12-15, Eze 28:12b-15.

Servant [δοῦλος doulos] (14) 1:1(x2), 2:20, 6:15, 7:3, 10:7, 11:18, 13:16, 15:3, 19:2, 5, 18, 22:3, 6. Notice that this word occurs with equal frequency in the each half of the book. Further, all occurrences refer to servants of God or the Lamb or both except 6:15, 13:6 and 19:18. These latter exceptions always occur in a list: *all men, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave*, denoting that it is all inclusive of the wicked.

Shaft [φρέαρ frear = well or pit] (4) 9:1, 2(x3). This is the shaft to the abyss (which see), that is, its entrance and exit. Its opening under the 5th trumpet is described as releasing a demonic force which torments the wicked (unsealed). Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word only occurs in Luke 14:5, John 4:11, 12.

Shame [αἰσχύνη aischune] (1) 3:18. This refers to the shame associated with nakedness that should be covered with white clothes, which represent Christ's righteousness as exemplified in a person's life (Rev 19:8). This is an allusion to the shame felt by Adam and Eve in Eden when they discovered their nakedness (Gen 3:10, 11).

Sharp [ὄξυς oxus] (7) This word actually means swift (Rom 3:15), but when used to describe a sword (1:16, 2:12, 19:15) or sickle (14:14, 17, 18) it means sharp. It is significant that Jesus' judgement as symbolised by the sword and sickle is thus depicted as being swift and sharp.

Shine – see **Light**.

Sickle [δρέπανον drepanon] (7) 14:14, 15, 16, 17, 18(x2), 19. The sickle is used to harvest both the ripened (dried) grain and the clusters of grapes of God's wrath.

This word only occurs one other time in the New Testament (Mark 4:29) and again refers God's final judgement.

Sign [σημεῖον semeion] (7) 12:1, 3, 13:13, 14, 15:1, 16:14, 19:20. This word is used in two different senses: great signs which appear as a warning of coming events (12:1, 3, 15:1) and (miraculous) signs performed by the land beast or false prophet (13:13, 14, 16:14, 19:20) to attract false worship to the sea beast and the image to the beast. Both senses occur throughout the New Testament; eg: warning signs {or signals} (Matt 16:1-4, 24:3, 30, 26:48, Mk 8:11, 12, 13:4, 22, Luke 11:30, 21:7, 11, 25, etc); miraculous signs (Matt 12:38, 39, 16:1-4, 24:24, John 2:11, 23, 3:2, 4:48, 54, 6:2, etc.)

This same word is used in the Septuagint (Eze 9:6) as the sign of the righteous who were not to be killed.

Sin [ἁμαρτία harmartia] (3) 1:5, 18:4, 5. These refer to the sins of God's people that have been cleansed by Jesus blood, and the sins of Babylon. Notice that we have in just these three references the primary difference between the saints of God and the inhabitants of Babylon – saints are forgiven sinners while Babylonians refuse to have their sins forgiven. Further, while this word is used as a noun, it has the sense of being a changeable state – saints have been washed, that is changed while

Babylonians refuse to allow this freely offered miracle of God. This word is used 173 times in the New Testament.

Sing a song [ᾄδουσιν ᾠδὴν adousin oden] (3) 5:9, 14:3, 15:3. These three respectively record the 4 living creatures and the 24 elders in heaven, the 144,000 on Mt Zion, and the saved on the sea of glass, singing a hymn of praise and glory to the Lamb and God before the throne. Both these words occur together, but not in the same phrase, only twice more in the New Testament in Eph 5:19 and Col 3:16 which also speak of praising God. Other less explicit hymns of praise are recorded in Rev 4:8, 11, 5:12, 13, 7:10, 12.

Sit [καθίζω kathizo] (3) The promise of Jesus to the saints in 3:21 to sit on the throne is fulfilled in 20:4 where the saints take their places to judge. Jesus' record (past tense) of his already having sat on the throne is detailed in Rev 4, 5.

Size – see **Measurement**.

Slaughter [σφάζω sphazo] (8) 5:6, 9, 12, 6:4, 9, 13:3, 8, 18:24. This verb is used, not to describe general indiscriminate mass murder, but the killing of things for a sacred cause, as a sacrifice (see 1 John 3:12). Thus the lamb is slaughtered (5:6, 9, 12, 13:8); the saints and prophets are slaughtered – presumably as martyrs defending the truth (6:4, 9, 18:24); the beast from the sea, as the false Christ or Messiah, is slaughtered (13:3). This last reference is important for the identity of the sea beast in its blasphemous claim to messiahship.

It is the misunderstanding of the sacred nature of this verb that has led some to believe that the slaughter in 6:4 and 9 describes mass killings by some evil tyrant in an egotistical fit of rage. However, the other seals (which see) clearly allude to the progress of the saints spreading the Gospel and the martyrdom that always accompanies a faithful witness in the face of determined opposition.

Slave – see **Servant**

Smoke [καπνός kapnos] (12) 8:4, 9:2(x3), 3, 17, 18, 14:11, 15:8, 18:9, 18, 19:3. Smoke is the result (consequence) of fire (which see) and is portrayed as such. And because fire can represent both the Holy Spirit (true or counterfeit) and destruction, so smoke is used to represent both the results of these two. Thus smoke can represent the results of the Holy Spirit impressing the minds of the saints to pray (8:4, 15:8) or of a false spirit on the wicked (9:2, 3, 17, 18) and the destruction that ensues. Smoke is also used as a symbol of the eternal destruction (rising forever)

of Babylon (14:11, 18:9, 18, 19:3). Compare Nahum 2:13, Josh 8:21, Isa 9:18.

Apart from the above, smoke only occurs in the New Testament in Acts 2:19 which quotes Joel 2:30.

Snake see **Serpent**.

Snow [χιών chion] (1) 1:14. Here and in Matt 28:3 we have the phrase, *white like snow*, a symbol of divine purity and radiance.

Sodom (1) 11:8. See **Egypt**. A place notorious for its wickedness and debauchery.

Son [υἱός huios] (8) Of these occurrences, three occur in the phrase *sons of Israel*, see **Israel**. Of the remainder, three occur in the phrase *(A) Son of Man*, which see below. The remaining two occurrences both refer to Jesus as the Son of God (2:18) in the message to the church of Thyatira, and the male child of the virtuous woman (12:5).

(A) Son of Man (2) 1:13, 14:14. A comparison with John 5:27, Heb 2:6 and Dan 7:13 clearly identifies this phrase with Jesus in His role as executive judge.

Song [ὦδε ode = song of praise or hymn] (5) 5:9, 14:3(x2), 15:3(x2). These are the three great hymns of praise sung to the Lamb by the saints. See **Sing a song**.

Soon [ταχύ tachy] (6) 2:16, 3:11, 11:14, 22:7, 12, 20. This adverb of time, with the exception of 11:14, always occurs in the phrase uttered by Jesus, *I am coming soon*. This is indirect evidence that the third woe (ie, the seventh trumpet) of 11:14 also refers to Jesus' Second Advent.

[τάχος tachos] (2) 1:1, 22:6. This temporal adjective (as distinct from the adverb above) always refers to the nearness of the events described in the book of Revelation.

Sore [έλκος helkos] (2) 16:2, 11. These refer to the sores under the first of the last seven bowl plagues. Otherwise the word only occurs in Luke 16:21 (plus a related verb ἐλκώ helkoo in Luke 16:20) in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. In both cases, literal sores in a figurative narrative are implied.

Sorcery [φαρμακεία pharmakeia] (1) 18:23, [φάρμακον pharmakon] (1) 9:21, [φάρμακος pharmakos] (2) 21:18, 22:15. This is one of the lists of sins of the wicked that can exclude them from heaven. This is confirmed by the only other reference to this sin in the New Testament (Gal 5:20).

Sound – see **Voice**.

Spirit [πνεῦμα pneuma] (24) In all but four cases, the uses of this word denote the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead. The occurrences may be classified as follows:

2:7, 11, 17, 29, 3:6, 13, 22. This is the phrase, “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the seven churches.”

1:4, 3:1, 4:5, 5:6. The seven spirits of God surrounding the throne. They are said to be held by Jesus (3:1) and blazing like lamps (4:5), and eyes possessed by Jesus sent to all the earth.

1:10, 4:2, 17:3, 21:10. “in the spirit” is invariably associated with (near) the start of a new section or vision of Revelation.

14:13 Spirit grants rest to the dead.

19:10, 22:6. A comparison of these with 1:1-3 shows that the “testimony of Jesus” is the visionary experience of John (what he saw) and is called the “Spirit of Prophecy”.

22:17 The Spirit and bride say “come”.

11:11 The breath (lit. spirit) of life from God enters the two prophets. Contrast a similar reference in 13:15 (below).

The remaining references are all to a false spirit:

13:15 The land beast (“false prophet”) is given authority to give breath (lit. spirit) to the image of the beast.

16:13 Three evil (lit. unclean) spirits like frogs from the mouths of the unholy trinity of beasts.

16:14 These three frogs are the spirits of demons who perform miraculous signs to deceive the world.

18:2 Every evil (lit. unclean) spirit (and demons) lives in Babylon. Since the three frogs come from the unholy beast trinity, this is confirming evidence that the beast trinity is Babylon.

Spring [πηγή pege] (5) This word always occurs in the phrase *springs of water* and forms a chiastic pattern:

7:17 A: The Lamb leads the righteous beside springs of living water

8:10 B: star from heaven falls on the springs of water & embitters

14:7 C: Worship Him who made...the springs of water

16:4 B: An angel turns the springs of water to blood

21:6 A: Thirsty offered drink from the spring of water of life

Notice that the star is parallel to the angel as elsewhere in Revelation. In Isa 49:10 and John 4:14 the springs of water represent Jesus and His truth of the Gospel of Salvation. Thus, the plagues in 8:10 (caused by Satan) and 16:4 would represent a counterfeit heresy of false salvation. This is appropriate since the truth of salvation in Jesus is a sweet truth and the

false salvation is a bitter heresy. This is reinforced in the fifth trumpet where people seek death. Thus, the middle “C” instance is literal, the “B” occurrence is counterfeit and the “A” is genuine.

Stadia [στάδιον stadion] (2) 14:20, 21:16. See **1600** and **12,000**. This ancient surveying unit of distance was one eighth of a mile and could be translated furlong.

Stand {verb} [ἵστημι histemi] (21) This word never refers to the author, John (unless we adopt the Textus Receptus reading in Rev 12:18).

3:20, 5:6, 8:3, 10:5, 10:8, 14:1, 19:17 refer to Jesus.

5:6, 6:17, 7:1, 9, 11, are all before the throne in the 7 seals.

8:2, 3, 11:4, 11 are in the trumpets.

12:4, 18 involve the dragon before the woman and on the shore

15:2 describes the victorious on the sea of glass.

18:10, 15, 17 respectively describe the kings, merchants and sea captains who stand afar of and utter double woes about the demise of Babylon.

20:12 describes the dead et al who stand before the throne.

Here, the act of standing has the connotation of authority and bearing in all cases; in the case of the dragon it is akin to defiance.

Star [ἀστήρ aster] (14) 1:16, 20, 2:1, 28, 3:1, 6:13, 8:10, 11, 12, 9:1, 12:1, 4, 22:16. Rev 1:20 states that stars are a symbol of angels (the Greek for messengers) and is applied consistently with the arguable exception of 6:13 (as suggested by the modifying phrase “in the sky”), they represent messengers to the seven churches (1:16, 20, 2:1, 3:1), Satan who originally was an angel in heaven (8:10, 12, 9:1, compare 9:11, Isa 14:12-14), Satan’s angels (12:4 compare 12:9), the angels at the twelve gates of the new Jerusalem (12:1 compare 21:9, 12) and Jesus Himself (22:16). The stars of 12:1 presumably also represents angels or messengers as symbolised in Dan 12:3 & Phil 2:15, 16 – the wise who lead others to righteousness, ie, apostles or missionaries who are true messengers of righteousness.

Stone [λίθος lithos] (8) This word is used as follows:

4:3 The appearance of the God on the throne, jasper and carnelian stone

17:4 Part of the decoration of the woman, Babylon, precious stones

18:12, 16 Some of the cargoes of Babylon, precious stones

18:21 A large millstone is thrown into the sea

21:11 The appearance of the New Jerusalem, like a precious stone, a jasper stone (see 1 Cor 3:12)

21:19 Foundations of the New Jerusalem decorated with every kind of precious stone. (see 1 Cor 3:12)

Thus, stones represent an attribute of the appearance of God which the impure woman (Babylon) seeks to emulate by decoration. (A similar feature is observed with gold, which see.)

Street [πλατεία plateia] (3) 11:8, 21:21, 22:2. More correctly, this is a wide street, or idiomatically, a public place where people can gather. (See also Matt 6:5, 12:19, Luke 10:10 etc.) Thus, the two witnesses are left for dead in a public place (a great disgrace in the Jewish mind), and the New Jerusalem has the river of the water of life flowing through its main street (public place) which provides ready access to all.

Strength – see **Power**.

Sun [ἥλιος helios] (13) 1:16, 6:12, 7:2, 16, 8:12, 9:2, 10:1, 12:1, 16:8, 12, 19:17, 21:23, 22:5. Notice that Jesus’ face shines like the sun (1:16, 10:1) and the woman in Rev 12 is clothed in the sun (v1), but Jesus will be the source of light in the New Jerusalem (21:23, 22:5). The heat of the sun does not affect the righteous (7:16) but hurts and burns the wicked (16:8). An angel standing in the sun calls the birds to destroy the forces of the wicked (19:17). It is during judgements on the wicked (or as a result of their activity?) that the sun is darkened (6:12, 8:12, 9:2). The direction of the sun (idiomatically the east) is where the liberators of God’s people arise at the end of time (7:2, 16:12).

These similes are reminiscent of other Scriptural reference to the saint’s righteousness shining like the sun (Ps 37:6, Matt 13:43) with Messiah Jesus its source (Mal 4:2). Thus, Revelation’s sun is seen to be the saints’ sanctified (imparted) righteousness of Jesus in which they are clothed (Rev 12:1).

Sun, Moon & Stars (3) 6:12, 13, 8:12, 12:1. In the OT, the sun moon & stars are invariably used in association with worship: eg, used in a warning not to bow down to them (Gen 37:9, Deut 4:19, 17:3, 2 Ki 23:5); a warning that their light would be stopped (Eccl 12:2, Jer 8:2, Eze 32:7, Joel 2:10, 3:15, Matt 24:29, Mark 13:24, 25, Luke 21:25); as a symbol of God’s creative power (Ps 136:8, 9, 148:3, Eze 31:35) and as a symbol of the church - a beautiful woman (SS 6:10).

Supper – see **Banquet**

Sword - two types: μάχαιρα (machaira) (4)

Rev 6:4 - great sword used to take peace from the earth

Rev 13:10 (twice) - sword used to kill

Rev 13:14 - beast wounded by the sword.

This word is used often outside Revelation, eg, Matt 10:34 (not peace but a sword), Matt 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, John 18 in the garden to arrest Jesus, etc, Acts 12:2, 16:27 (weapon of death), Eph 6:17 (sword of the Spirit), Heb 4:12 (Word of God is sharper than any two edged sword), Heb 11:34, 37 (weapon of death) etc.

ῥομφαία (rhomphaia) (6)

Rev 1:16, 2:12, 16, 19:15, 21 - sword from the mouth of Jesus. (Note that Isa 49:2 talks of a sword and mouth but the LXX uses μάχαιρα (machaira); therefore this parallel is listed in the glossary with a caution.) Rev 6:8 - kill with the sword [from Jesus' mouth? - see above.] suggesting that this sword is connected with the work of Jesus and His saints. The only other place ῥομφαία rhomphaia occurs in the New Testament is Luke 2:35 - a sword will pierce your own soul too.

The distinction between these two swords is made clearer in LXX where μάχαιρα machaira is used to denote a soldier's weapon (Gen 27:40, 2 Sam 24:9, 1 Chr 21:5), while ῥομφαία rhomphaia is used to denote the instrument of divine judgement (Gen 3:24, Num 22:23, Judg 7:20, 1 Chr 21:12, 16) or other large sword (1 Sam 17:39, 45, etc).

Tabernacle [σκηνή skene] (3) 13:6, 15:5, 21:3. (The verb form, σκηνώω skenoo, also occurs in 7:15, 12:12, 13:6, 21:3) This Greek word may be translated dwell (live) or tabernacle (ie, tent). Since John also used κατοικέω katoikeo for dwelling, some might argue that σκηνή skene should be uniformly translated tabernacle. However, this is neither necessary nor desirable, especially in Rev 21:3 which would have to be rendered, "the Tabernacle of God is with men", when v22 declares that the temple (equated with the tabernacle in 15:5) does not exist in the New Jerusalem. Despite this, *tabernacle* is preferable in 13:6. Thus, *tabernacle* (σκηνώω skenoo), which always refers to God and the righteous, acts as a counterpoint to *dwell* [κατοικέω katoikeo].

Tail [οὐρά oura] (5) 9:10(x2), 19(x2), 12:4. In the New Testament, this word only occurs in the book of Revelation, where it is always associated with sinister activities of the wicked or Satan directly. In the Old Testament, the word most often occurs literally. When it is used figuratively, it either refers to wicked Israel who were not the head, ie, not leaders but followers (Deut 28:13, 44), or, false prophets (Isa 9:15). This latter sense appears that which John uses. Thus, the mouths and stings in the tails of the horses in the fifth and sixth trumpets represent the false prophets (teachers) of wickedness. Similarly, Satan's lies (tail) drew one third of the angels from heaven (Rev 12:4, 9).

Tear [δάκρυον dakruon] (2) 7:17, 21:4. It is a measure of the hope found in the book of Revelation that the only times tears are mentioned are in the phrase, *God will wipe away every tear from their eyes*.

Teeth See **Tooth**.

Temple [ναός naos] (16) 3:12, 7:15, 11:1, 2, 19(x2), 14:15, 17, 15:5, 6, 8(x2), 16:1, 17, 21:22(x2). These references depict two different temples - one on earth and the other in heaven with the division naturally falling into the two halves of Revelation. Those on earth (3:12, 7:15, 11:1, 2) are clearly symbolic, while the temple in heaven is depicted as central to God's plan for eradicating sin.

In the New Testament, ναός naos, denotes: pagan temples (Acts 17:24, 19:24), the temple in Jerusalem (Matt 23:16, 17, 21, 35, 27:5, 51, Mark 15:38, Luke 1:9, 21, 22, 23:45, John 2:20), Christ's own body (Matt 26:61, 27:40, Mark 14:58, 15:29, John 2:19, 21), the body of believers - that is the church (1 Cor 3:16, 17, 2 Cor 6:16, Eph 2:21, 1 Thess 2:4), our physical bodies (1 Cor 6:19). (Note that there is never any reference to a temple in heaven: it is in Hebrews that we encounter the Tabernacle [σκηνή skene] in heaven. See also *Tabernacle*.)

Since there is no temple in heaven when the saints are taken there to the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:22), Rev 7:15 cannot refer to the temple in heaven. Thus the best explanation of the temple references in the first half is the church. In the second half, the temple is equated with the tabernacle of the testimony (Rev 15:5) - a reference to the tabernacle in heaven, the dwelling of God.

Tent – see **Tabernacle**.

Testify [μαρτυρέω martureo] (4) There are four instances of people testifying (that is, providing evidence) in Revelation as follows:

1:2 John about what he saw

22:16 Jesus' angel to John

22:18 John to those who hear the words in Revelation (see below)

22:20 Jesus that He is coming soon.

Testimony [μαρτυρία marturia] (9) 1:2, 9, 6:9, 11:7, 12:11, 17, 19:10(x2), 20:4. In all cases, the testimony here is the testimony of (ie about or concerning and belonging to) Jesus. That is, it is always the testimony of Jesus or of those who give such testimony of Jesus. Further, in six of these cases (1:2, 9, 12:17, 19:10(x2), 20:4, see below), John develops a technical phrase, The Testimony of Jesus [μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ]. In Rev 1:1-3 we deduce the following from the "chain of revelation":

Rev 1:1 – 3	Technical Phrase	Definition
God gave the message to Jesus	The Revelation of Jesus	The message God gave
Jesus gave the message via His angel to John	The Testimony of Jesus	What John saw (his prophetic visionary gift)
John gave the message to the church	The words of the prophecy of this book	What John wrote (ie, the book of Revelation)

Thus, the Testimony of Jesus is the visionary prophetic gift, *not* the book of Revelation itself. Revelation 19:10 confirms this by defining the testimony of Jesus as the spirit of prophecy. A comparison of 19:10 with its close parallel in 22:8, 9, offers further confirmation that the testimony of Jesus is associated with the office of a prophet.

With this understanding, it is interesting to observe that John had been imprisoned because of the testimony of Jesus (ie his prophetic gift, 1:9); and that the last day (remnant) church will be characterised by (among other things) the gift of prophecy (12:17); and that people had been martyred because of their prophetic gift (20:4).

[**μάρτυς** martus] (5) This word describes those who are willing to die on account of their testimony as did Jesus (1:5), Antipas (2:13), Jesus the Amen (3:14), the two witnesses (11:3) and the saints (17:6). [It is in this sense that the word has entered English as Martyr.]

[**μαρτύριον** marturion] (1) 15:5 The tabernacle (literally, tent) of the testimony in heaven. This is a direct allusion to Moses' tabernacle of testimony in the desert: Ex 38:21, Num 1:50, 53, 10:11, Acts 7:44. This last reference says that the earthly tabernacle was made according to the pattern which Moses was shown in the mountain. It is thus a building (or tent) which testifies of Jesus and His great plan of salvation.

Throne [θρόνος thronos] (47) 1:4, 2:13, 3:21(x2), 4:2(x2), 3, 4(x3), 5(x2), 6(x3), 9, 10(x2), 5:1, 6, 7, 11, 13, 6:16, 7:7, 10, 11(x2), 15(x2), 17, 8:3, 11:16, 12:5, 13:2, 14:3, 16:10, 17, 19:4, 5, 20:4, 11, 12, 21:3, 5, 22:1, 3. These all refer to the throne of God in heaven except for the following cases: 2:13 (of Satan), 4:4 (of 24 elders), 13:2 (of Dragon), 16:10 (of beast), 20:4 (of saints). Notice that most (27) occurrences of throne occur in the seven seals.

The Bible declares that heaven is God's throne (Isa 66:1, Matt 5:34, 23:22, Acts 7:49) and the earth His footstool. The throne is a symbol of authority to rule and judge.

Thunder [βροντή bronte] (10) 4:5, 6:1, 8:5, 10:3, 4, 11:19, 14:2, 16:18, 19:6. Thunder either represents the voice of God or accompanies His voice. In either case it signifies a Divine utterance. Comparison with the only other occurrence in the NT, Jn 12:29 (apart from the incidental Mk 3:17) lends weight to this view. The OT usage is similar, eg, Job 26:14, 37:4, 1 Sam 2:10, Ps 29:3, etc. The seven thunders are the only part of Revelation which was sealed - an allusion to the sealed book of Daniel (8:26, 12:4, 9)

Thunder and lightning (and earthquake) (4) 4:5, 8:5, 11:19, 16:18. These issue from the throne of God and symbolise the Divine presence – usually Jesus. In the latter three cases they are accompanied by an earthquake. The first three cases are all in introductory visions of each section; the last is part of the seventh bowl plague. Compare Ex 19:16, 20:18, Ps 77:18, Jer 10:13, 51:16, which also record similar theophanies.

Tomb [μνήμα mnema] (1) 11:9. The enemies of the two witnesses are refused a tomb or memorial of their death. Of the several words available for grave, John chooses the one that denotes a memorial. Thus, the witnesses' enemies kill them and try to erase their memory.

Tooth [ὀδούς odous; Actually plural form: ὀδόντες odontes] (1) 9:8. See **Lion**.

Torch - see **Lamp**.

Torture {noun} [βασανισμός basanismos] (6) 9:5, 14:11, 18:7, 10, 15.

{verb} [βασανίζω basanizo] (5) 9:5, 11:10, 12:2, 14:10, 20:10.

As recorded in Revelation, torture is inflicted as follows:

9:5 The wicked torment the wicked like a scorpion

11:10 The 2 witnesses torment the wicked

12:2 The woman is distressed during child birth

14:10, 11 God torments the wicked with eternal punishment

18:7, 10, 15 Torment of Babylon such as she inflicted on others

20:10 Torment of Devil, beast and false prophet in the lake of fire

Only the verb form occurs in the remainder of the New Testament (Matt 8:6, 29, 14:24, Mark 5:7, 6:48, Luke 8:28, 2 Pet 2:8). In all cases, this torment or torture is associated with divine judgement and often, more specifically, with judgements against demonic spirits.

Tree Several Greek words are translated trees with distinct usage:

[δένδρον dendron] (4) 7:1, 3, 8:7, 9:4 - a symbol of people generally, and righteous people particularly. This is consistent with New Testament usage of tree to represent people and their character (Matt 7:17, 18, 12:33, Luke 6:43, 44, 13:19, etc.)

[ξύλον xulon] (7) 2:7, 22:2, 14, 19 - the tree of life, a reward for the faithful overcomers {and, 18:12 (x2) – citron and costly wood = a hard-wearing furniture wood, an allusion to the practise of Babylon buying and selling spiritual things including eternal life!} In the rest of the New Testament this word is often used to describe the beam on which Jesus was crucified (Acts 5:30, 10:39, 13:29, Gal 3:13, 1 Pet 2:24, etc.)

[ἐλαία elaiā] (1) 11:4 two olive trees - an alternate symbol of the two witnesses. In the Gospels, this is always used in the phrase *Mount of Olives* (Matt 21:1, 24:3, 26:30, Mark 11:1, 13:3, 14:26, Luke 19:37, 22:39, John 8:1.) In Rom 11:17, 24, James 3:12, olive trees are used as a symbol of the true church and its character.

[συκὴ suke] (1) 6:13 a fig tree shaken - a symbol of turmoil. Its use in the New Testament (Matt 21:19-21, 24:32, Mark 11:13, 20, 21, 13:28, Luke 13:6, 7, 21:29, John 1:48, 50, James 3:12) shows that the fig tree was a symbol of the second advent of Jesus and social conditions generally.

Tribe [φυλή phyle] (21) 1:7, 5:5, 9, 7:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6, 21:12. These may be classified as: occurring in the phrase *language, nation, people and tribe*, which see, (5:9, 7:9, 11:9, 13:7, 14:6), the tribes of Israel meaning the sealed people of God (7:4 – 8, 21:12), referring to Jesus' lineage (5:5) and people generally (1:7).

Troops [στράτευμα strateuma] (4) 9:16, 19:14, 19:19(x2). These troops (or bodies of soldiers) are all mounted troops riding horses. The first represents the forces of the wicked and number 200,000,000; the second represent the forces of the Lamb. In the last reference they battle each other at (H)Armageddon (which see). That this is not primarily a literal battle is evident from the highly symbolic nature of the language; rather, it is the final battle of principles between Christ and Satan. This may well involve some literal bloodshed.

True [ἀληθινός alethinos] (10) 3:7, 14, 6:10, 15:3, 16:7, 19:2, 9, 11, 21:5, 22:6. In all but one case (19:9) this word occurs in connection with another adjective to make a double adjective, eg, holy and true (3:7, 6:10), faithful and true (3:14, 19:11, 21:5, 22:6), righteous and true (15:3, 16:7, 19:2). Some are titles of Jesus (3:7, 14, 6:10, 19:11), or

descriptions of God's judgements (16:7, 19:2) or God's ways (15:3) or His words (19:9, 21:5, 22:6).

Trumpet {verb} [σαλπίζω salpizo,] (10) 8:6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 9:1, 13, 10:7, 11:15. These all occur in the seven trumpets. The associations of this verb are similar to the noun.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, the verb occurs only twice: Matt 6:2 records the trumpeting of hypocrites and 1 Cor 15:52 concerns the trumpeting of God to raise the dead at the resurrection.

Trumpet {noun} [σάλπιγξ salpinx,] (6) 1:10, 4:1, 8:2, 6, 13, 9:14. All are associated with the voice of Jesus or His judgements on the inhabitants of the earth (which see).

In the New Testament, trumpet occurs in Matt 24:31, 1 Cor 15:52, 1 Thess 4:16 all refer to the second coming and the events associated with it; 1 Cor 14:8 discusses the clarity of the trumpet's sound for battle, while Heb 12:19 recalls the trumpet at Sinai connected with the giving of the law.

The OT Hebrew uses three words for trumpet, *shophar* (a ram's horn), *chatsotserah* (silver trumpets) and *taqoa*. All were used for the Sanctuary service but only the silver trumpets were specifically made for the ritual. [The Greek Septuagint does not so distinguish - all are called σάλπιγξ salpinx, including horns.] The following lists the occurrences of these Hebrew words.

Taqoa (unknown instrument)

Eze 7:14 - sounded to signal preparation for battle

Shophar (ram's horn)

Ex 19, 16, 19, 20:18 - at the giving of the 10 commandments on Mt. Sinai to impress the people with God's presence.

Lev 23:24, 25:9 - to announce feast of tabernacles and day of atonement

Josh 6 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 16, 20 - seven trumpets used by seven priests when they marched around Jericho seven times to destroy it.

Judg 3:27 - Ehud summons the Israelites to battle

Judg 6:34, 7:8, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22 - Gideon use against the Midianites.

1 Sam 13:3, 2 Sam 2:28 - Saul and Joab used to signal the army.

2 Sam 6:15 - accompanied transport of the ark of the covenant.

2 Sam 15:10 - Absalom used to proclaim himself king.

2 Sam 18:16, 20:1, 22 - used to signal the army.

1 Ki 1:34, 39, 41, 2 Ki 9:13 - used to proclaim Solomon and Jehu king.

Neh 4:18, 20 - used to signal imminent danger and a call to fight.

Job 39:24, 25 - used to signal a battle

Ps 47:5, 150:3 - instrument of praise to God
 Isa 18:3, 27:13 - the Lord's great trumpet as a call to worship Him.
 Isa 58:1 - voice like a trumpet
 Jer 4:5, 19, 21, 6:1, 17, 42:14, 51:27 - signal for battle
 Eze 33:3, 4, 5, 6 - used as warning of danger
 Hos 8:1, Joel 2:1 - warning of the day of the Lord
 Joel 2:15 - call to declare a fast and hold a sacred assembly
 Amos 2:2 - war cries and the blast of a trumpet
 Amos 3:6 - warning of the approaching disaster the Lord causes
 Zeph 1:16 - a day of trumpet and battle cries
 Zeph 9:14 - The Lord will appear . . . and sound the trumpet
Chatsotserah (silver trumpet)
 Num 10:2, 5, 7, 8, 29:1 - for calling the community together for feasts.
 Num 10:10 - used to sound over the sacrificial offerings.
 Num 10:9, 31:6 - used for signalling in war and battle
 2 Ki 11:14 - used to announce Joash king.
 2 Ki 12:13 - used in temple worship
 1 Chr 13:8, 15:24, 28, 16:6, 42, 2 Chr 5:12, 13 - accompanied transport of the ark of the covenant.
 2 Chr 7:6 - used in temple worship
 2 Chr 13:12, 14 - used in battle and war
 2 Chr 15:14 - used in worship at rededication of people to God
 2 Chr 20:28 - used in thanks at temple after returning from battle
 2 Chr 23:13 - used to proclaim Joash king
 2 Chr 29:26, 27, 28 - used in worship in the temple
 Ezra 3:10 - used at the foundation of new temple
 Neh 12:35, 41 - used in worship at the temple
 Ps 98:6 - instrument of worship
 Hos 5:8 - used to raise the battle cry
 Since the Greek word combines all these by not distinguishing, we conclude that *trumpet* in Revelation is a symbol of God's voice, a warning of His pronouncements, used to remind people of the presence of God, at coronations, and a warning to prepare for spiritual battle as depicted in the Sanctuary service. The best single example of this is Josh 6 where seven trumpets are used to win a battle for the Lord.

Two Witnesses (1) 11:3-13. The identity of these two witnesses is provided by a number of clues such as:

Those alluding to Elijah:

- (1) v3: they prophesy for 1260 days (3½ years, Ja 5:17, Lu 4:25) in sackcloth - the time of Medieval Rome's supremacy,
 - (2) v5: they call fire down from heaven (1 Ki 18:37, 38, 2 Ki 1:9-14)
 - (3) v11: they are caught up to heaven (2 Ki 2:11)
 - (4) v6: they shut up the heavens (1 Ki 17:1)
- Those alluding to Moses:
- (1) v6: they initiate a plague of blood (Ex 7:14-18)
 - (2) v6: they strike the earth with plagues (Ex 9:14-16)
- Other General Clues
- (1) v10: also called two prophets (Moses and Elijah)
 - (2) v4: also called two olive trees - an allusion to Zech 4: 3-12 and the two who serve the Lord of the earth. Rom 11:17, 24, James 3:12 use this figure of the church and its character.
 - (3) v4: also called two lampstands - probably two churches or two aspects of the same church on the basis of Rev 1:20 which equates the symbol of the lampstand with a church as the light of the world (Matt 5:14-16). If this is correct, then the two lampstands are symbols of God's true church from the time of Jesus to His second advent.
 - (4) v3: 1260 days is a parallel to the 1260 days of the woman of Rev 12 which is a clear allusion to a church.

Thus, the two lampstands appear to be symbols of the end-time church whose basis is the Bible symbolised by (the prophets) Moses and Elijah as the "Law and the Prophets." Further, consistent with the pattern elsewhere in Revelation, John takes time to introduce new characters by giving historical background. If it is true that the two witnesses are the end-time church that had its origins before medieval times and the 1260 years, then some of the prophecy is still future and we will refrain from divining the future by any further speculation.

There is a fascinating connection between the work (or result?) of the two witnesses and the seven plagues. Rev 11:6 records the witnesses' ability to turn water to blood and strike the earth with plagues. Rev 16:2-4 has similar language: water to blood...plagues...earth.

Unbelieving – see Unfaithful.

Unclean [ἀκάθαρτος akathartos] (3) 16:13, 17:4, 18:2. All these are associated with Babylon's beast trinity. These are, respectively, the unclean spirits like frog; the filth of the prostitutes cup and the spirits that inhabit Babylon. This word denotes things that are impure or (idiomatically) evil and is used frequently in the NT to describe evil or demonic spirits, eg, Matt 10:1, 12:43, etc. See also, **Clean**.

Unfaithful [ἄπιστος apistos] (1) 21:8. The unbelieving are among the list of people excluded from the Holy City and thrown into the lake of burning sulphur.

Victor - see **Overcomer**.

Virgin [παρθένος parthenos] (1) 14:4 This word is used to describe the spiritual purity of God's people and is thus consistent with other figurative passages in the New Testament (Matt 25:1-11, 2 Cor 11:2).

Voice [φωνή phone] (55) This word can (and often is) translated *sound*. It also occurs in the phrase *great (or loud) voice* 21 times in Revelation.

Water [ὕδωρ hudor] (19) Five of these always occur in the phrase *springs of water*, which see. The remainder can be grouped as follows:

- 1:15, 14:2 voice of many waters (both referring to Jesus)
- 19:6 roar of many waters at wedding of the Lamb
- 17:1 Many waters where the prostitute sits (also 17:15)
- 19:6 roar of many waters
- 12:15 water like a river from the dragon
- 22:1 river of the water of life from God (cf John 4:10, 11, 7:38)
- 22:17 gift of the water of life (cf John 4:10, 11, 7:38)
- 8:11 one third of waters made bitter, death from bitter water
- 11:6 two witnesses have authority to turn waters to blood
- 16:5 angel in charge of the waters
- 16:12 waters of the Euphrates dried up

The symbol of water is explicitly stated in 17:15 as representing people. Thus, when the waters of the Euphrates where prostitute Babylon sits dry up, 16:12 (compare 17:16 where the 10 kings hate the prostitute) clearly represents the collapse of Babylon's political power base. Similarly, the river of water from the dragon against the woman (12:15) symbolises persecution.

War – see **Fight**.

Wedding [γάμος gamos] (2) 19:7, 9. The marriage of the Lamb (Jesus) to the bride (the saints) causes much celebration in heaven because the bride has made herself ready. However, the fine linen (righteous acts of the saints) is given the bride to wear (19:8). Thus the bride makes herself ready by accepting the gift of robes. A similar scene is presented in Jesus' parable of the wedding in Matt 22:1-14 where again, the wedding garments were provided. The situation just before the second advent is also likened to a wedding in the parable of the 10 virgins in Matt 25:1-13. This theme is repeated in Luke 12:36. Even in the events of Luke 14:8 and John 2:1-11, faint echoes can be heard of this same idea. Thus a

wedding is consistently used as a symbol of the preparation time before and eventual arrival of Jesus at His second advent.

Wheat [σῖτος sitos] (2) 6:6, 18:13. Wheat (and barley) or grain generally is a consistent symbol of the righteous saints and is a counterpoint to the wicked grapes as seen in 14:14-20 with the two harvests. In the rest of the New Testament, where it is not used literally, wheat is also a symbol of the righteous saints (Matt 3:12, 13:25-30, Mark 4:28, Luke 3:17, 22:31, John 12:24, 1 Cor 15:37). It is interesting that both references to wheat in Revelation refer to the righteous as a tradeable commodity, in the second instance by Babylon. This is another reminder that events are frequently outside the control of the righteous (but not God!) which will give them the impression that they (the righteous) are just pawns in a large game! No wonder that Jesus advises the saints that life on earth requires patient endurance (2 Cor 1:6, Rev 1:9, 13:10, 14:12).

White [λευκός leukos] (16) This adjective is always used to describe something either divine or of divine origin: Jesus' head and hair (1:14 x2), Jesus' stone with a new name (2:17), garments of saints (3:4, 5, 18, 4:4), robe of saints (6:11, 7:9, 13), horse (6:2, 19:11, 14), Jesus' cloud (14:14), fine linen (19:14), Jesus' throne of judgement (20:11). Elsewhere in the New Testament, the usage is similar – white describes a glorified Jesus (Matt 17:2, 9:3, 9:29), angels or their clothes (Matt 28:3, 16:5, 20:12, Acts 1:10), a ripe harvest of grain (John 4:35) and our inability to produce white hair (Matt 5:36).

Whole [ὅλος holos] (5) This adjective is used to qualify world (3:10, 12:9, 16:14), moon (6:12) and earth (13:3). In the case of those referring to the entire world and earth, the wicked are clearly intended in all cases (compare Luke 2:1 where whole world means only the Roman world). Thus, we may infer two things: (1) that the righteous form a small minority (compare Luke 18:8), or (2) that the righteous are not really part of this world (John 18:36, Rom 12:2, Eph 2:2-6, Col 2:20). Both ideas are consistent with scripture.

Widow [χήρα chera] (1) 18:7. Here, the prostitute Babylon declares herself not a widow. This is a strong allusion to Isa 47:8, 9, where the fall of literal Babylon is predicted. The symbol of a widow for a city represented a city forsaken. Both literal and figurative Babylon were/will be forsaken by the very ones who supported her (Rev 17:13, 16).

Wind [ἄνεμος anemos] (3) 6:13, 7:1(x2). When used in the metaphorical sense, as here, this word denotes trouble and strife (Matt 7:25, 24:31, Mark 13:27, Jer 49:36, Dan 7:2) caused by impure or heretical doctrine

(Matt 11:7, Luke 7:24, Eph 4:14). The four winds being kept in check by four angels here suggests that heresy is held back from all directions. Interestingly, when these four angels at the Euphrates are released (Rev 9:14–16) a demonic army is unleashed which vents its fury on the wicked.

Wine [οἶνος oinos] (8) 6:6, 14:8, 10, 16:19, 17:2, 18:3, 13, 19:15. There are clearly two different kinds of wine here – that in 6:6 is protected by God, and is guarded by and given to the saints, and so is presumably not intoxicating. By contrast, the remaining references to wine are all associated with anger and adultery and presumably intoxicating. Notice that the two types fall naturally into the two halves of the book. Of the seven occurrences in the second half, some record wine coming from Babylon (14:8, 17:2, 18:3, 13) and the remainder are those comes from God (14:10, 16:19, 19:15.) These two wine sources are both associated with furious anger: Babylon’s wine makes the nations drunk and angry, while God’s wine symbolises His anger at Babylon. These wine counterpoints acts as a kind of poetic justice by God – Babylon gives nations intoxicating wine, so God’s punishment of Babylon is the wine of His anger. Notice that in two cases (6:6, 18:13) wine is mentioned in conjunction with oil – see Oil.

Winepress [ληνός lenos] (3) 14:19, 20, 19:15. The winepress is called the winepress of God’s wrath because of the large (red) blood flow associated the judgements of God. It is also an extension of Jesus’ metaphor of the vine to demonstrate His relationship with the disciples (John 15:1-8) and that of the vineyard for the field of labour (Matt 21:33).

Wisdom [σοφία sophia] (4) 5:12, 7:12, 13:18, 17:9. These occurrences fall into two distinct groups which correspond to the two halves of Revelation. The first two list wisdom as one of the seven attributes of Jesus when He takes the throne and begins to rule. The second two suggest that to understand the prophecies of the sea beast (and its 666) and that of the woman who rides the beast from the abyss, requires a mind with wisdom. Thus, prophetic understanding requires a mind in tune with Jesus (see 2 Peter 3:15 and 1 Cor 2:15, 16).

Witness – see **Testify** and **Testimony**.

Woe [οὔαι ouai] (14) This word occurs equally in the two halves of Revelation as listed below and provides an important link in the chain of evidence to identify the trumpets and Babylon.

8:13, 9:12, 11:14 – the last three trumpets are woes on the unsealed

12:12 – woe to the inhabitants of the earth because the devil is cast down

18:10, 16, 19 – double woes on Babylon.

Elsewhere in the Bible we observe that woes are pronounced against spiritual leaders and teachers who, because of their privileged knowledge of the Bible etc, should know better than to lead others into sin. Thus, woes are pronounced against:

Matt 11:21, Luke 10:13 Chorazin and Bethsaida because of the miracles performed there without repentance. Contrast the peace in Matt 11:28-30.

Matt 18:7, Luke 17:1 People who cause the world to sin

Matt 23:13-29, Luke 11:42-52 Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, bring disrepute on the church

Matt 26:24, Mark 14:21, Luke 22:22 Judas who betrayed Jesus despite warnings and his privileged position.

Luke 6:24-26 Rich, well fed, laughing, those spoken well of: These are clearly symbolic references to the spiritually rich, and arrogant who squander their opportunities to help.

1 Cor 9:16. Paul, if he does not preach the Gospel

Jude 11. Teachers who lead others astray and to rebellion

Matt 24:19, Mark 13:17, Luke 21:23. These woes on pregnant and nursing mothers warrant extra comment for several reasons. First, it is unlikely that this passage should be understood literally as all Christians, expecting the soon return of Jesus would be effectively prevented from having families. While some have understood thus, it is out of character with the rest of the Bible. It makes more sense to understand this instruction of Jesus symbolically: A mother or woman is invariably a symbol of a church and her dependant children are the growing members of that church. Thus, the woe pronounced on mothers and their nursing children could allude to false churches and those they have lead astray. Such a symbolic exegesis is made possible here by the fact that the woe is pronounced in the context of Daniel’s prophecy of the abomination of desolation (Dan 9:27, 11:31, 12:11), which clearly describes a false system of worship at the end of time.

Isa 5:18-20 Those who deceitfully cause others to sin

Isa 24:16 The treacherous betray by treachery!

Isa 30:1 Obstinate children who make plans not mine and sin

Jer 23:1 Shepherds who destroy and scatter sheep

Eze 13:3 Foolish prophets who follow their own spirit

Eze 34:2 Shepherds of Israel who take care of themselves

Zech 11:17 Worthless shepherd who deserts his flock

Therefore, all the woes of Revelation can be understood as pronounced against the wicked who are teachers or leaders who should know better and who lead others astray and into sin. The application to Babylon's woes is obvious – she is a false system of worship but which is nominally Christian. The case for the trumpets is strengthened by observing that the sting, as the instruments of woe is always in the mouth – from whence the wisdom and teaching are supposed to flow (Rev 9:19). Thus, the last three trumpets revolve around issues of false teachings and the torment that results from these. Peter describes false teachers in the last days (2 Pet 2) that are slaves of depravity but were once teachers of righteousness. It would have been better for such people to have never known the truth than to have known it and turned away (2 Peter 2:21). Thus, Peter effectively pronounces a woe on such false, hypocritical teachers.

Wood [ξύλον xulon] – see **Tree**.

Woman [γυνή gune] (19) 2:20, 9:8, 12:1, 4, 6, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 14:4, 17:3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 18, 19:7, 21:9. With the exception of 2:20 (Jezebel, see below) and 9:8 & 14:4 (incidental and plural) all these refer to just two women, one pure (ch 12, 19:7, 21:9) and the other a harlot (ch 17) who act as counterpoints to each other. (Compare this same contrast with that of Zech 2:7 & 10 where the daughter of Babylon is contrasted with the daughter of Zion.) The woman of Rev 12 is later described in 19:7 and 21:9 as the bride of the Lamb (Jesus) a clear reference to the true church. This figure is possibly taken from numerous Old Testament passages likening Israel to the wife or bride of God, Eze 16, Isa 62:5, Jer 2:2, 32, etc.

By contrast, the prostitute or Babylon of Rev 17 & 18 is a symbol of the false church at the end of time. This prostitute rides on the beast from the abyss (17:3, 8) and is called Babylon (17:5). The symbol of an impure woman is a common one in Scripture for false systems of worship, Babylon (Isa 47:1-3, compare Eze 16:15, 38, 44, 23:1-48, Nah 3:4, 5)

The two women of Revelation, one pure and the other impure with their respective progeny, clearly act as counterpoints of each other. Such a theme is common in Scripture, eg, Sarah and Hagar clash over their children (Gen 21), Leah and Rachael clash over children (Gen 29, 30), Hannah and Peninnah clash over children (1 Sam 1), Two prostitutes before Solomon clash over their children (1 Kings 3:16-28), Two mothers argue over eating their sons (2 Kings 7:26-29), Jehosheba and Athaliah

clash over baby Joash (2 Kings 11, 2 Chron 22, 23), The parable of the two adulterous sisters and their children (Eze 23) etc.

The reference to Jezebel (2:20) has a clear (chiastic) parallel with the harlot of Rev 17: both had illicit relationships, both had powerful political ambitions and stopped at nothing to achieve their ends, both murdered God's people, both wore expensive clothes of display, both had children, both were punished by God and both were killed by those she trusted. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Jezebel was a type of the harlot of Rev 17. Thus, the Jezebel of Thyatira appears to be a state church with political ambitions as was the case in medieval times, and the Thyatiran church was reproached for its tolerance of this situation (2:20). Thus, the errors of the medieval church appear bound for repetition but this time by the Babylonian church consisting of the trinity of beasts at the end of time.

World [κόσμος kosmos] (3) 11:15, 13:8, 17:8. This word primarily meant (to the Greeks) order and then the universe because of the observable order therein. In Koine Greek it is most often just the *world*, as distinct from the earth. The first of these reference talks of the kingdom of this world. The other two speak of the book of life and the lamb that was slain from the foundation (idiomatically, creation) of the world. Thus, Revelation affirms that the plan of salvation was hatched before sin even entered. This is a common theme in the New Testament: Matt 13:35, 25:34, Luke 11:50, John 17:24, Eph 1:4, Heb 4:3, 9:26, 1 Peter 1:20.

[οἰκουμένη oikoumene] (3) 3:10, 12:9, 16:14. This word has a slightly different connotation from the above. Here, the word originally meant the world as a community (our English word for economy has its origins here) and thus it meant the world's inhabitants. In Revelation, the word has a more restricted sense because it only ever means the wicked of the world. In all cases of οἰκουμένη oikoumene, the word is qualified by the adjective *whole*. Thus, while the whole world is specified, the whole wicked world is clearly intended. This suggests that at the time the righteous form a very small minority of those who will be persecuted and/or deceived by the dragon and frogs.

Worship [προσκυνέω proskuneo = to fall prostrate] (24) 3:9, 4:10, 5:14, 7:11, 9:20, 11:1, 11:16, 13:4(x2), 8, 12, 15, 14:7, 9, 11, 15:4, 16:2, 19:4, 10(x2), 20, 20:4, 22:8, 9. Worship is a recurring theme in Revelation over which the final battles take place. Notice that worship occurs seven times in the first half and 17 times in the second half of Revelation.

Worthy [ἄξιος axios] (7) 3:4 saints are worthy to walk with Jesus, 4:11 God almighty is worthy to receive glory etc, 5:2, 4, 9, 12 Worthy is the lamb to open the sealed book, 16:6 the wicked deserve (are worthy) to receive their punishment.

Wound – see **Plague** and **Slaughter**.

Wrath [θυμός thumos] (10) This word suggests a furious outburst of passion, a rage or fury, and is different from anger (which see) which denotes a settled feeling. All occurrences of wrath are in the second half of Revelation and can be classified as follows:

God's Wrath (* denotes association with anger)

*14:10 A: Wine of God's wrath, undiluted, in the cup of anger

14:19 B: great winepress of God's wrath

15:1 C: seven plagues complete God's wrath

15:7 C: seven bowls filled with God's wrath

16:1 C: seven bowls of God's wrath poured on the earth

*16:19 A: Babylon given cup of wine of the wrath of God's anger

*19:15 B: Jesus treads the winepress of wrath of God's anger

Notice that the wrath of God is only poured out in the last days on the wicked and Babylon and is a response to the wrath (or intoxicating) wine of Babylon and the Devil.

Wrath of the Dragon (Devil, Satan) or Babylon:

12:12 Great wrath of the Devil who came down to earth

14:8 Babylon made nations drink the wine of wrath of fornication

18:3 Nations have drunk the wine of the wrath of fornication

Note that in the last two instances, the word **θυμός** thumos would be better rendered *passion*, *intoxicating* or *maddening*. Thus the wrath is a blind rage or a mindless passion. Notice that wrath is nearly always associated with wine – an indirect indictment of its intoxicating effects.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, this word occurs in such a way as to suggest blind, irrational rage when describing the action of people (Luke 4:28, Acts 19:28, 2 Cor 12:20, Gal 5:20, Eph 4:31, Col 3:8, Heb 11:27). By contrast, the wrath of God is measured and deliberate but still furious (Rom 2:8).

Write [γράφω grapho] (29) Twelve times John is instructed to write (1:11, 19, 2:1, 8, 12, 18, 3:1, 7, 14, 14:13, 19:9, 21:5), and once not to write (10:4). The remainder of these record things which have been written on

such as the book of Revelation itself (1:3, 22:18, 19), a white stone (2:17), the overcomer (3:12), the sealed scroll (5:1), the book of life (13:8, 17:8, 20:15, 21:27), the foreheads of the saints (14:1), the forehead of the harlot (17:5), the books (20:12), Jesus (19:12), the thigh of Jesus (19:16).

Year [ἔτος etos] (6) 20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. These all refer to the 1000 years, which see. This word is usually understood as a literal period of a solar year and usually denotes a period of years, eg, 12 yr (Matt 9:20, Mark 5:25,), 7 yr (Luke 2:36), 84 yr (Luke 2:37) etc.

[ἐνιαυτός eniautos] (1) 9:15. This word is generally used to indicate the duration or time of a period (lit aeon) of a year, eg, the year of some high priest (John 11:49, 51, 18:13, Heb 9:7, 25), every year of the sanctuary calendar (Heb 10:1, 3), a whole year (Acts 11:26, 18:11), the year of the Lord's favour (Luke 4:19). However, it can be equivalent to ἔτος etos above – compare the same period of 3½ years of Elijah's drought occurs but with different words for year: Luke 4:25 (ἔτος etos) and James 5:17 ἐνιαυτός eniautos). The context of Rev 9:15, the perfect verb ("had been prepared"), the lack of numerical adjectives and the other time periods all strongly suggest an idiomatic expression of "this exact time." Thus, a number of factors conspire to prevent a prophetic day for year exegesis of 9:15.

Yield - see **Repay**.

Zion [Σιών Sion] (1) 14:1. Mount Zion is a counterpoint to the mountain of Megiddo (Harmageddon – see **Armageddon**) in the same way as Jerusalem is contrasted with Babylon, both in Revelation and elsewhere in Scripture. The scene on Zion is one of peace and order while on Armageddon - war! The text in Revelation clearly presents the people of the Lamb with the name of the Lamb and his Father's name (seal) on their foreheads. Mount Zion only occurs in the New Testament in Heb 12:22 where it refers to the heavenly Jerusalem. Elsewhere in the New Testament Zion refers to the people of God or the actual place. The same is true in the Old Testament: Mt Zion is always the dwelling place of the LORD in Jerusalem and the site of the temple. (See 2 Ki 19:31, Ps 48:2, 11, 74:2, 68, 125:1, 133:3, Isa 4:5, 8:18, 12:10, 18:7, 24:23, 29:8, 31:4, 37:32, Lam 5:18, Joel 2:32, Ob 17, 21, Mic 4:7.)

Chapter 7. Keys to Understanding the Apocalypse

The book of Revelation was written in a very different time, in a different language, in a different culture, in a different place; by an author writing in a foreign language (even to its author!) under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. All this has conspired to produce a literary work, which, for modern readers, has become rather inaccessible. Therefore, special care and literary methods are required to properly understand this most marvellous, but equally baffling work. However, any such effort will be well spent. Here are some suggestions for understanding Revelation.

1. It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:1); meaning, it is a revelation from God about Jesus, by Jesus and belonging to Jesus. The list given in the first part of chapter three herein demonstrates how much the theme of Jesus recurs throughout Revelation. As with the remainder of Scripture (Luke 24:27), unless we see the saving work and character of Jesus in every page we miss its central message.
2. Another important clue to understanding Revelation is given in Rev 1:2 where John tells us that, “He signified” (ἐσήμανεν esemanen) the message. Therefore, unless we have compelling contrary reasons, the scenes and narrative must be read symbolically.
3. Despite the above, we should not guess or speculate about the meaning of Revelation’s symbols – all are either explained in Revelation itself or are drawn from the remainder of Scripture. Compelling evidence for this assertion is given in chapter 5 of this book where the Biblical allusions are listed. Chapter 6 is an attempt to give greater detail on Revelation’s symbols.
4. The words used in Revelation should be invested with the same meaning which the author, John, would have given them. The fact that, unlike Daniel, Revelation was not sealed (Rev 22:10) and therefore accessible to its author, provides more evidence for this principle. Again, chapter 6 of this book gives more detail on significant words in Revelation. This rule may also require that the exegete be sensitive to the literary structure of the text – especially when chiasms, parallelisms and other devices are used. Chapters 1 and 2 herein are devoted to this issue.
5. Despite being written in Koine Greek, an Indo-European language, Revelation’s style and literary structure is distinctly Semitic. For example, it makes frequent use of parallel passages, chiasmic structures, numerical features, anticipatory sections, antithesis passages, characters with multiple names reflecting their work, counterpoints, etc. The first chapter of this book discusses these Semitic forms. The literature of Revelation is clearly modelled on the Old Testament apocalyptic books of Daniel (see appendix 2) and Zechariah, among others.
6. The predictive elements of Revelation’s prophecies will require some special attention. Given the striking stylistic and thematic similarities between Revelation and Daniel, it is appropriate to employ the same principles of exegesis for both. Thus, using the self-explained prophetic passages of Daniel as a model, we observe that all Daniel’s prophecies begin in the time of the prophet (Rev 1:3, 22:10) and extend until the second Advent of Jesus. A similar pattern is followed in Revelation. This idea is clearly predicated on the assumption that God the Holy Spirit inspired the author and thus invested the message of Revelation with a Divine element. While John, being human, could not know anything of the future, God does (Isa 46:10, Amos 3:7).
7. Next we notice that the predictive prophecies are not given so that we may know the future; rather, they are given as Jesus said, to strengthen our faith when they come to pass (John 14:29, 16:4). In the words of Sir Isaac Newton, *Prophecy was not given to make men prophets, but as a witness to God when it is fulfilled*. Thus the future can only be known in broad outline but will be recognised in detail with hindsight.
8. We may employ yet another tool adduced from Daniel (see appendix 2) dating from (possibly before) the apostolic era: in apocalyptic literature (predictive prophecies couched in symbolic language) where a definite time period is implied, a prophetic day is understood to be a literal year. This is illustrated several times elsewhere in Scripture, (Num 14:34, Isa 34:8, 61:2, 63:4, Eze 4:5, 6. see also Job 10:5, 15:20, 36:11, Ps 39:5,

61:6, 90:10, 15, Eze 22:4) and especially in the 490 day, 70 week Messianic prophecy in Dan 9:24 – 27.

9. There is no guarantee that a prophecy will be fulfilled at all: God is sovereign! A number of Old Testament prophecies were not fulfilled or had their outcome reversed or otherwise changed depending upon the people involved and their faithfulness. For example, Hezekiah's early death (2 Kings 20:1–5), Ninevah's destruction within 40 days (Jonah 3:3–10), David's eternal throne and kingdom (1 Kings 8:25, 6:11, 12 etc), Ahab's early demise (1 Kings 21:20–28). In Ex 3:8, 15:17, 23:23 God promised to give the Israelites the land of Caanan but because of their unfaithfulness, none of them received it (Num 14:30). Thus the fulfilment of some prophecies is conditional. See appendix 5.
10. Finally, given that Revelation as part of sacred Scripture, it was written under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. That is, we must assume that John recorded what he saw and heard in vision (2 Peter 1:19–21, 2 Tim 3:16, 17). Thus when reading and studying such material, we must requisition the divinely ordained guide, the Holy Spirit (John 16:13).

The above principles serve as a simple but extremely powerful exegetical tool box based on Biblical principles. Despite this, there remain a number of divergent interpretation systems. While space precludes a detailed discussion of the history of prophetic interpretation, it can be summarised by characterising the various systems under the following broad headings, with brief notes on their origins and validity. They are listed in the approximate order of their age.

Historical

The historical system says that apocalyptic prophecy begins its fulfilment at the time of the prophet and continues throughout history until the Lord returns. This is the oldest system (it dates from before the time of Jesus) and the one implied by even a cursory glance at the prophecies of Daniel (see appendix 2); thus it was the one preferred by most of the Protestant reformers. This is the general system used in this book, simply because it is the only system with a firm Scriptural basis.

Idealist

The idealist (sometimes called spiritualist – not to be confused with spiritualism as a cult) system uses the scenes and images of a prophecy by

applying them to the eternal conflict of good and evil generally, in all ages. Thus the images in a book such as Revelation do not necessarily have any specific application to any particular historical incidents, but all in general. This system was first championed by Oregin of Alexandria. While it is often appropriate to draw spiritual lessons from all passages of Scripture, to deny specific interpretation is to deny its stated purpose (John 14:29, 16:4, Rev 1:3, 33:10).

Preterist

The preterist system begins with the assumption that predictive prophecy (and often anything else supernatural) does not exist or is very rare and limited. Thus, Bible “prophecy” was all written after the events it symbolises. For example, preterists often interpret Revelation's prophecies as describing the persecution of Christians by Nero and others in the middle half of the first century. This system was first developed by the Jesuits Licunza and Alcazar around the time of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century as part of the counter reformation.

The preterist system requires that Daniel be written in the second century BC and that most of his prophecies culminate in the activities of Antiochus Epiphenes. (See appendix 2 for a greater discussion of this issue.) Thus the book of Daniel, while claiming to be written in the sixth century BC, is placed in the second and its author is made out to be a liar. All this to avoid predictive, divine inspiration! (2 Peter 1:19–21) Thus, preterism robs Christ of His credentials, by depriving Him of His legitimate Messianic claims on the basis of numerous Old Testament prophecies.

The preterist system was developed as a deliberate alternative to the idea (as espoused by historicists) that the Roman church was the Antichrist by placing the Antichrist in the past. On this basis, it is an unfortunate irony that the system developed to shift the focus of prophecy away from Medieval Rome as the Antichrist accomplished its credentials as the Antichrist – the preterist system is quite antichristian because it denies Christ His prophetic credentials!

Futurist

The Futurist system places most fulfilment of apocalyptic prophecy in the distant future when the (presently) unknown Antichrist will appear. This system was first developed by the Spanish Jesuit, Ribera, around the time of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century as part of the counter reformation. The great difficulty with this system is its lack of firm Biblical

basis. One must accept, without Scriptural authority or precedent, a series of propositions about how to read the prophecies.

For example, in understanding the 70 weeks prophecy (Dan 9:24–27), futurists will usually (and arbitrarily) lift the final 70th week out and place it at the end of time. There is no Biblical justification for such an interpolation of time. It is also inconsistent with their understanding of the rest of the prophecy – why not impose a gap between the 7th and 8th weeks too?

As with the preterist system, the futurist system was developed as a deliberate alternative to the idea (as espoused by historicists) that the Roman church was the Antichrist by placing it in the future. Again, because of the way it deals with Christo-centric prophecy it becomes antichristian.

Dispensational

The dispensational system begins with the (unbiblical) assumption that history is divided into a series of dispensations that are characterised by differences in the way God deals with people. For example, the Christian age is often made a parenthetical period of history unknown to any of the prophets. This system was first developed by Darby and later, Schofield in the nineteenth century.

The scheme is based on the following fallacies:

1. The assertion that there are dispensations in history whose number and purpose cannot even be agreed by dispensationalists. (Some suggest 7, 10, 12 or 3!) This assertion is just that and has no Biblical foundation what ever.
2. There should be a clear distinction between Israel and the church. But again this is an assertion without foundation. See appendix 5.
3. Dispensationalism claims that all prophecy should be interpreted literally. This is despite the New Testament's frequent use of symbols. In Revelation alone, Jesus appears in numerous symbols (see the list in section 3.) This literalism is opposed to the principle of the Bible interpreting itself.

4. Along with futurists, dispensationalists remove the 70th week from the 70 week prophecy (Dan 9:24–27) and push it into the future. Such a manoeuvre inserts a time period longer than the original length of prophecy – again without Biblical support or precedent.

5. The dispensational system necessarily requires that the Jews return to their land (Palestine) before the Lord returns, and without any spiritual reformation or revival of the Jews. This assertion requires that such prophecies be unconditional and thus contradictory. For example, compare Jer 17:4 with Jer 17:25 where God promises to hate Judah forever and love Judah forever. The only way such mutually exclusive promises can be both true is under the principle of conditionalism. See appendix 5. In any case, the New Testament contains no promise of a return by Jews to Palestine.

Apotelesmatic

Of all the systems, this is the one that could be described as the prophetic equivalent of *politically correct*. In the words of its inventor, The other systems of prophecy are not wrong in what they affirm but in what they deny. Thus this system attempts to be all-inclusive. By extension, this system therefore inherits all the weaknesses (without the strengths) of all other systems. By saying too much, it says nothing!

While it is recognised that some prophecies have more than one fulfilment (eg Matt 24), these prophecies should only be so understood when actually implied in the text, which is not often. The apotelesmatic system was developed (actually revived from ancient Platonic thought about endlessly repeating cycles of history) by Desmond Ford about 1980.

Miscellaneous

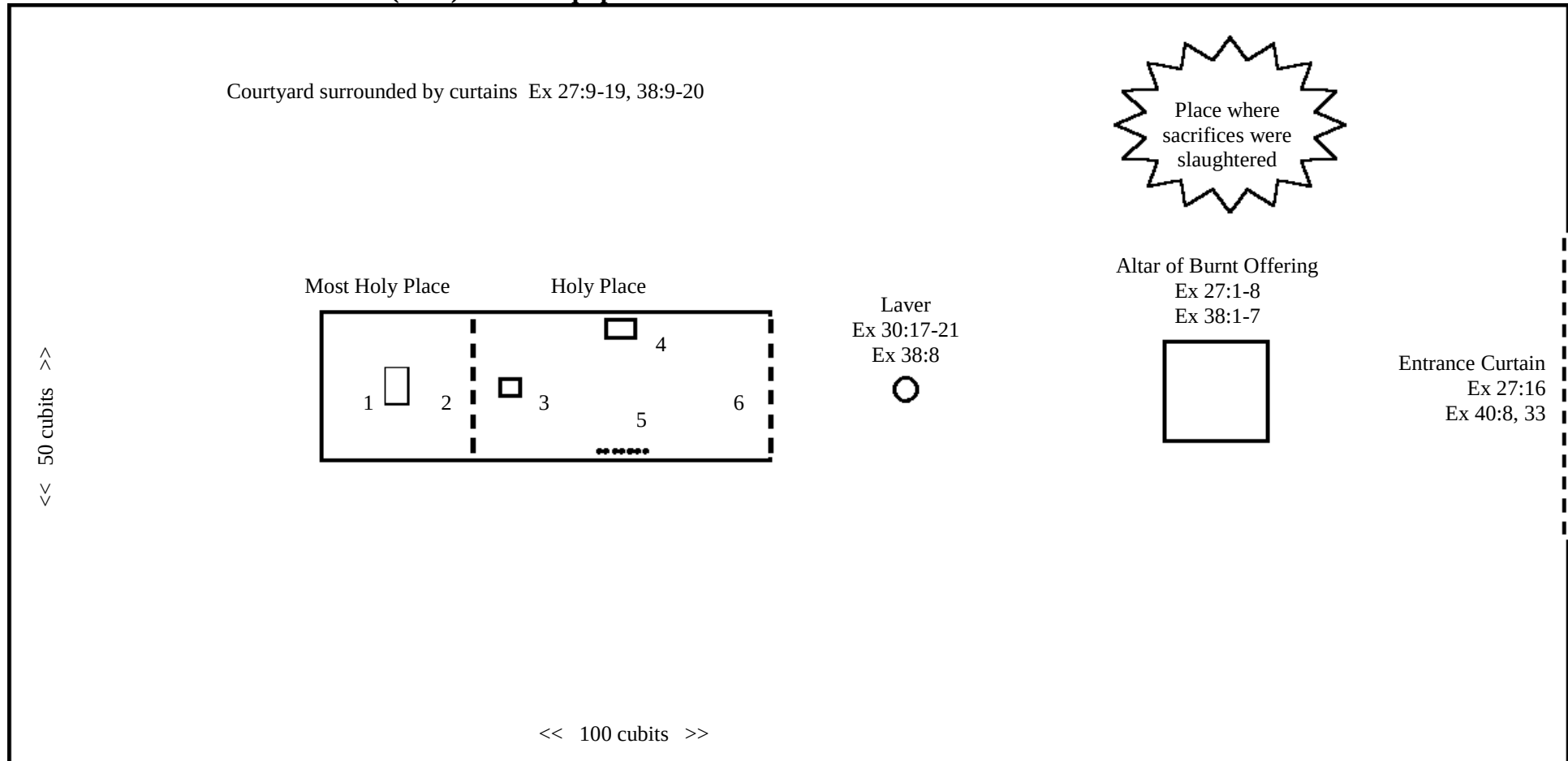
A number of variations on these themes have also been developed including, Recapitulationist, Millennial Dawnism, etc. However, we need not concern ourselves with such variations but focus upon the message of Scripture by allowing it to interpret itself. For more information on conditionalism, see appendix 5.

Appendix 1

A Summary of the Tabernacle and its Services

The Old Testament Tabernacle (Tent) and its Equipment

North Side



Legend:

- 1: Ark of the Covenant covered by the Mercy seat and Cherubim Ex 25:10-22, 26:34, 37:1-9, Heb 9:3-5
- 2: Curtain separating the Holy from the Most Holy Place Ex 26:31-33
- 3: Golden Altar of Incense (with horns) Ex 30:1-10, 37:25-29
- 4: Table of for the Bread of the Presence Ex 25:23-30, 26:35, 37:10-16
- 5: Golden Lampstand Ex 25:31-40:, 26:35, 37:17-24
- 6: Curtain entrance to Holy Place Ex 40:5, 28

Sanctuary Services

We can classify Revelation's Tabernacle allusions according to the services concerned with (1) the outer court, (2) the Holy Place (the first apartment) and (3) the Most Holy Place (the second apartment). These may be distinguished by the furniture and activities involved in each section.

Outer Court and Holy Place Activities

In Revelation, the outer court activities are very brief and incidental. The only references to any outer court equipment are:

- (1) Rev 5:6 - The Lamb which had (recently) been slain, presumably outside in the outer court.
- (2) Rev 6:9 - the souls under the altar. Of the two altars in the tabernacle (burnt offering and incense), only the altar of burnt offering is recorded as having any thing under it.
- (3) Rev 8:5 - fire from the altar (of burnt offering?)

Only priests were allowed to enter the Holy Place in the tabernacle or temple. Revelation records several such allusions:

- (1) Rev 1:12-20 - Jesus among the seven golden lampstands
- (2) Rev 5:8 - The Lamb (Jesus, John 1:29) surrounded by bowls of incense held by the 24 elders (compare Ps 141:2)
- (3) Rev 8:1 - Half an hour silence, the time usually spent in silent worship during the burning of incense.
- (4) Rev 8:2-5 - The Angel (Jesus) with the censer near the golden altar of incense
- (5) Rev 9:13 - Voice (of God) from between the horns of the golden altar. (See below on the Altar of Incense.)
- (6) Rev 11:1, 2 - Measure the temple and its altar (excluding the outer court).

In all of these, the precise service from the sanctuary is not clear; however, it is clear that the continual, daily ministry in the first apartment of the sanctuary is in the mind of John. Thus, the outer court and Holy place occur in the first half of Revelation without any reference to the second apartment.

Most Holy Place Activities

By contrast with the first half of Revelation, the second half only refers to Most Holy Place activities and its Day of Atonement service:

- (1) Rev 11:19 - the Ark of the Covenant is revealed - the only furniture in the Most Holy Place. (See below on the Altar of Incense.)
- (2) Rev 14:18 - the altar is the source of the loud voice instructing the harvesting angel to reap the clusters of grapes. (See below on the Altar of Incense.)
- (3) Rev 15:5-16:1 - the seven angels from the temple depart to deliver judgements from God - an allusion to the day of atonement in Lev 16.
- (4) Rev 16:7 - the altar proclaims that God's judgements on the wicked are just. (See below on the Altar of Incense.)

Notice that in Revelation the throne of God is never directly placed in the heavenly sanctuary or temple and so its location (if that is a meaningful phrase) cannot be determined as either the Holy Place or the Most Holy Place. However, that it is in the heavenly temple appears certain as all God's activities are directed and originate from the temple, especially against the wicked. Now there is no description of the heavenly Temple anywhere in the Scripture, however, it must be somewhat different from the earthly tabernacle because the earthly was so symbolic. The heavenly does not have an altar of burnt offering, nor embroidered angels, nor ram's skins covering etc. It is not even clear that the heavenly temple even has two apartments, which in the earthly clearly represented two (not mutually exclusive) phases of Jesus' high priestly ministry. Thus the temple references in Revelation must be understood symbolically - those in the Holy Place represent the daily or continual ministry which is Jesus intercession before the Father; those in the Most Holy Place represent final judgement, the working out of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and the final eradication of sin. Notice that while the ministry is proceeding in the Most Holy Place, activity does not stop in the Holy Place, fortunately, as we need Jesus' continual ministry of intercession.

Which Temple?

Thus far we have only noticed the construction and layout of the sanctuary in the wilderness as recorded by Moses in Exodus. This has been given a prominent position because it is the one most quoted and analysed, and it received the divine seal of approval because it was made “according to the pattern” (Ex 25:40, Heb 8:5) and God’s glory filled the tabernacle (Ex 40:34, 35). However, while Solomon’s temple differed from Moses’ tabernacle, it was also built according to the divine plan (1 Chron 28:19) and received divine approval by being filled with God’s glory (1 Kings 8:10, 11, 2 Chron 5:13, 14). The list below shows some of the important differences between the two temples:

- Solomon’s temple was twice the linear size of Moses’ tabernacle
- Solomon’s temple was a permanent structure of gold and bronze pillars, wood and stone, while Moses’ tabernacle was essentially a tent
- Solomon’s temple was three stories high and had attached storage rooms, while Moses’ tabernacle was single story without attached rooms
- Decorations on the walls of Solomon’s temple were different from Moses’ tabernacle
- The courtyard furniture was much larger in Solomon’s temple, eg, the laver of Moses’ tabernacle became a “sea” plus 10 bronze basins
- Solomon’s temple had 10 lampstands while Moses’ tabernacle had just one
- In Solomon’s temple half the lampstands were on the south and half on the north; in Moses’ tabernacle the only lampstand was on the south
- 1 Kings 7:48 says there was one table for the bread of the presence (as per Moses’ tabernacle) but 2 Chron 4:8 says there were 10 in the temple

This list is not exhaustive.

Thus, we cannot be definitive about the meaning of the minutia of the tabernacle or the temple. Further, since both were made “according to the pattern” (Ex 25:40, 1 Chron 28:19) these differences are just one reminder that the heavenly temple’s details cannot be known. It is nowhere described in the Bible.

The Golden Altar of Incense

There is some debate about just where the golden altar of incense was placed – in the Holy Place or the Most Holy Place. The texts below suggest both:

Texts suggesting the Holy Place

Ex 30:4 Put the altar in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the Testimony--before the atonement cover that is over the Testimony.

Ex 40:3, 5 Place the ark of the Testimony in it and shield the ark with the curtain...Place the gold altar of incense in front of the ark of the Testimony

Texts suggesting the Most Holy Place

1 Kings 6:22 So he overlaid the whole interior with gold. He also overlaid with gold the altar that belonged to the inner sanctuary.

Heb 9:3, 4 Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant.

At first glance, the Bible appears to be equivocal. However, it is possible that the altar of incense was so closely associated with the Ark of the Covenant and its services that the writers often put the two together. Certainly, if the inner curtain were removed, the altar stood directly in front of the Ark. Thus, in the mind of John, it is legitimate to place the golden altar of incense in both the Holy and Most Holy Place. This explains why it appears in both halves of Revelation.

There is possibly another reason for this situation: The sanctuary had two altars – the altar of burnt offering in the outer court and the golden altar of incense inside. The golden altar of incense represented the prayers of the saints, and it was before this altar that the priest most often ministered in both the daily and yearly services. It thus was central to Jesus’ ministry of intercession in both apartments.

Calendar of Annual Jewish Feasts

<u>Lunar Month</u>	<u>Date & Feast</u>	<u>References</u>	<u>Agricultural Activities</u>
1 Abib; Nisan (March/April)	14 Passover 15 Unleavened Bread 16 First Fruits	Ex 12:6 - 8 Lev 23:6, 7 Lev 23:10 - 14	Spring (later) rains; Barley & flax harvest
2 Ziv (Iyyar) (April/May)	14 Passover for those who missed the first	Num 9:10, 11	Barley harvest Dry season begins
3 Sivan (May/June)	6 Pentecost (Weeks)	Lev 23:15 - 21	Wheat harvest
4 (Tammuz) (June/July)			Tending vines
5 (Ab) (July/August)			Ripening grapes, figs, olives
6 Elul (August/September)			Dates, figs and olives, Processing grapes
7 Ethanim (Sep./Oct.)	1 Trumpets (New Year) 10 Atonement, [Yom Kippur] 15-21 Tabernacles	Lev 23:24, 25 Lev 23:27 - 32 Lev 23:34 - 43	End of harvest
8 Bul (October/November)			Sowing wheat & barley, Early (former) rain
9 Kislev (November/December)	25 Hanukkah (Dedication)	John 10:22	Winter rains begin
10 Tebeth (December/January)			
11 Shebat (January/February)			
12 Adar (February/March)	14, 15 Purim	Ezra 6:15, Est 3:7, 13, 8:12 Est 9:1, 15, 17, 19, 21	Citrus harvest, Almond blossom

Note: In addition to those feasts listed in the table, there were new moon festivals on the first of every month.

Appendix 2

A Summary of Daniel's Prophecies

Introduction

It is impossible to discuss the prophecies of Revelation without at least a cursory glance at those of Daniel. This is not only because there are numerous parallels between the two books, but also because the literary style and theme of Daniel provides a context and background in which Revelation is set.

The records of Daniel are of two types - historical, chs 1 - 6, and prophetic, chs 7 - 12. Further, the historical narratives illustrate the theme and character of the prophecies.

The material presented here is based on the (now widely accepted) view that Daniel was a real historical person who lived in the sixth and fifth centuries BC; that is, he is the person he records himself to be.

General Notes

The historical narratives all follow a similar pattern and literary style: that of Crisis - Courage - Vindication. Each of the six incidents is analysed in this way in the table.

Similarly, the prophecies follow the same pattern and also illustrate God's vindicating work and thus His ultimate control of the affairs of men. [This is the meaning of the word Daniel: God is my Vindicator (or judge).] Each of the four prophecies are parallel and analysed in another table.

Prophetic Principles

Since these prophecies are so unambiguous, they serve as a paradigm or model for interpreting all Biblical apocalyptic literature. Hence we may list several general principles:

1. The prophecy begins its fulfilment in the time of the prophet and continues its fulfilment until the end of time (the second coming of Christ in Daniel's case.)

2. The second coming of Christ is the culmination and climax of prophecy, not political developments.

3. The Bible explains its own symbols. Thus it is unnecessary to invent ingenious schemes to interpret apocalyptic literature.

4. The prophecies should be read and understood in the way the prophet would understand them. That is, words should be given the meaning they had in the prophet's time. God speaks in the language and culture of the author (the prophet).

5. Bible prophecy is not given so that men may know the future except in broad outline. Rather, prophecy serves to strengthen the faith of its students when they observe its gradual unfolding and realise who holds and controls the future.

6. Successive prophecies are often, but not always parallel. That is, while they might cover the same historical period, each will serve a different purpose by emphasising a different idea or teaching.

7. God controls history and the affairs of men: nothing occurs without His authority. His purpose will ultimately succeed.

8. A prophetic (apocalyptic) day should be understood as a literal year.

Note: The attempts by some (usually "preterists") to make many of Daniel's prophecies apply to Antiochus Epiphanes are examined at the end of this appendix and shown to be wanting.

The Vindication Pattern of Daniel Chapters 1 to 6

The material of Daniel is of two different literary forms: Historical narrative and Prophetic. A common exegetical error occurs when one attempts to interpret the prophetic portions without understanding the pattern set by the narratives. Here, the narratives are shown to all have a similar form – that of crisis and vindication following faithfulness and divine intervention. The prophetic passages are of similar form as shown in the next page.

	Daniel 1	Daniel 2	Daniel 3	Daniel 4	Daniel 5	Daniel 6
Divine Providence (Preparation)	Judah captured by Chaldeans (1:1-3)	King receives dream & forgets (2:1, 5)	Courage of three worthies (3:7-12)	King receives dream (4:1, 2, 4, 5)	Gates unlocked & Cyrus' prowess (Isa 45:1)	Daniel's diligence, piety & honesty (6:1-5)
Pagan imposed crisis, that is, challenge to God's law or authority	Imposed meat diet (1:5)	King threatens execution (2:5,9,12)	Threatens fiery furnace execution (3:13-15)	King defiant (4:28 - 30)	King holds defiant celebration and desecrates temple (5:1-4)	Daniel remains loyal (6:10, 11)
Response of Righteous	Resolves not to defile & requests special diet (1:8)	Uses tact (2:14-16) & holds prayer meeting (2:17, 18)	Stand firm & confident before king (3:16-18)	Daniel interprets and warns (4:19-27)	Conspicuously absent - later rebukes (5:18-24)	Threatened execution by lions (6:6-9, 15-17)
Divine intervention	Shown favour by supervisor (1:9)	Dream revealed to Daniel (2:19-23)	Not burned (3:19-25)	King goes mad (4:31 - 33)	Writing on wall (5:5, 6)	Daniel not eaten (6:19-22)
Result of above	Allowed special diet (1:14-16)	Reveals & interprets dream to king (2:24-45)	Walk free (3:26, 27)	Retains kingdom when sanity restored (4:34a, 36)	King paled (5:6) Daniel called (5:10-16) & interprets (5:25-28)	Daniel walks free (6:23)
Vindication (human vs Divine wisdom judged)	Judged 10 times better (1:18-20)	God of Daniel praised as superior to all others (2:46, 47)	God of worthies praised as superior to all others (3:28, 29)	Praises God as ruler of all (4:34b, 35, 37, 3)	Daniel promoted King executed, Babylon falls to Cyrus (5:29 2 Chron 36:23)	Accusers executed by lions (6:24)
Outcome (elevation of righteous)	Captives become highly regarded public servants (1:20)	Daniel promoted to chief adviser (2:48, 49)	Worthies promoted (3:30)	King and kingdom greater than before (4:36b)	Daniel highly regarded in Persia (5:31, 6:1-3)	Darius praises God (6:25-27) Daniel prospers (6:28)

The Parallel Structure of Daniel's Prophecies

Prophecy:	Daniel 2 - Metal Image	Daniel 7 - Beasts	Daniel 8&9 - Goat & Ram	Daniel 11 & 12 - Kings
Babylon	Head of gold 2:32, 37, 38	Lion 7:4	—	—
Medo-Persia (2 part coalition)	Chest & arms of silver 2:32, 39	Bear 7:5 (Raised up on one side)	Ram 8:3, 4 (Two horns, higher one arises second)	Three more kings, then a fourth 11:2
Greece	Belly & thighs of bronze 2:32, 39	Leopard 7:6	Goat with prominent horn 8:5-7;	A mighty king 11:3
4 divisions of Greece	—	4 heads	4 horns 8:8	Empire parcelled to 4 winds, kings of north & south 11:4-14
Pagan Rome	Legs of iron 2:33, 40	Terrifying beast 7:7	Little horn 8:9	King of the North 11:20, 21
Jesus' death and destruction of Temple	—	—	Messiah the Prince cut off and the abomination of desolation 9:25-27	Prince of the covenant 11:22-25
Divided Europe	Feet iron and clay 2:33, 41-43	10 horns 7:7b	—	King of North and King of South 11:26-31
Medieval Rome: blasphemy, persecution, 1260 days	—	Little horn reigns for 3½ years 7:8, 25	Little horn 8:10 - 12, 24	King who exalts himself for 3½ years 11:32-35 = 12:7 11:36 - 44
Pre-Advent Judgement	Stone strikes image 2:34 Image destroyed 2:35	Court sits, books opened 7:9, 10; Little horn destroyed 7:11, 12, 26	Sanctuary cleansed after 2300 days 8:13, 14 Little horn destroyed 8:25	He will come to his end 11:45 Michael the great prince stands up 12:1
Vindication	—	Kingdom handed to saints 7:25, 27	Sanctuary restored after 2300 days 8:14	Saints in the Book will be delivered and shine 12:2, 3
Kingdom of Jesus (Second Advent)	Stone fill whole earth 2:35, 44	Son of Man given sovereign power 7:13, 14, 27	—	Saints live forever 12:3b, 12:13.

Literary Structure of Daniel

Only a sample of the ingenious literary structures within Daniel will be given here. They are fairly self evident to an observant reader and therefore can be readily written down. The two samples chosen here well illustrate similar structures in Revelation and are among the most important to Revelation

Literary Structure of Daniel 7

I: Prologue

A: Introduction and thoughts passing through the mind, 7:1, 2

II: Vision

B: Lion, Bear & Leopard, 7:4 - 6

C: Fourth Beast origin and description, 7:7

D: Little Horn, 7:8

E: Son of Man's Judgement, 7:9, 10

D: Little Horn, 7:11a

C: Fourth Beast slain, 7:11b

B: Other Beasts, 7:12

E: Son of Man's Kingdom, 7:13, 14

III: Daniel's First Reaction

A: Transition to explanation, 7:15, 16

IV: Angel's First Interpretation

B: Four Beasts, 7:17

F: Saints inherit the eternal Kingdom, 7:18

III: Daniel's Second Reaction

C: Fourth Beast's activities, 7:19

D: Ten Horns and Little Horn's description, 7:20, 21

E: Son of Man's Judgement, 7:22a

F: Saints inherit the eternal Kingdom, 7:22b

II: Angel's Second Interpretation

C: Fourth Beast's activities, 7:23

D: Ten Horns and Little Horn's activities, 7:24, 25

E: Judgement on Little Horn, 7:26

F: Saints inherit Eternal Kingdom, 7:27

I: Epilogue

A: Conclusion and thoughts passing through the mind, 7:28

Literary Structure of Daniel 9:24 - 27

A: 70 sevens (weeks) are "cut off" on *your people* [2 word phrase];

B: & *your holy city* [3 word phrase]

A: to: finish transgression, seal sin, expiate wickedness [2 word phrases]

B: introduce everlasting righteousness, seal vision & prophet, anoint holy sanctuary [3 word phrases]

A1: Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes,

A2: there will be seven sevens (weeks) and 62 sevens (weeks)

B1: It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench,

B2: but in times of trouble.

A2: After the sixty-two sevens (weeks),

A1: the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.

B1: The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.

B2: The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

A1: He will confirm a covenant with many

A2: for one seven (week)

A2: In the middle of the seven (week)

A1: he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.

B2: And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation,

B1: until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

[Note that the time elements apply to "A" items only]

The Time Prophecies of Daniel

Of the six time prophecies found in Daniel, only the 3½ years (twice), 2300 days and the 70 weeks will be examined here because only these have relevance to the book of Revelation. Again, we will derive implicit principles to interpret such prophetic passages.

3½ Years

This time prophecy occurs in Dan 7:25 and 12:7. It also occurs in Rev 11:2, 3, 12:6, 14, 13:5 and so will be examined in more detail in the main part of this book. However, a comparison of these shows that in prophetic time, 1 year is 12 months of 30 days.

70 Sevens or Weeks - Dan 9:24 - 27, & 2300 Days - Dan 8:13, 14

That these two prophecies are not only related but are part of the same scheme is demonstrated by the following:

1. Gabriel's explanation was cut short and incomplete in Dan 8 because Daniel fainted with exhaustion
2. In Dan 9 the same angel, Gabriel is sent to Daniel - Dan 9:21
3. Daniel recalls the former vision of Dan 8 - Dan 9:21
4. Gabriel was sent to give insight and understanding [of the former vision] - Dan 9:22
5. Daniel is instructed to recall the former vision - Dan 9:23
6. The last thing mentioned in Dan 8 and the only matter left unexplained is the subject of time. Time is the first thing mentioned in Dan 9:24
7. Both are connected by the instruction to seal up the vision - Dan 8:26 & 9:24

Therefore, many expositors have put the starting date for the 70 weeks and the 2300 days at the same point - the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. According to Ezra 7, this occurred in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, 457 BC. That the two prophecies share the same beginning is seen from Gabriel's initial statement, "70 weeks are determined (Heb: cut off, see also Theodotion's Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate) [from the 2300 days] for your people." If the 70 sevens (weeks) are interpreted as 490 prophetic days, or 490 literal years, we obtain a precise time table for Jesus ministry as the first half of the final seven years (week) which ended in 34 AD. Thus Jesus was to be baptized in 27 AD (in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Luke 3:1) and crucified 3½ years later - just as the Gospels record! Thus the prophetic year/day principle is demonstrated in the greatest Messianic prophecy in Daniel.

Many expositors have extrapolated this prophetic year/day principle, so clearly demonstrated in the 70 week prophecy, to other apocalyptic time prophecies. Such an association between the year and day was common in other contexts (Num 14:34, Isa 34:8, 61:2, 63:4, Eze 4:5, 6. see also Job 10:5, 15:20, 36:11, Ps 39:5, 61:6, 90:10, 15, Eze 22:4). For a more extensive survey of this principle see *Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation*, W. H. Shea, Daniel & Revelation Committee Series, Volume 1, Review & Herald, Washington, 1982.

Historical Note

An erroneous interpretation of Daniel's 2300 day prophecy, which concluded in 1844, caused much religious excitement in the early 1800's. The Millerites and others believed, despite Jesus' numerous warnings to the contrary, that 1844 would be the time of Jesus' return. This excitement reached fever pitch in 1844 and their disappointment became known as "The Great Disappointment." This event and its aftermath has been the cause of much unnecessary cynicism about Biblical time prophecy. However, these events are clearly anticipated in Rev 10 and 11, where Daniel (or his successors) is simply instructed to "prophesy again."

Antiochus or Rome?

This section examines the question of the identity of the Little Horn in Daniel 8. There have traditionally been two dominant views, which both date from New Testament times:

- * **Antiochus (IV) Epiphanes**, a minor Seleucid king who reigned from 175 BC to 164 BC. In his zeal to Hellenise the Jews and crush them, he erected an altar in the temple and sacrificed a pig on it. This interpretation is known as "preterist".
- * **Roman Empire and its successor, Medieval Rome**. This is the historicist understanding.

Here is a list of reasons why the Little Horn of Daniel should be understood as Pagan and Medieval Rome:

1. The parallel structure of the four visions of Daniel (chs 2, 7, 8/9, 11/12) are all the same: starting with Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Rome's disintegration (Europe etc), Papal Rome, Judgement, Second Coming. Antiochus Epiphanes does not fit this structure.
2. The prophecy states that the Little Horn would arise from one of the four winds of the earth (which Rome did) and not one of the previous four horns (as Antiochus Epiphanes did). Such a conclusion can only be deduced by reading the Hebrew and noticing the gender of the words, which the grammar requires to agree. Verses 8 & 9 of Daniel 8 may be set out as follows:

	Feminine	Masculine
v8	to the four winds	of the heavens
Heb:	le'arba` rûhôt	hašāmāyim
v9	from the one	from them
Heb:	min-hă'ahat	mêhem

Hence the correct origin of the little horn, according to the grammar of the Hebrew text, is not one of the horns but one of the (idiomatic) four directions of the compass. Antiochus came from one of the four horns (ie was a Seleucid king) while Rome arose from the west.

3. Christ believed that the function of the little horn, namely its abomination that causes desolation, was in His day still future! See Matt 24:15 and Mark 13:14. Rome was yet to destroy the temple, it had still not persecuted thousands of Christians and had not yet tried to substitute Christ's mediatorial work.
4. The Seleucid kings reigned from 311 BC to 65 BC and Antiochus was the eighth in a line of 20. More than a dozen Seleucids reigned after him. Therefore, Antiochus' reign could not be described as "the time of the end" (v17 & 19), or "the latter part of their reign" (v19 & 23), or "the distant future" (v26). By contrast, Rome fits these time elements well.
5. Antiochus never "grew until it reached the host of heaven" (v10), was never "great" (v11), he rarely prospered or succeeded (v12 & 24), was not "very strong" (v24). In fact, Antiochus IV was quite the opposite - And he did not really "prosper" (verse 12) or grow "exceedingly great" (verse 9). His father, Antiochus III, was called "the great," and rightly so, for he restored the original Seleucid dominions. Antiochus Epiphanes, on the other hand, was referred to sarcastically, by at least some of his contemporaries, as "Epimanes" - the madman. Antiochus Epiphanes, after a short-lived triumph in the "south" (Egypt), was totally defeated there when the Roman ambassador, C. Popilius Laenas, merely informed him that the Roman Senate wanted him to leave. The grim Roman drew a circle around Antiochus with his cane and demanded a decision before he stepped out of it. In the "east" (Mesopotamia), Antiochus Epiphanes died under obscure and sorry circumstances. Even in the "glorious land" (Palestine), where

at first he seemed successful, all his ambitions came to nothing within his lifetime. In short, he was not “great,” but a political nobody who achieved almost nothing!

6. The greatest weakness of the Antiochus interpretation is that it is not Christ centred (Luke 24:27) but politically based. Such a terrestrial understanding robs the prophecy of its Christological significance and reduces the exegesis to one of imagination rather than Biblical exposition.
7. It was Rome, not Antiochus, who "set himself up to be as great as the Prince of the host" (Dan 8:11) and is said to "stand against the Prince of princes" (Dan 8:25). Clearly Christ is the "Prince" against whom the Little Horn is so opposed. That is, the Little Horn is a religio-political power, unlike Antiochus who was entirely politically motivated. It was Pontius Pilate and his fellow Romans who crucified Christ. It was Rome's General (later Emperor) Titus who permanently destroyed the Jerusalem temple. It was (papal) Rome that "changed the times and the laws" (Dan 7:25) and introduced a false Sabbath. It was Rome that introduced a human mediator and robbed people of Christ's heavenly ministry!
8. Despite strenuous efforts, no historical effort has ever been capable of fitting the 2300 days into any portion of Antiochus' reign. He succeeded in interrupting the sanctuary service for about 3 years but never ultimately "took away the daily sacrifice." By contrast, Medieval Rome usurped the place of Christ as our mediator and Saviour by proclaiming itself the only means of salvation.
9. The links between Daniel 8 and Daniel 9 cannot be ignored: same angel (Gabriel) was sent to explain both visions, the explanation of the 2300 days was not given due to Daniel's exhaustion, references to the previous vision (Daniel 9:21 & 23),

Daniel's invariant pattern of persecution and vindication does not fit with Daniel 9 unless it is linked with Daniel 8, Daniel 8 ends with time and Daniel 9 begins with time (70 years and 70 weeks of years). If this is true, and the 70 weeks prophecy is accurate, then the year-day principle is also true. Hence, 2300 years could not apply to Antiochus or an earthly sanctuary!

10. The language of the prophecy is clearly celestial not terrestrial. For example, the phrase, "place of his sanctuary" (v11), the word place (Heb, mākōn) always denotes the place where God dwells or the foundation of His throne. See Ex 15:17, several times in 1 Kings 8 and 2 Chron 6, Ps 33:14, Isa 4:5, Isa 18:4, Ezra 2:68, etc. It is clear that the temple alluded to is not the earthly temple but the heavenly. This strengthens the Christological significance of this prophecy. It cannot refer to a minor political skirmish involving an egotistical incompetent!

While it is true that Antiochus Epiphanes persecuted Jews, polluted the (earthly) sanctuary and his accession to the throne was irregular, this is not sufficient in view of the above. Indeed, others have shared these characteristics, eg, Nebuchadnezzar, but are correctly rejected because they do not fulfil all the specifications of the prophecy. We therefore conclude that the Little Horn is intended to represent Imperial and Medieval Rome.

For further references consult the following:

Selected Studies on Prophetic Interpretation, W. H. Shea, Daniel & Revelation Committee Series, Volume 1, Review & Herald, Washington, 1982.

God Cares - Volume 1, C. M. Maxwell, Pacific Press P A, Mountain View, 1981.

Appendix 3: Brief History of Rome

- 753 BC Traditional founding date for the city of Rome
- 100 BC Gaius Julius Caesar establishes the Roman Imperial line of Caesars
- 46 BC Julius Caesar reforms the calendar to essentially that which we use today by beginning the year at Jan 1, seven days after the winter solstice. He also decreed that every fourth year to be a leap year (slightly too much by 3 days every 400 years).
- 44 BC March, Julius Caesar assassinated in the Senate
- 27 BC Julius Caesar's adopted son, Gaius Octavian, succeeds to the Imperial throne as Caesar Augustus
- 5 BC Probable date for Jesus birth in Bethlehem to Joseph and Mary (Matt 1, Luke 2)
- 14 AD August 19, Tiberius Caesar ascends the Roman Imperial throne to succeed Augustus. Later, Augustus makes slight variations to the calendar by naming the eighth month after himself, giving it 31 days (rather than 30) and making February 28 days.
- 27 Jesus Baptised in the 15th year (by the traditional Jewish inclusive reckoning) of the reign Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1)
- 31 Jesus crucified 3½ years later during Passover (March/April)
- 34 End of 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9:25-27 (490 years after the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem issued by Artaxerxes Longamanus 457 BC): Stephen martyred and Jews reject Christ (Acts 7:51, 57, 58), Church scattered (Acts 8:1), Philip first missionary to Gentiles (Acts 8:26, 27), Paul appointed missionary to Gentiles (Acts 9:11, 12, 15), Peter's vision to go to Gentiles (Acts 10:11, 12), Gentiles become Christians (Acts 11:17, 18), Church headquarters moves to Antioch (Acts 11:19 - 21), Christians like Christ (Acts 11:25, 26).
- 37 Caligula Caesar succeeds to the Imperial throne at the death of Tiberius
- 41 Claudius Caesar succeeds to the Imperial throne at the death of Caligula
- 54 Nero succeeds to the Imperial throne at the death of Claudius
- 66 Following a revolt by the Jews, Roman forces led by Cestius Gallus, besiege Jerusalem. However, the siege is mysteriously terminated and the Christians, remembering Jesus' words in Matt 24:15 - 19, flee Jerusalem. The Jews believe they have won. In response, Nero appoints Flavius Vespasianus as General of Syria and Judea. Thus begins a six-year war of the Jews.
- 68 Nero dies and is succeeded by Vespasian, who, hands the siege of Jerusalem to his son Titus.
- 70 Jerusalem besieged in spring. August 30, against Titus' orders, the temple is torched and destroyed.
- 73 Jewish war finally ends with the capture of Masada.
- 79 Vespasian dies and is succeeded by his son Titus on the Imperial throne.
- 95 Approximate date of the writing of Revelation by the last surviving disciple, John, exiled on Patmos by Domitian.
- 100 The end of the first century sees the end of all Jesus' surviving disciples and thus the end of the Apostolic church. During the next 200 years Rome's persecution of the Christian church gradually intensifies. Despite this, the church grows and expands into all parts of the world from the British Isles to China, from Africa to Scandinavia. There is some evidence that the Gospel even reached the Americas in about the third century.
- During the next 150 years, Rome tries to suppress, with increasing violence, the Christian sect, often confused with Jews because of their common day of worship, their common belief in monotheism and their refusal to worship the emperor.
- 250 Emperor Decius begins the policy of exterminating Christians. It was continued by his successor Valerian.

- 303 Emperor Diocletian issues an edict, which attempts to finally and utterly (and viciously) wipe out all Christians.
- 312 Constantine becomes Emperor.
- 313 Constantine issues the edict of toleration that ends ten years of bitter Christian persecution. He also adopted policies to support the church by combining church and state, freeing the church of taxes and granting religious freedom to Christians, built lavish churches, etc. From this point onward, as the Roman Empire declined, the church expanded. With official support, the separation of church and state rapidly blurs, thus begins the process of transition from Imperial Rome to Medieval Rome that would take about 200 years to complete.
- 323 Constantine converts to Christianity (becoming the first Christian emperor) and attempts to unite pagan worship with Christian beliefs. Thus arose Christmas, Easter and Lent, all pagan festivals. Sunday (rather than Saturday) weekly worship had been in vogue for about 100 years.
- 325 Council of Nicaea convened by Constantine to resolve the Arian debate. It issues the Nicæan creed and sets the official church calendar including the times for Easter, lent and Christmas (Dec 25). By this time, the date for the winter solstice had moved to Dec 22.
- 330 Constantine officially moves the capital from Rome to Constantinopal (now Istanbul). This accelerates the process of transition from Imperial to Medieval Rome by creating a power vacuum, which would grow with time and begin to be increasingly filled by the Papacy.
- 337 Constantine dies after being baptized on his deathbed. His son and successor was an Arian. The church now endured a series of heresies, which served to dogmatise its teachings.
- 476 Last (western) Roman emperor, Romulus Augustulus beheaded by Odovacar (an Arian and king of the Heruli), declared himself king of Italy and sent the insignia of Roman rule to Constantinopal thus ending imperial rule in the western Roman empire leaving the Papacy solely in charge.
- 493 Ostrogoths under Theodoric (Arians) depose and kill Odovacar
- 496 Conversion of the Frankish king, Clovis, the first Germanic king to embrace Roman Christianity.
- 534 Arian Vandals of North Africa under Genseric finally destroyed by the (eastern) emperor Justinian.
- 538 Arian Ostrogoths driven out of Rome by Justinian, and so reuniting Italy. Thus, Emperor Justinian's declaration of 533 that the bishop of Rome (then Vigilius) to be the "corrector of heretics," "head of all the holy churches" and "head of all the holy priests of God" and (effectively) the emperor of the west, became effective. This declaration completes the transformation from Imperial to Medieval Rome, which makes a single person as head of both church and state on an international scale. From this time on, most kings of western Europe ascend their thrones with the permission of the Bishop (Pope) of Rome. Thus begins the 1260 years of papal domination following the overthrow of three European powers: Heruli, Vandals and Ostrogoths.
- 554 Ostrogoths (the last Arian tribe) cease to exist.
- 590 Pope Gregory the Great ascends to the throne (590 – 604) regarded by many historians as marking the beginning of medieval times. Gregory was immensely rich, personally financing several wars and laid the foundation for the Papal claim to absolute power.
- 756 Pepin of France subdues the Lombards of Northern Italy and cedes their territory to the Pope.
- 800 Charlemagne crowned "Charles Augustus, Emperor of the Romans" by Pope Leo III. This effectively creates the Holy Roman Empire.
- 1054 Great schism between eastern and western churches erupts: the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinopal excommunicate each other.
- 1071 Jerusalem falls to the Mohammedan Turks. This alarms the church and disrupts pilgrimages thus creating the need for the later Crusades.
- 1076 Pope Gregory VII excommunicates (German) Henry IV for rebellion against the Pope's civil authority. Henry is forced to wait three days in the snow at Canosa for an audience. Henry begs forgiveness by kneeling before Gregory.

- 1095 Pope Gregory VII appeals to the nobles from Clermont, France, to free the Holy Land of infidels. This resulted in the first Crusade, which in turn created the kingdom of Jerusalem that lasted for about 100 years.
- 1147 Second Crusade, “King’s Crusade” inspired by the preaching of Bernard of Clairvaux. It was not successful and collapsed a year later.
- 1189 Third Crusade inspired by a great church council. It collapsed three years later with little success and much loss of Christian life.
- 1204 Western (Catholic) armies capture Constantinople in the fourth Crusade, wresting it from the Turks.
- 1208 Pope Innocent III declares transubstantiation a dogma of the church at the fourth Lateran Council. Innocent III authorises a bloody crusade against the Albigenses of southern France.
- 1231 Pope Gregory IX institutes the inquisition for the removal of all heretics.
- 1245 A church council convened by Pope Innocent IV deposed emperor Frederick of Saxony simply by decree.
- 1300 First Year of Jubilee declared Pope Boniface VIII in which all visitors to Rome gained a free indulgence for sin.
- 1305 Pope Clement V elected and moves the seat of the papacy to Avignon in France in 1309. Thus begins a period of 70 years when the papacy ruled from France. This became known as the “Babylonian Captivity.” during which time all popes, most cardinals and curia, were French and the city of Rome fell into obscurity and became almost deserted.
- 1377 Babylonian captivity ends when Pope Gregory XI moves back to Rome.
- 1378 – 1417 The great schism when, at one time, three popes claimed the title.
- 1415 John Hus of Bohemia is burned alive for heresies including the condemnation of indulgences, despite civil guarantees of his safety.
- 1453 29 Aug. Constantinople falls to the Muslim forces and effectively ends the eastern Roman (Byzantium) empire.
- 1534 Jesuit Order founded by Ignatius de Loyola.
- 1545 Pope Paul III convenes the Council of Trent to oppose the inroads of the Reformation. The council must decide whether to adopt the Bible as its rule of faith or (as was ultimately decided) tradition, which was to have precedence over the Bible. Thus begins the process that later initiates what is usually called the counter-reformation (at the conclusion of the council of Trent).
- 1562 January 18 - Final (17th) session of Council of Trent: Gaspare Ricciulli de Fosso (Archbishop of Reggio) breaks the deadlock over the debate on the Sabbath question (should we keep Saturday in accord with the Bible, or, Sunday in keeping with the then traditional practise?), by arguing that the church’s apparently successful change of the proper (Biblical) day of worship from the seventh to the first day, is the distinguishing mark of its supreme temporal and ecclesiastical authority. Further the same church regards this change as successful because Protestantism agrees with the change by observing Sunday for which there is no Scriptural authority. This council settled all canon law as the most binding on the Catholic Church. It also settled all questions of theology concerning soteriology, the sacraments, purgatory, transubstantiation, etc. It marks the effective beginning of the Counter Reformation, which lasted about 150 years and became a great scourge to the RC church.
- 1582 Pope Gregory XIII reforms the calendar to its modern form. By this time, the date of the winter solstice had moved another 10 days from that of the council of Nicaea, to Dec 12. Thus, Gregory deleted 10 days (Oct 5-14) from the calendar without interrupting the weekly cycle. He further decreed that no century year was to be a leap year unless divisible by 400 (this deletes 3 leap years every 400 and makes the calendar accurate.) Most European Catholic countries follow immediately, but other countries adopt the Gregorian calendar over the next 300 years.
- 1789 November 2; The vast wealth of the Catholic church is confiscated in France to pay the national debt.

- 1798 General Berthier, on order from Napoleon, takes captive Pope Pius VI who dies in a French jail the following year. The Vatican states are confiscated and the Catholic church must seek civil permission to function. Thus ends the 1260 years of Papal supremacy over European civil authority.
- 1806 The Holy Roman Empire ceases to exist for the first time since Charlemagne.
- 1813 January 19; Pope Pius VII reluctantly signs a concordat which totally surrendered temporal power to Napoleon. This set a pattern for further concordats in Sardinia (1817), Prussia (1821), Hanover (1824), Belgium (1827), Switzerland (1828, 1845), Sicilies (1834), all of which removed the power of the pope to appoint bishops and gave it to civil authorities.
- 1848 Pope Pius IX, Pio Nono, flees Rome for his own safety.
- 1849 A new Roman (Italian) secular republic is declared which guarantees religious freedom to all. An Italian Bible is translated and printed.
- 1850 The pope returns to Rome but only rules by the authority and help of Austrian and French troops. The returned pope with his foreign troops brutally suppresses the new secular constitution and burns the newly printed Italian Bible.
- 1870 The Catholic Church adopts the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope's "ex-cathedra" statements. In this same year, the Pope declares himself a prisoner of the Vatican in view of the complete loss of the Papal States.
- 1929 Pope Pius XI concludes a concordat with the Italian Government to reinstate a small portion of what were once the Vatican states. Later, other concordats were signed with other European nations.
- 1962 October 11; Pope John XXIII convenes Vatican II council which proves to be the most revolutionary council in history!
- 1964 November 21; Vatican Council II, Decree on Religious Freedom and Decree on Ecumenism.
Pope Paul VI issues an encyclical on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*.
- 1965 December 8 - Vatican II council concludes and allows the mass in the common language (rather than exclusively Latin); welcomes back the "separated brethren" (Protestants), issues *Lumen Gentium*, opening the door to other churches (they were never before recognised), proclaims a more social theology, etc.
- 1967 December 7; Pope Paul IV and the Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople lift the excommunication that Pope Leo IX and Patriarch Michael Caerulius imposed on each other in 1054.
- 1988 October 11 - Pope John Paul II addresses the European Parliament on political unity.
- 1998 Pope John Paul II issues an encyclical, *Dies Domini*, The Day of the Lord, which defends and encourages worship on Sunday.
- 2000 March 12, Pope John Paul II issues a *misa culpa* from St Peter's basilica apologising for the Catholic church's excesses including the persecution of Jews, the Crusades, the inquisition and other bloody wrongs. "We forgive and ask forgiveness," he said.

Brief History of Protestantism

- 800+ From about the ninth to 15 centuries, underground Protestant movements existed such as, the Waldensies, Albigensies, Huguenoes, and many others. However, these were never a recognised force and were often ignorant of each other's existence. They shared several features in common: an objection to the Roman Catholic mass, the perpetuation of the Scriptures in the language of those who used them and a common understanding of theology (justification by faith) and prophecy (historicist).
- 1382 Wyclif produces the first complete translation of the Bible into a modern, common language. His source was the Latin Vulgate. [He is now regarded as the "Morning Star of the Reformation."]. This set a trend for Protestantism which became one of its distinguishing features – to place the Bible in the hands of the common people, in their own language, for their personal study.
- 1415 John Hus of Bohemia is burned alive for heresies including the condemnation of indulgences, despite civil guarantees of his safety.
- 1517 Martin Luther nails the 95 theses to the door of the Wittenburg church. This is often regarded as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation because it set out a formal challenge to the authority of Rome by condemning the sale of indulgences (essentially raising money for Roman cathedral works by selling forgiveness of sins, thus excusing guilt etc.) Luther labelled these, "licences to sin."
- 1525 First complete version of the Bible produced in a modern language and translated directly from the original languages by Tyndale. About the same time, Luther produces his German Bible, also translated from the original languages.
- 1534 Church of England separates from the Roman Catholic Church.
- 1538 A copy of Tyndale's English Bible is placed in all English churches.
- 1571 The Church of England establishes the 39 Protestant articles of faith.
- 1650 During the 17th century the protestant reformation was very weak and struggled against the rising tide of secular humanism. Bible is still not widely available.
- 1750(?) John Wesley unwittingly founds the Methodist Church on the distinctive doctrine of the need to live a holy life like Christ's.
- 1776 First "Protestant" nation of USA established upon the twin freedoms of religious and civil liberty.
- 1798 William Carey becomes the first modern, salaried apostle (or "missionary") for a Protestant organization.
- 1802 The first Bible society (The British and Foreign Bible Society) established.
- 1844 The year of "The Great Disappointment" when the Millerites (followers of William Miller) had predicted that Jesus would return. This was based on a misunderstanding of Daniel's 2300 days, Dan 8:13, 14.
With the failure of the Millerite interpretation of the 2300 days, the movement broke up into six groups (listed here in descending order of size): Those who left religion altogether, those who returned to their original churches and became increasingly cynical and secular (this persists to the present), those who remained loyal to William Miller (who died in 1849 when his remaining followers dispersed), those who continued to set new dates for Jesus' second advent (these developed into the Jehovah's Witnesses among others), those who developed into the Church of the Christian Advent, and those who developed into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- 1845 The Southern Baptist Convention is formed which rapidly becomes the largest denomination in the USA.
- 1846 Evangelical Alliance formed from more than 50 denominations in Britain and America.
- 1908 Federal Council of churches formed from 31 American Protestant churches in America.

- 1910 World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh initiates the Faith and Order movement - later the Ecumenical movement. This conference included Anglo-Catholics and established the Christian Unity Week; Roman Catholics absent and unwelcome. Asquith Government removes 1689 wording that prohibits the Monarch of England from any exposure to the Catholic Mass.
- 1921 International Missionary Council at Lake Mohonk, New York, tries to get Protestant missionary agencies to cooperate with each other.
- 1925 Conference on Life and Work, Stockholm seeks unity among churches in solving social, political, and economic problems.
- 1927 Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne, looks at the theological basis for unity.
- 1937 Life and Work Conference, Oxford, adopts the slogan, "Doctrine divides, Service unites."
- 1948 World Council of Churches (WCC) formed in Amsterdam from the Conference on Faith and Order, and includes 147 denominations in 44 countries (and includes the Greek Orthodox Church.)
- 1954 World Council of Churches meets at Evanston, Illinois, USA.
- 1960 February 2 - Requiem Mass held for Earl of Halifax at Westminster Abbey.
- 1961 World Council of Churches meets at New Delhi, India.
- 1967 Jerry Falwell becomes a dispensational futurist and makes Israel and its place in eschatology his main sermon topic
- 1968 World Council of Churches meets at Uppsala, Sweden.
- 1975 World Council of Churches meets at Nairobi, Kenya.
- 1977(?) Jerry Falwell forms the Moral Majority with the objective of creating a significant political influence over the right of politics.
- 1978 Dr Ronald Coggan becomes the first Archbishop of Canterbury to attend a Papal Mass since Mary I.
- 1979 By some dubious means, Jerry Falwell, Paige Patterson and Paul Pressler, seize control of the Southern Baptist Convention (meeting at Houston) by installing their candidate, Adrian Rogers. After this usurpation, the SBC is subverted for significant political ends.
- 1980? Christian Coalition formed (in USA) whose objective is to legislate morality and enforce (their understanding of) Christian beliefs. To do this would require removing the wall of separation between church and state as stated in the US constitution. The coalition includes many organizations such as the Moral Majority, Promise keepers, many protestant churches, and some Roman Catholic organizations.
- 1982 The president of the USA, Ronald Reagan, (a nominal Protestant) conspires with the Pope to begin the process of undermining communism by supporting the Polish trade union, Solidarity. This causes the collapse of the Polish government and ultimately, the Soviet Union plus communism generally.
- 1983 World Council of Churches meets at Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- 1991? World Council of Churches meets in Canberra, Australia.
- 1998 At the behest and instigation of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Religious Right gained enough support in the US Congress House for a majority vote (not enough for the 2/3 required) for a "Freedom Amendment" to the Constitution aimed at subverting the separation of church and state.
- 1999 The Anglo-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) recommends to the world churches (ie Protestantism) that they accept the primacy and authority of the Pope.

Brief History of (Modern) Spiritism

Note: We will adopt a practical definition of spiritism as any mystic religion or practice that places private revelations from spirits above objective revelation such as that from the Bible or other recorded source. Thus, a number of supposedly Christian churches (in name only) can be labelled spiritistic.

- 1847 Jackson Davis publishes his book, "*Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations and a Voice to Mankind.*" It has since been through more than 50 editions and has been in continuous print ever since.
- 1848 Kate and Margaret Fox hear rappings at their home in Hydesville, New York. They develop into well-known mediums via the use of these "Rochester Rappings." The central tenet of their teaching was that there is no such thing as death.
- 1850 Mizra Ali Muhammad is murdered which galvanises his followers into an organised society known as the Baha'i faith, which teaches the unity of all religions and that Jesus, Mohommad and Moses were all equal prophets of God.
- 1851 The *Pistis Sophia* (Faith of Wisdom), an influential Gnostic text of the first century, discovered by James Bruce in 1769 and sold on a London bookstall in 1773, is first published and received enthusiastically.
- 1875 Madam Helena Blavatsky (nee Petrovna), H S Olcott and W Q Judge jointly found the Theosophical society in New York, which teaches that there is truth in all religions but actually espouses reincarnation and other forms of ancient spiritism and Satan worship.
- 1884 The Apocalypse of Peter, the Gospel of Peter and one of the three books of Enoch, all influential Gnostic texts of the first and second centuries are discovered in the tomb of Akhmim in upper Egypt.
- 1889 Myrtle and Charles Filmore publish the magazine, *Modern Thought* (later, *Christian Science Thought* (1890), and later, *Thought* (1891)). In 1891 the Unity school which later became the Unity School of Christianity.
- 1896/7 The Gospel of Mary and the Gospel of Thomas, influential Gnostic texts of the first and second centuries are discovered in the tomb of Akhmim in upper Egypt.
- 1902 Edgar Cayce begins giving spirit "Readings" and continues for the next 43 years with a total of 14,000 such readings. He writes several books on "Bible" prophecy that become very popular throughout the 20th century.
- 1904 Aleister Crowley publishes the Book of the Law that he channelled from Aiwass, a spirit entity.
- 1907 Levi H Dowling publishes "The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ" which he channelled from a spirit entity.
- 1912 Rudolph Steiner founds the Anthroposophical Society in Munich. This was established after his disagreements with the organization and ideas of the Theosophical society. The Anthroposophical Society teaches the centrality of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and its connection with the reincarnation of all people.
- 1912 The Baha'i faith is exported to the USA and flourishes into thousands of communities and schools.
- 1916 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (1859-1930) English physician and fiction writer, is converted to spiritism. Until his death he was a vigorous, proselytising defender of spiritism who wrote extensively and travelling widely.
- 1919 Rudolph Steiner founds the first Steiner school. These schools and their spiritualistic curriculum and methods spread around the world.
- 1922 Rudolph Steiner founds the Anthroposophical Medical University in Dornach, Switzerland, which teaches Biodynamic Agriculture and eurhythmic dance.

- 1928 Romain Rolland and Edmond Bordeaux Szekely jointly found the International Biogenic Society.
- 1931 Alice Bailey begins receiving (channelling) messages from the “ascended master” Djwhal Khul who was supposed to be from Tibet.
- 1945 An Arab peasant finds the 13 Nag Hammadi codices, containing 53 works, bound in leather, dating probably from the late first century, still sealed in a large clay jar. These are still regarded as the single most important source of Gnostic writing ever discovered.
- 1945 The well know spiritualist Edgar Cayce dies, but a society springs up which preserves his legacy and publishes his “readings.”
- 1952 L Ron Hubbard re-organises his Danetics movement into the Church of Scientology.
- 1954 George King receives a spirit message to be the spokesman for the “Interplanetary Parliament” as servant of the cosmic masters.
- 1955 Urantia Book published. (Urantia means planet earth.)
- 1960 George King founds the Aetherius Society to disseminate messages from the “Avatar Jesus” who was living on Venus, and other information concerning spiritualistic meanings for flying saucers etc.
- 1963 Author of “Liber Vaticinationem” declares that the Aquarian age has begun which initiates the Hippie New Age of love.
From this beginning, modern spiritism is popularised by renaming it *New Age* philosophy. Included under this broad umbrella is anything that is both mystic and secular, such as, crystal power, channelling, natural healing, séances, transcendental meditation, pantheism, and much else. This new form has developed to the point where it is now the received wisdom of the masses. It was popularised by people such as Marilyn Ferguson, Shirley MacLaine, Napoleon Hill (Think and Grow Rich), Jose Silva, Terry Cole-Whittaker, Edgar Cayce.
- 1975 The Airport Vineyard Christian fellowship takes on its modern form by initiating the Toronto Blessing in which people laugh for hours on the floor, make animal noises, or jump about like pogo sticks, etc as alleged evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- 1976 Helen Schumann and William Thetford publish “A Course in Miracles” which Helen channelled from Jesus over seven years. Both were professors of medical psychology at Columbia University college of Physicians and Surgeons, New York city.
- 1977 First extensive (but still incomplete) English translation of the Nag Hammadi texts is published.
- 1980 Marilyn Ferguson publishes the influential New Age book, “The Aquarian Conspiracy.”
- 1983 Shirley MacLain begins publishing a series of books and holding public meetings and making films on New Age theory. This starts with her influential book, *Out on a Limb*.
- 1985 Mark L Prophet and Elizabeth Claire Prophet publish “The Last Teachings of Jesus” in four volumes, channelled from Jesus during 1965-1975.
- 1990 The Nag Hammadi codices, dating probably from the late first century and found in 1945 are published. These are still regarded as the single most important source of Gnostic writing ever discovered.

Brief History of Atheism

- 1620 René Descartes (1596-1650) entered a “stove” (probably a small room) and came to the conclusion “cognito ergo sum” (I think therefore I am). While not an atheist, he laid a foundation in rationalism, which required no reference to any god. This and subsequent developments in atheistic rationalism was almost certainly a reaction to the monopolistic and stultifying atmosphere created (and fostered) by the Medieval church. The outcome of the council of Trent only served to reinforce the irrelevance of liturgical religion.
- 1670 Benedictus de Spinoza (1632-1677) extended the philosophy of Descartes but was a pantheist and monist.
- 1675 John Locke (1632-1704) pioneered the empiricist philosophy. This made rationalism even more self centred and that by human reason alone it is possible to prove the existence of God (an interesting contradiction!)
- 1750 David Hume (1711-1776), known as the student sceptic was one of the first modern philosophers to really believe that God does not exist. Paul Helm said, “his work in religion can be regarded as one of the most fundamental attacks on natural theology in modern times.”
- 1751 Between 1751 and 1780, a group of French thinkers published L'Encyclopedie. These included Denis Diderot (1713-1784) and Paul Henri d'Holbach (1723-1789) who argued that any reference to God was unnecessary and undesirable in explaining natural phenomena. Both vigorously denied the existence of God. The French encyclopaedists declared war on God and religion as an eternal hindrance to intellectual progress.
- 1781 Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) became the dominant figure of the enlightenment in Germany. He lectured heavily and published “Critique of Pure Reason” (1781) and “Critique of Practical Reason” (1788) and “Critique of Judgement” (1790), which glorified human autonomy in the absence of any notion of God. He believed in an inner moral law. That is, he believed that man must live as though there were a god - an enduring paradox! Without at least a pretend god, he contended, morality is meaningless and society and its underpinnings collapses.
- 1800 Georg W F Hengel (1770-1831) was chair of philosophy at the university of Berlin. While believing that “spirit alone is reality” (as opposed to the material world) he rejected theism in favour of Absolute Idealism. In fact, his philosophical system was closer to pantheism. He wrote, “The universal is to be found in the state...the state is the Divine Idea as it exists on earth. We must therefore worship the state as the manifestation of the Divine on earth...the State is the march of God through the earth.” This laid the philosophical foundation for Marxism and later dictators.
- 1831 Charles Darwin (1809-1882) trained in (among other things) theology and ministry at Cambridge University, leaves on a voyage in the Beagle that lasted 5 years. A brilliant naturalist, it has been much debated as to whether he was a theist or atheist (he called himself an agnostic.) However, his ideas have been the most potent force for atheism ever.
- 1844 Robert Chambers publishes a book that anticipates evolutionary thought, “The Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation.”
- 1846 Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-1872), an ex-theological student, claimed that religion had simply evolved over the centuries and so was the sole product of the human imagination and tradition. In 1846 he wrote, “I deny God.” Despite this he did not reject religion because he saw some value in it. However, for most of his life he maintained a steady concerted attack against theism. 20,000 people attended his funeral.
- 1848 Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Fredrich Engles publish The Communist manifesto, which urged workers to overthrow the ruling classes and establish an atheistic state, and abolish all religion and morality.
- 1858 Charles Darwin reads a paper on his new theory of the evolution of the species to the English Linnaean Society.

- 1859 Charles Darwin publishes the first edition of, “The Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured races in the Struggle for Life.” This is the single most influential book in science. In it Darwin asserts his “greatest concept”, that of natural selection or the survival of the fittest.
- 1867 Marx publishes Das Kapital from London, after which his atheistic ideas made him depressed and desperately unhappy despite the money he earned from his writing.
- 1868(?) Francis Galton (1822-1911), Charles Darwin’s cousin, extends the idea of evolution to develop the concept of eugenics. This lays the foundation for Hitler’s repressive regime.
- 1869 Thomas Huxley (“Darwin’s bulldog”) coins the term “agnostic” to describe himself. In reality, he intended it as a euphemism for atheism, or more precisely, anti-theism. Huxley was raised in a very devout religious home.
- 1871 Charles Darwin publishes “The Descent of Man” in which he claims that man evolved from apes.
- 1875 Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), the son of a minister of religion and the grandson of two others, said, “God is dead” and then proceeded to vigorously popularise this concept. The idea caught on to a limited extent during his lifetime, but became far more popular after his death.. His values and morals were based on “Biological Heroism” and laid the foundation for eugenics and Hitler’s excesses. He was a soldier and psychologist remarked, only a few weeks before collapsing in Turin while protecting a whipped horse, I swear to you we shall have the whole world in convulsions. I am fate.”
- 1883 Engels, a devoted follower of Darwin and disciple of Marx delivered the eulogy at Marx’s funeral. He said, “Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history.”
- 1896 The Ethical Union is founded to promote the ideas of atheistic humanism.
- 1899 Robert Ingersol (1833-1899), gifted American lawyer, politician, satirist, and sceptic, dies. He had written a number of works deriding the idea of God and the Bible such as, “Some Mistakes of Moses.” This had earned him the reputation for being one of the most notorious opponents of the Bible in modern times. It is reported that he was set on this path but his devout Christian, conservative upbringing and the preaching of eternal hell fire each Sunday morning. At an oration at his brother’s graveside he said, “Whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and jewelled with joy, will at its close, become a tragedy; as sad, and as deep, and as dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.... Life is a narrow vale betwixt the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond those heights. We cry aloud – the only answer is the echo to our wailing cry. From the voiceless silence of the unreplying dead comes back no sound!”
- 1913 Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung part company. Freud founds the psychoanalysis school of psychiatry in which the unconscious is believed to control all human behaviour. Freud described religion as “the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity. He believed in a close connection sex and religion. (Sex was also believed to be the root of all human behaviour.) Freud also taught that religion is a universal form of neurosis associated with sexual repression marked by psychotic hallucinations.
- 1914 Nietzsche is credited with creating the “Euro- Nietzschean War”; the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand is assassinated by young Serbian militants spouting Nietzschean slogans in support of their national will to power.
- 1917 Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, or Lenin (1870-1924) helps to found the Russian Revolution along atheistic lines following the fall of the Czars. He used Marx's ideas as his model by repeating the mantra, “Religion is the opium of the people. Religion is a kind of spiritual intoxicant in which the slaves of capitalism drown their humanity and blunt their desire for decent human existence.” It is estimated that he murdered about 20,000,000 of his own countrymen.

- 1923 Pierre Loti (Julien Viaud 1850-1923), French naval officer and literary genius, dies at 73. His writing was characterised by sensual satisfaction, death, frustration, melancholy, and profound despair. He was honest enough to report what effect his beliefs had: “Those who still bow before the feet of Christ, believe me, these are the only happy people on earth. They know nothing of the anguish of passing time, the anguish of loneliness, and the terror of the coming extinction. They go on their way calm and confident. I would give my life to possess that radiant illusion of theirs, even at the risk of becoming as infatuated as the poor lunatics in asylums, who fancy themselves among the rich and powerful of earth!”
 “In default of this faith, could we but anchor ourselves to something, some hope, some immortality – but there is nothing. Outside this ever-shining personality of Christ, everything is terror and darkness.” (Quoted in Blackwoods Magazine for March 1924.)
- 1924 Josef Stalin, an ex-theological student, replaces Lenin as the head of the Russian Revolution. He went on to become one of the main architects of the USSR.
- 1927 Hitler, implementing the ideas of Darwin, Galton, and eugenics begins forcibly sterilising 2,000,000 people. Nietzschean ideas become very influential and are claimed as a basis by almost all German extreme political groups.
 Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) studied for the Roman Catholic priesthood but soon became an atheist. For a while he supported the Nazis but later rejected them also. His major work “Time and Being” (1927) shows he was influenced and impressed by Plato, Kant, and Nietzsche. He was the arch-type and originator of the existential movement.
- 1929 W. O. Saunders, brilliant and popular writer and atheist dies. He made some quite frank admissions about the effect of his beliefs on his own thinking: “I would have you meet one of the loneliest and most unhappy individuals on earth.... I am talking about the man who doesn’t believe in God.... I am peculiarly qualified to introduce the agnostic [atheist]. I am one myself....
 “Probably you will be surprised to know that the agnostic [atheist] envies your faith in God, your settled belief in a heaven after death, and your blessed assurance that you will meet with your loved ones in an afterlife in which there will be neither sorrow nor pain. He would give anything to be able to embrace that faith and be comforted by it.... For him there is only the grave and the persistence of matter. All he can see beyond the grave is the disintegration of the protoplasm psychoplasm of which his body and personality are composed.... But in this material view I find no ecstasy nor happiness. Is this the end and all human life and endeavour?... Therefore would I try to convey to your mind and heart something of the wistfulness and loneliness of the man who does not believe in God.... To him this earth is but a tricky raft adrift upon the unfathomable waters of eternity, with no horizon in sight. His heart aches for every precious life on the raft, drifting, drifting, drifting, wither no one for certain knows.” (Quoted in Blackwoods Magazine, page 23, November 1930.)
- 1932 The USSR is founded as the ultimate experiment in an atheistic state empire. 7,000,000 members were formed into 80,000 cells. 20,000,000 people were pressed into forced labour on behalf of the state. It is estimated that he murdered about 40,000,000 of his own countrymen.
- 1933 “A Humanist Manifesto” is published by a group of scholars – all secular humanists. It was predicated on a very optimistic view about the future.
- 1939 The world is plunged into a war triggered by Hitler’s Third Reich. Before 1945 it had murdered 6,000,000 Jews at a rate of 12,000 per day. Said Hitler, “I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality...we will train a young people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence, imperious, relentless and cruel.”
- 1941 The American Humanist Association formed to promote the ideas of atheistic humanism.
- 1949 Mao Tse-tung founds the largest communist state, China, following the famous long march. At one point, he killed 22,000 people each month in the cause of the state. Before he died in 1976, he said, “My body is riddled with diseases, I have an appointment with God.”

- 1950 Bertrand Russell (1872-1966) is awarded the Noble prize for literature. He was an atheist filled with contradictions – his writing was at times confused and often depressing. Despite this, he was quite honest about the effects his beliefs had: “That man is the product of causes which had no provision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are...destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievements must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.... Brief and powerless is man’s life; on him and on his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark.” (Mysticism and Logic, page 47F, and page 561.)
 “We stand upon the shore of an ocean, crying to the night and the emptiness. Sometimes a voice answers out of the darkness. But it is the voice of one drowning; and in a moment the silence returns.” (Russell’s autobiography, page 287.)
- 1952 The International Humanist Association formed to promote the ideas of atheistic humanism.
- 1957 Albert Camus (1913-1960) is awarded the Noble prize for literature. He is an existential atheist and wrote of loneliness and the absurdity of human existence.
- 1963 The British Humanist Association formed to promote the ideas of atheistic humanism.
- 1964 Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), raised a devout Roman Catholic, became a French philosopher, dramatist, essayist, novelist and atheistic existentialist (his own title), and Marxist, rejects the Noble prize for literature for “personal reasons”. His ideas were absorbed in the 1950s by all eight members, while studying in France, of the Angka Loeu (Higher Organization) that surrounded Pol Pot in Cambodia. Sartre’s brand of existentialism leads directly to deep despair and hopelessness, which was frequently felt by his disciples. His personal creed was, “Travel, polygamy and transparency.” (He had four mistresses.) In his book, “Being and Nothingness” he wrote, “Man can will nothing unless he has first understood that he must count on no one but himself; that he is alone, abandoned on earth in the midst of his infinite responsibilities without help; with no other aim than the one he sets himself; with no other destiny the one he forges for himself on this earth.”
- 1973 “Humanist Manifest II” published. This second revision was deemed necessary because the first was far too optimistic about the future.
- 1975 Pol Pot, with his Khmer Rouge guerrillas attempts to establish an atheistic Marxist communist state in Cambodia. By 1977 they had killed 1.5 million people. Pol Pot had been educated in a monastery. He died in 1998 in his sleep. His ideas were taken from Jean-Paul Sartre’s teachings in atheistic existentialism. His generals were also educated in France under Jean-Paul Sartre.
- 1980 28 nations representing 1.5 billion people, more than one third of the earth are governed by atheistic Marxist communism.
- 1982 Isaac Asimov, science fiction writer and scientist, in an interview on the subject of Science and the Bible in Free Enquiry 2, Spring 1982 p9, says, “I am an atheist out and out. I’ve been an atheist for years and years, but somehow I felt it was intellectually unrespectable to say one was an atheist because it assumed knowledge that one didn’t have...Emotionally, I’m an atheist. I don’t have the evidence to prove that God doesn’t exist, but I so strongly suspect that he doesn’t that I don’t want to waste my time.” [At lest Asimov is honest enough to admit that to be a serious atheist one needs much greater knowledge than is available to even an encyclopaedic such as he is.]
- 1983 Alexander Solzenitzyn is presented with the Templeton prize for progress in religion. In accepting the prize he said, “I have spent 50 years working on the history of our revolution...But if I were asked today the main cause of the ruinous revolution that has swallowed up 60,000,000 of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat, ‘Men have forgotten God, that is why all this has happened.’”
- 1989 The atheistic USSR collapses under the weight of its own inefficiency and corruption. About the same time, the Chinese government begins to allow religious expression and worship.

1997 “The Black Book of Communism” estimates that the number of people killed by communism since 1917 to be 85-100 million. On the other hand, Paul Jacobsen estimates that the figure is about 125 million for the 20th century. This does not include the large number of people killed in the numerous wars of the 20th century as a result of atheism, which could double this number!

Luis Palau, in *God is Relevant* (New York Doubleday, p 23, 82) states, “The seismic shock of out-and-out atheism sent tidal waves across Europe and beyond, accounting directly for the annihilation and butchery of more than one hundred million people this past century alone. Humanity has paid a steep, gruesome price for the awful experiments in deliberate atheism carried out by Lennin, Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tse-tung and others – each of whom was profoundly influenced by the writings of the apostles of atheism ... After watching atheism proliferate ... its clearer than ever that ... without God, we’re lost.”

Appendix 4: Historical Connection Between Babylon, Rome and 666

This appendix is included to demonstrate that, in the mind of the early (first century) Christians, Rome was seen as the spiritual continuation of Babylon as far as false religion was concerned. We begin by observing that the connection between Babylon and Rome was already well established in John's time on theological, historical and philosophical grounds. For example:

- * 1 Peter 5:13 uses the Christian "code" word Babylon for Rome.
- * The Roman Emperors had taken some of the vestments and titles of the priests of Babylon, eg, Pontifex Maximus = the great bridge builder [between God and man]. That is, the Roman Emperors regarded themselves in the same way as the priests of Babylon – God's representative on earth, which early Christians found so distasteful.
- * Rome was the center of the empire's principle (secular) false religion - emperor worship. It was therefore correctly understood by early Christians to become the focus of heresy and persecution. (The early church had already tasted this in the time of Nero.)
- * Some of the priests, trained in the esoteric mystic rites of ancient Babylon, were starting to settle in Rome. Indeed, just before the final collapse, capture and sacking of Babylon, the priests of Babylon decided to divide and flee in order to preserve their craft. Half went east and ultimately settled in Nepal where their successors, the Dalai Lama and Co. have been ever since. The other half went west and initially settled in Pergamum. When writing to the seven churches, John alludes to this in Rev 2:13 by calling Pergamum the location of Satan's throne. However, by John's time, some of the priests had moved further west to Rome and were busily establishing their religion (sun and devil worship) as the official orthodox religion of the Roman empire. Interestingly, they accomplished this by combining religion with state authority, as in ancient Babylon. This religion was called Saturnalia, and Rome was its capital. No wonder Christians called Rome, Babylon (1 Peter 5:13)!

Now it is well known that the number 6 held a special fascination for the ancient Chaldeans (the ruling class and priests of Babylon). We have inherited much from this: 60 seconds in a minute, 60 minutes in an hour, the circle divided into 360 (60 x 6) degrees, the day divided into 4 quarters of 6 hours each, etc. The Babylonian number system was based on 60 (unlike ours based on 10).

It is said by some that this fascination with 6 was perpetuated by the priests because of their belief in numerology - they wore gold amulets such as those in the British Museum, and depicted a 6 x 6 square in which were arranged the numbers from 1 to 36 in such a way that every row, column and both diagonals added to 111. The sum of all the numbers from 1 to 36 is - you guessed it - 666!

John would have known this - but even he did not, the Roman Medieval religion has a pedigree directly traceable to Babylon. All the symbolism, the sun worship, Mary worship (as the queen of heaven), festivals of Saturnalia (Christmas) and Ishtar the queen of heaven (Easter), the sacraments, repetitive prayers, icons and statues, etc, owe their origin to Babylon. The Catholic Church simply put Christian labels on them as is well known.

Hence any understanding of the interpretation of Revelation's 666 must be an integral part of the system of worship, not a tack-on feature derived from a title (dubious or otherwise.) This is certainly true of ancient Babylon and Rome, and well known to the surrounding peoples of John's time. Since the high priest of Babylon regarded himself as the visible representative of God to man and used the mystic number 666 as a symbol of this, his direct successor who similarly regards himself should be viewed in the same light.

Revelation, unlike Daniel, was never a sealed book and, unlike Daniel, was accessible to its author. The 666 would have been understood by John's fellow Christians as one of the "codes" for Babylon's priests and its mystic religion..

The Antichrist

The book of Revelation does not contain the term "antichrist". However, because the same author, John the Revelator, used the term in his other writings, and because the term is popularly associated with the number 666 (rightly or wrongly) we will examine if there is any legitimate connection between the two.

The term "antichrist" only occurs in the writings of John in the following places:

1 John 2:18, 19 Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.

1 John 2:22, 23 Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist--he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

1 John 4:2, 3 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

2 John 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Thus we find that the spirit of antichrist is anyone who:

- (1) Claims to be Christ (Messiah) but is not. That is, who claims to be a means or form of salvation other than the real Jesus Christ.
- (2) Claims that Jesus Christ is not just that – the Messiah and Savior of the world.
- (3) Claims that Jesus is not from God and thus divine. That is, who denies the Father and Son.
- (4) Claims that Jesus did not come in the flesh. That is, anyone who claims that Jesus was not fully human.

Now it is evident that while the book of Revelation does not mention the antichrist explicitly, it describes the sea beast of Rev 13 in a way which fits the first of the above criteria of the antichrist for at least two reasons:

- (1) The sea beast blasphemes which indicates that it (in some way) usurps the power and prerogatives of God. (See Glossary entry Blasphemy {noun}.)
- (2) The sea beast is described as a power that assumes the form of a pseudochrist.

<i>God the Son, Jesus</i>	<i>Beast from the Sea (13:1 - 5)</i>
Jesus like the Father (Jn 14:9)	7 heads & 10 horns like dragon
Slain Lamb (Rev 5:6)	Wounded and lived (Rev 13:3)
Receives throne from Father (Rev 5:7, Matt 28:18)	Receives throne from dragon (Rev 13:2)
Jesus ministry lasts 3½ years	Beast reigns 42 months (Rev 13:5)

It is interesting to note in passing that Medieval Rome certainly assumed such an office and historical role. One of its cardinal doctrines was that it was the only means of salvation; and that all who disagreed should be executed (as many were). See appendix 3 for more details.

Appendix 5: The Role of the Jews in Eschatology

Today there is a commonly held view (at least in some circles) that the return of the Jews plays an integral part in the final events of earth. Since such a view is not confined to any one school of interpretation, and since this view colours the eschatological understanding of those who hold it, this appendix is devoted to examining its validity.

As usually understood, the return of the Jews to Palestine means that a substantial number (but still a small fraction of the total) of Jews will be gathered from their scattered lands, especially the land of the north – Russia, to resettle their ancient homeland. They will be assisted by the “Gentiles” and establish their own political autonomy. Further, such a development is a necessary precursor to Jesus’ second advent with the final events, including the battle of Armageddon to occur in the valley of Meggido. (Occasionally some will also insist that the temple must also be rebuilt; but we will not explore this here.)

That the modern state of Israel, complete with artificially revived Hebrew as the official language, was established in 1948 is now a historical fact. Its population continues to swell from returning, dispersed Jews from, among other places, Russia. However, the fact that this has occurred is no endorsement of the prophetic theory any more than success or wealth is a sign of God’s favour.

This eschatological theory of the necessity of the literal return of the Jews to Palestine is based on the following premises:

(1) *Secondary Application*

The prophecies in the Old Testament about the return of the Jews (eg, Jer 23:3–7, 30:10, Eze 20:33–35, 36:17–28, Zeph 2:1, 2, etc) have a secondary application in the last days, in addition to their primary application in the fifth and sixth centuries BC.

(2) *Land of the North is Russia*

As evidence for this assertion, adherents of this theory remind us that the scattered Jews would return from the north, which these people affirm is Russia, not the east as is Babylon. For example, see Jer 3:18. That is, north cannot refer to Babylon.

(3) *Unconditional Prophecy*

Gen 17:7, Judg 2:1, Jer 31:3, 4, Eze 16:60 state that God loved the Jews with an everlasting love and, therefore, could not and will not reject them.

That is, once a prophecy is has been pronounced, it cannot be revoked and must be fulfilled exactly as stated.

(4) *Extent of Territory Unfulfilled*

Some also suggest that God promised the Jews all the land, “from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates.” (Gen 15:18) Because this was never fulfilled in Biblical times or any time since, its fulfilment must be still future, at the end of time.

(5) *Literal Jewish Kingdom*

According to Acts 1:6, 3:21, Jer 23:1–6, Jesus will establish a literal kingdom when the Jews return. This is one of the motivations for organizations like Ebenezer Emergency Fund, etc.

Let us examine these premises in turn and seek a Biblical foundation for each. It should be again stated that the idea of the literal return of the Jews to Palestine and its importance to eschatology is utterly dependant on these premises. The whole system stands or falls with them.

(1) *Secondary Application*

The assertion that the Jewish return prophecies have a secondary application is just that – an assertion without Biblical authority. While it is obviously true that some prophecies do have dual applications (the best example is Matt 24 which Jesus applied to the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world), such must be explicitly mandated by the text rather than the exegete. No such authority can be found for a secondary application for the Jewish return prophecies.

Such unwarranted re-application of prophecies to a second application other than is allowed by the Bible itself is the same error as some make in suggesting Nebuchadnezzar’s seven times (Dan 4) should be applied to the Christian church at the end of time. No such authority can be found.

Sometimes, (especially among dispensationalists) it is asserted that there must be a clear distinction made between the Christian church (viewed as parenthetical dispensation) and the Jewish state. Again, this is just an assertion without Biblical authority.

(2) *Land of the North is Russia*

The phrase, “land of the north” always refers to either Babylon or Media (Jer 25:9, 11, 25, 26, 46:6, 10, 20, 24, 26, 50:1–3, 8-10, 41-43, 51:47-49, Eze

26:7, Zech 2:6, 7, 6:8-10, etc) It may come as a surprise that Babylon was regarded as north of Jerusalem.; however, for a traveller to go to Babylon required that from Jerusalem he travel (initially) north. Hence Babylon became the land of the north. However, when addressing Babylon, God referred to Media (who overthrew Babylon) as the land of the north. It is significant that while this is the Bible's uniform designation (except in theophanies such as Eze 1 where the north is the origin of God), no Jews live in either Babylon or Media today. This makes the fulfilment of the prophecy impossible in modern times (in the Biblical sense) thus effectively precluding any secondary application.

(3) Unconditional Prophecy

Let us now examine the claim that because God promised in Gen 17:7, Judg 2:1, Jer 31:3, 4, Eze 16:60, etc, that He would love Israel with an everlasting love, that He therefore could not reject them and must ultimately restore them to their original status as His chosen people. Stated another way, if a prophecy says that Israel would always remain God's chosen people, is God therefore bound under all circumstances?

There are numerous examples where the outcome of a prophecy was changed to something quite different from what was predicted. For example:

- * Ex 3:8, 15:17, 23:23 – God promised to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites who left Egypt. But the adverse report by the spies caused them to rebel, so God said, “not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home.” (Num 14:30) God even called this, “my breach of promise” (Num 14:34 KJV).
- * 2 Kings 20:1 – Hezekiah's sickness resulted in a prophecy from Isaiah that he would not recover. However, in 2 Kings 20:2-6 Hezekiah pleads with the Lord who decides to reverse the prophecy and adds another 15 years to his life.
- * Jonah 3:3, 4 – Jonah prophesied that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days. Yet when the people repented, the prophecy was reversed (Jonah 3:5-10).
- * 1 Kings 21:20-26 – Elijah prophesied that Ahab would be destroyed. But when he repented the outcome was reversed (1 Kings 21:27, 28).
- * 2 Sam 7:16, 16, Ps 132:11 – God promised David (and confirmed it to Solomon in 2 Chron 7:18) that his throne would last forever. That David's royal throne was destroyed in 586 BC, about 500 years later, is a historical fact. However, the prophecy was no less certain because it, as

with all such prophecies was conditional as recorded in 1 Kings 6:11, 12, 8:25, Ps 132:12, 2 Chron 7:17, 18.

This principle of prophetic conditionality is stated explicitly in Jer 18:7-10 and illustrated in the dual prophecy of the permanence (Jer 17:24 – 26) or eternal destruction (Jer 17:27) of Jerusalem. The outcome is dependent not only on the sure word of the prophet but also the fidelity of the people. This same principle of conditional prophecy applies to the Jews as well as any other nation.

The original promise of God's selection of Israel as his special people is contained in Ex 19:5, 6, “if you obey me fully and keep my covenant then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Notice that their status as God's special people hinged on an “if” that is, it was conditional. In fact there were many promises to Israel that were equally conditional e.g.

- their status as the chosen people, Ex 19:5,6; Deut 28:9,
- a great nation, Deut 28:1, 7, 9, 10, 13
- a holy nation, Deut 7:9-14; 28:1-14; 30:16,19
- the land, Deut 8:1, 7-9; 30:19, 20
- the Davidic line of kings, 1 Kings 2:3, 4; 8:25, 9:4,5; 1 Chron 28:4-9; 2 Chron 6:16; 7:17-22
- blessing to the nations, Eze 36:23, 33-36; 37:23, 28, etc.

That the literal nation of Israel rebelled and was unfaithful to the place where they rejected the Messiah is well known history. This was illustrated by Jesus in His parable of the tenants (Matt 21:33-43) where He predicted that, “the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to another people who will produce its fruit.” (v43) This caused Jesus to weep over Jerusalem (Matt 23:37) and pronounce the curse, “Look, your house is left to you desolate.” (v38)

Peter confirmed the fulfillment of these prophecies in 1 Peter 2:9,10: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people but now you are the people of God.” (compare Ex 19:5, 6). This was addressed to Gentiles!

The transition from literal Israel to spiritual Israel, or the Christian Church, is the subject of Romans 9 – 11. Here Paul agrees with Peter's interpretation by quoting Hosea 2:23, “I will call them my people who are

not my people” (Rom 9:25,26) and that spiritual Israel includes both Jews and Gentiles (v24, see also Acts 10:34, 35; Rom 10:12, 13)

Paul emphasises the fact that the rejection of literal Israel as God's chosen instrument for the salvation of the world does not mean that individual Jews can no longer be saved (Rom 9:6; 11:1, 2, 11, 15). But they are to be saved as Christians and not Jews. It is true, Paul says, that national Israel stumbled at the stumbling stone, Jesus Christ (Rom 9:32,33; 11:11, compare 1 Peter 2:6-8; 1 Cor 1:23); but this need not mean that they are to fall - “God forbid” he exclaims (Rom 11:1, 22). Literal Jews may still find salvation by being grafted into spiritual Israel, in precisely the same way Gentiles are grafted in (v23, 24). “All Israel” consists of both Jews and Gentiles, thus “all Israel shall be saved.” (Rom 11:25, 26)

When the Jews rejected Christ as the Messiah, God in turn rejected them and commissioned the Christian Church as His chosen instrument for the salvation of the world (Matt 28:19,20; 2 Cor 5:18-20; 1 Peter 2:9,10 etc). Accordingly, the covenant promises and privileges were all permanently transferred from literal to spiritual Israel (Gal 3:26-29).

The argument that prophecy is unconditional requires a very selective use of Scripture. Notice that in Jer 17:4, God's anger is kindled against wicked Judah and will burn forever. Later in the same chapter (v25) He promises to Love them forever. Now these two prophecies are mutually exclusive and can only be resolved by use of the principle of prophetic conditionality.

(4) *Extent of Territory Unfulfilled*

The assertion that the prophecy of Israel's territory (Gen 15:18), stretching from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates being unfulfilled, is simply untrue. It was fulfilled during the time of David and Solomon (1 Kings 4:20, 21) and remained true for a while under the divided kingdom.

(Note that even if this prophecy had not been fulfilled due to Israel's unfaithfulness, God would not have been bound because of the principle of conditional prophecy.)

(5) *Literal Jewish Kingdom*

To suggest that Acts 1:6, 3:21, Jer 23:1-6 implies the establishment of a literal Jewish kingdom requires the following errors of exegesis:

- (1) The unwarranted association of Acts 1:6, 3:21 and Jer 23:1-6. That is, to claim some connection between any two or more passages requires some clearly recognisable linguistic or hermeneutic link. None exists.

- (2) Robbing Jer 23:1-6 of its Christological significance. This passage contains one of the great prophecies of Jesus and should be read as such and not arbitrarily applied to anything else. The Bible should be allowed to interpret itself.
- (3) The assumption that the often politically motivated disciples asked a valid question in Acts 1:6. The Jews of Jesus day often mistook politics for religion.

In short, there is no Biblical support for the notion of the establishment of a literal kingdom of Israel at the end of time.

Conclusion

All the above suggests that the Jews do not play an integral role in eschatology. This does not preclude the possibility that an independent nation of Jews would be established as has occurred. However, its establishment bares no relationship in Biblical eschatology to the return of Jesus.

Further, the requirement that a Jewish Kingdom is a necessary prerequisite to the return of Jesus robs the event of its Divine origin and purpose. It denies the principle espoused in 2 Cor 1:20, that all promises find their “yes” in Christ!

What of the Jewish Prophecies?

In view of the above, what are we to make of the numerous Old Testament passages dealing with the restoration of Israel? Do they now mean nothing? NO! According to Gal 3:26-29 the covenant promises made to Israel are to be understood as applying to the Church in a Christian sense (2 Cor 1:20). However, in making such a transition we must occasionally make adjustments. To illustrate this, let us examine Isa 65 & 66.

Isa 65:20, 23 suggests that death is still present whereas Rev 21:4 says there is no death in the new Jerusalem.

Isa 65:23, 24 describes the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem viewing the carcasses of the wicked surrounding the city, whereas Rev 20 says that fire completely renovates the earth before the Holy city descends.

[Compare Gen 49:7 with Ex 32:26 for another example of transformed fulfilment of prophecy.]

**Supplement
to the**

Revelation of Jesus

(The Apocalypse Interpreted)

Peter A McGowan

This book is a supplement to, and should be read in conjunction with
“Notes on the Revelation of Jesus”
by the same author.

Supplement to the Revelation of Jesus

Preface

Since the publication of *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, several people expressed extreme frustration with its content because, “it did not go far enough in its explanation.” I have understood this to mean that I had not fully interpreted the text of Revelation. The fact that this was its stated purpose was of no comfort.

Therefore, in order to preserve the original purpose of that book, particularly its close Biblical exegesis without the need for too much private interpretation, the idea of a supplemental book was born, where such ideas could be explored more fully.

It should be stated immediately, that while this book has been prepared with much prayer and (hopefully) guidance of the Holy Spirit, it still contains much interpretation. That is, the concepts here cannot be so immediately deduced from the Biblical text: while most of them were latent in *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, here they have been made patent. Thus, this book represents my personal attempt to systematise the meaning (as distinct from the literary text) of Revelation. Further, as explained in *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, I have adopted the historicist approach without wanting to exclude the idealist interpretation. However, the historical interpretation will be the main focus here.

In preparing this material, I resisted the temptation to simply write a commentary. Rather, I have chosen to provide a series of essays, which are often, but not always, written around each section of Revelation. The highly repetitive and structured form of Revelation’s text makes this a more flexible and useful form.

In order to avoid too much repetition, *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus* should be read before and in conjunction with this book. Further, there is no attempt to comment on every aspect of the text because I do not understand its every part.

Again, I am deeply indebted to many people for their uncounted helpful suggestions to improve this work. I am particularly grateful to my wife Loree who so capably managed personal and household responsibilities that permitted the time required to write such a work.

It is my earnest hope that this book will help some people better see the way Jesus guides His people generally and each of us individually. As a result, perhaps we will better see His character.

Peter A McGowan
Jan 2001 – Oct 2002

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Overview of Revelation

This section is provided for the reader to gain a quick view of the general plan of the interpretation adopted in this supplement. Little or no argument is given – just the identity of the characters and events.

I debated for some time before preparing this section for fear that it would overshadow all else here. That is, some might read this section and omit all subsequent material. However, if one cannot trust a readership, especially in a work such as this, then such a book should not be published.

Therefore, I encourage readers to use this section as a map to help grasp the large volume of detail involved. Please read it in conjunction with the main volume, *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, to which this work is just a supplement. Especially should chapter 3 and 7 of that book be consulted.

Overview of Overview

The Seven Churches: Traces the history of the entire Christian Church.

The Seven Seals: Traces the history and experience of the true church

The Seven Trumpets: Traces the history of the unsealed wicked, especially as it affects the true church.

Cosmic Conflict: Provides several views of the great controversy between Christ and Satan in their battle for mankind's loyalty.

The Seven Bowl Plagues: This is still future but tells how Jesus will demonstrate the wickedness of the wicked by allowing the consequences of their sinfulness to reap its baleful effects.

The Destruction of Evil: What was outlined in the 6th and 7th bowl plagues is described in greater detail in this section – evil is allowed to destroy itself, which culminates in God finally destroying the devil. This process also involves the redeemed saints “auditing” God's judgement to remove all doubts. Sin will never appear again.

The New Jerusalem: The cleansed earth receives the new home of the saved as the New Jerusalem is established on earth from heaven. The blissful saints live forever.

The Seven Churches

The seven churches trace the history of the Christian church since the time of its founding in the first century AD. Both saints and sinners exist in the church.

The introductory vision depicts Jesus walking among His churches to lead, guide, and warn them.

1st Church, Ephesus: The apostolic church of the first century that started out with such promise and fervour, but lost its first love (of Jesus). It *began* setting up ecclesiastical institutions, bishoprics, and the distinction between clergy and laity. Despite this, its evangelistic success was astonishing.

2nd Church, Smyrna: The persecuted church of the 2nd and 3rd centuries. The crumbling Roman empire often needed a “scape goat” to blame for its troubles and the meek church was an easy target.

3rd Church, Pergamum: The compromising church of the 4th and 5th centuries. It was during this time that Constantine made Christianity legal (for purely political reasons). As a result, the church developed a close relationship with the state that became too cosy. Principles were sacrificed and cardinal doctrines were abandoned or changed.

4th Church, Thyatira: The Medieval Church of the 6th to 16th centuries. This was the darkest period of the church history. The persecuted church of the second century became the persecutor of heretics. The church dominated world politics.

5th Church, Sardis: The church divided between the reformation and the counter-reformation in the 16th to 18th centuries. A very weak church with good ideas and ideals in some quarters but still corrupt in others. The fact that the reformation was not still-born is testament to its divine origin.

6th Church, Philadelphia: The missionary church of the 18th and 19th centuries. By this time the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches existed in name only due to their seriously weakened state. The protestant churches began vigorous international evangelisation. During this time, the Bible societies were born – the reformation appeared unstoppable.

7th Church, Laodicea: The rich and prosperous church of the late 19th century to the end of time. The reformation slowed to a crawl and the liturgical churches are being revived. The world is experiencing a time of unparalleled international prosperity, which has always been disastrous for the spiritual health of the church.

The Seven Seals

While the seven churches depict the history of the Christian church, both good and bad, throughout the Christian era, the seven seals trace the history of the

true church as the Holy Spirit prepares the Bride for heaven. This history is parallel to that given by Jesus in His sermon of Matt 24, Mark 13, Luke 21. The introductory vision shows Jesus seated on the throne in the heavenly sanctuary, directing the affairs of the true church.

1st Seal, White Horse: The church goes forth to the world and victoriously evangelises the world in the 1st century, AD.

2nd Seal, Red Horse: The true church (during this time there was little difference between the true church and the visible church) suffers persecution at the hands of civil authorities as a result of its evangelisation during the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

3rd Seal, Black Horse: During the compromising period of the 4th and 5th centuries, Bible truth became much more rare and expensive for the true church. Decisions for Jesus had to be very carefully weighed.

4th Seal, Pale (chloros = green) Horse: During the 6th to 16th centuries, death by sword, famine and inflicted plague followed the true church wherever its message of truth was carried. During this time, the true church hid itself from the general public view.

5th Seal, Souls Under the Altar, How Long? During the 16th to 19th centuries, the message of Jesus' Second Advent was rekindled. But progress against such widespread apostasy was slow and the patience of the saints was tested as they waited for their teachings and personal sacrifice to be vindicated.

6th Seal, Great Signs in Heaven and Earth: The Holy Spirit's sealing process is finally concluded. Two groups are made clear – the wicked who seek destruction, and the righteous who are sealed as Jesus returns.

7th Seal, Silence: Since this is still future, it is difficult to understand. I assume it is the peaceful pleasure of the faithful saints enjoying the company of their Saviour in person, at last!

The Seven Trumpets

The seven trumpets trace the history of the unsealed wicked throughout the Christian era. The effects of the growing separation of the wicked from the righteous become more and more evident as evil increases.

1st Trumpet: The world government of the Roman Empire begins to crack during the 1st century – some Christians are killed as scapegoats.

2nd Trumpet: The strength of civil governments (including the Pax Romana) had been its citizens' respect for the rule of law. This principle is popularly abandoned causing international instability in the 2nd and 3rd centuries.

3rd Trumpet: Civil government has now so deteriorated during the 4th and 5th centuries that Satan is taking firmer control. This begins to impact by corrupting (embittering) the teachings of the rising false church.

4th Trumpet: Wickedness is now developed to the place that most learning has ended in one third of the world (Europe). This is what happened during medieval times of the 6th to 16th centuries.

Three Woes: The woes are pronounced as messages of condemnation against the wicked leaders called to preach but who turned their energies to leading the masses astray.

5th Trumpet: 17th to 19th centuries saw a reaction to the intellectual declension created by the medieval church. Among the wicked this produced the atheistic movement that lasted about 150 years. Most of its leaders were raised Christians on whom this trumpet pronounces a woe. The lack of settled hope produced the devil's scorpion sting of discontent.

6th Trumpet: The failure of the atheistic movement produced a reaction in the other direction – a defacto non-organised secular religion, modern spiritism, now called the new age movement in the late 19th century onwards. All worship demons. Again a woe of condemnation is pronounced against those who lead others astray, especially those who introduce such to Christian churches. The events of the righteous (two witnesses) are traced beginning with the Millerite great disappointment and the establishment of the remnant church.

7th Trumpet: This depicts the final condemnation of the remaining wicked leaders at the second advent where the kingdoms of this world are seen to be bankrupt and become the kingdoms of Christ.

Cosmic Conflict

The introductory vision in the Most Holy Place and the Ark of Covenant shows that subsequent sections will involve the antitypical Day of Atonement (see Lev 16) concerning final judgement.

1. Woman and the Dragon: Traces the great controversy between Christ (Michael) and His church (the woman), and Satan (the dragon), and their battle for the loyalty of all people. The devil used civil authority to persecute the church, especially during the period of 538-1798 (1260 days) of papal supremacy. This tactic failed to crush the true (pure) church so the devil enlists two further monsters (below) to help fight the true church. Michael and the male child represent Christ.
2. The Beast from the Sea: Traces the history of the Roman Catholic Church and its persecution of the true church that lasted 1260 years before being wounded. The fatal wound began to be healed when the Vatican states were restored in 1929.
3. The Beast from the Land: Represents the USA, which, in turn, created the image to the beast, apostate Protestantism. This beast is also the false prophet who deceives the world by miraculous signs, acting as a false Holy Spirit. These three beasts form an apostate trinity of powers (Babylon), opposed to the (true) divine trinity.
4. The 144,000: These follow the lamb on Mt Zion and again depict the true (pure) church composed of faithful saints throughout the Christian era.
5. The three angels' message is the final evangelistic thrust of the true church (above) in the last days. It includes a message of the pure Gospel of salvation by faith, creation and Sabbath worship, separation from false churches and doctrine, and the coming destruction of the wicked.
6. The two harvests of the earth, the harvest of the righteous wheat, and the gathering of the wicked grapes, simultaneously anticipates the seven last plagues and Jesus' second coming with its destruction of all wicked.
7. Rev 15:1-4 depicts the saved saints in heaven. They have been victorious on earth and sing the song of Moses – the song of deliverance over sin and its effects through the work and merits of Christ alone.

The Seven Bowl-Plagues

These seven final judgements by God on the wicked (alone) represent the antitypical Day of Atonement just before Jesus' return. As such, they depict the final attempt by God via the Holy Spirit to demonstrate to the wicked the consequences of their sinfulness and to show the advantages of purity as displayed in the contrasting lives of the righteous. The wicked still refuse to repent. Since this material is still future, we must be extremely careful.

- 1st Plague, Sores on the Wicked: Widespread disease afflicts the worshippers of the beast and his image.
- 2nd Plague, Sea Turned to Blood: Widespread death that can be directly attributable to the sinfulness of the wicked.
- 3rd Plague, Rivers and Springs of Water Turned to Blood: The corrupted doctrine (heresies) of the wicked causes further death, which can be directly attributable to the rejection of the true Gospel of Jesus.
- 4th Plague, Sun Scorches People with Fire: This depicts intense pain induced by the work of the Holy Spirit on the consciences of people as they view the peace of the righteous. However, they still refuse to repent.
- 5th Plague, Darkness Around the Throne of the Beast: The wicked, by rejecting the pure doctrines of the true Gospel, create a spiritual vacuum of darkness which cause them great pain. Their heresies are bankrupt.
- 6th Plague, Armageddon: The above calamities, all international and public, cause the political base of Babylon to begin to collapse. This precipitates a call for international leaders to gather in a show of false, demonic miracles to produce the final deception. Meanwhile, the righteous, clad in Christ's righteousness, sense that Jesus' return is especially near. (The final spiritual battle of Armageddon, recalling Elijah's experience on Mt Carmel, is described in Rev 19:11-21).
- 7th Plague, Babylon Collapses: Jesus returns with the declaration, "It is done!" The coalition of three beast powers, Babylon, collapses by splitting into its constituent parts: civil authority under the control of the devil, Roman Catholicism, and apostate Protestantism. The last two are destroyed forever.

The Destruction of Evil

If the seven last plagues occur in the space of about one day (Rev 18:8), then the destruction of evil takes just one hour (Rev 18:10, 17, 19). Thus the final scenes will indeed be rapid. This section of Revelation depicts the destruction of the institutions as distinct from the people, which occurs just before the descent of the New Jerusalem.

1. The Harlot and the Beast from the Abyss: This depicts a religio-political coalition of civil and religious powers which collapses under the weight of its own corruption. The civil powers that supported Babylon will turn against her.
2. The Destruction of Babylon: describes the brief period after Babylon's fall where all leaders and traders lament her fall.
3. Heaven Celebrates over Babylon's Fall: The curtain is drawn aside to reveal the instigator of Babylon's fall – Jesus.
4. Wedding Banquet of the Lamb: The church of God is now finally ready to meet Jesus at His soon return.
5. Rider on the White Horse and the Army of Heaven: This army is the church of God, which takes up the final battle (of Armageddon) against the forces of wickedness. The beast and false prophet are destroyed by the sword of the Spirit.
6. The Millennium: During the millennium, the saints Judge (audit) God's decisions while the wicked remain dead. Satan is bound on earth.
7. The Destruction of Satan: As the New Jerusalem descends, Satan and the resurrected multitudes of the wicked make a final attack on the Holy City. I suspect that the fire descending is as much internal conflict as actual conflagration. Satan and all sin are destroyed.

The New Jerusalem

The basis of the New Jerusalem is the perfection of its architect and citizens. Thus, the establishment of the New Jerusalem begins with a judgement (destruction) of all wicked. The (earthly) home of the saved is described in allegorical form with many theological overtones.

Introduction: Heaven and Earth

Dan 10:12-14, *Then he continued, “Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come.”* (NIV)

This remarkable passage shows that, not only are the heavenly intelligences interested in earthly affairs, but that they take an active role in influencing them! Even more than the book of Daniel, the Apocalypse shows the intimate relationship between heavenly and terrestrial affairs. Each of the seven visions of Revelation portrays the principle character, Jesus, in His high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary actively and busily influencing both the righteous and the wicked.

It was the pagan religions that portrayed that God as remote and unknowable (Dan 2:10); however, the New Testament teaches that Jesus was to be the “God with us” (Matt 1:22) who lived among us (John 1:14) and that the Holy Spirit is to abide with us. In Revelation, not only does each of the seven sections begin with a heavenly scene of Jesus in the sanctuary, but every sub-section has an intimate connection with celestial initiatives.

The central vision (Rev 11:19-15:4) portrays Jesus and Satan in open cosmic warfare, which again, involves the inhabitants of planet earth, both righteous and wicked. The idea that human difficulties have cosmic proportions has become the theme of much modern literature and film – many taken directly from the apocalypse. What are the features of Revelation’s text that has made it so enduring and compelling? Here are some suggestions:

- It offers a cosmic dimension to human suffering, which partially explains why all human effort to solve earth’s problems has failed.
- It contains a wonderful message of hope that all such suffering will, one day, be solved – but only by a final perfect judgement executed by divine edict. Only then will all injustices will be made right!
- It appeals to most of us who have a fascination with conspiracy theories – Revelation has the ultimate conspiracy theory of Satan and the human institutions he has created to further his diabolical plans
- Once the imagination has grasped the graphic images of Revelation, they are impossible to erase. This may explain (in part) why they are so popular in modern film.
- Revelation’s highly symbolic text offers a tantalising yet irresistible element of mystery. However, all attempts at understanding are doomed to

fail unless the text is approached by “a mind with understanding” (Rev 17:9) – Spirit lead, Biblical, Christ-centred scholarship.

- When this is done, it has the additional appeal that Revelation’s prophecies provide astounding precision in predicting numerous events and the broad sweep of church and secular history.
- Revelation offers a glimpse of Jesus found in few other places. He is not only Saviour and Judge, but cosmic governor who actively manages terrestrial affairs in such a way as to ultimately demonstrate His justice, divinity and love.

In short, Revelation’s fascinating text is difficult to ignore, even for those suspicious of it.

What Revelation Says About Itself

The prologue (Rev 1:1-8) and the epilogue (Rev 22:6-21) have a great deal to say about how the book of Revelation is to be understood and read. However, as a counter to the almost limitless silliness now circulating about Revelation, three things should be kept clearly in the mind of any would-be interpreter:

1. It is the revelation of Jesus (Rev 1:1), by which I understand –
 - a) It is a text *belonging* to Jesus and as such is sacred and should be handled as such. Much of the puffery in film and modern culture using Revelation’s themes are sacrilegious and some are just blasphemous.
 - b) It is the Revelation *from* Jesus. Therefore, it has a divine author and origin and is quite capable of revealing divine mysteries, including future events. Anyone who suggests that Revelation is merely the product of human effort makes John to be a liar because he cannot even be truthful about his own work.
 - c) It is the Revelation *about* Jesus, including His character and methods of dealing with humanity. Thus, the content of Revelation concerns issues of individual choice, their consequences, the societal trends that ensue, and Jesus’ response to them and vis versa. Revelation is not much concerned with international politics but is very concerned with Jesus’ people.
2. Revelation concerns events that must occur “soon” or quickly (Rev 1:1, 22:6). Thus, it depicts real events and characters from the time of John to at least the second advent of Jesus (Rev 1:7).
3. The text of Revelation opens with an ingenious clue to its interpretation in the first two verses. Its unmistakable Semitic literary structure, a chiasm, provides

clear evidence of where John wanted to place his emphasis – in the central element. Here is a very literal translation directly from the Greek:

- A: [A] Revelation of Jesus Christ
 B: which God gave to him
 C: to show His servants things to occur soon
 D: and He signified sending [it] via His angel
 C: to His servant John who testifies
 B: [about] the Word of God
 A: and the testimony of Jesus Christ (the things he saw)

Thus, the Holy Spirit, via John is here telling us (among other things) that the message of Revelation has been *signified*, that is, written in signs and symbols. In keeping with the general principle of Bible interpretation, the key to all these symbols is found in the rest of Scripture, not in any interpreter’s imagination or some quirk of history.

Taking the above two points together, we conclude that Revelation’s text must not be understood in the strictly literal sense, but neither must it be interpreted in a purely spiritual sense. Further, all the prophecies of Revelation must have Christological significance. That is, unless we see Jesus in every aspect of Revelation, we have misunderstood.

(For a longer discussion of the principles of interpretation, see *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, chapter 7.)

There is much more that we should notice about this opening chiasm – it provides a useful definition of one of John’s technical terms. Let us examine more closely the above chain of revelation as set out in the table below.

Rev 1:1 – 3	Technical Phrase	Definition
God gave the message to Jesus	The Revelation of Jesus	The message God gave
Jesus gave the message via His angel to John	The Testimony of Jesus	What John saw (his prophetic visionary gift)
John gave the message to the church	The words of the prophecy of this book	What John wrote (ie, the book of Revelation)

Thus, the Testimony of Jesus is the visionary prophetic gift, (*not* the book of Revelation itself). Revelation 19:10 confirms this by defining the testimony of Jesus as the spirit of prophecy. A comparison of 19:10 with its close parallel in 22:8, 9, offers further confirmation:

Rev 19:10	Rev 22:8, 9
See that you do not	See that you do not
Your fellow servant	Your fellow servant
Of your brothers	Of your brothers
Who have the testimony of Jesus	The prophets
	And those who keep the words
Worship God	Worship God

Thus, John consistently uses the technical phrase, “The Testimony of Jesus” to indicate the visionary gift and office of a prophet.

The remainder of this opening section, the prologue of Revelation, appears to be devoted to a group of five triple statements:

- The three-fold blessing on those who hear, read, and take the message to heart.
- The trinitarian greeting from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- The three-fold dedication to Jesus including a doxology. Thus, Jesus is declared to be the One who loves us, who gave His blood for us, and who promoted us to be a kingdom of priests. Heady stuff for otherwise degenerate sinners!
- The three-fold theme: Jesus is coming soon; every eye will see Him; all the wicked will wail. (There are numerous woes pronounced against the wicked later in Revelation.)
- The imprimatur, the three-fold authority: Jesus is the alpha and omega; the eternal; the almighty.

Therefore, either this message is from our Lord and God and should be taken seriously, or John is a deluded liar and the book should be consigned to the trash. My personal experience attests that the book of Revelation is far too clever to be the result of a deranged mind; further, it has so strengthened my walk with the Lord that I am convinced of its divine origin. I am certain that its inclusion within the canon of Scripture was a wise choice (despite its difficult and doubtful inclusion by the early church).

Thus, more than any other book of the Bible, Revelation draws aside the veil into heaven to catch a glimpse of the activities in the control room (temple) of the universe, with our heavenly Father at the controls. It depicts Him as a compassionate God keenly interested in human welfare and salvation, who will ultimately settle all questions and right all wrongs to everyone’s satisfaction. Therefore, Revelation contains one of the greatest messages of hope to be found anywhere. It is here that we most clearly find the answers to some of life’s impossible questions about injustice, poverty, and human sinfulness, and their ultimate resolution.

Only Jesus our uniquely qualified Saviour can settle these matters and Revelation tells us something of how He will do it.

Finally, we should mention briefly the other fascinating literary structures to be found in Revelation, which are discussed at length in *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*. Further, some waste time arguing over which is the correct literary structure

that John intended: I believe such discussion is fruitless because many of these interleaved and overlapping structures shed some extra light on the meaning of the text. That is, they are not mutually exclusive but complementary.

For example, Revelation appears to be based on seven visions consisting of seven parts with an introductory vision of Jesus. Equally, there is an over-arching chiastic structure – I am sure that many more await discovery.

The Seven Churches

Rev 1:9 – 3:22

Introduction

It is not surprising that a book with the title, “Revelation of Jesus” begins (following a prologue) with an extended description of Jesus. This is fortunate for two principal reasons:

- It reinforces the Christ-centred message of the book
- It provides several interpretational clues for the text.

Regarding the second point, there are some that say, regardless of how we interpret the remainder of Revelation, the messages for the seven churches should be understood literally and are given for the use of those actual churches in the first century. While I agree that the messages were addressed to the seven actual churches, the messages cannot be understood literally as the introductory vision makes quite clear: Jesus is described as having a sword coming out of His mouth, His eyes like blazing fire, seven stars in His right hand, a voice like a trumpet and many waters, etc. Further, two of these symbols are explicitly interpreted for us (Rev 1:20) and thus are not literal: the seven stars are seven angels (messengers) and the seven lampstands are seven churches.

Thus, we conclude that, consistent with the opening prologue, the message of Revelation is signified, coded with symbols.

Further, while the messages to the seven churches were addressed to these actual churches, the fact that they have been included (by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit 2 Peter 1:19-21) in a book on prophecy for the end time, suggests this part along with all other parts has relevance beyond these seven churches in the first century.

The opening description of Jesus also sets a pattern for the remainder of Revelation – each of the seven visions begins with a description of Jesus who is interested and active in the leadership of His church. This is the fulfilment of Jesus’ promise in Matt 28:20 to be with His church forever.

As described in the previous chapter, the description of Jesus portrays Him as actively influencing earthly affairs. In this case (as in all subsequent visions), He is described in sanctuary images: priestly robe to the feet, gold sash, walking among seven lampstands, trumpet sound, etc. This reminds us of His description in Hebrews (4:14-16, 5:6, 10, 6:19, 20, 7:17, 21, 8:1, 2, 9:11, 15, 10, 19-22, etc) as our great high priest in the heavenly sanctuary. It is by Jesus that we “draw near to God” (Heb 10:22), and because of whom we are seated in heavenly realms (Eph 2:6). Thus, Jesus is depicted as ministering to His church from the heavenly

sanctuary by coming close to us. Jesus always takes the initiative; “without me you can do nothing” (John 15:4, 5).

The symbols used to describe Jesus are, naturally, quite significant when understood in the Biblical context:

- The trumpet, lampstand, robe and sash are allusions to the daily ministry which focussed on the reconciliation of the sinner to God.
- Eyes like blazing fire is a compound symbol. The eye is a New Testament symbol of spiritual insight (Matt 6:22, 7:3-5, John 4:35), while the fire is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3, 7:30, Heb 1:7, Rev 4:5, 7). Thus, Jesus’ ministry involves imparting spiritual insight via His Holy Spirit – see John 16:13.
- The voice like many waters can be understood from its explicit interpretation in Rev 17:15 as representing peoples, multitudes, nations, and languages. Thus, the words and teachings of Jesus are heard in the multitudes of languages.
- The sharp two edged sword [ῥομφαία rhomphaia] from the mouth of Jesus occurs six times in Revelation and only once elsewhere in the New Testament, Luke 2:35, where it is described as capable of piercing the soul.

Thus, Jesus is depicted as a Saviour who has Spirit filled disciples, who is interested in His people’s welfare, and whose teachings are not only precise, but go to the very soul of our being. Jesus’ teaching’s matter! His next step is to spell out some specific message to the churches in Asia, specifically tailored messages which serve (I believe) as parables to seven periods of church history during the so called Christian era.

In each case, the messages to the seven churches are addressed to the messenger (angel) of each church and follow the same formula:

1. To the messenger to the church of ..., write:
2. These are the words of [description/title of Jesus]
3. I know your ... [= commendation]
4. Nevertheless ... [= reproof]
5. Counsel
6. To him who overcomes I will give ... [rewards]
7. He who has an ear let him hear what the spirit says to the churches

Thus, while the message is given by Jesus, it has the imprimatur of the Holy Spirit. This is the way all Scripture should be understood (2 Peter 1:19-21).

1. Ephesus

The name Ephesus means first or desirable and thus is a privileged or principle position – an aspect of their inheritance not lost on the apostolic church. Jesus is depicted as:

- the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, reminiscent of Isa 49:15, 16, “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me.”
- The One who walks among the seven lampstands (= the churches Rev 1:20). Jesus takes an active interest in His churches despite their shortcomings. The church is the object of His supreme regard.

The apostolic church was a hard working church, which evangelised the then known world from England to China – an amazing accomplishment for a group that was just 500 at Jesus’ resurrection (1 Cor 15:6). Thus, the Ephesian church is commended for their deeds, their perseverance, and hard work.

The church is also commended for its intolerance of wicked men – it tested them and rejected the false, especially those who claim to be apostles but are not. [We will observe later that the lack of this attribute becomes a growing cancer in later churches until it is entirely absent in Laodicea.] Thus, Jesus here implicitly distinguishes between tolerance of human difference and tolerance of heresy and sin. The Ephesian church had learned the delicate task of loving the sinner but hating the sin. In all this, they had not grown weary.

Despite its impressive accomplishments, Ephesus is criticised because they had forsaken their first love – Jesus. Their hard work had become an end in itself rather than recalling why they had engaged in the work – a needful reminder for all today. A work, no matter how good, is useless without Christ (1 Cor 1:23, 2:2, 16, Gal 6:14, John 15:5).

The remedy for this dangerous situation is three things:

- Remember the height from which you have fallen. Too often we Christians forget our high calling – we are each on a personal mission from the King of the universe to show and tell others of His love, and He has made all power available to those who do this work.
- Repent, turn back, turn again to Jesus, look to Him and live!
- Do the things you did at first. We should let nothing distract us from the work we are called to do.

Unless the above spiritual balm is applied, the Ephesian lampstand will be removed from its place (presumably in the temple of God), that is they would be

removed from the membership of the greater church. Works, no matter how good are still not substitute for Christ in the church. Jesus is a gentleman and will not enter where He is unwelcome. If the work of the church is so urgent that it excludes its purpose and object, Jesus, then Jesus will quietly leave.

Ephesus is also commended for hating the Nicolaitans (= “victory people”). This is a common human failing – we believe we can have victory over sin by ourselves; but Jesus reminds us that “without me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)

Overcomers, victors in Christ, are promised the right to eat from the tree of life. That is, they will be granted the right (authority) to return to the first home of man, a promise in keeping with the above counsel to repent (turn back) to Jesus.

2. Smyrna

The name of this church means a sweet smelling aroma, a possible allusion to the numerous references in the Levitical code for burnt offerings (eg Lev 1:9, 13, 17, 2:2, 9, 3:5, 6:15, 21, 8:21, 28, 17:6, 23:13, 18, etc). Such offerings were described as “pleasing to the Lord” and are always associated with fire and burnt offerings. Thus, Smyrna was to be a church of sacrifice; and during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, Rome unleashed a blitz of persecution that martyred thousands of Christians.

How appropriate that Jesus should here be titled, “the first and last” – He was just that to many who paid the ultimate price for Him. Further, Jesus is called, “the One who died and came to life again” – a reminder of Paul’s words in 1 Cor 15:12-20 that Jesus’ resurrection is the sum and substance of the Christian faith.

Again, the people of Smyrna are reminded that they did not suffer alone – Jesus knows their affliction and poverty because He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa 53:3). Despite their situation, they are declared rich! (v9) Clearly, this is not in a material sense but a spiritual sense (see also Rev 3:17). The church during the 2nd and 3rd centuries was materially poor but spiritually rich during persecution: only fully committed people became members. Thus, the church grew despite oppression.

It was during this time that Roman authorities tried every method to eliminate Christianity: false charges (inspired by Satan the accuser) were brought against the saints. The charges were invariably false because the devout Christians went to great lengths to be good, loyal citizens (Rom 13:1-7). But Jesus simply advises them not to be afraid of what they might suffer; “I will be with you always” (Matt 28:20).

The persecution of the period of Smyrna had begun with Emperor Trajan (98-117) who issued the first official policy, the 97th letter. Decius continued this policy (in 250) by again attempting to suppress Christianity. Later, Valerian tried the same thing with worse results. The persecution of the Smyrna period reached a climax during the time of Diocletian, who in 303 began the most bitter campaign of annihilation, and completely banned Christianity.

However, the politically savvy Constantine accepted the purple in 312, he realised that

- There were more urgent needs of Rome's resources that persecuting tax-paying pacifists (Christians)
- The persecution was ineffective because the church grew strongly
- Christians made excellent citizens who paid taxes faithfully
- A bureaucracy bent on extermination cast a pall over the mood of his court which was not helpful
- The populace was astute enough to realise that the emperor was not God

Thus, in 313 AD, Constantine issued the edict of toleration, signed in Milan, effectively legalising Christianity, ten years after Diocletian's decree. Smyrna had indeed suffered 10 days of persecution but had remained faithful to the point of death and had earned the crown of life from their Lord, Jesus.

Appropriately, they were also promised a second reward – the overcomers would not be harmed by the second death (v11). Thus, Smyrna sets a high standard – achievable only by those who keep Christ first and foremost (and last).

3. Pergamum

In Rev 2:12, Jesus is described as the One with the sharp two-edged (literally, “two mouthed”) sword. This sword is never used literally in the New Testament but denotes an instrument of spiritual warfare. Further, since it issues from Jesus' mouth, we assume that it is the teachings of Jesus when used against His enemies, for it is able to kill them (Rev 19:21). Thus, the church of Pergamum was to be one that had significant issues over dividing the Word.

Such was the case during the 4th and 5th centuries, just after Christianity was legalised and became fashionable. Historically, most heresies had their genesis in this period including penance, Sunday sacredness (Constantine introduced the first Sunday Law), Arianism, Gnostic practices (eg monasticism), etc, etc. Thus, doctrinally, Pergamum was a period of great compromise; as though the church had moved into Satan's territory – Rev 2:13 describes Pergamum as living where Satan has his throne. This was prophesied elsewhere as well (2 Thess 2:7, 2 Peter 2:1, Jude 1:4).

In the real city of Pergamum, this was (in a sense) literally true. Satanic worship and the mystery religion was anciently centred in Babylon. However, when Alexander the Great came to destroy Babylon, the satanic priests decided that in order to preserve their craft and secrets they needed to flee: half went east to Tibet/Nepal where they continue today as the Dalai Lama & Co; the other half went west and settled in Pergamum.

Pergamum made an ideal fortress – high and on a rocky outcrop.

It is in the period of Pergamum that two classes of people appear: those who have not renounced their faith (v 13, 14), and those who hold to the teachings of Balaam (compromise) and the Nicolaitans (legalism). The teachings of Balaam (like Jezebel) encouraged illicit relationships between the secular and sacred – a thinly veiled scheme to entice the saints to sin.

Notice that the two classes of church members – the faithful and the compromisers, appear after the persecution of Smyrna had finished. Further, the prescribed antidote for the compromisers is the threat of the sword from the mouth of Jesus. This is a poignant lesson for all – it is only those who use (rather than fight against) the sword of the Spirit who are safe from the spiritual cancer of compromise.

4. Thyatira

In His message to the church of Thyatira, Jesus describes Himself as the Son of God whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze. The moral decay initiated by the compromising stance of Pergamum reached its nadir during Thyatira. The official state church during the 6th to 16th centuries exerted absolute control in politics, religion and thought, so that all learning and development was stifled. The populous became illiterate, uneducated, and ignorant of even the most basic facts of salvation.

Thus, it was most important that Jesus remind this church of the central truth of the Gospel – He is the Son of God, and the source, via His Spirit, of all spiritual truth.

Despite this, there remained in Thyatira a faithful remnant including the Waldensies, Albigensies, Huguenots, and some North African groups who preserved the scriptures and the truth of salvation in the Son of God. These scattered, faithful minorities are commended for their love, faith, service, and perseverance: it was they who ultimately turned the tide and finally initiated the Reformation – these are commended for doing more than at first. All this, despite the greatest persecution of saints in History (more than 50 million killed) whose only crime was to possess the Bible or some portion of it.

For the majority of those in Thyatira, Jesus reserves harsh condemnation because they tolerate Jezebel [This anticipates the end-time woman of Rev 17] whose chief notoriety was using state forces to enforce religion (not spirituality). Jezebel perfectly models what the church leadership did during the medieval period – invented false doctrines and used state resources to enforce them. While most of the great heresies had their genesis in the period of Pergamum, all dogma arose during the time of Thyatira. Thus, Jezebel is rightly accused of false religious practices – eating food offered to idols. She is also accused of teaching Satan's deep secrets (v24), thus fostering illicit relationships and effectively practicing Satanism! Further, despite great religiosity, the medieval period was a time of moral declension particularly among the clergy.

We see evidence of God's love and patience here – He gives time for her to repent – the period of Thyatira was the longest of any church. God is unwilling that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9).

Note that in Pergamum, the compromising attitude had split the church into the faithful and the “lax”. This distinction is continued in Thyatira and deepened. Jesus appears to have most to say to these lax members who have a form of

Godliness (2 Tim 3:5) – they will suffer much (Rev 2:22). Thus, it is an exquisite irony those who seek to avoid difficulties by compromising truth will suffer most.

Verse 23 mentions the children of Jezebel who will be struck dead (future tense) – a fascinating anticipation of Rev 3:1 (the Sardis church period). This process is to become a sure sign that God is the only One who can search hearts and minds (ie, judges) – but known only to the churches! God will repay (v23).

For the remnant of the faithful saints the requirements have been made especially light, “Hold on to what you have until I come.” During the medieval period, the theme of Salvation by faith was nigh on extinguished – it was only by divine intervention that the Scriptures were preserved. The majority of the truths of salvation had been buried under much theological rubbish.

The promises to the overcomers have some further exquisite ironies. The principle sin of the Jezebel imitating church of the medieval period was its (largely successful) attempts to illicitly dominate civil affairs and private thought. However, the overcomers will have authority over the nations and rule them with an iron sceptre – a promise from Ps 2:7 originally applied to Jesus, now applied to Thyatirans as imitators of Jesus.

Ultimately, it was John Wyclif who began the process of breaking the state church’s authority – he simply translated the Bible into the common language (English) and the people began to see the church for the fraud that it was. He became the “morning star” of the reformation (v28).

5. Sardis

Following the dark period dominated by the medieval church, the period of Sardis (16 to 18th cent.) represented a church in a very weakened condition. Thus, Sardis is reminded of two great facts: that Jesus holds the churches in His right hand, and is the One who sends forth the seven Spirits of God and His regenerating power.

Again, the church is described as having the appearance of being alive but is actually dead. Not only had the state church dominated politics for 1000 years, it had also dominated thought and theology. The reformation church had much to unlearn as well as learn; progress back to apostolic ideals was excruciatingly slow. Some were unwilling to go far enough and the reform process was often stalled by those unable to move beyond a position established by some earlier leader. Thus, numerous ecclesiastical island-theologies (denominations) arose, each defending some point and unable to see another point of view. Thus Christianity was weakened by fragmentation in the very process designed to offer strength!

In these difficult and trying circumstances, Jesus’ advice to Sardis is to wake up and strengthen what little remained of truth before all light was extinguished. The reform process was far from complete (Rev 3:2). He also advises Sardis to repent before Jesus comes to surprise them (as a thief comes to surprise a victim).

Again, the true and faithful, first mentioned in Pergamum, listed as a remnant in Thyatira, are singled out for special commendation. Rev 3:4 describes those who

have not soiled their clothes; ie, those who have the robe of Christ’s righteousness (Rev 19:8) and are very few. They are promised a personal walk with Jesus in white robes because they are worthy.

Interestingly, the overcomers are promised the same reward as the faithful remnant – white robes. Further, the overcomers will be guaranteed a place in the book of life, and a confession of that name before the father in heaven. Appropriate rewards indeed!

6. Philadelphia

This church of “brotherly love” (Philadelphia) shares the distinction with Smyrna of not receiving any reproof of correction. In displaying and developing its admirable traits of character, they had truly imitated Him “who is holy and true” (Rev 3:7). Further, they had recognised that Jesus had given His church the keys to the kingdom (Matt 16:19, Luke 11:52, Isa 22:22, 33:6). The clear allusion here is to a people who facilitate the entrance of outsiders into the Kingdom of Jesus. This is confirmed by Jesus’ open door set before them – the way to the kingdom of David is permanently open.

Thus, the Philadelphian church period (17th to 19th cent.) was to be a missionary church. Yet despite its meagre strength (Rev 3:8), its results were impressive:

- The reformation was extended theologically and geographically
- Bible societies were established everywhere
- The Scriptures were translated into every major language
- The first salaried missionaries (apostles) of modern times were sent out starting with William Carey in 1798
- The power of the state medieval church was finally broken so that modern states became secular and independent of the church
- Protestant churches set up schools and universities to eliminate illiteracy
- Charities and hospitals were established

An impressive list of accomplishments for such a spiritually and materially weakened church. The Philadelphians had not denied the name of Jesus but had sought to imitate His life.

Despite the (temporary) defeat of the medieval state church, the Philadelphian church endured fierce opposition from another source – the synagogue of Satan. It was during this time that the popularity of atheism reached its peak (see on the fifth trumpet):

- The theory of (modern scientific) evolution was born
- The inspiration of the Bible was no longer assumed
- Christians were ridiculed for their “infantile” faith
- Governments became secular

As will be shown later, the leaders of the atheistic movement were all trained Christian priests or rabbis who turned on their faith because they saw inconsistencies in the religious organization (establishment) rather than looking to the source of their faith.

The progress of the faithful in the various periods is salutary:

- In Pergamum (Rev 2:13, 14) there are those “who hold to the teaching of Balaam”, ie, the faithful appear to be a goodly proportion of the total
- In Thyatira, the faithful have become a small remnant (Rev 2:24) “who have not learned Satan’s deep secrets.”
- In Sardis (Rev 3:4) there are now “a few people who have not soiled their clothes.”

In Philadelphia the distinction between the faithful and others has gone – opposition arises from Satanism (assumed here to be atheism).

But the Philadelphian church is so spiritually weak that Jesus promises to keep them from the hour of trial – this would be left to the church in Laodicea. Thus, the time of the Philadelphian church would end before the last days of trial and judgement.

We should pause to observe that the use of the word “hour”, when not preceded by a numerical adjective in Revelation, always occurs in reference to some end-time event (Rev 3:3, 3:10, 9:15, 11:13, 14:7, 15). Further, the hour of trial is sent to test all the inhabitants of the earth – a technical phrase for the wicked in Revelation. And this will be conducted in such a way as to make the wicked acknowledge that they have been wrong (Rev 3:9). This we must accept by faith – it may not occur in this life!

The Philadelphian overcomers are promised a great deal: A pillar in God’s temple (= His church, 1 Cor 3:16, 17), to bear the name of the city of God and the name of God. This is the first reference to the sealing and anticipates the second vision on seals and Rev 14:1. Thus, despite their helpless, weakened condition, they learned to depend on their Lord, and in Him, accomplished much. So can we!

7. Laodicea

If the names of all previous church periods were significant, Laodicea is especially so – it means, “Judging the people.” The Philadelphian church was promised to be kept from the hour of trial (3:10), which, by succession, occurs during the period of Laodicea. The same period of pre-advent judgement is described in Dan 7:9, 10. (See appendix 1.)

Historically, Laodicea was the wealthiest city in Asia Minor. It was the banking town at the end of the common trade route as traced by the seven churches. It was famous, not only for its great wealth, but its lukewarm spring waters, which attracted huge numbers seeking healing of various maladies. It also sold a locally woven black woollen cloth popular among the upper class for special occasions.

Local physicians also concocted a Phrygian eye salve sold as a therapy for eye infections.

So great was the wealth of Laodicea, that when it was extensively damaged in an earthquake of AD60, the city leaders refused royal assistance to rebuild the city. These and related events had bred a widespread cocky arrogance in the locals. They believed they were self-sufficient and almost invincible – they needed nothing. Unfortunately, the church of Laodicea in Asia minor in the first century, is an all too accurate picture of the church generally at the end of time – rich and self sufficient, but spiritually passionless.

The spiritual condition of each successive church is weaker – Sardis is described as only appearing to be alive: Philadelphia is said to have very little strength left: Laodicea is so weak it is not commended for anything (the only church to be so damned with faint praise.)

Thus, Jesus chooses His titles carefully and significantly:

- The Amen (= truth) – a title of greatness
- The faithful and true witness
- The ruler [chief] of God’s creation

The last is particularly significant: From the 20th century onwards, while popularly, atheism had died, its principle instrument of instruction, evolution, remains popular precisely because it excuses intelligent people from all moral responsibility to their creator. This is an interesting irony – numerically atheism is dead but its theoretical underpinnings remain, casting a long shadow over modern history, science, and even religion. The task of Laodicea is to present Jesus, not only as the Creator, but as Ruler of all creation – including us!

[We pause to note that the principle symbol of this aspect of God’s deity, the Sabbath, is likely to be a worship issue during the end-time church of Laodicea.]

The Laodicean church period presents a serious and almost fatal condition – materially wealthy but spiritually passionless. In the symbolic words of John, they are rich but lukewarm. So desperate is this situation, so abhorrent is the Laodicean condition, that Jesus threatens to spit them out of His mouth – reject them as capable of presenting His teachings! Serious indeed!

As if this were not enough, Laodicea is now described as:

- Wretched – they have great need of the great Healer. We must repent and seek the guidance of Jesus in our Christian walk.
- Pitiable or miserable – despite great luxury, there is no true happiness apart from a life dependent on Jesus.
- Poor – spiritually poor and lacking power. We need the gold of Jesus, experimental religion refined by the fire of trial and the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The gold of Jesus is free but costs us everything.
- Blind – lacking spiritual insight. This is a subtle point: never before has the church had such freedom and opportunity to do good with great material wealth. Huge resources and education, great theoretical knowledge from

extensive formal research programs, arrogance of religious groups and a smugness born of a misplaced sense of correctness; but despite this, Jesus describes the period of Laodicea as lacking spiritual insight! Only Jesus' eye salve can cure this – it takes only a look at Jesus to provide all the spiritual insight needed for the Christian walk.

- Naked – clothes of our own making are not clothes at all. Only the clothes of Jesus, the “white raiment” of Christ's righteousness can suffice as our title to heaven.

In Rev 3:19 Jesus claims that those He loves He rebukes and chastens. By this standard, the Laodicean church is greatly loved for no other church is the subject of such scathing rebuke. The cure is to repent, to turn to Jesus, to look at Him with healed eyes, to put on His robe of righteousness and leave aside our own wealthy self sufficiency, to realise our great need, and to place Jesus as ruler of our lives, to represent Him as ruler of all His creation. For the (we) arrogant Laodiceans, this is bitter medicine.

Finally, the overcomers in Laodicea are promised a very great reward – to sit with Jesus on His throne. The rewards to each previous church period have increased as their spiritual strength declined, and Laodicea is promised the greatest gift of all: the judgement church is to sit on the seat of judgement with Jesus Himself!

The special needs of each church period dictate a corresponding emphasis of Bible truth. That of Laodicea may be summarised as:

- Jesus is creator and Lord
- Jesus is judge and judgement has begun
- The cure for wealthy self sufficiency is to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus (Heb 12:2, 3)
- Repent – turn from our own resources to dependence on Jesus.

Then the judged will become the judges (Rev 20:3-5).

The Seven Seals

Rev 4:1 – 8:1

There is almost complete unanimity among Bible commentators that Rev 4:1 begins a new section/vision. The scene changes from the earthly churches to the heavenly throne room of the universe, and John is invited through the open door to observe. Thus our attention is returned to the heavenly sanctuary and the worship there. Somehow the activities in the heavenly sanctuary affect the earth via the seals as each is broken. What is going on?

The section on the seven seals might also be called the seven hymns, each of which celebrates, in poetic Hebrew (using Greek words) style, some reason to praise God and/or the Lamb. The table below lists these hymns of praise.

Ref	Who sings	To:	Content	Why
Rev 4:8	4 living creatures	God	Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.	Holy, eternal
Rev 4:11	24 elders	God	You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.	Creator, sustainer
Rev 5:9, 10	4 living creatures & 24 elders	Lamb	You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.	Suffering redeemer
Rev 5:12	Many angels	Lamb	Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!	Suffering redeemer
Rev 5:13	All creatures	God & Lamb	To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!	King of universe
Rev 7:10	Great multitude in white robes	God & Lamb	Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.	Saviour
Rev 7:12	All angels, elders, living creatures	God	Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!	Praise

Note that the level of praise rises with the number of creatures singing each hymn of praise. One gets the impression that the universe's resources are not sufficient to sing the praises of our great God and redeemer! This provides the first

clue to the purpose of the vision of the seven seals: the universe praises God and the Lamb for their salvation of mankind, which is completely underserved. Thus, we expect to catch a glimpse of the way Jesus will act in Human history to save humanity. Let us analyse the vision to see if this is true.

Introductory Scene

The introductory vision to the seven seals naturally divides into the two parts, Rev 4 and 5. The first part depicts a heavenly worship scene containing a number of elements anticipated by the message to the Laodicean church: sitting on thrones, open door, and white clothes. This is not to suggest that the two are connected in a semantic sense, but that this is a common literary device used by John. The structural precedent of this celestial worship scene is Eze 1 and Isa 6:1-6, where, in both cases, a prophet was inaugurated into his office by viewing a theophany of overwhelming grandeur. In this case, the Redeemer and Saviour is the One inaugurated into office and the King; this is described in the second half of the introductory vision (Rev 5).

When reading such a passage about the throne room, it is all too easy to conjure up some image of a throne acting as a seat; but no such is described – in fact the throne may consist of four cherubim as directly implied in 2 Sam 22:11, Ps 18:10 (see also 1 Sam 4:4, 2 Sam 6:2, 2 Kings 19:15, 1 Chr 13:6, Ps 80:1, 99:1, Isa 37:16). Thus, the scene was beyond description, dazzling and awesome.

Around the immediate presence of God are the four cherubim or living creatures, each with a different appearance: lion, ox, human, eagle. Close to the throne are the seven lamps representing the seven spirits of God. As in Eze 1, the presence of God is associated with thunder, noises, and lightning. Surrounding this is a sea of glass, pure (or clear) as crystal – calm, smooth and orderly (quite a contrast to the raging sea depicted in Rev 7:1). Surrounding the throne are 24 other thrones for 24 elders with victory crowns who apparently represent the redeemed of the earth. (No other information is available on the identity of these elders, but note that of all the creatures in the universe, the redeemed of the earth are placed closest to the throne of God.)

Anciently, the act of laying a crown before a seated monarch is to acknowledge the monarch's supremacy and was considered a sacred pledge of loyalty. It also indicated one's indebtedness to the seated ruler. Thus is depicted the worship of the 24 elders who never tire of rehearsing their gratitude to God for their salvation, and His creatorship, by casting their crowns before the throne.

The scene described in Rev 4 of incessant worship, is clearly a prelude to something else, more important. Ancient thrones were often large enough to seat two people, a facility exploited by the reigning king when he wished to install his heir as his acknowledged successor. A deed was drawn up and executed, sealed with appropriate seals and then placed on the right of the king who sat on the throne. In a pompous ceremony, with the reigning king seated on the throne and the deed lying on the throne to his right, the heir would ascend the throne, accept the deed and unseal it. All watching would then cheer and shout.

Thus, the scene described in Rev 5 is quite typical of such an enthronement scene, with the Lamb as the heir. Interestingly, the word “hand” does not appear in the Rev 5:1 (or v7) so that the Greek actually reads, “Then I saw on the right of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.” This is entirely consistent with ancient regal custom. Therefore, John views the enthronement scene (in symbolic form) of Jesus as the crucified but resurrected Saviour in the heavenly courts, presumably shortly after His resurrection. The New Testament frequently alludes to this, eg, Mark 16:19, Luke 22:69, Acts 5:31, Rom 8:34, Eph 1:20, Col 3:1, Heb 1:3, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, Rev 3:21.

[Note: It is Rev 3:21 which provides an important clue about the section break between Rev 3 & 4: Rev 3:21 describes Jesus as having already sat down on the throne at some previous time, while Rev 5 describes that act. Thus, Rev 4 & 5 comes well before Rev 3.]

Why is there a need for this enthronement (or inauguration) ceremony, and why is it so important as to warrant the undivided attention of the universe and elicit its rapt praise? As usual, the literary structure of this introductory passage provides the best internal clue to the author’s intended emphasis and understanding. The section analysed here is that which follows the initial description of the heavenly scene in Rev 4:1-8a, which is followed by a series of activities.

4:8b-11 A: Worship of the 4 living creatures and 24 elders

5:1a B: Location – on the right of the one sitting on the throne

5:1b C: A Scroll (written on both sides) and sealed with 7 seals

5:2 D: Who is worthy to open the scroll and loose its seals?

5:3 E: No one able to open the scroll or look at it (John wept)

5:4 E: No one found worthy to open the scroll or look at it

5:5a D: Lion of Judah, Root of David has triumphed (is worthy)

5:5b C: (He) will open the scroll and its 7 seals.

5:6 [The Lamb’s description: sacrificed, seven horns, seven eyes are seven spirits sent out to all the earth]

5:7 B: Lamb takes the scroll from the right of the one sitting on the throne

5:8-14 A: Worship of the 4 living creatures and 24 elders, and all creatures

Thus, the whole point of this passage (at the centre of the chiasm) hangs on the fact that only the Lamb, sacrificed and yet alive, is worthy to open the seals and

look inside the scroll. Whatever, we make of the seals, they revolve around the right of Jesus as our crucified and risen Lord to open this book and its seven seals. Thus, the seals are the key to opening the book.

Now we observe two facts: seals are a symbol of the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 3:30), and books are designed to record facts as written text (Rev 3:5, 13:8, 17:8, 20:12, 15, 21:27, Ps 69:28, Phil 4:3). Thus, the seven seals appear to be a record of the work of Jesus directing the Holy Spirit in the work of sealing (sanctifying) the saints. Taking our cue from the paradigm of Daniels’ parallel prophecies, we also assume that the seven seals cover the same period of history, the Christian age, between the time of Jesus and His Second Advent. The next section will explore this more fully.

Overview of the Seals

The most probable intent of the seals is to trace the history, or at least a paradigm of the progress of the righteous, as they are sealed. Several lines of evidence suggest this:

- The verb, “seal” (Gr σφραγίζω sphragizo), when applied to people, invariably refers to the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:33, 6:27, Rom 15:28, 2 Cor 1:22, Eph 1:13, 4:30).
- The introductory vision is solely concerned with the praise of God because of the Divine attributes of Saviour, Creator, and Sustainer.
- Sealed people avoid the judgements of God in Rev 9:4.
- The sealed are also dressed in white (Rev 7:9, 13), and are described as those who have survived the great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb to make them white (v14). See also Rev 19:8.
- Similarly, the first horse is white – a colour always associated with the righteous (Rev 3:4, 5). Further, the crown (Gr στέφανος stephanos) on the first rider is a victory crown given to the victorious saints (2 Tim 4:7).
- The language of sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts is reserved in the Bible for God’s efforts to correct wayward saints (Lev 26:14-45, Deut 32:24, 25, 2 Sam 24:12, 1 Chr 11, 12, 2 Chr 20:9, Jer 14:12, 21:7, 9, 24:10, 27:8, 13, 17, 18, 32:24, 36, 34:17, 38:2, 42:17, 22, 44:13, Eze 5:12, 17, 6:11, 12, 7:15, 12:16, 14:21) by waking them from spiritual lethargy. This is a subtle but important point – the saints are not sinless or perfected until the resurrection (1 Cor 15:51-54). As erring humans, we often need the Lord’s hand or providence to refocus our minds on the Christian path and keep us from being distracted. We must fix our eyes on Jesus (Heb 12:2, 3).
- The verb to follow (Gr ἀκολουθέω akolouthéo) occurs 79 times in the Gospels (eg Matt 4:20, 22, 25, 8:1, 10, etc) and all except Mk 14:13 depict a person following Christ. The other five occurrences in Revelation (14:4, 8, 9, 13, 19:14) also refer to the act of a disciple who follows (literally,

joined in the way of) Jesus, or a righteous messenger who follows a divine calling. Thus, by consistency, the 4th horse is such a case.

- There is a very close parallel between the seven seals and Jesus' sermon as recorded in the Synoptic apocalypse (Matt 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), which clearly depicts the future history of God's church. (See *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*.)
- The four horses of different colours is an allusion to two passages in Zechariah 1:7-17, 6:1-8 (especially the second). In these passages, the horses are sent from the presence of God as messengers to go throughout the whole earth. The purpose in both cases was to build up Jerusalem. This, with the information above is interpreted to mean the true church and its message to go throughout the earth (Zech 1:10, 6:7). [The detail of this message is actually given in Rev 11:1-12 and 14:6-11.]
- The first four seals each begin with a call, "Come!" from one of the living creatures around the throne. None of the other septets have their action so closely tied directly to the throne of God.

Thus, the work of the Holy Spirit (as directed by the enthroned Jesus) and the march of the Gospel, as depicted in the seals, has caused division and strife, just as Jesus predicted (Matt 10:34-39).

As stated earlier, the premise of this hermeneutic is primarily historical. However, the seals have such important information for our present Christian walk, we cannot ignore the idealist interpretation. In many ways, the seals are also a model of each person's experience of Salvation, and in this sense, the seals are timeless.

The table below sets out the similarities and differences between the formula used for each of the first four seals:

Horse colour	Rider had:	Rider given:	Purpose
White	Bow	Crown	Conquering & to conquer
Fiery-red	--	Take peace from the earth	Make men slay each other
Ink-black	Pair of scales in the hand	--	Expensive grain. Leave oil and wine
Grass-green	Name of death, hades followed.	Authority over ¼ of the earth	To kill with sword, famine, death and wild beasts.

Notice the sequence that John observes the scene: First the Lamb opens the seal, then a living creature calls "Come!" he next sees the horse, and then its rider, then the rider's equipment, then what the rider is given, and last of all what purpose the rider is called to fulfil. (This makes seven parts to each of these messages.)

Horses do not exclusively represent either righteous or wicked forces – they are used as symbols of both in Revelation. They are used consistently as symbols of

spiritual forces in the seals (for the righteous), in the trumpets (for the wicked) and the heavenly host of Rev 19 (for the righteous). Thus, the seals present the saints armed with the sword of the spirit (Eph 6:17) taking the Gospel to a world and thus causing trouble.

1st Seal – White Horse

The first seal shows a white horse ridden by someone armed with a bow and given a crown (στέφανος stephanos, consisting of laurel leaves, or equivalent, as given in the Olympic games to victors) going out to begin continuously conquering. This well describes the first century church in its successful evangelisation of the world. This apostolic church first conquered Jerusalem (Acts 2, 5:28), then the surrounding area of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1, 4, 11:21), Ethiopia, (Acts 8:26-39), Asia Minor (Acts 14:21-27, 19:26), and eventually the whole world (Acts 17:6).

The first rider on the white horse is described as a conquering conqueror – the sense is one of continuous, on-going victory. This, the first century church certainly did as shown above. However, when applied to the Christian individual experience, the first rider on the white horse shows that a new Christian is to have a life of continuous victory over sin, not just a single victory (or conversion), but a (continuous) battle. Indeed, Paul says that he died daily (1 Cor 15:31, see also Luke 9:23).

The first century Christian church parallels the individual Christian in another sense – the seals represent the work of Jesus via the Holy Spirit (the fifth book of the New Testament should have been called, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit"); Rom 8:9 reminds us that who anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to Christ. Without Him, we have no victory and cannot conquer (John 15:4).

In the ancient world, conquering victory meant to subjugate others, that is, to make other nations and cities accept the authority and rule of the conqueror. The church obtains such victories in the name of Jesus by adding saints to the Kingdom of Heaven. Similarly, the Christian is to gain continuous victory over the sinful nature and so demonstrate his citizenship of the Kingdom of Heaven.

2nd Seal – Fiery Red Horse

Observe that, unlike the rider on the white horse, the rider on the red horse is unarmed, at least initially. He is "given" to take peace from the earth (or land, that is, its inhabitants). Somehow, the very existence and authority of the horse and its rider causes people to slay (the Greek means sacrifice) each other.

Then the rider is given a large sword (μάχαιρα machaira) that is reminiscent of the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17) as the Word of God being part the Christian armour. This is the consistent with the horse's colour: of the several words available to John to describe a red hue, he was inspired to select the one associated with fire – a symbol of the work and effect of the Holy Spirit. Thus we have a Spirit led horse and rider wielding the Word of God, which causes men to sacrifice each other.

The phrase, “take peace from the earth” (Rev 6:4) involves a subtle word play on an utterance of Jesus in Matt 10:34, “I have not come to send peace but a sword.” The word for *send* is βαλεῖν balein, from the verb βαλλω ballo; while the word for *take* is λαβεῖν labein from the verb λαμβανω lambano. Note the first syllable is the reverse (lab vs bal). Jesus predicted in Matt 10:35, 36 the effect His teaching would have on the world. “*For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law - a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.*”

Assuming the seals are historically parallel to the churches, we would expect that the red horse is fulfilled in a time corresponding to the second church, in the 2nd and 3rd centuries. This was a time of great unrest, when the Spirit filled preaching and actions of the church contrasted with the moral excesses of the crumbling (decadent) Roman Empire. Rome sought to deflect attention from its own inept government management by blaming and killing (sacrificing) Christians. Had the church not been so faithful, it would not have created so many martyrs.

On a personal level, this seal predicts some of the experience of each Christian. As shown above, the seal echoes the comments of Jesus about the effect that a true Christian will have on those around him – many will be alienated and turned into enemies. Jesus has asked us, if necessary, to sacrifice friends and family for the sake of the kingdom.

Thus, the Spirit lead Christian, in attempting to imitate the life of Jesus, wields the sword of the Spirit, which makes some uncomfortable to the point of antagonism. We are merely called to do our duty. (Luke 17:10)

3rd Seal - Ink Black Horse

Again, of the several words available to John to describe the complete lack of colour of this horse, he was inspired to use the one that is also the noun for writing ink (μέλας melas). In the first century, ink was made from soot and consisted (when dry) of nearly pure carbon. Unlike other words for *black*, this one has no connotations of doom or despairing hopelessness. [As an aside, it is interesting to note that during the period corresponding to this church period of Pergamum, in the 4th and 5th centuries, the art of manuscript preservation, often using a “scriptorium” began in earnest.]

John depicts the rider on the black horse as holding a pair of scales (ζυγός zugos = yoke). The word literally implies a beam pivoted at its centre and loaded at each end and in all other instances in the New Testament (eg Matt 11:29, 30, Acts 15:10, Gal 5:1, 1 Tim 6:1) is used to describe a yoke for horses or oxen; here it describes a beam balance.

Many commentators have yielded to the temptation to interpret these scales through the western (Latin) association of this symbol with judgement. However, the text itself reveals the purpose of the scales – it is to accurately measure out the grain and food at exorbitant prices. The more scarce (and expensive) the commodity, the more precisely it must be measured. Therefore, the issue here is not

the meaning of the symbol of scales, but the meaning of wheat, barley, oil, and wine, and a famine thereof.

There is a reference to doling out food by weight in Lev 26:26 which sets the scene in the context of punishment (or consequences?) for disobedience. Thus, while the seals depict the history of the saints, these saints are not sinlessly perfect. However, the reference in Leviticus is to bread, not the raw grain, so this allusion should be used with caution.

Oil and wine are symbols of the Holy Spirit (Matt 25:3, 4, 8, Mark 6:13, Luke 7:46, 10:34, 16:16, Heb 1:9, James 5:14, etc) and His work in the Christian life of regeneration or healing. While the saints are imperfect and erring, the Holy Spirit is both perfect and freely available.

Grain (wheat and barley) is used as a consistent symbol of the saints (Matt 3:12, 13:25-30, Mark 4:28, Luke 3:17, 22:31, John 12:24, 1 Cor 15:37). Thus, we have here a picture of saints as a scarce, tradeable commodity (as in Rev 18:13).

Taking these symbols together, we have a picture of the true church (composed of saints) becoming rare and expensive. During the 4th and 5th centuries people became true Christians only rarely – the state church of compromise was being established (see comments on Pergamum) and because it was fashionable to be a Christian, few were genuine and most compromised. Bishops and governors met and traded ideas and populations like pieces on a chess board.

However, for the true followers of Jesus, the Holy Spirit (oil and wine) was unquenched – He remains as active then as now: without Him, the Christian cannot breathe the atmosphere of heaven.

This problem of accepted, conventionalised faith and religion, is always a problem to those who attempt to be genuine and thus contains a veiled warning to Jesus’ disciples even today.

4th Seal – Green Horse

The colour of this horse is debatable: the Greek word is χλωρός chloros, which everywhere else (Rev 8:7, 9:4, Mark 6:39) depicts the colour of grass and the fate of the righteous (when used symbolically). Thus, the righteous are depicted as something that people walk upon and trample. The rider on the fourth horse was named death and the grave followed close behind. He was also given power to kill with sword famine and plague.

This became almost literally true during the long night of the dark ages (6th to 16th centuries). To be involved with the true church was death and the grave followed wherever its missionaries ventured. People were tortured, beheaded, torn apart by wild beasts and generally hounded underground. Thus, the true church survived in caves and grottos – the light of truth was almost extinguished, except for the brave witness of Waldensies, Albigensies, Huguenots, and some North African groups who risked their lives to preserve the Scriptures.

Widespread persecution is socially, politically and ultimately economically expensive. Thus, the concerted attempts by the state church to extinguish its

opposition caused widespread economic depression and famine. Simple societal infrastructure that we take for granted in civilised times were non-existent in many places which often caused great hardship.

Here is a valuable lesson of history that too few modern repressive governments have still not learned – religious tolerance and freedom is a formula for wealth and prosperity. Even a casual examination of history suggests that while many famines are caused by natural variations in local weather, their effects are readily mitigated by healthy societies and exacerbated by repressive regimes. Some historians have concluded that regardless of what one thinks about the correctness of the true religion of Jesus and its toleration, it is an excellent formula for national prosperity. [Modern secular humanism has made a partially successful attempt to claim the credit for this moral ground.]

The religion of Jesus demands personal integrity of its adherents: it is a truism that a society cannot rise any higher than the level of its populace. The appalling experiment of repression perpetrated by the state medieval church is a salutary lesson – religious tolerance is too expensive for any person or society to afford.

5th Seal – Souls Under the Altar

The fifth seal depicts an almost bizarre scene of souls under the altar calling out to God and asking “how long?” Again, we must read these literary pictures symbolically. The souls of the dead are unconscious as if asleep (Job 14:2, 21, Ps 6:5, 13:3, 88:10, 90:5, 115:17, John 11:13, 14, Eccl 9:5, 6, 10, etc.), so what is meant by being under the altar; and which altar is implied?

The altar alluded to here can only be the altar of burnt offering in the Old Testament system, for only it ever has anything under it (Ex 27:5, 29:12, 38:4, Lev 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34, 5:9, 8:15, 9:9, etc.) The souls of the martyrs then ask God, “How long ... are you not judging?” To the watching universe, it must have appeared at times as though their witness had been wasted. How long will God wait until their sacrifice is avenged (or justified) in the eyes of the wicked of the earth?

During the extended period of domination by a state church, the persecuted followers of Jesus must have often groaned in agony. Thus it was under the 5th seal that the saints ask, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?” It is almost the same cry as in Ps 94:3, “How long will the wicked, O LORD, how long will the wicked be jubilant?” Imagine their predicament – they try to do the right thing, serve Jesus faithfully and the wicked appear to always triumph. Asaph asked a similar question, “For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” (Ps 73:3)

While faithful saints have faced similar problems at all times, historically this came to a head during the 17th and 18th centuries – the truth of God became difficult to maintain in the absence of hard experimental evidence, or so it seemed. Thus, many were tempted to cry out, “Is it really true?” Jesus replies, “wait a little longer. Your white robe is ready. The problem is not yet fully solved.” (Rev 6:11)

The word “avenge” (v 10) only occurs in one other place (Rev 19:2) where the question of Rev 6:10 is answered – God will avenge and justify the sacrifice of the martyrs. The divine vengeance celebrated in Rev 19:2 is anticipated under the sixth seal.

Before proceeding further, we should note another valid way to understand these seven seals. As will be seen shortly, the sixth seal depicts events immediately prior to the Second Advent. The fifth seal has the cry of the martyrs following their persecution. Historically, the persecution of the saints (particularly martyrdom) of saints ended in Europe about 1750, but has continued in other places ever since (eg, during the Soviet Union, South America, China and many more). As noted above, this suggests that it is possible to understand the first five (at least) seals as contemporary.

With this understanding, we observe that the Old Testament precedents for the four horsemen (Zech 1 and 6) depict simultaneous messengers to the whole earth, each going to one of the four compass directions. There is nothing to preclude this possibility in Revelation: rather, the reference in Rev 6:8 to having authority over one quarter of the earth, tends to support this view.

Thus, it is possible to understand the seals as depicting the progress of the Gospel and its various stages as it develops in any region. The fifth seal is the cry of the martyrs of all ages for vengeance and justice.

6th Seal – Wicked and Righteous

The sixth seal begins a pattern common to five (2nd to 6th) sections of Revelation – the sixth part depicts the fate of two classes of people, the righteous and wicked. The sixth seal describes the fate of the wicked in Rev 6:12-17, while the fate of the righteous is described in Rev 7:1-17. This is the culmination of the seals – the sealing process of Jesus via His Holy Spirit on all people – those who reject the Gospel become wicked and those who accept are counted righteous.

Wicked: Rev 6:12-17 describes a most heart rending scene in which the wicked finally realise their folly, their guilt, their hopelessness, and so cannot stand in the presence of the Lamb and God. They want to kill themselves immediately. That is, the wicked wish to exterminate themselves and Rev 20:5, 9, describes God granting their wish.

Thus, sin has within it the seeds of its own destruction. God is not arbitrary – He does not destroy the wicked for only the purpose of purifying the universe (although this is obviously important): He destroys the wicked out of love and mercy for themselves. Heaven would be hell for the wicked – they want no part with God. This is a sobering thought: everyone chooses whether they go to heaven or a destructive hell themselves! God’s judgement confirms what each person wants. Only those who would be comfortable in heaven will be there.

The wicked would have no-one to oppress, no appetite to overindulge. The primary pleasure of heaven will be the presence of our Saviour, whose presence the wicked cannot abide.

Righteous: Rev 7:1-17 begins with a strange scene of four angels holding back the winds long enough to complete the sealing of the saints. No judgements will fall on anyone until this sealing process is complete. Thus, the presence of the righteous has often (temporarily) saved the wicked – a situation reminiscent of Abraham pleading for Sodom (Gen 18).

The seal of God consists of writing the name of God on the foreheads of saints (Rev 7:3, 14:1) and suggests that they have the mind of God and know Him (Heb 8:10-11, Jer 31:31-34).

Again, some have tried to make this passage too literal – the saints will consist of Jews only who rule the earth (or some variant of this theme). However, as noted earlier, the language is far too symbolic for this. Further, we have one of John's literary trademarks here: "I heard ... I saw" (Rev 7:4, 9) in which are described two opposites depicting the same thing: he hears a numbered group of one nationality, but sees an unnumbered multitude from all nations. These saved sing anthems to celebrate their salvation, hold victory palms and wear white robes of Christ's righteousness (Rev 7:9, 14, 19:8).

Thus, saints take great pleasure in serving God in His temple (Rev 7:15 His church on earth, 1 Cor 3:16, 17), they are part of God's kingdom, they do not hunger

or thirst (Matt 5:6), the Sun of Righteousness does not beat on them, they are not sad.

The great pleasure of the saved is to serve God and do His bidding – heaven will be unfit for any other kind of person than the saved. Only those who can enjoy the pleasures of heaven on earth will be saints in heaven. We must be seated, already, in heavenly places (Eph 2:6).

7th Seal – Silence

The reference to half an hour of silence is as tantalizing as it is enigmatic. Since this depicts future events we must proceed with great caution. Recognising the chiasmic structure of so many parts of Revelation, one should presumably understand this passage in the context of the scroll with writing on both sides described in the introductory vision to the seals. Some have suggested that this is the will (and testament) of God to the saints and/or Jesus – a view consistent with that enunciated earlier.

Whatever the seventh seal's enigmatic intent, I assume it records the peaceful pleasure of the faithful saints enjoying the company of their Saviour in person, at last! The sealing process is complete (for the righteous) who now reflect the character of their Lord and Master (1 Cor 3:18, 1 John 3:2). The forgiven saints have become the transformed saints, sealed by the Holy Spirit, and are victorious.

The Seven Trumpets

Rev 8:2 – 11:18

Introduction

The introductory vision to the seven trumpets in Rev 8:2-6, as for all other introductory visions, shows a striking chiasm:

A: 7 angels before God are given 7 trumpets

B: another angel at the altar with golden censer

C: incense with the prayers of the saints

D: all on the golden altar before the throne

C: incense with the prayers of the saints

B: angel with censer & altar fire: casts it to earth: thunders, noises, lightning & earthquake

A: 7 angels with 7 trumpets prepare to trumpet

The scene here described is reminiscent of Jesus' work in the (heavenly) sanctuary toward the end of the daily ministration, which involved the golden altar. The daily rite finished when the priest threw the censer on the temple pavement with a clatter. In this description, it causes thunder, noises, rumblings, lightning flashes, and an earthquake. In all cases, the earthquake is a symbol or instrument of God's judgement on the wicked at or just before the Second Advent. In the rest of Scripture, earthquakes are associated with God's presence (Judg 5:5, Ps 77:18, Nah 1:5, Matt 27:54, 28:2, Acts 16:26) most often His anger (2 Sam 22:8, Job 26:11, Ps 18:7, Isa 29:6, Eze 38:18, 19, Zech 14:5) and instruments of His judgement at the end of time (Matt 24:7, Mark 13:8, Luke 21:11). This scene also suggests something concerning the end of probation; we will see that this occurs under the seventh trumpet.

In *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus*, the trumpets are shown to be the history of the wicked during the Christian era because (1) they largely affect the wicked "inhabitants of the earth", 8:13, 9:4 (those who do not have the seal of God), especially in the later trumpets, (2) occur as a result of the devil leading forces against the wicked! 8:9, 12, 9:1, 11, especially in the 5th trumpet, and, (3) are sent (allowed?) by God as partial (one third) punishments in an attempt to have the wicked repent, 9:20. (4) the last three are woes, which elsewhere are invariably pronounced on the doomed.

. Further, the order of their objects, Earth, Sea, Springs of water, Sun moon & stars, Darkness (no light), Waters (Euphrates), Voices in Heaven, is the reverse order of creation, suggesting the undoing of creation, or destruction. These same wicked are condemned for destroying the earth (Rev 11:18).

Further, on the basis of the paradigm of the repetitive prophetic system of Daniel, the trumpets are broadly parallel to the historical sequence of the seven seals and seven churches.

The First Four Trumpets

Thus the first trumpet would represent the wicked in the first century. The tree [δενδρον dendron] 7:1, 3, 8:7, 9:4, is a symbol of people generally, and righteous people particularly and their character (Matt 7:17, 18, 12:33, Luke 6:43, 44, 13:19, etc). The passage gives the suggestion of the trees (righteous) suffering "collateral" damage. The grass [χορτος chortos] in 8:7, and especially the reference in 9:4 make it clear that grass is a symbol of people and possibly righteous people. Green [χλωρος chloros] (6:8, 8:7, 9:4) also occurs in Mk 6:39. All these refer to the colour of grass except (possibly) 6:8. In the Septuagint grass is used similarly and in conjunction with green vegetation. During the first century AD, there was some persecution of the righteous (among others), which resulted from the growing civil stability of Rome; Christians and others were used as scapegoats.

The second trumpet is easier to understand. There are only a few other places which refer to burning mountains, Heb 12:18, Ex 19:18, 24:17, Deut 4:11, 5:4, 22, 23. All these are connected with the giving of the Law on Sinai. Thus the mountain being thrown into the sea must be connected with the overthrow of God's law and/or the loss of the great pacifying element of society - the rule of law. That this was the case in the second and third centuries is a simple matter of history. As God's law fell into greater disrepute (among civil powers) lawlessness increased and societal order collapsed with it. The strength of civil governments and the Roman Empire in particular had been its principle of the "Rule of Law". As respect for God's law fell so did the principle of the rule of law, which produced growing anarchy. Many, particularly in the church lost their lives. International trade slowed (ships destroyed etc). Thus we see that the success of society is related to its regard for God's law and its implementation.

The third trumpet begins with a great star falling from the sky to earth. In Revelation, stars are always a symbol of angels or messengers (Rev 1:20), and, the only other reference to angels falling from heaven to earth (like a torch) is Isa 14:12 and Luke 10:18. This suggests that this star is Satan himself. The rivers and springs of waters, when used figuratively, refer to the refreshing source of divine truth and teaching (Isa 49:10, John 4:14). Bitter, poisoned water is used as a symbol of ungodliness and a lack of spirituality, and God's judgement of wicked people as a

result, Jer 9:15, 23:15. This trumpet represents a continuing series portraying a declining spirituality in the world and a growing wickedness. Civil commotion naturally results. The wickedness has now progressed (during the 5th and 6th centuries) to the point where Satan has a more direct control over world affairs.

The fourth trumpet is reminiscent of Eze 32:7, 8. In the OT, the sun moon & stars are invariably used in association with worship: eg, in a warning not to bow down to them (Gen 37:9, Deut 4:19, 17:3, 2 Ki 23:5); a warning that their light would be stopped (Eccl 12:2, Jer 8:2, Eze 32:7, Joel 2:10, 3:15, Matt 24:29, Mark 13:24, 25, Luke 21:25); as a symbol of God's creative power (Ps 136:8, 9, 148:3, Eze 31:35) and as a symbol of the church - a beautiful woman (SS 6:10). That the sun moon and stars are partially darkened suggests a time of moral and intellectual declension - the dark ages of the medieval period (7th to 15th cent.). This symbolism is replete with striking allusions to the dark ages - lead by the church (SS 6:10) a denial of God's creative power and the issue of worship generally. It was only people educated outside Europe that eventually began the process to terminate the near monopolistic hold that the Roman Catholic Church exerted on people's thinking. The period following was a reaction against the church.

The Last Three Trumpets – Three Woes

The last three trumpets are called three woes (Rev 8:13, 9:12, 11:14). This word “woe” occurs 14 times in Revelation – seven times in each half: those in the first half all refer to the last three trumpets. In the remainder of the Bible, “woe” invariably refers to leaders and teachers who lead others astray (Isa 5:18-20, Jer 23:1, Eze 13:3, 34:2, Zech 11:17, Matt 23:13-37, etc. See also 1 Cor 9:16). For hermeneutic consistency, we assume that this is the case in Revelation also.

Further, the woes are pronounced against “the inhabitants of the earth” (Rev 8:13) – a technical term for the wicked. Thus, the wicked in the last three trumpets are those who are leaders who had been called to preach and have refused and turned to other things.

The Fifth Trumpet – 1st Woe

Following the general historical method, this 5th trumpet should occur in the years after the medieval period. The time after the medieval period was a two-fold reaction by different groups of people, feeding on each other, to intellectual declension: the reformation (in the church) and the renaissance. Both served to invigorate the world and almost destroyed the state Church.]

The text of Rev 9:1-11 is presented in a striking chiasm and describes the wicked people, symbolised by locusts:

A: The Star (Angel) of the Abyss (Satan) 9:1, 2

B: Locusts have stings Like Scorpions, Torment unsealed 5 Months 9:3-6

C: Locusts like Horses in Battle 9:7a

D: Armour of Locusts like gold crowns 9:7b

E: Description of Locusts 9:7c, 8

(Human, woman's hair and lion's teeth)

D: Armour of Locusts like breastplates of iron 9:9a

C: Locusts like Horses in Battle 9:9b

B: Stings Like Scorpions, Torment 5 Months 9:10

A: The Angel (Star) of the Abyss (Satan) 9:11

First, the apparently human appearance suggests a significant societal or political movement, which had a fierce aspect like lion's teeth. This aspect of the mouth also suggests some new(ish) doctrine.

The armour only has the appearance of (“was like”) gold crowns and iron breastplates. The Greek preposition here (ὡς hos = something like) occurs frequently in Revelation and often introduces a counterfeit. In all cases except 9:7, the *στέφανος* stephanos = crown, is worn by the righteous as a symbol of victory in the Christian life (see 1 Cor 9:25, 2 Tim 2:5, 4:8). Thus, the apparently gold crowns appear to be a symbol of a counterfeit (or feigned) victory. The iron breastplate, similarly, is used as a symbol of righteousness (Eph 6:14, Isa 59:17) and its fruit of faith and love (1 Thess 5:8). In the 5th trumpet it acts as a symbol of a counterfeit righteousness of the locust army.

This locust army is a regular symbol in the Old Testament (Jer 51:14, 27, Isa 33:1, 4, Ex 10:1-20) for God's instrument of punishment on the wicked who had been asked to do something. This again suggests the use of the technical term “woe” as discussed above.

The horses in Revelation symbolise the power of the two opposing armies – one in the seals and the other in the trumpets. They are clearly spiritual armies fighting spiritual battles.

The scorpion sting is a symbol of the attacks of the devil (Luke 10:19), which is consistent with the identity of the locust army leader – the devil or Satan. This element gives a critical clue to understanding this trumpet: what ever this trumpet is, it can perfectly distinguish between the righteous and the wicked (sealed vs unsealed, see Rev 9:4, compare Eze 9:4, 5 where a mark on the forehead was used to distinguish the saved who would not be destroyed.). Further, the torment it induces creates the desire for death in its victims, which they endured for five months (150 years) without killing anyone. Therefore, this can be no conventional war or political movement because none has ever been so astute as to discern the saved from the unsaved.

Finally, the leader of the locust army a star (9:1), and angel of the abyss (9:11) who had fallen from heaven to earth (9:1), is already introduced in the third trumpet (8:10, 11). There can be no doubt that this destroying leader is the devil himself! As we shall soon see, he took advantage of the pent up distain for organised religion created by the medieval church, to create a new pseudo-religion.

In my opinion, the best way to understand all these specifications, consistent with the record of history is to recall the rise of atheism at the end of the 17th century. It was part of the reaction to the overbearing, monopolistic, intellectually

stultifying atmosphere created by the nominally “Christian” Medieval state church. Following its decline in influence, two movements arose – the protestant reformation and atheism.

The atheistic movement was the only one that could so perfectly distinguish between the saved and unsaved – they distinguished by self-selection. And, true to the prophecy, the atheistic movement lasted about 150 years during which time it was the dominant popular philosophy. The most famous product of the great atheistic movement was the theory of evolution enunciated by Darwin, Huxley, and Lamarck. As it died out, it gave way to a more moderate form – secular humanism, which became the dominant philosophy of government from the late 19th century onwards. [In modern times, numerous surveys show that less than 10% of people describe themselves as atheists and more than 80% of people firmly believe there is a God of some kind.]

That this attack by the devil, likened to the sting of a scorpion, tortured those who fell victim to (adopted this) philosophy, is easily demonstrated by observing the comments of some of atheism’s greatest proponents:

Robert Ingersol (1833-1899): *“Whether in mid-sea or among the breakers of the farther shore, a wreck must mark at last the end of each and all. And every life, no matter if its every hour is rich with love and jewelled with joy, will at its close, become a tragedy; as sad, and as deep, and as dark as can be woven of the warp and woof of mystery and death.... Life is a narrow vale betwixt the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond those heights. We cry aloud – the only answer is the echo to our wailing cry. From the voiceless silence of the unreplying dead comes back no sound!”* (Given at an oration at his brother’s graveside.)

Pierre Loti (Julien Viaud 1850-1923): *“Those who still bow before the feet of Christ, believe me, these are the only happy people on earth. They know nothing of the anguish of passing time, the anguish of loneliness, and the terror of the coming extinction. They go on their way calm and confident. I would give my life to possess that radiant illusion of theirs, even at the risk of becoming as infatuated as the poor lunatics in asylums, who fancy themselves among the rich and powerful of earth!”*

“In default of this faith, could we but anchor ourselves to something, some hope, some immortality – but there is nothing. Outside this ever-shining personality of Christ, everything is terror and darkness.” (Quoted in Blackwoods Magazine for March 1924.)

W. O. Saunders: *“I would have you meet one of the loneliest and most unhappy individuals on earth.... I am talking about the man who doesn’t believe in God.... I am peculiarly qualified to introduce the agnostic [atheist]. I am one myself....*

“Probably you will be surprised to know that the agnostic [atheist] envies your faith in God, your settled belief in a heaven after death, and your blessed assurance that you will meet with your loved ones in an afterlife in which there will

be neither sorrow nor pain. He would give anything to be able to embrace that faith and be comforted by it.... For him there is only the grave and the persistence of matter. All he can see beyond the grave is the disintegration of the protoplasm psychoplasm of which his body and personality are composed.... But in this material view I find no ecstasy nor happiness. Is this the end and all human life and endeavour? ... Therefore would I try to convey to your mind and heart something of the wistfulness and loneliness of the man who does not believe in God.... To him this earth is but a tricky raft adrift upon the unfathomable waters of eternity, with no horizon in sight. His heart aches for every precious life on the raft, drifting, drifting, drifting, wither no one for certain knows.” (Quoted in Blackwoods Magazine, page 23, November 1930.)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1966): *“That man is the product of causes which had no provision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are...destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievements must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.... Brief and powerless is man’s life; on him and on his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark.”* (Mysticism and Logic, page 47F, and page 561.)

“We stand upon the shore of an ocean, crying to the night and the emptiness. Sometimes a voice answers out of the darkness. But it is the voice of one drowning; and in a moment the silence returns.” (Russell’s autobiography, page 287.)

Thus, these candid admissions by erudite and educated atheists frankly admit their despair and unhappiness without a settled faith in a loving God. Most keenly felt the devil’s scorpion sting of hopelessness!

In most cases these capable atheists were raised devout Christians. Some (eg Robert Ingersol) became atheists because of the unbiblical and unchristian teaching of eternal burning in hell. It is interesting that this trumpet is called a woe, suggesting that the atheists it describes were leaders and teachers who had been asked to preach the gospel, but didn’t. Certainly, the reformation sprang up as part of the same movement that launched atheism, but the atheists’ reaction and hatred of a God painted by the medieval church poisoned their minds permanently.

Despite the apparent temporary success of this anti-religion of atheism, it was bound to give way to that under the sixth trumpet, the second woe.

The Sixth Trumpet – 2nd Woe

Just as the despair and gloom of the medieval church initiated the atheistic movement, so the despair and gloom of the atheistic movement created its successor: the modern, revived form of spiritism, the New Age Movement. However, while atheism (and its modern form, secular humanism) created education systems,

modern government, multiculturalism, and much more (and killed no one), the New Age movement is predicted to kill one third of humanity with an army of 200,000,000. Today, we observe the near universal use of the spiritualistic New Age philosophy in such things as Sheng Fui, rapidly increasing Buddhism, crystal use, popular culture, film and song.

Some might find it strange that this destroying, demonic army (see 9:20) is released and sent forth by command from the altar in the heavenly temple. That is, God dispatches an army of demons! However, in Scripture, our omnipotent, all-controlling God is often thought to cause that which He does not prevent. For example, see 1 Sam 16:14, 23 where God is recorded as sending an evil spirit on Saul. Or compare 2 Sam 24:1 where God incites David to sin, with 1 Chron 21:1, which ascribes this cause to Satan. It is my opinion that, under the sixth trumpet, God allows the accumulated evil deeds of the wicked to wreak their baleful effects on the wicked in order to demonstrate its intrinsic sinfulness.

Importantly, the destroying army is kept at the great river Euphrates, which is the life source for the great city of Babylon and represents the political base of mystical Babylon (Rev 17:15). Thus, the destroying army comes from wicked Babylon to attack the wicked! (See Rev 17:16.)

The four angels who release this army are first introduced under the sixth seal (Rev 7:1-3) as those who restrain the winds of strife. Thus, the release of the destroying army is related to the sealing process of the righteous. This is further emphasised by its timing, a precise moment described as this very hour, and day and month and year: idiomatically, this exact time. [Note that no numerical adjectives exist here, which prevents us interpreting these time periods as prophetic.]

The important feature of these horses is in their mouths and what comes out of them – their false teachings; and their tails with which they inflict injury. Again, these tails are symbolic of false prophets and their false teachings (Isa 9:15).

Unfortunately, these false teachings result in the death of one third of all human kind (9:18). From the mid 19th century onwards, the world has witnessed a series of the most horrifying wars in all history. More people have been killed in the 20th century than the rest of history's wars combined! Further, almost all these wars have been ideological in nature, rather than political or territorial. The last two verses of Rev 9 tell just why this is true – the wicked refuse to stop worshipping

their demons and idols, and refuse to stop practicing their sorcery (New Age teachings) and their fornication.

Fortunately, the righteous are again immune from these plagues (see Rev 7:1-3).

Lastly, observe that this sixth trumpet is again called a woe, suggesting that it is pronounced as a condemnation of leaders or people who had been asked to preach the good news. This is a salutary lesson to any smugness that the righteous may be tempted to indulge: “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16) said Paul. And so should we.

As with most of the sixth parts of each major section of Revelation, it is divided into two messages, one for the wicked, discussed above, and one for the righteous, which occupies Rev 10:1 – 11:13. This latter passage will be discussed in more detail in the next essay. Suffice to say here that during the rise of modern spiritism, marketed and packaged in its modern form of the New Age, God raises up a new church with its origins in apostolic times, with a special message for the last days.

Conclusion – The Seventh Trumpet

As with all of the first three septets (7 churches, 7 seals, 7 trumpets) the last always depicts something about or just before the Second Advent of Jesus. In the seventh trumpet, all heaven rejoices that Jesus has begun to reign (11:15, 16) and that the power of evil has been broken (11:17). Interestingly, Jesus specifically mentions the judgement on those who destroy the earth (11:18), presumably by the ones who had the destroying angel of the abyss as their leader (9:11). This close of probation for the wicked is anticipated under the sixth trumpet (Rev 10:6, 7).

The judgement process obviously has different outcomes for different people: For the wicked the judgement produces condemnation, while for the righteous, the judgement produces vindication (11:18). Thus, the righteous eagerly look forward to the judgement as it bring hope, while the wicked dread the judgement because it brings fear. In this vein, Daniel contains one of the great promises for God's faithful saints: “This horn was waging war against the saints and defeating them, **until** the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom.” Dan 7:21, 22. NIV.

The Remnant Church in Bible Prophecy

Rev 10:1 – 11:13

Introduction

The momentous events of the “Advent Awakening” in the 19th century sent shock waves through all established churches. This international movement initiated by the Millerites’ resulted in the “Great Disappointment” of 1844 when Jesus failed to return as predicted. What many people do not realise is that this difficult and embarrassing debacle was predicted in Rev 10:8-11. Let us examine this fascinating passage in Revelation 10 & 11, which outlines the rise, history, and message of the last-day church.

Of the two halves of Revelation (1:1 – 11:18 and 11:19 – 22:21) the first contains three prophecies spanning the entire Christian era: the seven churches, the seven seals, and the seven trumpets. These three septets begin during the apostolic era of the first century and conclude with Jesus’ Second Advent. The second half of Revelation focuses on events surrounding Jesus’ second and third advents.

Revelation 10:1 – 11:14 forms part of the sixth trumpet (which begins in Rev 9:13), thus we expect that the events depicted should occur at the end of time, that is, following the 1260 day/year period (which will be shown to conclude toward the end of the 18th century). Let us examine this passage more carefully.

The Great Disappointment

Rev 10:1, “Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars.” A comparison with Rev 1:12-16 shows that this angel is the “Son of Man”, Jesus Himself. (Compare Rev 1:1.) The fact that Jesus personally descends to deliver the message to John suggests its importance and its Christ-centeredness.

Rev 10:2, “He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand.” The Greek verb, “lay open” is more correctly rendered, “which had been opened.” In understanding this passage, we seek some book, which had, in the early 19th century, just been opened, or in the parlance of Scripture, “unsealed”. This cannot be the book of Revelation itself because it was never sealed (Rev 22:10). In fact, there is only one Biblical book ever sealed – the book of Daniel (Dan 12:9). That the book of Daniel and its prophecies were opened (began to be understood for the first time) in the early 19th century by William Miller and his international following is a matter of history. We will observe that the book of Daniel reappears more than once in this section of Revelation.

The remaining description of the angel of Rev 10:2 having a foot on land and sea suggests an international proclamation, which it was. William Miller’s message that Jesus would return in 1844 was being preached in North Africa, Europe, England, South America, and Australia.

Then, as if to confirm the identification of the little book as that of Daniel, John alludes to Dan 12:9 in Rev 10:4 by using the phrase “seal up”. John also alludes to another unique phrase to Daniel 12:7 when the angel swears by lifting his right hand to heaven (Rev 10:5).

The prophecy in Rev 10 also tells us something about what the angel’s message was about. Observe that it was a shout like a lion and like thunder. These symbols suggest a message from God and a prophetic one at that (see Amos 3:7, 8, Hos 11:10, John 12:29, Job 26:14, etc.)

Rev 10:6 introduces two elements of profound significance to the 19th century advent believers. Verse 6 alludes to the Sabbath commandment, “he...who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in them and the sea and all that is in it. There will be no more delay.” Thus, there arose a movement that believed in keeping the seventh-day Sabbath (Ex 20:8-11) and that Jesus would return at a definite time, which had just been revealed (1844).

Probably because of the certainty of their conclusions, they had missed three things: First; the very next word in the text is BUT – Jesus’ second coming would not occur under the sixth trumpet but under the seventh trumpet.

Second, they also missed (or ignored) Jesus’ specific warning against such date setting in Matt 24:36, 42, 44, etc. This should serve as a salutary warning to all who may think they are very certain about some “new light”, especially a prophetic interpretation; prophecy was given to strengthen the faith of believers after the event (John 14:29, 16:4), not to make men prophets!

Third, they missed the purpose of the message in Rev 10. In v8-10 John describes a surreal scene in which the angel instructs him to eat the little book (of Daniel). It would taste as sweet as honey in the mouth. This alludes to Eze 2:9 – 3:3, a passage about the inauguration of Ezekiel’s prophetic calling (Eze 2:1 – 3:27). But John adds that while the prophetic message of Daniel was sweet as honey in the mouth, it would turn his stomach bitter. Thus is prefigured the great (and very bitter) disappointment which the Millerites endured when Jesus did not return in 1844.

However, John’s message contains a simple instruction for these people, which was implemented [without date-setting] by a tiny minority of the Millerites,

“You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, languages and kings.” (Rev 10:11) The smallest group to arise from the Millerites, that which later developed into the remnant Church, was the only group to do this when Hiram Edson, on the morning after the Great Disappointment, realised that the time element of the 2300 days was correct, but that the event was wrong – instead of Jesus’ return, a change in His high priestly ministry had been prophesied. The pre-advent judgement in the heavenly temple had begun! (See appendix on the Great Controversy and Judgement.) Over the next 100 years, the other familiar and distinctive evangelical doctrines were developed and adopted.

Many abandoned their faith; many protestant groups immediately began making plans to amalgamate in some way. Thus, in 1846 the Evangelical Alliance was formed from more than 50 denominations in Britain and North America. Other such conferences and alliances were also created.

As the small remnant church developed, it was told to “prophesy again”. In Rev 11:1-6 we are told just what that prophetic message was to include.

The Prophetic Message

Rev 11:1 begins, “I was given a reed like a measuring rod to measure the temple and its worshippers.” The act of measuring is a consistent Scriptural symbol of judgement (see Eze 40:1-3, Matt 7:2, Mark 4:24, Luke 6:37, 38, 2 Cor 10:12); and here we have a scene of judgement associated with the temple. Because the Jerusalem temple had been destroyed and never rebuilt, John had some other temple in view. What might this other temple(s) be – there are several possibilities:

- The word *temple* can refer to the temple in heaven (Rev 14:15, 17, 15:5, 6, 8 etc)
- *Temple* can also symbolise the church as a body of believers (1 Cor 3:16, 17, 2 Cor 6:16, Eph 2:21, 1 Thess 2:4, see also 1 Pet 2:5)
- Jesus used the *temple* as a symbol of His human and resurrected body (Matt 26:61, 27:40, Mark 14:58, 15:29, John 2:19-22)
- Paul used the *temple* as a symbol of our physical bodies (1 Cor 6:19, 20).

In my opinion, it is unnecessary to choose between these various options because, by the principle of the economy of prophecy, they are all intended. If this is true, then Revelation tells us that the church, a body of believers arising from the great disappointment, would hold teachings about the judgement associated with the heavenly sanctuary, the literal resurrected body of Jesus (as distinct from Gnostic views), and another doctrine related to our personal bodies, which is obviously the wholistic health message. But, according to John, there was much more.

In Rev 11:2, John anticipates the prophecy of the 42 months (in Rev 13:5), the active period of the antichrist during medieval times. Then for further emphasis, John repeats this same prophetic period as 1260 days, which anticipates Rev 12:6, 16 (compare Dan 7:25, 12:7). Thus, the church that survives the great

disappointment was to be active in proclaiming the time prophecies of Daniel, particularly those associated with the Daniel’s little horn. But there is more!

In Rev 11:3, 4, John calls this distinctive church, two witnesses, two lampstands (compare Rev 1:20 where lampstands are a symbol of churches), two olive trees (an allusion to Zech 4:3-12. Rom 11:17, 24 and Jam 3:12 use this passage in referring to the church) and in v10, two prophets. This prophetic role occurs a number of times in this passage as listed below:

- Rev 10:8-10 – describes the surreal scene of John eating the little book and it tasting sweet. This is a strong allusion to Eze 2:8-3:3 which inaugurated the prophetic ministry of Ezekiel.
- Rev 10:11 – prophesy again, suggesting that there was a previous prophesying
- Rev 11:3 – witnesses prophesy in sackcloth
- Rev 11:4 – fire comes from their mouths: Fire is a scriptural symbol of the presence of God via His Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:3, 7:70, Heb 1:7, 12:18, 29), while the mouth is a consistent symbol of words of teaching (Matt 4:4, 5:2, 12:34, 35, 15:11, 17, 18, 21:16, Luke 1:64, 70, 4:22 etc.). Thus, fire from the mouths of the two prophets suggests that they would prophesy.
- Rev 11:6 – two witnesses shut up the sky while they prophesy
- Rev 11:10 – two witnesses are two prophets: Their description alludes to Moses (who struck the earth with plague of blood) and Elijah (who stopped the rain for 3½ years and called fire from heaven). These Bible prophets were the great reforming leader-prophets who re-established truth in a time when it had been lost. Even today, we still refer to such a work as an “Elijah Message”. (See Mal 4:5, 6.)

Thus, the end-time true church would be a prophetic church, that is, possess the gift of prophecy as one of its distinguishing features. Interestingly, this idea is repeated in other passages in Revelation on the end-time church where it is called the Testimony of Jesus (Rev 1:1-3, 12:17, 14:12, 19:10).

Summary

Let us list the characteristics of this end-time church as listed in this passage of Rev 10, 11:

- It would be born out of the great disappointment of 1844
- It would possess the gift of prophecy
- It would teach the great time prophecies of Daniel
- It would teach the prophecies of Revelation including the identity of the antichrist
- It would teach the Bible Sabbath and the importance of the Law
- It would teach divine fiat creation in seven literal days
- It would teach a final judgement message and the day of atonement, sometimes called the “Elijah Message”

- It would teach about the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus, that is, it would have a Christ centred message (see 1 Cor 15:12-20)
- It would teach the truth about the heavenly sanctuary/temple
- It would teach a whole health message about our body temples
- It would be a Holy Spirit empowered church
- It would teach the nearness of Jesus' return
- It would be a reforming church to restore lost truth

This list does not include more characteristics listed in other places such as Rev 7:1-17, 12:17, 14:1-12, etc. (We do not have time or space to examine these passages here.) Taken together, they give a fairly complete picture of the end-time remnant church.

Now, in my reckoning, there is not any one church or group that teaches all this truth, and has a fully international influence. Nor are there any such eclectic people who have the attention of all on earth and earn their disgust. There are many places where the name of Jesus has never been heard: about one third of the earth has not been touched by the Christian message of God's true church. However, there is Christian growth within and without established churches which, taken together, could, at some future time, be described as the remnant church.

Destiny of the Two Prophets

If this interpretation of the prophecy of the two witnesses/prophets has been correct thus far, then the passage in Rev 11:7-13 is still future (as indicated by the Greek verb tenses). Therefore, we will exercise extreme caution and refrain from a complete interpretation. However, some of the characters can be identified. Note

that the two witnesses are called two prophets (11:10); and at the end of time these two (true) prophets form a counterpoint to the false prophet of Rev 13:11-17 (which is also couched in present/future tense).

The beast from the abyss has been introduced earlier in the trumpets as the star that fell from heaven (8:10, 11) to the abyss and rose from it (9:1, 2, 12). The same beast from the abyss reappears in 17:18 and is ultimately thrown back into the abyss (20:1-3). This beast is the devil or Satan who often operates through civil authorities and governments.

Sodom and Egypt (11:8) are difficult symbols to interpret. However, they are only synonyms for "the great city", which, everywhere else in Revelation refers to Babylon (16:9, 17:18, 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21). Thus, it appears that when the two witnesses have completed their work, the devil attacks the remnant church and it appears to collapse and rise again 3½ days (years?) later.

As shown earlier, these two witnesses/prophets appear to allude to Moses and Elijah, who as prophets are often associated (Mal 4:4-6). Elijah was the second Moses (Deut 18:15, 18) whose task was turn the hearts of the people back to God and His commandments (Law). As is well known, Elijah accomplished this task by arranging a contest of the gods – the true god is the one who answers by fire (1 Kings 18:24). In this scenario in Revelation 11, the outcome is equally certain: the hostile trial jury will eventually "give glory to God". This phrase is a technical legal phrase used in Jewish trial as a solemn oath to tell the truth (Josh 17:19, Jer 13:16, John 9:24). Thus, the truth about God will be confessed even by the wicked.

While I believe this by faith, we must await it's outworking to understand its meaning and significance.

Cosmic Conflict

Rev 11:19 – 15:4

The introductory sanctuary scene for this central section of Revelation simply displays the Ark of the Covenant. Thus, we enter the second half of the book of Revelation. It is in the second half that the concept of judgement is mentioned most often. While in the first half judgement is only anticipated. With the first mention of the only piece of furniture in the Most Holy Place, the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) is clearly in the mind of John. Again, this Day of Atonement was associated with judgement by Jews on the basis of Lev 16.

The concept of Judgement as understood in the Bible is profoundly different from our modern adversarial system. The ancient Jewish jurisprudence was closer to the Napoleonic inquisitorial system where the Judge controlled proceedings and led the inquiry.

Rev 12 gives a very useful overview of the history of the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan – Satan challenged God's authority causing celestial doubts, which had to be resolved in an open and transparent manner. See appendix 1 for a longer discussion of this fascinating issue.

This section of Revelation is distinguished by several literary devices, one of which has confused many interpreters: the action involving the saints appears to be always in heaven:

- The woman (the true church) appears in heaven (Rev 12:1)
- The saints follow the Lamb and sing before the throne (Rev 14:3)
- The three angels (messengers of truth) fly in mid-heaven (Rev 14:6)
- Jesus harvests the saints from a cloud (Rev 14:14)
- Jesus' army dressed in fine linen are heavenly armies (Rev 19:14)

The key to understanding this is given in Eph 2:6 where Paul describes the saints as seated in heavenly realms. This emphasises the Christian tension of having a citizenship in heaven (and living as such) but actually living in a sinful world. It is the classic now and not yet tension.

Lastly, this second half of Revelation has a new focus, it emphasises end-time events and traces the destiny of institutions (the beast trinity) rather than individuals (in contrast to the first half of Revelation.) The key (or pivotal) verse in this section is Rev 12:17 – the table below sets out the tenses in this section.

Dragon:	Rev 12:1-17a	Aorist	Rev 12:17b	Present
Sea beast	Rev 13:1-7	Aorist	Rev 13:8-10	Future
Land Beast	Rev 13:11	Aorist	Rev 13:12-17	Future
144,000	Rev 14:1-2	Aorist	Rev 14:3-5	Present

3 Angels		Rev 14:6-12	Present
Judgement	Rev 14:14-20	Aorist imperative (this means present)	
Sea of Glass		Rev 15:1-4	Present

Aorist verbs are almost always translated by a past tense. Thus, it is possible to deduce a chronological order to the events described: All the events are described in this section as viewed from a point in time after the 1260 days.

General Outline of Section on Cosmic Conflict

1. Michael battles the Dragon who persecutes the Woman (Rev 12:1-17)
2. Sea Beast wars with the saints (Rev 13:1-10)
3. Land Beast wars with the saints & deceives the wicked (Rev 13:11-18)
4. The Lamb followed by the 144,000 (Rev 14:1-5)
5. The 3 angel's messages (Rev 14:6-12)
6. The two harvests of the earth
 - * harvest of the righteous grain (Rev 14:13-16)
 - * gathering the wicked grapes (Rev 14:17-20)
7. Destiny of the saints (Rev 15:1-4)

It should now be apparent why this section is so named – it deals with cosmic wars. Further, each section on the beast trinity appears to be constructed with a similar literary form:

- * Introduction and description of beast and related characters
- * Overview of history
- * Detailed history
- * Message to the faithful

1. The Dragon and the Woman

Rev 12:1, 3 describes the woman and the great red dragon as great signs that appear in heaven. These characters are depicted as battling each other. Let us examine the symbols used so that the text can be understood.

On the basis of Eze 16, Isa 62:5, and many other such references, the woman represents a church. The fact that she is described in the terms used and so contrasts with the wicked, impure woman of Rev 17 suggests that the woman of Rev 12 represents the true Christian church founded by Jesus.

This pure woman is clothed with the sun. Comparison with Ps 37:6, Matt 13:43 and Mal 4:2 all suggest that the sun is a symbol of the righteous of Christ (which heals), a fitting robe for the true church.

The moon under the woman's feet is a fascinating allusion to Ps 89:34-37, where the moon is used as a symbol of the Word of God. Thus, the woman is depicted as standing on the Word of God. Again, this is most appropriate for God's true church.

The crown of 12 stars introduces a symbol often used in Revelation. It is explicitly interpreted in Rev 1:20 as representing angels (ie, messengers). However, is there a more specific application alluded to here? Possibly Dan 12:3 and Phil 2:15, 16 may be in John's mind suggesting that the stars here could represent the messenger-leaders of this true church, that is, its apostles (missionaries to use a more modern term). This suggests that the focus of the true church is its desire to reach others with the truth of God's Word.

The fact that the Woman appears as a sign in heaven has confused some interpreters. However, Paul tells us that this is most appropriate. In Eph 2:6 the true church is described as being seated in heavenly realms (by faith). That is, we have the assurance of salvation in the here and now.

Now to the dragon: Revelation is the only book of the Christian canon to have a dragon. However, the Septuagint includes a non-canonical book called *Bel and the Dragon* (an ancient fairy tale which casts Daniel as a detective). Fortunately, it is unnecessary for us to know much about this work because the text of Rev 12 interprets this symbol explicitly: the dragon represented the devil or Satan (Rev 12:9). The word "dragon" appears 13 times in Revelation and always in the second half. However, there are several references to the devil in the first half under different symbols (Rev 8:10, 9:1, 11 – a star). Isa 14:12-15 provides useful background on Satan's origin, which concurs with the history in Rev 12: Satan came from heaven but was confined to earth after his fall.

As shown above, stars represent angels (Rev 1:20). Therefore, Satan's fall resulted in the departure of one third of the angels of heaven (Rev 12:4, 9). Further, it was Satan's tail that drew the angels of heaven with him – Isa 9:15 states that the tail is a Scriptural symbol of false prophets and their teachings. Thus, Rev depicts Satan as drawing one third of the angels of heaven with him in his rebellion by his false teaching and subterfuge. (Of the angels who remained loyal to God, some presumably had questions about what had happened. These will be resolved in the pre-advent judgement – see appendix 1 on the Great Controversy.)

The child with the iron scepter (literally, rod) is a clear allusion to Ps 2:2, 8, 9, Isa 9:6. These all refer to Jesus Christ (Messiah). Jesus was born of the virgin Mary during the Roman occupation of Israel, and Satan who persecuted the church using Roman civil authority as his instrument. Thus, while the dragon primarily represented Satan, it is often secular civil authorities that do his bidding.

The wonderful news is that while Satan appeared to have a temporary victory when he killed Jesus, Jesus rose from the dead and thus provides the hope of our

salvation (1 Cor 15:12-20). He now sits at the right hand of the throne of God (Rev 5, 12:5, Heb 8:1, 12:2, etc). He is our high priest in heaven (Heb 4:14, 15). Jesus, our Savior is forever beyond the reach of satanic forces and our salvation is assured.

The 1260 Days: Before analyzing this interesting time period, let us place it in context by noticing a number of points. First, the word *day* (Gr: *ἡμέρα* hemera) occurs 21 times in Revelation; of these, it occurs six times with a numerical adjective. These are distributed with a chiastic structure in Revelation:

- 2:10 A: 10 days persecution of church of Smyrna
- 11:3 B: 1260 days 2 witnesses wear sackcloth
- 11:9 C: 3½ days 2 witnesses lie dead (enemies gloat)
- 11:11 C: 3½ days later 2 witnesses resurrected
- 12:6 B: 1260 days dragon persecutes woman
- 18:8 A: One day 7 plagues come on Babylon

Second, a prophetic period of 1260 days, 42 months, 3½ years occurs seven times in the Bible and five times in Revelation as follows:

- Dan 7:25 3½ years little horn persecutes saints
- Dan 12:7 End of 3½ years marks the beginning of time of the end.
- Rev 11:2 42 months gentiles trample holy city
- Rev 11:3 1260 days 2 witnesses wear sackcloth
- Rev 12:6 1260 days woman flees to the desert from persecuting dragon
- Rev 12:14 3½ years woman flees from dragon in desert
- Rev 13:5 42 months beast blasphemes and exercises authority

These periods are clearly all the same piece of prophetic time when the saints (pure woman, true church) are persecuted by the devil via his secular civil authorities, and corrupt religious institutions.

Third, notice that in prophetic time, a year consists of 12 month of 30 days.

Thus, if we wish to understand this 1260 day (year) prophetic period, we seek a time in history when the true church was persecuted by both civil and religious authorities. Fortunately such a period is easily identified. From about 6th to 18th centuries, the Devil hounded and persecuted the true church by using secular civil governments (often prompted by the Medieval church) to suppress the truth. This policy only made the saints more determined and the true church miraculously survived. [See the next section on the sea beast of Revelation for a longer discussion about the 1260 day prophecy.]

Thus, the dragon persecuted the woman, but the woman was given the wings of an eagle to flee into the desert (Rev 12:14). During the medieval period, the true church often lived in caves and remote places to escape persecution. Witness the Waldenses, Hugenots, Albigenses, and Ethiopians who became adept at living in very unusual circumstances (and places) to preserve their faith from attacks of the dragon.

The reference to eagles' wings is very significant as it alludes to Ex 19:4 where, the Old Testament church was called out of Egypt into the desert (or

wilderness) to keep it safe from corruption. At the beginning of the Medieval period, the true church was called out of Spiritual Egypt into the spiritual wilderness to keep it safe from corruption.

The dragon also spewed a river out of its mouth to drown the woman (Rev 12:15). History tells us that this took two forms: countless heresies (philosophies) and crazed mobs were sent against the church simply because they wished to worship as Jesus had instructed. Again the earth helped the woman by swallowing the river. Thus, after several attempts, the dragon fails dismally to destroy the true church.

Having so spectacularly failed, the dragon adopts a new plan. Rev 12:17 describes his new tactic – he goes away (!) and calls up two new monsters to help in the war against the church. He stands on the shore of the sea and calls up the sea beast and the land beast. The true church is here distinguished by two outstanding characteristics – it keeps the commandments of God and has the testimony of Jesus.

2. The Sea Beast Rev 13:1b-10

The first monster, from the sea, called up by the dragon is a beast very similar to the dragon himself: both have seven heads, both have 10 horns. However, the beast has 10 crowns on his horns while the dragon has seven crowns on his heads. Further, the sea beast derives its authority from the dragon and receives the dragon's throne. Rev 13:2 goes on to describe the sea beast's leopard-like body, its feet like that of a bear, and the mouth like that of a lion. These rapacious animals are reminiscent of those in Dan 7 but in reverse order as though John is looking backward in history (the number of heads and horns are the same giving a strong structural parallel).

Let us examine the literary structure of Rev 13:1-10:

Description of the Sea Beast

13:1b-3a Sea beast resembles the Dragon

Activity of the Sea Beast:

13:3b A: Whole earth astonished and wondered after the sea beast

13:4a B: People worship dragon - authority given to sea beast

13:4b C: People worship sea beast - who can war against him?

13:5a D: Sea beast given mouth to speak blasphemies

13:5b E: Sea beast exercises authority for 42 months

13:6 D: Sea beast blasphemes God

13:7a C: Sea beast makes war on saints and conquers them

13:7b B: Sea beast given great authority

13:8 A: All will worship the beast except the faithful

Message to the Faithful

13:9, 10 The Sea Beast will be punished by God.

The symbols John uses to describe the sea beast are important – together they give a clear picture of the antichrist in prophecy. First, recall that the dragon

attempted to usurp God's throne and His authority (Isa 14:12-15, Eze 28:12-17). Thus, the dragon tried to be God ("like the most high").

Next, notice that the sea beast is described in very similar terms to the dragon – both had seven heads and ten horns: that is, the sea beast is like the dragon. Compare this with John 14:9 where Jesus is just like God the Father. Further, the sea beast is given a deadly wound but revives – Just as Jesus is miraculously resurrected! The sea beast receives his throne and authority from the dragon, just as Jesus receives His throne and authority of God (Rev 5:7, Matt 28:18). The sea beast exercises his authority for 42 months just as Jesus' earthly ministry lasted for 3½ years. Thus, the sea beast is a counterfeit Christ.

If this is true, then whatever the sea beast actually represents, it will also be a counterfeit system of salvation because Jesus is the only means by which we can obtain our salvation (Eph 2:8-10, Acts 4:10-12).

The close parallels between Dan 7 and Rev 13:1-8 strongly suggest the same power. The centrality and prominence of this beast to Revelation's eschatology demands a definite identification, which, is fortunately not difficult. We merely note the specifications: The sea beast -

- arose in a populous place (from the sea), 13:1
- body strong as a leopard, feet slow as a bear, and mouth rapacious as a lion, 13:2
- derived its power and authority from the devil (or at least his civil authority at the time, Rome), 13:2, 3
- becomes an international political power, 13:3, 7
- is a false religious power which is blasphemous (offers a false means of salvation), 13:4, 5, 8
- sets itself up to challenge and usurp God, 13:6
- is a persecuting power by tyrannising and killing the saints, 13:7
- lasts 42 months, 1260 days (years) (see below)
- is fatally wounded but miraculously recovers, 13:3

There is only one power in history that fits all these specifications – the medieval church of Rome. It attacked the true church:

- (a) The true church is clothed in the sun – Christ's righteousness: the sea beast insisted that there was an alternate way of salvation – the church itself!
- (b) The true church had the moon (God's word) under her feet: the sea beast offered other sources of divine revelation such as the catechisms, encyclicals, and bulls, etc.
- (c) The true church is also distinguished by its keeping of the commandments (Rev 12:17): the sea beast adopted a false law as the symbol of its divinely ordained power on earth to change the law, especially the Sabbath. (See appendix 2.) Dan 7:25.

The strong and repeated allusions and parallels to Daniel 7 clearly suggest that the sea beast is the same power as symbolised by the little horn, its persecuting activities, blasphemous work and mistaken idea about divine prerogatives are also

depicted. Thus, the sea beast's blasphemy consists of usurping Jesus' sole right to provide the way of salvation, and divine prerogatives, such as the day of worship.

The centrality of the 42 months of the sea beast's activities in the above chiasmic structure, requires that we allot some correspondingly central attention to this issue. We begin by assuming (as elsewhere) that in prophetic literature, a day is equivalent to a year in actual time (Num 14:34, Isa 34:8, 61:2, 63:4, Eze 4:5, 6. see also Job 10:5, 15:20, 36:11, Ps 39:5, 61:6, 90:10, 15, Eze 22:4. Now for some historical facts.

It was in 313 AD that Emperor Constantine legalised Christianity by issuing the edict of Milan, which allowed free worship within the Roman Empire and encouraged Christianity. It suddenly became politically correct to be a Christian so many of the government bureaucrats "converted." The state church was thus born and immediately began to grow rapidly in numbers and influence. (This process was greatly aided by moving the capital of the empire from Rome to Byzantium [Constantinople, and later Istanbul] leaving the pope effectively the emperor in the west.) In 533 AD, Emperor Justinian (living in Byzantium) issued an edict declaring the Bishop of Rome the sole defender of the Christian faith and corrector of heretics. This decree also effectively granted the pope the status of emperor of the Western Roman Empire. Unfortunately, this decree could not take effect, due to difficult political conditions until the final Arian tribe, the Ostrogoths, were defeated in 538 AD. From this point, the political and ecclesiastical influence of the Pope grew until by about 610 AD, Pope Gregory the Great had established the vast Vatican states covering most of central Italy.

For the next 1260 years after these dates, the true church of God suffered under the hand of the official Christian Medieval church. This took the form of legal and economic sanctions, murder, torture, imprisonment, and so on.

In the late 16th century, the European Reformation (initiated by Wyclif, Luther, and others) had begun and the official state Medieval church had felt its effects to such an extent that the council of Trent (ended 1563) was convened to stem its' effects. This produced a reaction to Christianity in the form of atheism, which culminated in (among other things) the atheistic (as opposed to secular) French Reformation. In 1793, Napoleon issued the edict to rid the country and the world of the hated Roman Church's authority over civil matters. However, it was not until 1798 that the Pope was actually taken prisoner by General Berthier. The political influence of the papacy was broken and subsequent popes described themselves as prisoners in their own house. In 1870, the Italian government confiscated the vast Vatican states. Most thought that the Papacy had been permanently destroyed.

Thus, at several levels, the medieval church of Rome had a dominating influence over world political and religious matters for 1260 years, precisely fulfilling the prophecy in Revelation. During this period, the saints were hounded, persecuted and very nearly destroyed, but fortunately, God intervened to stop its blasphemous activities, at least for a while.

Then in 1929, the Italian government concluded a concordat with the Papacy, which involved the return of some of the Papal States. A large sum of money was also granted to assist in re-establishing the papal government. Thus, the apparently miraculous revival of the papacy had begun. Its power, prestige, and influence continue to grow even today.

Rev 13:8 then describes what happens (the Greek tenses are future) after the deadly wound is healed – all the inhabitants of the earth (those not written in the Lamb's book of life) will worship (literally, fall prostrate before) the beast.

Immediately after the description of the sea beast's blasphemous work, the Holy Spirit includes an encouraging message to the faithful saints in Rev 13:9, 10:

He who has an ear, let him hear. If anyone leads into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.

It certainly did!

3. The Land Beast

The land beast completes the trilogy of beasts, which together form a false trinity of powers attracting and promoting false worship. After a brief introduction in Rev 13:11a, the message of the land beast forms a chiasm as shown below:

13:11b	A: Land beast speaks like a dragon
13:12a	B: Exercised authority of the sea beast
13:12b	C: Makes the wicked worship the sea beast
13:13	D: Does great signs and makes heavenly fire
13:14a	D: Great signs deceive the wicked
13:14b	C: Tells wicked to set up an image to the sea beast
13:15a	B: Gives breath to the image of the sea beast
13:15b	A: Image speaks: forced worship, gives mark, restricts trade

Following the description of the work of the land beast, Jesus issues a warning to the faithful (13:18) about the identity of the sea beast and its mystic number 666.

The identity of this third beast, the land beast, as a member of the trinity of beasts is very significant. Recall that in Rev 12, the dragon, representing the devil working through civil authorities failed to crush the church in his bid to usurp God's authority and sole right to worship. So in Rev 12:17 the dragon is depicted as standing on the seashore and calling up two monsters – a sea beast and a land beast. The sea beast acted like a false Christ (or antichrist) because it operated for 42 months (3½ years), was wounded yet was miraculously revived, was like the dragon (as Jesus is like the Father), etc. Let us now consider the symbols used to describe the land beast.

The work of the land beast is depicted as a false holy spirit:

<u>God the Holy Spirit</u>	<u>Beast from the land</u>
Spirit like blazing lamps (Rev 4:5, Acts 2)	Calls fire from heaven (Rev 13:11, 12)
Purpose is to bring glory to Jesus (John 16:14, 15)	Purpose is to bring attention to sea beast (Rev 13:14)
Administers the seal of God (Eph 1:13, 4:30)	Administers the mark of the (sea) beast (Rev 13:16)
Inspires the prophets (2 Peter 1:19-21)	Is the false prophet (Rev 19:20 – cf 13:13)
Guides into all truth (John 16:13)	Deceives the world (Rev 13:14)

Thus, the land beast acts as a false holy spirit in the apostate trinity of beasts which, together establish a false religio-political coalition in the last days. Further, it appears that this beast is an international superpower with sufficient power to deceive the world, restrict trade and enforce an arbitrary death penalty – a great power indeed! We also note that despite its lamb-like (Christ-like, saviour-like) appearance, it speaks like a dragon. Lastly, the land beast appears to arise (or come to prominence) AFTER the medieval church (sea beast) has received its deadly wound but miraculously revives (Rev 13:12-13 is entirely future tense).

Just as it was possible to identify the dragon and sea beast, it is also possible to identify the land beast. Again, there is only one superpower that fits the above specification – the USA. Only it came to prominence in the 20th century, is the only superpower, is now the undisputed world leader. Indeed, it is criticised for using the United Nations as an extension of its own foreign policy. The USA is also the self-proclaimed defender of freedom (whatever that means) and the self-proclaimed liberty conscience of the world (despite its own profligate ways). Thus, the choice of symbols in Revelation is particularly apt.

If this identification is correct, we are able to draw some astounding conclusions (which must necessarily be tentative because they are still future):

- The USA will actually assist an international effort, along with other governments to religiously deceive the world.
- The USA will eventually repudiate one of its founding principles of government – the distinction between church and state (signs of this are already beginning to appear)
- The USA will help create the image of the (sea) beast – a state church with civil authority (just like the medieval church) to help enforce its will. That is, it will attempt to act like a false holy spirit by dictating matters of conscience. [This need not be a single institution, but could be a state encouraged/sponsored coalition of apostate protestant churches who support the position and distinguishing features of the sea beast.]

- Just as Elijah turned the people back to true worship of Jehovah by bringing fire from heaven, so the USA will deceive and turn the wicked from true worship by bringing fire (a false spirit) from heaven. [Significantly, the text uses word πνεῦμα pneuma (give spirit or breath to the image) here, and is one of the four places in Revelation that does not refer to the Holy Spirit.]

Thus, at precisely the time that the true Elijah message is proclaimed as prophesied in Malachi 4, a false Elijah message from the false holy spirit arises. This is confirmed by reference to the great central chiasm of Revelation.

Just as the righteous are distinguished by means of the sign of the Father's name on their foreheads (the true Holy Spirit), so the wicked receive a mark on their foreheads and hands (the false holy spirit). That is, the mark is a counterfeit sign; and the mark is administered by the land beast to restrict "trade", presumably of spiritual truth. While trade in spiritual truth is the immediate intention of the symbols employed here, history suggests that every power that has engaged in such practises invariably resorts to force and the control of more physical conditions as well.

In order to be better informed about the likely shape of this global coalition for deception, we should observe several things:

- The mark of the beast is administered on the forehead and hand. This is an allusion to the Deut 6:8, 11:18 concerning the teaching and obedience to the law (10 commandments) in ancient Israel.
- By contrast to the false message from the land beast, the saints are repeatedly encouraged to keep (and are distinguished by) the commandments in Rev 12:17, 14:12.
- As pointed out above, the work of the land beast acts as a false holy spirit to deceive and thus is a false Elijah message. The true Elijah message, given by the first angel of Rev 14:6, 7, involves two elements of the Gospel – judgement and worship of God on the basis of His creativity. The only commandment involving such is clearly the fourth on the Sabbath, which is directly quoted.
- It was shown above that one of the distinguishing signs of the people of God is their obedience to the commandments and the Sabbath in particular (it is singled out in Rev 14:7). Dan 7:25 suggests that the false power at the end of time will presume itself capable of changing these times and laws. History has now shown us that the Medieval Church chose the change from Sabbath to Sunday as the symbol of its authority (see appendix 2).
- Significantly, the distinguishing element of the righteous is called a "seal". The 10 commandments are called the covenant in the Old Testament (Ex 34:28, Deut 4:13, see also Lev 26:15, Deut 7:9, 2 Kings 18:12, 23:3, 2 Chr 34:31, Ezra 10:3, Neh 1:5, Dan 9:4). The seal of an ancient covenant (agreement or contract) made between a lord and a lesser person, contained

three elements: the lord's name, his title, and the lord's jurisdiction or territory. The fourth commandment is the only one to contain these elements.

Thus, the mark of the beast appears to be a false holy spirit whose adherents keep a false sabbath – Sunday instead of the seventh day! Further, the land beast will create an institution just like (an image of) the Medieval Church to help enforce this requirement with the death penalty for disobedience.

Finally, there is the mystic number 666 – the number of the priests in ancient Babylon. See the appendix on this subject in *Notes of the Revelation of Jesus*.

4. 144,000

In contrast to the wicked coalition of three beasts, we are now presented with a description of the Jesus' true church and its distinguishing characteristics. It should be said immediately that no amount of cerebral contortions could make the 144,000 a literal number. The reason is simple – Revelation is written in symbols as explained in the introduction. Second, every sentence in which this number appears (Rev 14:1, 7:4) is packed with symbols – in this case a Lamb in Mt Zion followed by people with writing on their foreheads! It would be a brave and ingenious exegete that could create a distinction between the literal and symbolic in the same sentence!

First, Mount Zion is used in the Bible as a symbol of the congregation of the sealed and saved saints (Heb 12:22). The peace on Mt Zion is a contrast to the war on Mt Meggido ("Harmageddon").

John records that he hears a sound like many waters. In Rev 1:15, this is equated with the voice of Jesus – thus, the saints accompany Jesus (the Lamb) and listen to His voice. Interestingly, Rev 12:17 describes the faithful saints as those who have the testimony of Jesus. John uses this technical phrase, "The Testimony of Jesus" [μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ] with specific intent. In the introduction, it was demonstrated that Rev 1:1-3 defines the "chain of revelation" and that the "Testimony of Jesus" is a technical term for the visionary prophetic gift. Thus, we have another reference to the prophetic gift among God's true church, the 144,000.

These people have a number of characteristics:

- Did not defile themselves with women
- They are virgins
- Follow Lamb wherever He goes
- Purchased from among men
- Offered as first fruits to God and Lamb
- No lie in their mouths
- Blameless (unblemished)

It should be the ambition of every Christian to be a member, at this moment, of the saved 144,000 who demonstrate to the world the advantages of following the Lamb.

5. The Three Angels

It is impossible to properly understand this section of Revelation without reference to its literary structure – here is a portion of the great central chiasm:

12:17 F: Saints who keep the commandments and have the testimony of Jesus
 13:1-8 G: Sea beast's blasphemy
 13:9, 10 H: Warning to saints (about Babylon)
 13:11-13 I: Land beast and deception – fire from heaven (false Elijah message)
 13:14-18 J: Image of beast and the mark on forehead and hand of the wicked
 14:1-5 J: Lamb with followers on Zion and the Father's name on foreheads
 14:6, 7 I: Gospel, Judgment, Worship (1st angel) (– true Elijah message)
 14:8 H: Babylon has fallen (2nd angel)
 14:9-11 G: Sea beast's blasphemy (3rd angel)
 14:12 F: Saints who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus

Thus, the central portion of the Revelation's great central chiasm contrasts the blasphemous sea beast and its false system of salvation (the antichrist), the false Elijah message, with that of the saints and the true Elijah message – a call to true worship of the true God by keeping the Law. Since this is apparently a message for the last days before Jesus returns, the three angels' messages have special significance to our time.

The saints (not a "church" in the modern sense with its creeds and religion) described in Rev 14:1-5 with their testimony of Jesus have a special message – the final Elijah message as predicted in Mal 4:4-6. This passage mentions both Moses and Elijah, who are alluded to in Rev 11:5, 6. Therefore, we have a parallel section here to that which has gone before:

Revelation 9 – 11	Revelation 13, 14
6 th Trumpet – demonism	Land Beast – demonism
Origin of True Church – disappointment	Origin of True Church – 144,000
Message of True Church – 2 witnesses, Elijah message	Message of True Church – 3 angels, Elijah message – God on trial
7 th Trumpet, Final Judgement – 2 nd Advent	Two Harvests, Final Judgement – 2 nd Advent

Thus, the Elijah message of a call to true worship of the true God is central to the saints' message to the last day world. What is the Elijah message?

Elijah's experience on Mt Carmel (1 Kings 18) is well known; but the Bible predicts that a similar battle over worship, followed by judgement, will recur in the last days (Mal 4:4-6). This is just the message of the first angel – true worship and judgement of God (= the hour of God's judgement).

The judgement here is described as God's judgement, or the judgement of God, meaning other's judgement of Him. (See appendix 1) Thus, the first angel's message warns people that the final judgement of God (see Dan 7:7-10) has already begun in the last days. This is good news because the great controversy and the experiment with sin will soon be settled – Jesus' character will be vindicated soon.

As already adduced, the principle issues at stake for the saints concern their loyalty to God, the motivation by the Holy Spirit (the seal of God) as evidenced by their keeping of the law. This is again alluded to here in the first angel's message: "Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." (Rev 14:7b) – a direct allusion to the 4th commandment on Sabbath keeping.

Thus, we have clearly laid out the issues to be faced by the saints in the last days – loyalty to God, and His requirements: a Spirit sealed people who love the law of God (Ps 119:1, 2, 97, 113, 165, Heb 8:10, Rom 8:5-9).

The second angel introduces a new concept by declaring the certainty of a future event as already past. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." (Rev 14:8) First let us enquire about the concept of Babylon and its identity.

As an Old Testament allusion, Babylon was the city foremost in opposing the worship of God and destroying the Temple – where worship was centred. It was only when Babylon fell that Temple worship could be re-established. In the New Testament Babylon had become a code word for Rome – the main protagonist of Christianity (1 Peter 5:13).

In Revelation, the situation is similar, but here we must be careful to observe John's literary conventions. He never introduces a new concept without first providing some explanatory background immediately before. In this case, Babylon is presumably the coalition of three beasts, dragon, sea beast, and land beast. This is confirmed in Rev 16:13, 19 where the three beasts form a coalition (Babylon) to deceive at Armageddon that later collapses into its three constituent parts.

This reminds us of one of the central truths of the Gospel, that Jesus has already secured our salvation, victory is assured in Jesus, alone! Those who grasp this by faith can also say, "Babylon is fallen".

The third angel brings a much more urgent call which anticipates the message of Rev 18:4, the call for saints to separate themselves from the enticements of Babylon or be implicated in her judgements and destruction! Again the central issue here is worship.

The saints at the end of time must be conspicuously distinct from the wicked, and this distinction is made by either having the seal of God or the mark of the beast.

In either case, this distinction is evidenced by the way (and who) one worships. Interestingly, the wicked have the mark of the beast and have no rest (Rev 14:11) because they worship the wrong god. As adduced above, the worship here clearly involves the issue of Sabbath rest, and the third angel's message gives another confirming evidence.

This obviously calls for great faithfulness and courage of God's people (Rev 14:12, 13) and so a special blessing is offered the saints here.

6. Harvest(s) of the Earth

As with all other sections of Revelation, the sixth part depicts a separation between the righteous and wicked before the Lord returns. Two distinct harvests are described in Rev 14:14-20 as demonstrated by the two harvest verbs:

- The verb for reap (θερίζω therizo Rev 14:14, 16) always refers to the reaping of grain, usually wheat. This symbolises the harvest of the righteous (John 4:36-38, 2 Cor 9:6, Gal 6:6-9). The righteous grain is reaped by Jesus Himself (Rev 14:16).
- The verb for gather (τρυνάω trugao Rev 14:18, 19) always refers to the harvest of grapes (Luke 6:44), and here represents the harvest of the wicked. The wicked grapes are harvested by angels of heaven from the temple and cause much shed blood (Rev 14:20).

It is a very instructive to observe that the angels are asked to mete out judgement on the wicked only after the (pre-advent) judgement (Rev 14:6, 7, Dan 7:9, 10) is complete. That is, when God's will has been made clear to the heavenly intelligences, only then are they asked to execute judgement (depicted here as the gathering of grapes). Thus, God is unwilling to require His angels to do that which they might have the slightest question or qualm about. Again, God's transparent justice is demonstrated.

7. The Destiny of the Saints

In contrast to the noise and destructive chaos involved in the harvest and judgement of the wicked, John describes the pacific scene of the redeemed saints standing beside the sea of glass (no turbulence or winds of strife). They praise God by singing the same song that only they can learn (Rev 14:3) – the song of Moses and the Lamb. God's justice is revealed (Rev 15:4).

It is only those who learn the song of salvation during our earthly life will be able to sing it beside the throne in Glory.

The Seven Bowl-Plagues

Rev 15:5-16:21

This section of Revelation begins that which is still entirely future. Thus we must exercise extreme caution when interpreting events about which we know nothing, except in very broad outline. Whatever one makes of the seven last plagues, it is clear that they allude to:

- The plagues of Egypt (Ex 7-11), which were sent by God to induce Pharaoh to grant the Israelites freedom to travel to the promised land of Canaan.
- In the case of the sixth plague in particular, John alludes to the actions of the Persian king Cyrus as a liberating king of the east in freeing God's people from Babylonian captivity and permitting them to return to Judah.

Therefore, some have concluded that since the seven last plagues fall only on the wicked, the righteous are either no longer capable of sinning or have been "raptured" away from the earth while the plagues are poured out. If either of these is true, it cannot be deduced from the text of Revelation. Notice that the saints are encouraged in the Christian fight to persevere (16:15) with a warning not to go naked – unclothed, ie, without Christ's righteousness (19:8).

Thus, it is necessary for the saints to endure by depending on Christ's merits until He returns with the declaration, "It is done" (16:17). We should also note that in both Egypt and Babylon, the freed people of God were not perfected, but showed ample evidence of human fragilities. However, the text implies that the events of the seven last plagues occur after the close of human probation. Jesus' intercession for all mankind in the temple is over (Rev 15:8) – all cases have been decided (by the people's own decisions). Despite this, the saints continue to need Christ's righteousness until they are perfected at His return (1 Cor 15:50-55).

Again, the emphasis of the text can be deduced from the literary structure of the introductory vision (see below). Further, this literary chiasm also demonstrates that the section begins in Rev 15:5 rather than 15:1.

15:5a Transition: After these things, I looked,
 15:5b A: and was opened the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven, from which came -
 15:6a B: the seven angels
 15:6b C: having seven plagues
 15:6c D: out of the temple, (having been clothed in linen bright and clean)
 15:7 E: One of the four living creatures gave the 7 angels 7 golden bowls filled with the wrath of God (who lives for ever and ever.)
 15:8a F: And the temple was filled the smoke of the glory of God and His power
 15:8b D: no one could enter the temple until the completion
 15:8c C: of the seven plagues
 15:8d B: of the seven angels
 16:1a A: And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying
 16:1b E: to the 7 angels, "Go pour out the 7 bowls of the wrath of God onto the earth."

The emphasis appears to be on the close of human probation as depicted by the prohibition from entering the temple until the judgements are complete. After the close of human probation, the wicked have these judgements poured out on them to demonstrate the wicked's destructive character. But they refuse to repent.

Timing

With the change in emphasis from Rev 11:19, in the second half of the book, there could be expected a different prophetic layout. In the first half, the three septets of churches, seals and trumpets each covered the Christian era between Jesus' first and second advents, from a different perspective. In the first half, the introductory visions were each independent of the one before and after. They are parallel (as per Daniel's parallel prophecies).

However, in the second half, the sections are more nearly consecutive. [Indeed, because of this, some have suggested that the second half of Revelation is a single section; but thus would make each section perfectly consecutive, without overlap, which they are not.] In the previous section, "Cosmic Conflict", the last two sub-sections concerned the judgement of righteous and the wicked (14:13-20),

and the saved beside the sea of glass in heaven (15:1-4). The seven last plagues, which complete the wrath of God clearly begin just before this final judgement and are clearly before the righteous being taken to heaven. This is confirmed by the great central chiasm on the Cosmic Conflict, including part of the introductory vision of the seven bowl plagues. That is, the bowl plagues are included within the span of the Cosmic Conflict period.

Thus, begins a trend perpetuated for the remainder of Revelation's sections: each new section begins in the sixth sub-section of the previous section.

Introductory Vision

The seven bowl-plagues are anticipated in the heavenly scene beginning in 15:1, where they are called the "seven last plagues – because with them the wrath of God is finished." From this and other references we deduce the following:

- The plagues are poured out on the wicked (16:9, 10) as judgements from God to (presumably) demonstrate the fundamental wickedness of sin and its evil consequences. Thus, the plagues are the result of the sin of the wicked.
- The plagues are "last" (15:1) and as such occur just before the return of Jesus (16:15, 17). They last about one prophetic day (18:8, that is, about one year).
- The plagues occur during a time when no one can enter the temple (15:8) which suggests the antitypical Day of Atonement, (yom kippur) see Lev 16:13, 16, 17, 1 Kings 8:2, 10, 11, 2 Chron 5:3, 14. (This is consistent with the understanding of the Jewish Mishnah, which suggests that the Day of Atonement represented God's judgement.)
- The order of the objects of the plagues (that on which they are poured), land, sea, springs of waters, sun, throne giving darkness (no light), Euphrates, air and voices, is reminiscent of the seven trumpets which also depicted judgements on the wicked. They are also the reverse order of creation.

During the time the plagues are being poured out on the wicked, the righteous are still patiently awaiting the return of Jesus (16:15) by keeping their robes (of Christ's righteousness, see 19:8) on.

The First Five of the Last Seven Plagues

The first plague, painful sores breaking out on people, is problematic because of the paucity of precedents and allusions. The only other place where the word sore (ταχύ tachy) occurs is Luke 16:21 with literal sores in a parable (itself figurative). Thus, I conclude that this plague depicts widespread disease, but only on those who had the mark of the beast and who worship his image. A similar plague on the Egyptians did not induce them to free the Israelites (Ex 9:9-11).

The second plague, the sea turning to blood killing all its creatures, suggests widespread death. It is not clear (although the general plot suggests) that this death may be related to the sores in the first plague. It is possible (but not definitely known) that this plague could be the result of man's pollution and desecration of our God-given planet. Already, such careless stewardship of our environment has produced much disease and suffering, and exhausted some of the (previously) plentiful fisheries.

The third plague, the rivers and springs of water turning to blood, uses symbols often found in Revelation as shown below:

- | | |
|------|--|
| 7:17 | A: The Lamb leads the righteous beside springs of living water |
| 8:10 | B: star from heaven falls on the springs of water & embitters |
| 14:7 | C: Worship Him who made...the springs of water |
| 16:4 | B: An angel turns the springs of water to blood |
| 21:6 | A: Thirsty offered drink from the spring of water of life |

In Isa 49:10 and John 4:14, the springs of water represent Jesus and His truth of the Gospel of Salvation. Thus, the plagues in 8:10 (caused by Satan) and 16:4 would represent a counterfeit water of life, a salvation heresy causing spiritual salvation. This is appropriate since the truth of salvation in Jesus is a sweet truth and the false salvation is a bitter heresy. This is reinforced in the fifth trumpet where people seek death. Thus, in the above chiasm, the middle "C" instance is literal, the "B" occurrence is counterfeit, and the "A" is genuine.

As elsewhere, blood represents death. Thus, this third plague appears to depict widespread death caused by false teachings. Just how this will happen is not revealed. The work of modern terrorists and rising anarchy is one possible component.

The third plague is followed by a declaration from the angel in charge of the waters that these severe judgements of God are just, precisely because the God treats the wicked in the way that they treated the saints and the prophets – their blood is shed! Thus, bloodshed is rewarded with bloodshed. "It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them." (Deut 32:35) "“Before your eyes I will repay Babylon and all who live in Babylonia for all the wrong they have done in Zion,” declares the LORD." (Jer 51:24) See also Jer 16:18, 25:14, Eze 7:9, Joel 2:25, Rom 12:19, Heb 10:30.

The fourth plague, the sun scorching people with fire, is a fitting sequel to the third plague as will be seen. Fire is used in Scripture as a symbol of Judgement (Matt 3:10-12, 2 Peter 3:7, Jude 7) and the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3, 7:70, Heb 1:7, 12:18, 29). Further, John 16:8 makes these two the same thing: "When he [the Holy Spirit] comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment." The sun is a Scriptural symbol of Jesus and His imparted righteousness to the saints (Ps 37:6, Matt 13:43, Mal 4:2).

Thus, the fourth plague depicts the wicked suffering under the conviction of guilt by the Holy Spirit, as they witness the purity of the saints' lives reflecting their Master, Jesus. Despite this, the wicked still refuse to repent (16:9).

The fifth plague, the beast's kingdom plunging into darkness, is a further development of the previous plague. Darkness is the opposite of light, and light is a symbol of Jesus and His life (John 1:4, 4, 9, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46). Darkness is therefore the spiritual and moral declension, which the wicked create by shutting themselves away from Jesus' light, that, they reject Jesus and His offer of salvation. The sense of hopelessness and foreboding that such a decision engenders is presumably the agony of extreme anxiety of which the wicked complain. Only the righteous who keep their eyes fixed on Jesus (Heb 12:2) remain in the light and can rest in the assurance of salvation. Despite this, the wicked still curse God and refuse to repent. This is a wonderful poetic irony: the sun or righteousness in the 4th plague causes darkness in the 5th plague!

Following the fifth plague, the condition of wicked society has degenerated to the place of desperation. It is now apparent to the wicked that their situation is a direct result of their sinfulness and the path they have been lead by their leaders – the dragon, sea beast and false prophet. Now their desperate situation calls for desperate measures, which are taken under the sixth plague by both the wicked generally, and the trinity of beasts in particular.

The Sixth Plague - Armageddon

The sixth plague, the drying of the great river Euphrates, appears to be a major political development. In ancient Babylon the Euphrates River was the lifeblood of the city by flowing diagonally through it. The allusion here is to Jer 50:38, 52:13, 36 where the Euphrates is described as the *many waters* and a *sea*. Whatever this represents, it begins a process that splits Babylon into three parts (16:17), that is, disintegration. This process is rapid because 18:8 describes all seven of Babylon's plagues as falling in one prophetic day (about a literal year).

In 17:15, the symbol of Babylon's waters is explicitly explained as representing many diverse people who presumably support Babylon. The fact that the Euphrates River is called great suggests a large number of people involved.

Babylon itself is described as a harlot, a counterpoint to the virtuous woman (church) in Rev 12. Further, Rev 17 describes this woman as blasphemous and an abomination. She is clearly composed of a coalition of the beast trinity of the dragon, sea beast, and false prophet (16:13), and thus represents the end-time false coalition of religious forces, which pool their resources to oppose God and His true church.

The arrival of "the kings of the east" (as most versions have it) is an allusion to the liberating Medo-Persian army of Cyrus, who, in 539 BC captured (the apparently impregnable) Babylon by diverting the Euphrates' flow into a large recently man-made basin upstream. The temporarily dried river would not have provided access to Babylon except that Belshazzar was holding a drunken state

dinner (Dan 5) during which the river gates had been mistakenly left unlocked. The city was taken in a few hours because its citizens offered no resistance – they had tired of Belshazzar's erratic, and at times tyrannical rule. Belshazzar is said to have been the only person killed. All this is described (or more precisely, predicted) in Isa 44:24-45:25, Jer 50-52, and Dan 5.

While Cyrus came from a direction east of Babylon, the prophecy in Rev 16:12 actually says the kings come from the rising of the sun (idiomatically, the east). As explained under the 4th and 5th plagues, the sun represents Christ and His indwelling effect on the life – imparted righteousness. Thus, the development in the wicked political world (drying of the Euphrates) at the end of time precisely mirrors the ancient events – people are tired of the deceptive leadership of the beast trinity (the prostitute of Rev 17) and withdraw their loyalty. Once the wicked have arrived at this realisation, the way is prepared for Jesus to return – the distinction between right and wrong is now crystal clear.

In the face of collapsing political support, the three coalition partners of Babylon (the beast trinity) make a last desperate attempt to rally the wicked: From the dragon, sea beast and false prophet, three evil spirits like frogs are sent as emissaries to the kings of the earth to gather them together.

Notice that the frogs in this plague are an allusion to the second plague (of frogs) in ancient Egypt (Ex 8:1-15). But why the second of Egypt's plagues and not any of the others? First, notice that the first of Egypt's plagues (blood Ex 7:14-24) was duplicated by Pharaoh's magicians (v22). Similarly, the magicians imitated the second plague of frogs (8:7). However, the third of Egypt's plagues could not be duplicated by the magicians (Ex 8:18, 19). Thus, the frogs in Revelation's sixth plague (Rev 16:13) represent the final (last) deception.

It is possible to gain an approximate idea of what this final deception might involve, at least in general terms:

- The three frogs issue from the *mouths* of the beast trinity. As elsewhere, the mouth is the source of words and teachings – in this case, false teachings that are blasphemous (see Rev 17).
- The land beast is called the false prophet here (compare Rev 13:13, 14) suggesting that, among other things, it speaks false prophecies. Much false prophesying can be heard in popular culture already, especially from apostate Protestantism and spiritism.
- The three frogs are spirits of demons (Rev 16:14) who perform miracles to deceive the wicked (the righteous are immune). Again, such things are apparent even now.
- Rev 17 describes these events in greater detail. Rev 17:8 depicts a time when mankind will be astounded at the *appearance* of the beast from the abyss – the devil himself! This will be discussed in the next chapter.

The stated purpose of the frog emissaries is to gather the kings of the (wicked) earth for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. This battle is not

described here but is detailed in Rev 19:11-21 – the armies of heaven and earth face each other. It is as though the trinity of beasts issues a challenge to God to see whose claims are correct – a foolish exercise since God is omnipotent! (Compare Isa 14:12-15.)

What are the righteous doing at this time? Rev 16:15 tells us that the saints must remain alert (to guard against the last deception) and remain clothed. This is presumably a reference to the clothes of fine linen (Rev 19:8), which represent “the righteous acts of the saints”. Such clothes are given to the saints because their own clothes (righteousness) are as “filthy rags” (Isa 64:6). Thus, the saints remain dependent on Christ and His imparted righteousness until He returns.

It should now be clear that the great battle of God Almighty (which is won by the armies of heaven) is the final spiritual battle in which the wicked have been deceived into participating. Despite this, this spiritual battle will probably contain some real physical aspects, as many previous religious wars have.

The last verse in this plague (Rev 16:16) mentions the place where the kings are gathered for the great battle of God, Armageddon. Now we must proceed carefully here because there has been far too much ink wasted on this topic that has served no useful purpose, but has rather raised unnecessary fears and is often based on unbiblical ideas. The safest course is to seek a consistent hermeneutic in understanding the text; that is, continue the system already adopted, based on the text itself.

The first point to notice is that the word is declared to be a Hebrew word (suggesting some Old Testament allusion) and is actually, Ἁρμαγεδών, Harmagedon. Such a place by this name has never existed, but the word simply

means har-megedon, the mountain of Megiddo. This gives another problem – the northern city of Megiddo is built on a plain; but the closest mountain is actually Mount Carmel, which overlooks Megiddo.

Second, we seek an Old Testament allusion that would help our understanding. As observed above, this battle of Armageddon clearly depicts a great final spiritual battle to clearly distinguish the forces of God and Satan, which vindicates God’s character. In this context, notice that 1 Kings 18:10, 19, describes the wicked King Ahab dispatching emissaries to all corners of the realm to gather people, and false prophets particularly, to a spiritual contest on Mount Carmel. The purpose of this spiritual contest is to determine who it was that was “troubling Israel” (1 Kings 18:17, 18) and to finally decide who was the true God.

Third, notice that the battle does not occur under the sixth plague, but under the seventh and is described in more detail in the next section of Revelation, The Destruction of Evil. Thus, the great cosmic issues of who is true, Satan or God, will be decided to everyone’s satisfaction in such a way that God’s name will be vindicated.

The Seventh Plague

The seventh plague is poured into the air, and a loud voice from the throne in the temple declares, “It is finished” as Jesus is about to return. That is, Babylon is destroyed by disintegrating into its three components, the dragon, sea beast, and false prophet (Rev 16:19). A great hailstorm erupts to finally destroy the remainder of the wicked as Jesus returns. The distinction between righteous and wicked is fully manifest and the saints have been avenged (Rev 6:10, 19:2).

The Destruction of Evil

Rev 17:1 – 20:10

This is the section of Revelation that provides more detail about the events only outlined under the sixth and seventh bowl-plagues. (Again, such a pattern is common in the second half of Revelation.) Thus, the angel guide who was one of the seven angels with the seven bowls (Rev 17:1) was probably the sixth. And the greater detail in this section concerns the final destruction of evil, precipitated by God's providence in such a way as to demonstrate the innate evil of sin. That is, God will use the evil powers to destroy themselves, and so demonstrate that sin has within it the seeds of its own destruction.

While more information is given of the final events, the time period covered in the first five parts of this section is quite brief: the seven plagues last about one prophetic day (Rev 18:8, about a literal year), while the destruction of Babylon lasts only about one hour (Rev 18:10, 17, 19) before the second Advent. Thus, the final movements will be very rapid indeed.

The literary style of this section changes from that which John usually employs. No heavenly vision begins this section; however, each of the seven parts begins with a heavenly scene which directly influences events on earth.

1. The harlot and the Beast She Rides

Description of the Woman, Rev 17:1-6

Again, John employs the symbol of a woman, a very different one from that introduced in Revelation 12, to represent Babylon, the final religio-political coalition of kings (Rev 17:2, 12) that persecutes God's saints (Rev 17:6). As shown in Rev 12, a pure woman represents a pure church; an impure woman represents an impure church (Zech 2:7, 10).

First, the woman is said to sit on many waters (Rev 17:1, 15), which represent many people, nations, languages, etc, (Rev 17:15). That is a diverse, widespread political base. (The ten horns representing 10 kings (Rev 17:3, 12) presumably represent the governments of this political base.) The woman is dressed in purple and crimson (Rev 17:4) signifying royalty (compare Rev 18:7). It was the antecedents of this power who mocked Jesus by dressing Him in such garments of royalty.

Rev 17:4 also describes some of her jewellery. (Contrast this impure woman's practice with 1 Tim 2:9, 10 where Paul discourages the use of such external ornaments.) The description of the jewellery here is that the ornaments are only gold plated (*κεχρυσωμένη χρυσίω* = having been gilded with gold), rather than being solid gold. Contrast this with the pure gold the saints of Laodicea (Rev 3:18) are instructed to buy from Jesus, presumably representing His sanctified (imparted) righteousness. Thus, the woman Babylon only covers herself with an

outward show of righteousness, which is for display only. Such contrived, showy righteousness is one of the hallmarks of all false religion.

The woman is also depicted as dressed in gems and pearls (Rev 17:4). Pearls are a consistent Scriptural symbol of spiritual truth (see Matt 7:7, 13:45, 46). Notice that the New Jerusalem has 12 gates, which are 12 pearls (Rev 21:21). Thus, the citizens of the New Jerusalem must enter the Holy City via the spiritual truths, given by Jesus and His word, which have sustained the church through the ages and kept it pure. This suggests that the pearls on the impure woman of Revelation 17 represent her heresies used to deceive the nations.

The woman also holds a golden cup filled with her abominations and the filth of her fornication. Revelation has two cups – one of God's wrath and fury (Rev 14:10, 16:19) and the other held by the great prostitute (Rev 17:4, 18:6). Since a cup is used as a symbol of God's judgement (Matt 20:22, 23, John 18:11, Ps 75:8, etc); and the prostitute brazenly displays the cup's contents, serves to emphasise her unabashed wickedness arising from her heresies, liaisons with unlawful powers, and her persecuting of the saints. Again, displaying heresies and sin as a virtue is another common characteristic of mature false religions. Such practices as homosexuality being "natural" have recently become common.

In the next chapter (Rev 18) we are given more details about the about prostitute Babylon's "trade" in spiritual things (cargoes):

- Gold and silver (see 3:18) representing a trade in sanctified righteousness. False religions have often sold righteousness without the need for a change of heart.
- Pearls (see Matt 7:6, 13:45, 46) representing false spiritual truth. That is, Babylon trades in heresies.
- Fine Linen (see Rev 19:8) representing righteousness. See above on gold.
- Incense (see Rev 5:8) representing prayers. Repetitive prayers are often used by false religion (Mark 12:40, Luke 20:47).
- Myrrh representing anointing oil for false prophets.
- Wine and oil (Rev 6:6, Matt 25:3, 8) representing a false holy spirit.
- Wheat (Matt 3:12) representing the righteous. The great prostitute was a persecuting power that killed many of the saints (Rev 17:6).

Thus, the great prostitute is the last great false religio-political power instituted to deceive the world and its leaders. As shown in the previous chapter, mystic Babylon is composed of a coalition of religious and political institutions: the beast from the abyss, the beast from the sea and the beast from the land. These

powers do not unite formally, but work together as a coalition. Their coalition is formed to perpetrate the last great deception associated with the battle of Armageddon.

The Beast from the Abyss

The great prostitute Babylon rides on the beast from the abyss (Rev 17:3, 8). This beast is first mentioned in Rev 11:7 without introduction, unless this has already been given in Rev 8:7, 9:1, 2, 11, as the devil or Satan. Its description is identical to that given in Rev 12:3, seven heads and 10 horns, but without crowns. In Rev 20:1, 3, the devil is thrown back into the abyss. Thus, the beast from the abyss is clearly the devil and possibly the civil powers through which he operates.

This is further reinforced by the description used of the beast from the abyss as the one who “one was, now is not, and will come” (Rev 17:8, 11), is a parody of a similar description of the eternal God (Rev 1:8). Again this is consistent with Satan’s original challenge to God’s supreme authority recorded in Isa 14:12-15, “...I will be like the most high.” Contrast also the devil’s title of destroyer (Rev 9:11) with his archrival, God, as creator (Rev 4:11).

Having said this, the devil almost never makes himself public but has often preferred to operate through civil authorities: it was Herod who tried to kill Jesus at His birth (Rev 12:4), it was pagan and papal Rome who persecuted the church (Rev 12:6, 13-16), etc. And at the end of time, Revelation tells us that Satan will create a coalition of 10 kings to support the great prostitute Babylon (Rev 17:3, 12) in an illicit union of church and state, or secular authority.

The Illicit Union that Won’t Last

When a domesticated animal is ridden, the one riding is supposed to be in control. So it appears that the great prostitute Babylon rides the beast from the abyss and thus is depicted its brief attempt to control secular civil authority. This union of religion and state effectively assembles an “army” for the battle of Armageddon. This army’s purpose is to fight against the Lamb (Rev 17:13, 14) and His heavenly army as described in Rev 19:11-21, but more on this later.

Now, we should keep in mind that the sixth bowl-plague provides an outline for the events depicted in this section (see previous chapter herein), namely,

- Babylon sits on many waters of people.
- Due to God’s providence, the deception practised by Babylon on its political base (described as the intoxicating wine of her adulteries, Rev 14:8, 18:3) becomes apparent to this political base, which causes them to “dry up”, that is withdraw support.
- The collapsing political support calls for desperate measures – special emissaries from a coalition of the dragon, sea beast and land beast (false prophet with its false prophecies) are sent out to call people to the last great deception (symbolised by the three frogs). It is at this point that the woman rides the beast from the abyss.

- Revelation 17 provides some idea of what this deception involves.

Rev 17:8 simply says that, “The inhabitants of the world [a technical phrase for the wicked in Revelation] whose names have not been written in the Lamb’s book of life ... will be astonished when they see the beast [from the abyss]”! Thus, Revelation hints at some form of personal appearance of the devil himself in this last great deception. Other Scriptures also hint at a similar event, see 2 Cor 11:14, Rev 11:7.

So the stage is set, the stakes are high, the two armies have drawn their battle lines. What happens next?

- The ten horns or kings suddenly hate the prostitute and turn against her (Rev 17:12).
- God’s glory fills the earth and He calls His saints out of Babylon (Rev 18:1-4).
- The once supportive political base has turned against Babylon and just stands and watches her destruction from afar (Rev 18:10, 15, 17, compare Dan 11:45).
- Babylon is destroyed by the very forces assembled to help her (the 10 kings) and they burn her with fire (Rev 17:16); Babylon is broken into three component parts (Rev 16:19).
- Heaven rejoices at the destruction of Babylon (Rev 19:1-5).
- Jesus prepares the wedding banquet (Rev 19:6-10) for his saints.
- The sea beast and the false prophet are destroyed in the battle of Armageddon (Rev 19:11-21).

Of the three great powers involved in the battle of Armageddon, this leaves just one left – the devil. His destruction is depicted in Rev 20 to be discussed later.

The above gives an over view of this important section on the destruction of evil, which God will accomplish in such a way to make clear to all people, including the wicked, that He has been fair and just. Let us briefly examine the remaining sections. Reference should be made to *Notes on the Revelation of Jesus* for some of the data quoted.

2. The Destruction of Babylon

The literary structure of this section is unique – a triple chiasm with a triple centre, each consisting of a double woe. The opening scene is of a great angel (probably Jesus Himself) who declares that Babylon is fallen and later illustrates this fall with by thrusting a large millstone into the sea.

The righteous are called out of Babylon so that they will not be destroyed when she is destroyed. This is a clear allusion to Lot’s experience (Gen 18, 19) and that of Jeremiah’s plea to the Israelites in literal Babylon (Jer 50, 51). This plea to separate ourselves from spiritual Babylon will become more urgent as the destruction of Babylon approaches at the end of time.

Babylon is an arrogant and defiant power which cannot be left unpunished. As a harlot she has been brazen, claiming that she has done no wrong. This has become a modern catch-cry of deviants in the western world.

The main point of this section (as judged by the literary structure) is to document the double woes of three groups: kings of the earth (who provided political support to Babylon), merchants of the earth (who made Babylon rich), and sailors who made Babylon's trade possible. As documented elsewhere, woes are only pronounced against leaders and teachers who have betrayed their sacred trust: God deals with them by revealing their folly and causing great anguish.

The text here reads like an action movie plot where the villains are eventually entrapped by their own perfidy – and best of all (as far as justice is concerned) they live long enough to realise their folly.

While this section describes the destruction and fall of Babylon, the destruction of the coalition elements (the three beasts) which composed Babylon still exist. The destruction of a coalition can be accomplished by nothing more than breaking up the coalition partners as is recorded in Rev 16:19. The kings and other Babylon supporters can only watch with dismay at her collapse. Interestingly, those who lament the fall of Babylon, lament the loss of their wealth (presumably both material and spiritual). Babylon's deception has dried up her money and the coalition of powers collapses under the weight of its own iniquity.

3. Celebration over Babylon's Fall

By contrast with the laments of Rev 18, Rev 19:1-5, records that heaven and earth celebrate by singing a great hymn of praise to God and the Lamb who has avenged (justified or vindicated) the saints. This is when the question of Rev 6:10 is finally answered. Unlike the kings and merchants, the saints realise that their salvation is close at hand, and celebrate the collapse of Babylon. Further, in the Old Testament the word *avenge* (Lev 26:25, Dt 32:35, 43, 1 Sam 14:24, 24:12, 25:31, 2 Sam 3:27, 4:8, 2 Ki 9:7, Est 8:13, Ps 58:10, 79:10, Isa 1:24, Josh 10:13, Jdg 9:24, 11:36, etc.) the word means to kill and completely destroy.

While the destruction of Babylon is complete, the destruction of the forces that composed Babylon (the three beasts) must wait a little longer for the battle of Armageddon. (See below.)

Rev 19:2 contains a very important but cryptic message, "He has judged (=condemned) the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged (=killed) on her the blood of his servants." This is an allusion to Deut 32:43 (the Song of Moses and their triumph over the Egyptian forces) and 2 Kings 9:7 the promise of the destruction of Ahab (the 7th king of Israel) and Jezebel the great "prostitute". Thus, God will destroy the powers of evil (Babylon here) by the very same means used to establish them. Thus, we find a celebration over the destruction of Babylon using the Song of Moses. This passage is presumably parallel in time to that in Rev 15:3.

4. Celebration for the Lamb's Wedding

Rev 19:6-10 records the celebration of the wedding of the Lamb to His church (see also Rev 21:2). The saints are clothed in Christ's righteousness (white robes) and are distinguished by their good works (righteousness). That is, the faith of the saints has made a difference in their lives as evidenced by their outward behaviour. They have earned the title *Christian* because they imitated the life of Jesus. The saints who were instructed to come out of Babylon by the great angel whose glory illuminates the whole earth (Rev 18:1-4, Jesus) now celebrate.

5. The Judge and the Heavenly Army:

The passage in Rev 19:11-16 describes a great general riding a white horse, called faithful and true, with eyes like blazing fire, with many crowns (diadems), whose robe is dipped in blood, and whose name is the Word of God. This is an obvious allusion to Jesus as the heavenly general. While He is depicted as a general, He is armed with nothing more than the Word of God (the sword from His mouth). These are the only weapons available to the Christian soldier, the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God (John 1:1, 14).

Who or what are these "armies of heaven" (Rev 19:14), which follow the Lamb on white horses, and so decisively destroy the forces of Babylon in the battle of Armageddon? One is reminded of the 144,000 standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1-5) who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. To answer this question, let us observe that the troops in this heavenly army are dressed in fine linen, white and clean (Rev 19:14), which represents the righteous acts of the saints (Rev 19:8). Thus, the heavenly army appears to consist of sanctified saints on earth! Again, notice that Eph 2:6 describes the saints as, "seated in heavenly places". Thus, a heavenly army consisting of earthly saints is quite consistent with Scripture.

This is confirmed by the use of the verb "follow" which John uses in a technical sense throughout the book of Revelation. Note the triple chiasm formed by the occurrences of this verb.

6:8 A: Pale horse followed by death & hades - kill by sword

14:4 B: The saints follow the Lamb wherever He goes

14:8 C: The second angel follows the first

14:9 C: The third angel follows the second

14:13 B: The deeds of the saints follow them

19:14 A: White horse followed by armies - sword comes from mouth.

Notice that all the occurrences of the verb follow are associated with the righteous. This is also true in the rest of the New Testament. ἀκολουθέω *akoloutheo* occurs 79 times in the Gospels (eg Matt 4:20, 22, 25, 8:1, 10, etc) and all except Mk 14:13 are of disciples following Christ. (Angels are never recorded as following Christ.) Thus, the army of heaven are, as demonstrated above, saints on earth who fight the Christian fight (Eph 6:10-18).

It is interesting that Jesus chooses to use an earthly army of His saints to fight the great battle of Armageddon. Notice that it is the sword that comes from the

mouth of Jesus (Rev 19:21) that defeats the remainder of the wicked. A comparison with Eph 6:17 suggests that this sword from the mouth of Jesus not only represents His teaching of Gospel truth, but is the “sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God.” Thus this heavenly army is armed with Paul’s spiritual weapons of the pure Gospel of truth and the sword of the Spirit.

In Rev 17:9, Jesus calls us to have a mind with wisdom. In 1 Cor 2:16 the required mind is further defined as being the mind of the Lord and the mind of Christ. To have the mind of Christ is to think and act as Jesus would (1 John 2:6) and to be changed into His likeness with ever increasing glory (2 Cor 3:18) so that when He appears we may be like Him (1 John 3:2).

Here we have an unusual prophecy: an army of Christian soldiers armed with the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus. They fight for the cause of Jesus by doing no more than imitating Him and representing Him. They are the people who, in their daily lives practise justice mercy and faithfulness (Matt 23:23) as the whole duty of man. The combined forces of the world, when arrayed against them is defeated and shamed.

In which army do you enlist, and what weapons do you carry? Do we daily arm ourselves with the sword of the Spirit and the Word of God? May our Lord Jesus help us to be ready for that great day when He shall be vindicated by our spiritual victory made possible by Himself.

The battle of Armageddon is depicted as vultures consuming the flesh of the opposing army – beaten by the sword from the mouth of Jesus. This sword from the mouth of Jesus is first described in the introductory vision of the first section (Rev 1:16, which see). It is a clear allusion to the Word of God (Eph 6:17), that is, the armies of heaven win the battle with nothing more than the truth of God as recorded in His Word. Spirit moved saints will ultimately be victorious!

The battle of Armageddon, only accomplishes the destruction of two of the three beasts partners, the sea and land beasts. The beast from the abyss (the devil) has more time to consider his fate during the 1000 years of imprisonment before his final destruction.

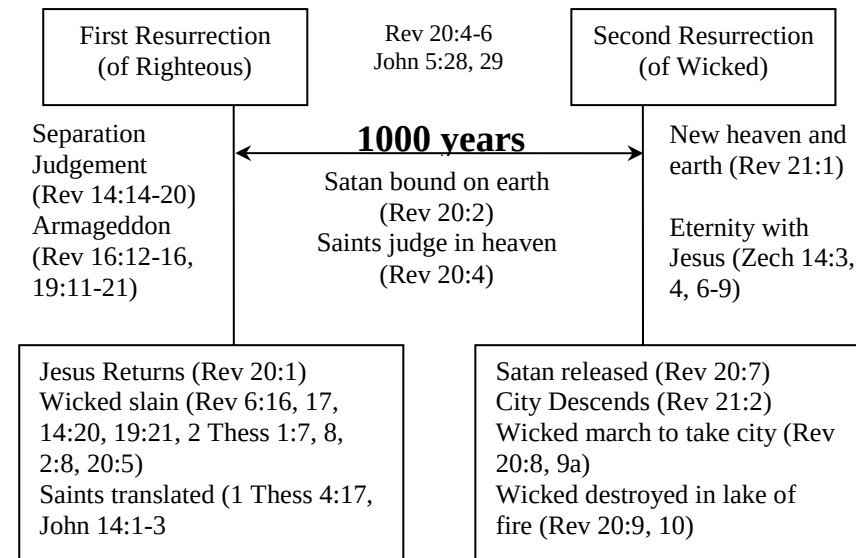
6. The 1000 Years

The saints will triumph when the beast from the abyss, the devil, is thrown back into the abyss (Rev 20:3) to be bound by a great chain: he cannot escape because he is bound by Jesus Himself (Rev 20:1). For 1000 years he considers the consequences of the challenge to God’s authority issued so long previously (Isa 14:12-15, Eze 28:12-17). His venture has utterly failed and he is surrounded by all the evil angels he has deceived – one dare not even imagine the bitter disputes this will cause among the demonic hosts. They will want to avenge themselves on their wicked leader but realise their own contribution to the usurper’s scheme. He will be unable to escape the conclusion that God is just, and that the devil was wrong.

The material in the passage Rev 20:1-10 is best presented in the form of a diagram as shown below. All the events surrounding the 1000 years are in one way

or another, connected with the two resurrections: the first resurrection of the righteous, and the second resurrection of the wicked.

This 1000 years contrasts with the time periods in the pervious section of one hour (for the destruction of Babylon, Rev 18:10, 17, 19) and one day (for the 7 last plagues, Rev 18:8). All these time periods are connected with judgement, the very short times are associated with the destruction of evil and the long time period is that allocated for the saints to judge (audit) the world.



Note that the purpose of the 1000 years is to enable the saints to judge. Not that they influence the outcome of any judgement, but that they are given the opportunity to audit God’s decisions and convince themselves of His Justice. For a fuller discussion of this second phase of God’s justice scheme, see appendix 1. Thus, God’s justice is not only perfect but will be seen to be so by every person.

7. The Destruction of Satan

God’s three phase plan of judgement to deal with the sin problem now enters its final phase. So far, the heavenly intelligences have reviewed God’s decisions (before the 1000 years), and so have the saved (during the 1000 years). A similar privilege is now granted the vast throng (Rev 20:8) of wicked who are brought back to life after the 1000 years (Rev 20:5).

Satan then attempts to mobilise the entire wicked population (Rev 20:8) for an assault on the New Jerusalem (v9). But notice how God chooses to destroy this vast army – with fire from heaven. Now we should recall that Revelation is written in symbolic language, and for the sake of consistency, we seek and understanding of this symbol of fire from heaven.

First observe that the phrase “fire out of heaven to consume” is a direct quote from 2 Kings 1:10, 12, 14, when Elijah faced hostile forces. Next observe that fire is a consistent symbol of the presence of God, specifically the Holy Spirit and judgement (Acts 2:3, 7:30, Heb 1:7, 12:18, 29). Thus, part of the punishment of God is to impress on the wicked the appalling effects of their sinfulness – they are conscience stricken from the Holy Spirit.

This is not to preclude the possibility of actual consuming fire which destroys – far from it; all effects of sin must be destroyed (Mal 4:1). Further, the wicked and their leader the devil are then cast into the lake of fire – the second (and final) death. “Trouble will not rise a second time.” (Nah 1:9)

Lastly, we must ask about the troublesome (to moderns only) phrase, “They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” (Rev 20:10) Again, the phrase must be understood in context. “They” refers to the three beasts, sea beast, land beast (“false prophet”) and the devil; that is the coalition that composed Babylon. These symbolic terms must be understood symbolically.

“day and night” is an idiomatic expression for *continuously*.

“tormented ... for ever and ever” must be compared with similar passage such as Jude 7, “Sodom and Gomorrah ... serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.” This fire is not still burning, but its effects are clearly eternal – Sodom and Gomorrah will never be rebuilt, that is, their destruction is eternal. 2 Thess 1:8, 9, makes this clearer, “He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction ...” Thus the *punishment* (a noun) is eternal but the *punishing* (a process verb) is finite.

God is just. He will not inflict an infinite punishing for a finite sin. In fact, Jesus has already taken our punishment for sin (1 John 2:2, Rom 3:22-25, Heb 7:29, 9:26, 10:10, 1 Peter 3:18) – Jesus paid it all! Thus, the wicked are not punished for sin, but endure the results of their choices by being shut out from the presence of God (2 Thess 1:8-10). Their anguish is so great, God mercifully destroys them.

By contrast, the righteous enjoy the company of Jesus forever in the New Jerusalem.

The New Jerusalem

Rev 20:11 – 21:5

The last section of Revelation on the New Jerusalem is the highlight of the whole book of Revelation. God's people have been reconciled and reunited with Him because of the wounded Lamb. Jesus now reigns on His throne and there are no more tears.

The traditional division between the section on the destruction of evil and the next section on the New Jerusalem is Rev 21:1; however, there is an exquisite chiastic structure which spans this chapter break, which makes the introductory scene one of purification by judgement.

- 20:11a A: Great white throne and the one who sat on it
- 20:11b B: Earth and heaven fled – no place found for them
- 20:12, 13 C: Dead judged according records of books including the book of life.
- 20:14, 15 C: Death, grave and wicked thrown into lake of fire, which is the second death
- 21:1-4 B: New heaven and new earth (no more sea) and New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God
- 21:5-7 A: Announcement from (the one seated on) the throne: Dwelling of God is with people, no more tears
- 21:6-8 C: Wicked excluded from city – thrown into lake of fire burning with sulphur, which is the second death.

Again, this pattern is consistent with the previous two sections which enlarge upon the final parts of the earlier section. In this case, we have a recap of judgement and of the destruction of evil. That is, the pure New Jerusalem is only possible when all evil has been eradicated forever.

The Holy City

It must be re-emphasised that the language here is highly symbolic and cannot be taken as a literal description of the city which descends. This is not to suggest that there will not be such a literal place on earth, but that such a place is beyond description.

The symbolic language depicting the new Jerusalem has numerous spiritual lessons for us even now. Here is a short sample:

Rev 21:21 – the 12 gates to the New Jerusalem are composed of 12 pearls. Pearls are used as a symbol of spiritual truth and salvation (Matt 7:6, 13:45, 46). Thus, the righteous must enter the Holy City via the truth of their salvation in Jesus.

Rev 21:18, 21 – the walls and streets of the city are pure gold. Gold is a symbol of the sanctified life (1 Cor 3:12, 2 Tim 2:20, James 5:3, Rev 3:18, etc). Thus the pure life imparted by Jesus is suffused throughout the city.

Rev 21:23 – the only light in the city is that of the Lamb. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12, see also John 1:4, 2 Tim 1:10). We can only see by the knowledge imparted by Jesus.

Rev 22:1:1, 2 – a river of the water of life flows from God's throne to water the city. This reminds us of Jesus' comment to the woman at the well, “whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” And again, “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” Thus, we are dependant upon Jesus for all things throughout eternity.

Rev 21:14 – the Lamb is the foundation of the city. Jesus supports and sustains us for ever and ever.

I want to be there with Jesus!

APPENDIX 1

The Great Controversy: Who is on Trial?

Paderewski vs Suzuki

One of the 20th Century's greatest musicians was Ignasi Paderewski (1860-1941), Polish pianist, composer and statesman. He was taught music early in the traditional method: learned notes, where they could be found on the piano, practised scales and numerous finger exercises, etc. He also advocated a similar method for students: play the music set before you.

By contrast, Shinichi Suzuki (b 1898), Japanese violinist, developed another method of teaching music by having the student play an instrument by ear after listening to recordings of each piece. This method is widely used and is gaining popularity over the more traditional methods in some circles.

Now these two methods of teaching music each have their advantages, but are incompatible with each other. With time, both have developed vocal and passionate proponents. Both camps argue that "scientific studies" have proved the overall superiority of their respective system. No resolution of this dilemma is in sight.

Now, let us suppose that Paderewski and Suzuki could actually meet (as far as is known, they never met each other.) Further, let us imagine that at this apocryphal meeting is also a gathering of their most passionate disciples. Human nature being what it is, the dinner discussion naturally turns to teaching methods with two camps rapidly staking out their respective territory.

Let us further suppose that the discussion becomes so heated that they propose a test to finally decide this didactic dilemma. Choose 200 hundred untrained music students; randomly divide them into two groups and instruct one group in the traditional Paderewski method and the other group of 100 in the newer Suzuki method; teach them for three years and then have them all sit a standard music examination to see how they have progressed.

QUESTION: At this final music examination, who is on trial?

ANSWER: Paderewski and Suzuki (and their teaching methods) with the results of the student's examinations used as evidence.

Lucifer's Problem

Anciently, there was a perfect angel, a guarding cherub in heaven, the one closest to the throne of God, of whom it is written:

This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on

the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you." Eze 28:12-15 (NIV)

To explain the entrance of sin would excuse it. No explanation can be given. However, once sin began, it took root in the mind of this once great angel and another idea was born:

How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!

You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." Isa 14:12-15. (Unless noted otherwise, all Bible texts are taken from the NIV)

Thus, Lucifer issued a direct challenge to the authority of God that could not be ignored. To do so would have left doubts in the minds of all other heavenly intelligences that might also breed foment. The problem had to be confronted in some way as to resolve this challenge. Notice what Daniel records:

This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully.

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. Dan 7:8-10.

The context of this passage is the activities of a power inspired and controlled by the devil and his deceptive forces. Now, the same question arises as before: At this court hearing, who is on trial? Let there be no doubt because the Scripture tells us explicitly:

Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: "That you may be justified in your words, And may overcome when you are judged." Rom 3:4 NKJV.

Thus, God is on trial while this challenge to His authority is resolved. In Rev 12:7-9 we read about the protagonists in heaven and the great controversy between Christ (Michael) and Satan (the dragon):

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough,

and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Thus, the earth became a cosmic laboratory in which Satan's delusions of self proclaimed deity could be tested. Paul also teaches a similar theme:

We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. 1 Cor 4:9b.

And again:

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. Eph 3:10, 11.

Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. 1 Peter 2:12.

"...your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. All this is evidence that God's judgment is right..." 2 Thess 1:4, 5. Thus, our lives are the evidence in the cosmic trial of God and His purposes. This is quite sobering: What do each of us demonstrate to others about the character of God? Is He loving and caring, or capricious, or vindictive? We cannot tell most observers about God's character, we must SHOW them.

How the Challenge will be Resolved

In the same way that the apocryphal music dilemma was solved, there must be an examination, or trial, with evidence taken from the results of the lives of those involved with the cosmic experiment, us! Let us examine this examination, which the Bible calls a judgement.

For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead. Acts 17:31. Thus, all people will be involved with this judgement and vindication of God and His character.

So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. Matt 10:26. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. Eccl 12:14. Thus, no evidence will be concealed – all will be revealed. There is no point in trying to hide anything in this life.

Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are ever before me. Isa 49:15, 16. Here is an important point: Whatever the purpose of the judgement, it is NOT to reveal to God who is saved and lost – He already knows, even before we are born! The purpose of the judgement is to reveal to all other intelligences who is lost and

saved, and why. *God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.* 1 John 3:20.

Indeed, Paul is quite explicit on this matter – the Lord obviously does not need to have a judgement so that He can discover who is saved – He already knows.

Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his." 2 Tim 2:19.

The reason for this wonderful truth is simple – the saved select themselves by choosing Jesus as their Saviour. Jesus stated (as recorded by John):

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 John 5:11-13. I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. John 5:24, 25.

Thus, we may have the assurance of salvation right here and now – our salvation depends only on our continued relationship with Jesus, and our acceptance of that salvation. He saved us and there is nothing any of us can contribute to that perfect provision, which has already been made for us. The only matter to reveal in the judgement is whether we have accepted that salvation and shown evidence of it in our lives. This is what is revealed to other beings, and not to God who already knows.

The Three-Phase Judgement

The challenge to God's celestial authority must be resolved in an open and transparent manner. For this reason, He has chosen a process involving a three-phase judgement of His dealings with sin and Lucifer's challenge. It must be kept in mind that the purpose of this "judgement" process, ie, trial, is not for God to discover who is saved (He already knows) but to reveal to angels and us who is saved and why.

We will observe that each phase of this triple judgement, there is involved a judgement throne or seat at which God and Jesus expose their actions to universal scrutiny. God's function is much like a judge in an adversarial criminal case where the jury decides and the judges supervises to ensure due process is followed.

Phase 1 – Pre-Millennial (ie, Pre-Advent) Judgement

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened. Dan 7:9, 10. The context of this judgement scene is the judgement of

the little horn **before** the second coming of Jesus. Thus, Jesus deals with this demonic power, but does so in a way that vindicates His character. Thus, the judgement scene depicts the angels sitting in judgement on God's decisions.

He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment [more correctly, trial or court case] has come. Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." Rev 14:7. Again, this trial occurs before the second advent of Jesus.

Now, it is obvious that this pre-advent judgement does not reveal anything to mortal humans living on earth because we are not involved. Its primary function is evidently for the heavenly intelligences. "...Even angels long to look into these things" (1 Peter 1:12). [Note: At times this phase has been called an "Investigative Judgement" in recognition of the fact that the angels have the opportunity to investigate such matters.]

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. Eph 3:10, 11.

"...your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. All this is evidence that God's judgment is right..." 2 Thess 1:4, 5.

At the conclusion of this first phase, the Bible depicts Jesus sitting on His throne in heavenly glory carrying out the results of this first phase.

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." Matt 25:31, 32. This is the first of the judgment seats.

Phase 2 – Millennial Judgement

Notice that Paul predicts a time when humans would judge angels (1 Cor 6:2, 3). This apparently arrives during the 1000 years, or millennium. *I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years. Rev 20:4-6.* Thus, unlike the pre-advent judgement, the millennial judgement is primarily for the benefit of the recently immortalised saints. (As the above passage makes clear, the wicked remain dead during the millennium.)

What an opportunity this will be – to audit God's dealings with His universe and satisfy all our questions! Doubtless there will be difficult moments for some as hitherto hidden facts are revealed about each of us. Imagine David having to

confess his deceit and murderous plots to Uriah the Hittite. However, I am sure that most of us will have some such hidden sins to confess to others. Interestingly, Revelation says that after the millennium God will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Rev 21:4).

We should pause to note that this second phase also involves judgement thrones or seats as clearly stated in the above passage. The following passages also discuss the throne of the Godhead during this time:

For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. Rom 14:10.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. 2 Cor 5:10.

This is the second of the three judgement seats in the three phase judgement of God.

Phase 3 – Post-Millennial Judgement

The first two phases of judgement have satisfied the heavenly beings and the saved of the earth. This leaves only one group – the wicked. It is during the third phase that they are both satisfied with God's decisions and character, and then destroyed.

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. Rev 20:7-9.

Thus, all minds will be fully satisfied that God is righteous and the challenge to His divine authority has been successfully met. Only then can it be said, "trouble will not come a second time" (Nah 1:9).

Again, there is a celestial judgement seat involved with this final phase of executive judgement.

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it... And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.... If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Rev 20:11-15.

Our Responsibility

If the above description appears too celestial and remote, not involving us, then it has failed. Just as the music exam involved the students, using their results as evidence to justify the maestros, so too this cosmic experiment involving the great controversy between Christ and Satan, will involve the lives of each of us. We are the evidence that will be used to vindicate God's character.

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. 1 Peter 1:15-17.

"...your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. All this is evidence that God's judgment is right..." 2 Thess 1:4, 5.

Thus, our actions do have cosmic significance. Therefore, let us walk as Jesus walked so that God may be proved right when He is judged (Rom 3:4).

APPENDIX 2

The Roman Catholic Church's Claim to Authority

This appendix is provided to list a small portion of the voluminous documentation concerning the Roman Catholic Church's (pre Vatican II) claims about itself. It should be remembered that since the Vatican II council, these claims have been de-emphasised but never changed or withdrawn.

SOURCE: James Cardinal Gibbons, "The Claims of the Catholic Church in the Making of the Republic," in John Gilmary Shea and others, *The Cross and the Flag, Our Church and Country* (New York: The Catholic Historical League of America, 1899), pp. 24, 25.

[p. 24] The Divine institution of a day of rest from ordinary occupations and of religious worship, transferred by the authority of the Church [p. 25] from the Sabbath, the last day, to Sunday, the first day of the week, ... is one of the most patent signs that we are a Christian people.

SOURCE: *The Christian Sabbath* (2d ed.; Baltimore: The Catholic Mirror, [1893], pp. 29-31.

[p. 29] The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday. We say by virtue of her Divine mission because He [who] has so called Himself "the Lord of the Sabbath," . . . commanded all, without exception, "to hear His Church,["] under penalty of being classed by Him as "the heathen and the publican." . . .

But the Protestant says: How can I receive the teachings of an apostate Church? How, we ask, have you managed to receive her teaching all your life, in *direct* [p. 30] *opposition* to your recognized teacher, the Bible, on the Sabbath question? ...

[p. 31] The Protestant world at its birth found the Christian Sabbath too strongly entrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the Church's right to change the day, for over 300 years. The Christian Sabbath is therefore *to this day* the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church, as Spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world.

[NOTE: This pamphlet is mostly a reprint of four editorials in *The Catholic Mirror* (Baltimore), Sept. 2, 9, 16, 23, 1893. The above quotation from the beginning to the first omission, and the last paragraph, came from the editorial of September 23, but the middle portion is part of an addition inserted by the author when the material was reprinted as a pamphlet. The title, with full subtitle, reads: *The Christian Sabbath-The Genuine Offspring of the Union of the Holy Spirit, and the Catholic Church, His Spouse. "The Claims of Protestantism to any Part Therein Proved to be Groundless, Self-Contradictory and Suicidal."*

SOURCE: Peter Geiermann, *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (1957 ed.), p. 50. Copyright 1930 by B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis.

Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

[NOTE: This work received the "apostolic blessing" of Pope Pius X, Jan. 25, 1910.]

SOURCE: *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests*, trans. by John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan (1958), pp. 402, 403. Copyright 1934 by Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., New York.

[p. 402] But the Church of God has thought it well to transfer the celebration and observance of the Sabbath to Sunday.

For, as on that day light first shone on the world, so by the Resurrection of our Redeemer on the same day, by whom was thrown open to us the gate to eternal life, we were called out of darkness into light; and hence the Apostles would have it called *the Lord's day*.

We also learn from the Sacred Scriptures that the first day [p. 403] of the week was held sacred because on that day the work of creation commenced, and on that day the Holy Ghost was given to the Apostles.

SOURCE: Stephen Keenan, *A Doctrinal Catechism* (3d American ed., rev.; New, York: T. W. Strong, late Edward Dunigan & Bro., 1876)

Q. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?

A. 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.

SOURCE: Louis Gaston de Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of To-day* (Boston: Patrick Donahoe, 1868), p. 225.

It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority Of JESUS CHRIST, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord.

Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church. [See No. 1442.]

SOURCE: Daniel Ferris, *Manual of Christian Doctrine: or, Catholic Belief and Practice* (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd., 1916), pp. 67, 68.

[p. 67] The Third Commandment.

Q. What does the word “Sabbath” mean?

A. It means the day of rest.

Q. When did the Sabbath begin to be kept?

A. From the very creation of the world; for then God blessed the seventh day, and rested on it from all His work. -Gen. ii. 2, 3,

Q. When was this Commandment renewed?

A. In the Old Law, when God gave the commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai, written with His own finger on two tables of stone.-Exodus xx.

Q. Why was the Jewish Sabbath changed into the Sunday?

A. Because Christ was born on a Sunday, arose from the dead on a Sunday, and sent down the Holy Ghost on a Sunday-works not inferior to the creation of the world.

Q. By whom was it changed?

A. By the Governors of the Church, the Apostles, who also kept it; for St. John was in spirit on the Lord's day (which was Sunday)-Apoc. i. 10.

Q. How do you prove that the Church has power to command Feasts and Holy-days?

A. By this very act of changing the Sabbath into the Sunday, which is admitted by Protestants, and therefore they contradict themselves by keeping Sunday so strictly, and breaking most other Feasts commanded by the same Church.

Q. How do you prove that?

A. Because by keeping Sunday [p.68] they acknowledge the power of the Church to ordain Feasts and to command them under sin, and by not keeping the remainder, equally commanded by her, they deny in fact the same power.

[NOTE: A considerable part of this extract was drawn from Henry Turberville's *An Abridgement of the Christian Doctrine* (known also as the Douay Catechism) of 1649.]

SOURCE: Caspare [Ricciulli de Fosso (Archbishop of Reggio), Address in the 17th session of the Council of Trent, Jan. 18, 1562, in Mansi SC, Vol. 33, cols. 529, 530. Latin.

[col. 529] Such is the condition of the heretics of this age that on nothing do they rely more than that, under the pretense of the word of God, they overthrow the

authority of the church; as though the church, His body, could be opposed to the word of Christ, or the head to the body. On the contrary, the authority of the church, then, is illustrated most clearly by the Scriptures; for while on the one hand she recommends them, declares them to be divine, [col. 530] offers them to us to be read, in doubtful matters explains them faithfully, and condemns whatever is contrary to them; on the other hand, the legal precepts in the Scriptures taught by the Lord have ceased by virtue of the same authority. The Sabbath, the most glorious day in the law, has been changed into the Lord's Day. Circumcision, enjoined upon Abraham and his seed under such threatening that he who had not been circumcised would be destroyed from among his people, has been so abrogated that the apostle asserts: “If ye be circumcised, ye have fallen from grace, and Christ shall profit you nothing.” These and other similar matters have not ceased by virtue of Christ's teaching (for He says He has come to fulfill the law, not to destroy it), but they have been changed by the authority of the church. Indeed, if she should be removed (since there must be heresies), who would set forth truth, and confound the obstinacy of heretics? All things will be confused, and soon heresies condemned by her authority will spring up again.

SOURCE: Heinrich Julius Holtzmann, *Kanon und Tradition* (“Canon and Tradition”) (Ludwigsburg: Druck und Verlag von Ferd. Riehm, 1859), p. 263. German.

The Council [of Trent] agreed fully with Ambrosius Pelargus, that under no condition should the Protestants be allowed to triumph by saying that the council had condemned the doctrine of the ancient church. But this practice caused untold difficulty without being able to guarantee certainty. For this business, indeed, ‘well nigh divine prudence’ was requisite-which the Spanish, ambassador acknowledged as belonging to the council on the sixteenth of March, 1562. Indeed, thus far they had not been able to orient themselves to the interchanging, crisscrossing, labyrinthine, twisting passages of an older and newer concept of tradition. But even in this they were to succeed. Finally, at the last opening on the eighteenth of January, 1562, all hesitation was set aside: [Gaspar de Fosso] the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the church could therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures, because the church had changed circumcision into baptism, Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ, but by its own authority. With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed, and it was declared that tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration.

APPENDIX 3

Ellen G White's views on The Seven Trumpets

Introduction

It must be stated in the most emphatic terms possible that all doctrine must be established on the basis of the Bible and the Bible alone. Indeed, Ellen White has stated this herself:

The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union; all who bow to this holy word will be in harmony. Our own views and ideas must not control our efforts. Man is fallible, but God's word is infallible. Instead of wrangling with one another, let men exalt the Lord. Let us meet all opposition as did our Master, saying, "It is written." Let us lift up the banner on which is inscribed, The Bible our rule of faith and discipline. RH, 15 Dec 1885, p16.

I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. EW 78.

In His word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of experience. GC vii.

The testimonies of Sister White should not be carried to the front. God's Word is the unerring standard. The Testimonies are not to take the place of the Word. Great care should be exercised by all believers to advance these questions carefully, and always stop when you have said enough. Let all prove their positions from the Scriptures and substantiate every point they claim as truth from the revealed Word of God. Ev 256.

The more we look at the promises of the Word of God, the brighter they grow. The more we practice them, the deeper will be our understanding of them. Our position and faith is in the Bible. And never do we want any soul to bring in the Testimonies ahead of the Bible. Ev 256.

Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light. CE 37. (1902), Ev 257, CM 125, 3SM 30.

The question is asked: What is the cause of the dearth in the church? The answer is: We allow our minds to be drawn away from the word. If the word of God were eaten as the food for the soul, if it were treated with respect and deference, there would be no necessity for the many and repeated testimonies that are borne. The simple declarations of Scripture would be received and acted upon. 6T 392 & 393.

I have words to speak to my brethren east and west, north and south. I request that my writings shall not be used as the leading argument to settle questions over which there is now so much controversy. I entreat of Elders H, I, J, and others of our leading brethren, that they make no reference to my writings to sustain their views of "the daily." 1SM 164.

Thus, again, all doctrine must be based on the Bible alone. Therefore, this appendix merely records Ellen Whites views on the interpretation of the seven trumpets, rather than proves any position on the basis of her writings. As will become apparent, the SDA church has clearly taken her advice (as recorded above) to heart because there have been so many divergent views on the understanding of the seven trumpets, despite some official writings on the subject.

Background

Ellen White wrote most of her material during the 19th century and very early part of the 20th century. During this time, several SDA authors set forth interpretations of Daniel and Revelation such as, Uriah Smith ("Daniel and Revelation"), J N Loughborough ("The Great Second Advent"), Josiah Litch ("Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy" magazine and "The Probability of the Second Coming of Christ about A.D. 1843", "An address to the Clergy"), Edwin Thiele ("Outline Studies in Revelation"), etc.

These authors presented a more or less unified view that has been largely adopted by the official SDA Bible commentary. According to this view the seven trumpets represent (in the case of the first four) wars against the western Roman

Empire – (1) Visigoths under Alaric in 410 AD, (2) Vandals under Genseric in 455 AD, (3) Huns under Attila in 451 AD, (4) Heruli under Odoacer in 476 AD. The fifth trumpet is understood to depict the rise of Islam as it attacked the eastern Roman Empire under Othman in 27 July 1299 to 27 July 1449 (150 years). The sixth trumpet is understood to depict the Turkish power from 27 July 1449 to 11 Aug 1840 (391 years and 15 days). The seventh trumpet depicts the Second Advent of Jesus.

By contrast, many modern SDA interpreters prefer a quite different scheme that makes the seven trumpets more closely parallel the seven churches and seven seals. This view has (for the purpose of simplicity here) been championed by Jonathon K Paulien and Roy Naden, who believe that the trumpets represent God's (partial) judgements on the wicked and specifically (1) the siege of Jerusalem by Rome in 70 AD, (2) the punishment of Rome during the 2nd and 3rd centuries, (3) the growing power of the church to fill the political vacuum created by collapsing Rome in the 4th and 5th centuries, (4) the spiritually and socially dark state of Europe during Medieval times in the 6th to 16th centuries, (5) the rise of atheism in the 18th and 19th centuries (6) the rise of spiritism ("New Age") in the 20th century, (7) the Second Advent of Jesus. [Note that in this scheme, there is no definite time period for the sixth trumpet.]

Many more schemes have been worked out but these are, for the most part, variations or refinements of one of the above two. For example, Taylor Bunch offered a more credible version (a refinement) of Josiah Litch's scheme.

Let us now survey Ellen's White's views to determine what interpretation she might have offered.

Introductory Vision and General Scheme

Ellen repeatedly identifies the angel with the golden censer standing before the altar in the introductory vision (Rev 8:2-6) as Jesus Himself acting as our intercessor (12MR 415, 19MR 215, YI 16 Jan 1896, HP 79, 7BC 930-931, 970, 6BC 1078, EW 252, 256, DA 667, PP 354, 4SG-a 8-9, ST 28 Feb 1906, etc).

The contents of the golden censer represent the truth of Christ's teachings (Ev 600-601).

Ellen White leaves no room for doubt about the general scheme that any interpretation of the seven trumpets must follow: they represent punishments on "the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity" (15MR 219). No specific group of the wicked are here identified, except for the last three trumpets called "woes". In these cases the woes are specifically directed at false Christian teachers. (See material below for more details.)

1st Trumpet

As far as can be determined, Ellen White makes no direct or even indirect reference to the first trumpet.

2nd Trumpet

As far as can be determined, Ellen White makes no direct or indirect reference to the second trumpet.

3rd Trumpet

Again, Ellen White makes no direct reference to the third trumpet; however, she does interpret some of its symbols. For example, the fountains of waters represent the sacred teachings and divine grace of Christ, which His followers are to dispense (teach & instruct) to others (PP 412, 6T 227-228, DA 454, PK 233-234).

Further, the corruption of these sacred teachings and divine grace is represented by defiled well-springs of the water of life (DA 478), which turn bitter (PK 232, EW 210-211).

Thus, Ellen White appears to suggest that the third trumpet has something to do with the corruption of the teaching of divine grace.

4th Trumpet

Again, Ellen White makes no direct reference to the fourth trumpet; however, she does interpret one of its symbols. The darkening of the sun is equated with the "Roman Church" and its effect in producing the "Dark Ages" (GC 55, TM 280).

Thus far, Ellen White shows considerable independence from the majority of the interpreters of her time – she clearly did not agree with the general scheme of Litch and Smith et al, who believed that the first four trumpets represented attacks on the western Roman Empire. Rather, she appears to prefer a less literal, more symbolic interpretation of the images in Rev 8.

5th & 6th Trumpets

There are only three statements in Ellen White's writings that refer directly to the fifth and sixth trumpets as listed (and quoted) below. The first two refer to the title of the last three trumpets as "woes"

Those who have been self-indulgent and ready to yield to pride and fashion and display, will sneer at the conscientious, truth-loving, God-fearing people, and will, in this work sneer at the God of heaven Himself. The Bible is disregarded, the wisdom of men exalted, and Satan and the man of sin worshiped by the wisdom of this age, while the angel is flying through the midst of heaven crying "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth. 1888, p485.

The "woe, woe, woe!" was pronounced upon a church who walked in the sparks of their own kindling, who did not derive their light and power from the great central Light, the Sun of Righteousness, and diffuse that light and glory to those who were in darkness. By

absorbing and diffusing the light, they cause their own light to burn brighter. The one who receives light, but does not give it as God requires him to do, will become a receptacle of darkness. PH028, p3.

It is clear that Ellen White believed that the three woes were pronounced against the **church** “who walked in the sparks of their own kindling.” Apart from these direct references to the woes of the trumpets, Ellen White makes some indirect comments about woes concerning those who are given the responsibility of preaching.

Those who are called of God to minister in holy things are called to be pure in heart and holy in life. “Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.” If God pronounces a woe upon those who are called to preach the truth and refuse to obey, a heavier woe rests upon those who take upon them this sacred work without clean hands and pure hearts. As there are woes for those who preach the truth while they are unsanctified in heart and life, so there are woes for those who receive and maintain the unsanctified in the position which they cannot fill. 2T p552.

I saw that there were fearful woes for those who preach the truth and are not sanctified by it, and there are woes also for those who consent to receive and maintain the unsanctified to minister to them in word and doctrine, I am alarmed for the people of God who profess to believe solemn, important truth, for I know that many who now profess to believe the truth are not converted nor sanctified through the truth. Men can hear and acknowledge the whole truth, and yet know nothing of the power of godliness. All who carry the truth will not themselves be saved by the truth they preach. Said the angel, “Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.” 4SG-b p59, 60.

See also 1T p261, GC p144, etc, for more comments about woes pronounced on those who do not preach the truth when called. Thus, it appears that Ellen White believed that woes were pronounced against those who are:

- (a) Called to preach but do not obey the call
- (b) Those who undertake this calling without “clean hands” (sanctified hearts)
- (c) Those who maintain (support) the unsanctified ministers

Again, this suggests that the woes were pronounced against the people and the (official) **church** “who walked in the sparks of their own kindling.”

The third and last direct statement (from Great Controversy) on the fifth trumpet comments on the sixth trumpet. Notice that Ellen White quotes an extensive passage from the pen of Josiah Litch and then comments on that.

In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfilment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown “in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;” and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: “Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.” -- Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, Aug. 1, 1840.

At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended. Great Controversy p335.

Notice that Ellen White does not actually say that this turn of events fulfilled the prophecy but rather, “fulfilled the prediction” of Josiah Litch. Thus, Ellen White uses the fulfilment of the prediction of Josiah Litch to document the rise of support for the Historicist system of interpretation without necessarily endorsing Litch’s view on the trumpets.

On the contrary, according to the quotations above, Ellen White appears to believe that the fifth and sixth trumpets had something to do with the punishment of the wicked generally, which was somehow facilitated by the corruption of the Catholic Church.

Thus, we find very little sympathy in Ellen White’s writings for Uriah Smith’s interpretation of the seven trumpets. The next appendix examines Uriah Smith’s views in more detail.

7th Trumpet

Ellen White makes a number of comments about this passage. See also the comments above about the last three trumpets called woes. The quotes below are only a small sample of the considerable material on the seventh trumpet.

The Kingdoms of this world are soon to become the kingdoms of our Lord. "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 forever and ever." There is to be a rapid and triumphant spread of the gospel. "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." BCL p57.

Through faith the children of God obtain a knowledge of Christ, and cherish the hope of his appearing to judge the world in righteousness, until it becomes a glorious expectation; for they shall then see him as he is, and be made like him, and ever be with the Lord. The sleeping saints shall then be called forth from their graves to a glorious immortality. When the day of deliverance shall come, then shall ye return, and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. When Christ shall come, it will be to be admired of all those that believe, and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. ST 1895 June 20

The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. The heavenly gates are again to be lifted up, and with ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy ones, our Saviour will come forth as King of kings and Lord of lords. Jehovah Immanuel shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord, and His name shall be one. "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." ST 1903 Oct 28.

Thus, Ellen White appears to believe that the seventh trumpet depicts the rapid spread of the Gospel just before Jesus returns to collect the righteous.

I was taken off in Vision to the Most Holy Place, where I saw Jesus still interceding for Israel. On the bottom of his garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the Most Holy Place, until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction: and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished his work in the Most Holy Place--laid off his priestly attire and clothed himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silent no longer; but pour out his wrath on those who have rejected his truth. I saw that the anger of the nations, the wrath of God, and the time to judge the dead, were separate events, one following the other. I saw that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The nations are now getting angry, but when our High Priest has finished his work in the Sanctuary, he will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance, and then the seven last plagues will be poured out. I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds until Jesus' work was done in the Sanctuary, and then will come the seven last plagues. These plagues enraged the wicked against the righteous, and they thought that we had brought them down upon them, and if they could rid the earth of us, then the plagues would be stayed. A decree went forth to slay the saints, which caused them to cry day and night for deliverance. This was the time of Jacob's trouble. Then all the saints cried out with anguish of spirit, and were delivered by the Voice of God. Then the 144,000 triumphed. RH 1849 Aug 1. (See also ExV p19, EW p36, Mar p258.)

This is again, a depiction of the time just before the second coming of Jesus associated with the close of probation. There is little dispute here between the views of Ellen White, Uriah Smith, and Jon Paulien.

APPENDIX 4

Objections to Josiah Litch's View on the Trumpets

This appendix is provided to reveal the bias of the author. (I believe this is only fair.) However, the fact that I object to Josiah Litch's view does not necessarily mean that I fully support the views of Jon Paulien et al, although I have much greater sympathy for the latter. (See appendix 3 for a brief description of these different views.)

The list below may provide some explanation for why Ellen White wrote so little about the prevailing interpretation of the trumpets – she did not agree but did not want to “rock the boat” on an issue that was not essential for salvation.

A list of reasons why the political interpretation of the trumpets as espoused by Uriah Smith et al, is untenable.

General

- (1) The system is inconsistent – most elements are assumed to be literal (ships, mountains, waters, horses) while others are taken symbolically (locusts, day for a year etc). Why was not ALL green grass destroyed (Rev 8:7)? Where was the cavalry of 200,000,000 (Rev 9:16)? Are the sun, moon, and stars in Rev 8:12 literal or symbolic?
- (2) Some elements are interpreted differently even when it is the same element. For example, the star that fell from heaven in Rev 8:10 is the same star that had fallen in Rev 9:1. Yet, in the former it is assumed to be Attila and the latter it is assumed to be either the rise of Islam or Othman. No Biblical support for either contention is offered despite the obvious allusion to Isa 14:12, Eze 28:17, and Rev 12:9, 13. In all other places in the Revelation and the New Testament, the abyss is the abode of the devil and the dead, not Islamic forces or any other political system.
- (3) Those elements that are taken symbolically are not interpreted according to the Bible's system, eg, the mountain hurled into the sea (Rev 8:8), or the star that fell from heaven (Rev 8:10). Instead, the elements are understood according what happens to fit the interpreter's view of history; that is, it becomes a historical interpretation not a Biblical one.
- (4) According to the historicist system of interpretation, the first three septets of Revelation will be parallel, and cover the same time periods from different perspectives. The paradigm for this is clearly set out in the book of Daniel. However, Josiah Litch sees the first four trumpets as covering, not the first 16 centuries of Christian history (as per the seal and churches) but all occurring

in the space of less than 100 years, about 405 – 480 AD. Most of these attacks on Western Rome were almost simultaneous.

- (5) Possibly the greatest weakness of the political rather than symbolic interpretation of the trumpets is that it deprives them of their Christo-centeredness. They are thus reduced to a description of some wars, which amount to a sideshow in the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan. The political interpretation offers nothing that illustrates God's dealing with men and nations and outworking of His providence in history.

5th and 6th Trumpets

- (6) By contrast to (4) above, the 5th and 6th trumpets are assumed to be contiguous, without explanation or textual support. If this is true, why does the 7th trumpet not immediately follow the 6th trumpet, that is, why did Jesus not return in 1840?
- (7) Smith suggests that the star that FELL (literally - had fallen) was the RISING of Islam. That is, a falling star represents something rising!
- (8) This is also chronologically impossible because Islam, as political force of international control came to prominence in the 250 years after Mohammad's death, ie, 650-900 AD. Yet, in Smith's system, Islam is begun in 1299 – about 600 years too late!
- (9) The closing dates for the 5th & 6th trumpets are equally problematic. 150 years are supposed to represent 150 years of torture without killing the Greek empire. The supposed closing date for the 5th trumpet and 150 years is 27 July 1449, when Constantinopol is supposed to have effectively collapsed (ie, killed!!) with the death of its last emperor. In fact, Byzantium fell on 1453 Aug 29 when Muslim forces actually took control of the city, and the Hagia Sophia in particular. Further, the Ottoman empire (why this Muslim power and not any other) actually survived until 1917 when its last vestiges disappeared.
- (10) The time periods have a fundamental error – during the 6th trumpet (27 July 1449 to 11 Aug 1840) the calendar was changed by deleting 10 days, for which no allowance is made.
- (11) Whatever one makes of the 5th and 6th trumpets, the interpretation must account for the fact that in both cases the forces can perfectly distinguish between the sealed and unsealed (Rev 9:4, 20, 21). The Islamic hordes often slaughtered without regard to creed and so cannot fulfil this part of the specification.

- (12) Further, the prophecy in the 5th trumpet clearly says that there was to be no death – only torture (Rev 9:4, 5, 10). That is, no one is killed under the 5th trumpet. Again, the Islamic forces, both before and after Othman, cannot satisfy this requirement because they waged war wherever they went and killed thousands. Some interpreters in the school of Josiah Litch contend that Othman and his Islamic forces did not “kill” the eastern Roman Empire but only tortured it. In fact, millions were murdered on threat of conversion to Islam. Further, in 27 July 1449, the Byzantium power is supposed to be finally killed!
- (13) This symbolic interpretation is inconsistent with the literal interpretation of the horses of Rev 9:7 etc. Either we must understand this prophecy literally or symbolically – but not both. It is also inconsistent with the use of the same word (or idea) of literal death in Rev 8:11.
- (14) The idea that Rev 9:15 involves a time period of a prophetic hour, day, month and year is, in my judgement, grammatically, literarily, and idiomatically impossible. The reason is three fold: (a) such a time period must have numerical adjectives before the time periods which this passage lacks, (b) the text does talk about a time period but a moment when the large army is released, and, (c) the idiom of the language is to convey “this designated (exact) moment”. That is, the angels are released according to God’s will, at the right instant, the right hour, day, month and year.
- (15) Other than interpretational convenience, it is not clear why Josiah Litch should choose the Ottoman Empire to represent Islam. It was one of several Islamic powers such as: the Umayyad Dynasty; the Abbasid Caliphate (750 – 1258) with headquarters in Baghdad is referred to as the “Islamic Golden Age”; the Mamluks; the Seljuq Turks (1055 – 1180); the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1526) the culturally most important Islamic empire of its day; the Mughal Empire (1526-1858), the Safavid Dynasty in Persia (16th – 18th cent); the Mysore Kingdom (- 1790), etc. Further, the Ottoman Empire was a rather poor representative of Islam because it operated along very different lines from the rule of Mohammad.

Thus, in my opinion, Josiah Litch’s political interpretation of the trumpets is not based on Biblical, consistent principles of exegesis.

For completeness, the prophetic time periods in Revelation, all those periods which have a numerical adjective, are exhaustively listed below.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 2:10 | A: 10 days of Smyrna’s persecution |
| 11:2 | B: 42 months nations (gentiles) trample holy city |
| 11:3 | C: 1260 days witnesses wear sackcloth |
| 11:9 | D: 3½ days prophets dead |
| 11:11 | D: 3½ days prophets dead |
| 12:6 | C: 1260 days of dragon persecution |
| 13:5 | B: 42 months beast exercise authority |
| 18:8 | A: in one day the seven plagues come on Babylon |

Rev 8:1 lists a time period of half an hour.

Rev 9:5, 10 refers to the 5 month period which is also part of a large and elaborate chiasmic structure of the 5th trumpet.

1000 year period is described six times in Rev 20:2-7.

Rev 12:14 lists the period, time, times and half a time (= 3½ years).

There are also several time periods involving the hour as listed below:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 8:1 | half an hour for silence in heaven |
| 17:12 | one hour the 10 kings will receive authority |
| 18:10 | one hour the doom of Babylon has come |
| 18:17 | one hour the wealth of Babylon is ruined |
| 18:19 | one hour for Babylon’s ruin |

(The last three are the three triple woes pronounced upon Babylon to effect its final destruction.)

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This material in book is also available as a 17 part seminar.

The author also welcomes comments and criticisms of this work.