

❖ *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must soon take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John, who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near. —Revelation 1:1-3.

God revealed what would happen at the end of time to Christ, who showed John, who then wrote most of what he saw down for the churches in Asia Minor. Christ had already given the concepts to His disciples on the Mount of Olives, but the Revelation unveils much more detail about the time of the end and corroborates what Jesus said about events *not yet* the end (e.g. false Messiahs, wars, famine, and earthquakes).

Knowing the basic structure of the apocalyptic Revelation will help immensely in your study. Let's start our overview of this structure by making a few very clear and adamant claims:

1. The book is divided into distinct sections and most of it is **sequential** from beginning to end. Christ's Revelation takes us sequentially from about 90 CE through the gathering and wrath to the Great Judgment. Please see the breakdown below for more information.
2. While the Revelation does make use of some symbols, they're **easy to understand** and already explained for us with just a few exceptions (e.g. the *whore of Babylon*).
3. The visions contained within the book are **for the Church** – saints and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything within it pertains to the bride of Christ – then, now, and in the future until the very end. A popular rapture belief perpetuated by the media, such as the “Left Behind”, series is that the apocalyptic writing is instead meant for a ‘*tribulation force*’ made up of believers who’ll be left behind after the gathering of the Church. This is unscriptural and part of a deceptive and potentially dangerous doctrine.
4. The book of Revelation is **not symbolic** as a whole and while it does contain some symbols, it should be taken as literally as possible! Many people have emphatically claimed that the opposite is true – that the *entire* Revelation is symbolic. Why? To support a particular end-times view that contrasts the message given in a literal interpretation of Revelation.

Now is as good a time as any to introduce different methods used in interpreting the Revelation. Although we'll compare and contrast different end-times positions in chapter 17, discussing the basic approaches others have taken to studying the apocalyptic writing may be beneficial to you as you prepare to go through it.

Four significant approaches have been taken in trying to understand the Revelation: Preterist, Historic, Futurist, and Spiritual (Idealist/Symbolic). All have been spawned from attempts to make the Revelation (and the Mount of Olives discourse) fit historical events or hidden meaning (as with the Spiritual approach). The latter is without boundaries, perpetuated by the likes of Augustine and Origen¹⁹, and won't be discussed here.

Classical preterism sees the fulfillment of Revelation's prophecies as having already occurred in the past, particularly in 70 CE with the destruction of Jerusalem. Proponents believe that the Revelation would have had more relevance to the original readers.²⁰ While it's true that much of what Jesus told His disciples in response to their specific question regarding the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE has already occurred, much hasn't. For instance, you'd be hard-pressed to find evidence that the incredible destruction of God's *Day of the Lord* wrath and Christ's second coming have already happened. For this reason, some preterists claim to be only *partial* preterists. Expositors of this view believe that while many of the events of the Mount of Olives discourse and of the Revelation have occurred (e.g. with the destruction of Jerusalem), others won't be realized until sometime in the future (e.g. the return of Christ, new heaven and earth, etc.).

Historicism (historic Protestant interpretation of the Revelation) is an all but extinct view held by the likes of John Wycliffe, John Calvin, and Sir Isaac Newton.²¹ This position teaches that God revealed the entire church age in advance through the symbolic visions of the Apocalypse.²² Examples include:

- The breaking of the seven seals were said to have been fulfilled by barbaric invasions of the Roman Empire.
- Arab hordes that attacked the Roman Empire had been represented by scorpions from the bottomless pit in chapter 9.
- The beast of chapter 13 represents the Roman papacy (and an assertion that the Pope is the Antichrist is also made here).

The biggest challenge with this approach is that it requires much conjecture since multiple historical events may fit a single prophecy. You should definitely avoid taking this approach for the same reasons you should avoid pursuing a Spiritual/Idealist/Symbolic approach!

Most popular among evangelical writers and Bible teachers of today is a *futurist* approach to an interpretation of the Revelation. This method dictates that everything past chapter three awaits future fulfillment. Whereas historicism attempts to match past events to Scripture as an explanation of prior fulfillment, futurists look forward to eventual fulfillment. Many who subscribe to this approach also hold to a dispensationalist view. It insists that church history has been divided into seven segments (i.e. 'dispensations') that closely correspond to the different churches in Asia Minor as recorded by John (more on this in chapter 17 of this guide).

Although I'm not a proponent of dispensationalism, I do appreciate the *futurist* method of analyzing the Revelation because it allows the reader to take a literal approach to interpretation whereas other methods must often take passages non-literally. Anyone assuming God meant something other than what He revealed literally must also take responsibility for their interpretation. Therefore, my recommendation (as already discussed) is to take Scripture at face value wherever possible unless context strongly suggests you do otherwise, and doing so results in no contradictions.

The following is very high-level summary of what we'll study by chapter:

- Chapters 1-5 (90 CE): Introduction by John, letters from Christ to the churches of Asia Minor, and an invitation to heaven to watch the end-times events.
- Chapter 6: Seals 1-6 depicting birth pangs and great tribulation.

- Chapter 7: Protection of the 144,000 Jews; Bride of Christ seen in heaven.
- Chapters 8-9: Seal 7; Trumpet judgments 1-6.
- Chapter 10: Seventh trumpet judgment.
- Chapters 11-13: Three-and-one-half-year period of great tribulation detailed.
- Chapter 14: A glimpse of *Babylon's* destruction, preaching of the Gospel before God's wrath, gathering of believers, and God's wrath – all things that will happen near the end of the 3.5-year great tribulation or shortly thereafter by the end of the trumpet judgments.
- Chapters 15-16: Seven vial judgments that will complete God's wrath.
- Chapters 17-18: Description (and destruction) of *Babylon* near the end of God's wrath; Antichrist kingdom details.
- Chapter 19: Armageddon at the end of God's wrath; Marriage supper of Christ.
- Chapter 20: Thousand-year reign of Christ; Great judgment following Christ's kingdom.
- Chapter 21: New heaven and earth after the judgment.
- Chapter 22: Final admonishments and closure.

Chapters 1-5 provide an introduction by John and letters to the 7 churches in Asia Minor. Why only 7? The early Church was segmented by geographical boundaries. You would've found one church in each city or town instead of hundreds-of-thousands of fairly autonomous and relatively small church organizations worldwide (as you'll find today). Christ's letters to these churches contain admonishments and warnings based on their behavior at the time. These chapters also reveal John's invitation to heaven to view the end-times events and prepare for the breaking of the 7 seals – only possible by Christ who had earned the right.

Chapter 6 seals 1-3 are broken to reveal events that have, and will, continue with greater intensity and frequency. Seals 4 and 5 are broken to reveal the persecution and death (beheading) that will happen at the hands of the Antichrist and his kingdom during their 3.5-year authority. Broken seal 6 of chapter 6 reveals the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars preceding Christ's return. It concludes with the realization by the rest of the world that God's wrath is coming.

Chapter 7 details the protection of the 144,000 Jews in anticipation of God's impending wrath, and the bride of Christ gathered at the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars can be seen here.

Chapters 8-10 outline the first 6 of 7 trumpet judgments (the beginning of God's wrath). The 7th trumpet will herald the kingdom of Christ – the anointing of the most holy – ending the 70th week of Daniel.

Chapters 11-13 give great detail about the kingdom and 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist – the last half of Daniel's 70th week. Each of these 3 chapters offers a different view of this timeframe. Why stick this information into the middle of the sequence of God's wrath? The 7th trumpet judgment marks the end of the 3.5-year great tribulation at the hands of the Antichrist, so it's probably as good a place as any to present a summary of that time.

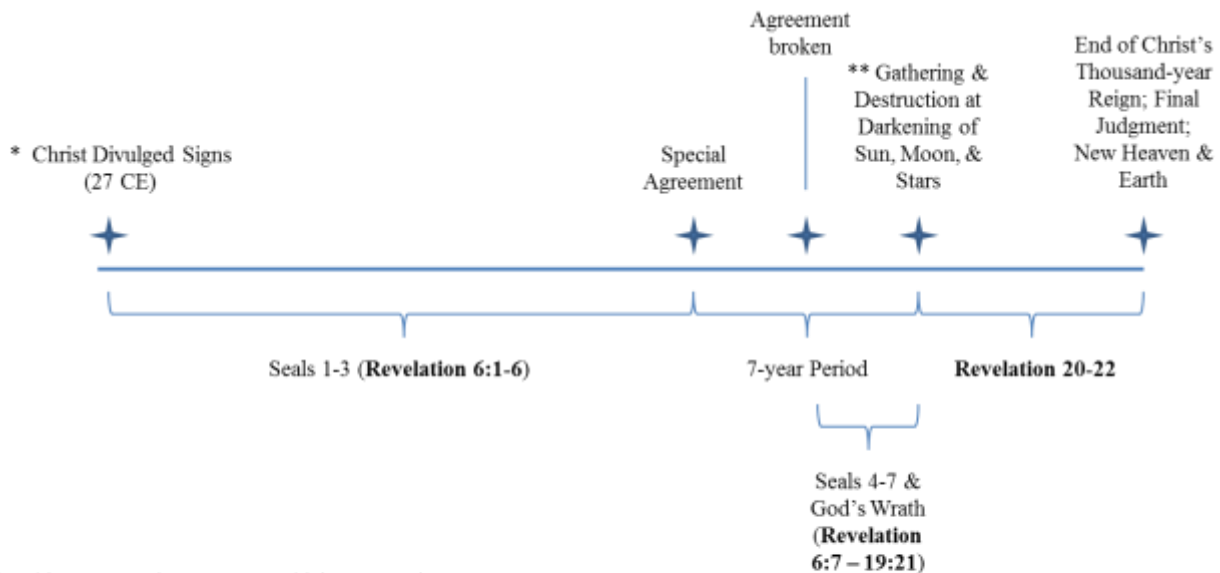
Chapter 14 tells of events concluding the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist (preaching of the Gospel, gathering, and wrath). The vision also updates the disposition of the 144,000.

Chapters 15-19 contain information pertaining to the rest of God's wrath to include the battle of Armageddon. You'll also find much detail regarding *Babylon*.

Chapters 20-22 will take us through Christ's 1,000-year kingdom, reveal details about the new heaven and earth, and offer closure to the Revelation.

As you'll discover, the entire unveiling is sequential and closely related to what Christ had already told His disciple on the Mount of Olives. The diagram below closely resembles the first one we looked at back in Chapter Two. The primary difference is the insertion of references from the book of Revelation. We'll break it down into multiple detailed timelines later in Chapter 16. Each detailed view will depict a specific timeframe and will contain appropriate references.

14.2 Timeline of the book of Revelation



* Evidence strongly supports a widely accepted understanding that Christ was born 3-6 BC; 27 AD would be near the time of His death & resurrection.

** Happens at or near the end of the 7-year period.

SUPPLEMENTAL READING (Either the King James or NASB version of the Bible is recommended; read at least 3 verses before and after Scriptural references to understand the context better):

1. Introduction by John: Revelation 1:1-9
2. Saints on earth and in great tribulation during the Antichrist's reign:
 - a. Revelation 13:7 & 10 (Antichrist at war with the saints, who must persevere)
 - b. Revelation 14:12 (further perseverance of the saints)
3. Closure: Revelation 22:7-21

❖ Chapter Sixteen – *The Unveiling*

You've probably read half or more of the book of Revelation by now while going through this self-study. My intent was to introduce many of the verses and concepts early on and to provide repetition to make your study of the Revelation more meaningful. I hope that's been the case.

In this chapter, we'll undertake a comprehensive overview of the book of Revelation similar to what we did with the book of Daniel. This will be broken down into 7 parts as follows:

16.1 Division of the Study of the Revelation by Part and Theme

<i>Part</i>	<i>Theme</i>
Part I: Revelation Chapters 1 – 4	Introduction by John and letters to the churches in Asia Minor.
Part II: Revelation Chapters 5 – 8:1	Breaking of seals 1-7, the gathering, and protection of the 144,000.
Part III: Revelation Chapters 8:2 – 10	Trumpet judgments 1-6 (the beginning of God's wrath).
Part IV: Revelation Chapters 11 – 13	Several perspectives of the Antichrist's 3.5-year period of authority that will end with trumpet #7.
Part V: Revelation Chapters 14 – 16	Events just before and just after the end of the 3.5-year period of authority; Vial judgments 1-6 (almost the end of God's wrath).
Part VI: Revelation Chapters 17 – 19	Babylon and the battle of Armageddon (end of God's wrath).
Part VII: Revelation Chapters 20 – 22	Christ's 1,000-year kingdom; New heaven and earth; Closure

As discussed in Chapter 14, the Revelation is sequential, relatively easy to read, written for the Church, and not symbolic as a whole. Take your time when reading Scripture references. My recommendation is to read the Revelation one chapter at a time and then compare what you've read to the appropriate overview given here.

Let's begin our study of the ultimate in apocalyptic unveiling with *Part I: Chapters 1-4*.

❖ *Part I: Revelation Chapters 1 - 4*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Revelation chapters 1-4

The first four chapters of the Revelation offer an introduction by John and instructions in the form of letters from Christ to the seven churches of Asia Minor (at the time of John's vision in 90 CE). John also reported what he saw after being invited to heaven to view the visions of the end he was about to receive.

Translation of the Greek word used for angel in these passages (*aggelos*) depicts a *messenger*. This may mean that each letter is addressed to a messenger or leadership of the appropriate church instead of an actual angel. This interpretation would make more sense than a scenario where Christ is telling a human to write to angels – especially when Christ has regular access to them Himself. Regardless of your position on this topic, the message and the intended audience aren't affected. The translation of 'messenger' therefore is a secondary issue and not worth fretting over.

~ Revelation Chapter One ~

In this opening dialog, you'll receive an introduction from John and will learn that the audience of this apocalyptic writing is seven churches of Asia Minor. The prophecy contained within it was, and is, applicable to:

- These seven churches and their behavior at the time of the writing in approximately 90 CE.
- Any church since then exhibiting similar qualities and behavior. They can learn from the warnings or admonishments given by Christ to the churches in Asia Minor, who labeled each church with particular positive and negative attributes.
- The future Middle East and the regions comprised by ancient Asia Minor from the time the 'covenant of death' is entered into with the coming Antichrist.

Some modern-day church denominations hold to a belief that each church and its letter in the Revelation are symbolic and correspond to a different 'church age'. For instance, they believe the Church of Sardis is the Church during the time of reformation (1500-1700 CE) and that the Church of Philadelphia represents the current Church from 1700 CE to the present. The rationale is that behavior and circumstances of the churches in the letters parallels that of various eras in the history of the church.²⁵ The assumption, therefore, is that Christ will return soon since we are in the 'final church age'.

This is man's wisdom at work, and you should avoid this way of thinking at all cost. While we can learn from the behavior and potential consequences of the churches in Asia Minor, we should take the letters at face value and be careful to not make something out of nothing. Good hermeneutics dictates we seek the historical meaning. Thus, there's no reason to employ allegory or symbolism (such as dispensationalism does to this part of the book) where originally none was intended (though each letter employs some symbolism which would have been understood by the readers).

Key Points or Considerations:

1. The Revelation was meant for the seven churches of Asia Minor in the ‘near’ part of a ‘near-far’ prophecy that spans current behavior and consequences as of 90 CE to the end of this age.
2. Seven lampstands are the seven churches of Asia Minor.
3. Seven stars are the angels of the seven churches of Asia Minor.
4. Christ’s weapon in apocalyptic writing is the sword.

1:1-6. God gave this Revelation of end-time events to Christ to give to the servants of the Church through John, who then wrote them down for the 7 churches in Asia Minor. His greeting included God, Christ, and the spirits of each of the 7 churches he was writing to. Why address these 7 churches in particular? John was most likely their apostle and responsible for their spiritual well-being and growth. Also, they were located for the most part in what’s western Turkey today in the middle of what will be regions making up the Antichrist’s kingdom.

Although many may have been taught that the Revelation won’t apply to them because they believe the Church will be gone before the events contained within it unfold, the book teaches a different ending and offers encouragement right off the bat.

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near. —Revelation 1:3.

1:7-8. “*BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn . . .*” is a quote from Zechariah echoed by others. Christ even referred to this Scripture on the Mount of Olives (cf. Daniel 7:13; Matthew 24:30 & 26:64; Mark 13:26 & 14:62; Zechariah 12:10; John 19:37).

1:9-11. Persecution of the 1st century Church was in full swing and many had suffered tribulation and death as a result. In fact, John had been exiled to the Island of Patmos just off the coast of Greece. The year would’ve been approximately 90 CE.

1:12-16. This passage describes Christ and you’ll learn shortly that the seven lampstands represent the seven churches of Asia Minor to whom this Revelation is addressed. The description of Christ in Daniel 7:9-10 also reveals white head and hair like snow or wool.

*I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; **His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool.** His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him . . . —Daniel 7:9-10.*

After reading verse 16, it would be good to remember that the weapon of Christ is a sword. Paul informs us in Ephesians 6:17 that the *sword* of the Spirit is the Word of God, also equated with Christ in Revelation 19:13. Revelation 9:15 & 21 reveal the sword Christ uses to strike down the nations at the battle of Armageddon.

1:17-19. Christ explains to John that He is the first and the last – the resurrected one who holds the power of death and Hell. He instructs John to write down the things that *are* (current affairs contained in the letters to the 7 churches of Asia Minor) and the things that *will be* (end-times events to follow).

1:20. The seven stars Christ is holding in his hand represent the messengers of the seven churches of Asia Minor and the golden lampstands represent these churches.

16.2 Map of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor



(Courtesy of Wikipedia)

~ Revelation Chapter Two ~

In this chapter, you'll read the letters given to these four churches of Asia Minor: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira. The church at Smyrna, like that at Philadelphia, is praised and Christ has nothing against them.

2:1-3. This passage is specifically for the church at Ephesus, which was 60 miles northeast of Patmos and 35 miles south of Izmir, Turkey. The city was the largest and most important in the Roman province of Asia. Christ begins by encouraging and praising the church for their patience and perseverance in the face of evil and in the midst of false apostles.

2:4-7. But, they had forgotten Christ and His ways. They must repent or suffer the consequences which include the removal of the church. True to His word, there is no church there today and Islam is the pervasive religion in the region. Conversely, those who overcome evil and persevere will be present in God's everlasting kingdom (cf. Revelation 22:2). Christ commends them for hating the evil ways of the Nicolaitans who were followers of a heretic named Nicolas.

2:8-11. The text here is for the church at Smyrna (modern-day Izmir, Turkey), which is where Polycarp²⁶ was martyred. He was one of John's disciples. The city was 13 miles south and 35 miles north of Ephesus and the second-largest in Asia. Christ acknowledges their tribulation and poverty, and the fact that some falsely claim to be Jews. He encourages them to remain faithful despite the tribulation and imprisonment that will befall them soon in order to receive everlasting life. If they do, they'll avoid the lake of fire judgment of God – the *second death* (cf. Revelation 20:14 & 21:8). I'm unsure of the significance of the '*ten days of tribulation*' and can find no significant information related to the statement.

2:12-13. Christ addresses the church at Pergamum in this passage. Its location was 15 miles from the Aegean coast, 70 miles north of Smyrna. The city was the oldest in Asia. Christ begins by commending the believers at Pergamum for their undeterred faith – even in the face of the murder of one of their fellow believers, Antipas.

2:14-15. Some in this church held to the teaching of Balaam, causing Jews to eat food sacrificed to idols and commit immoral acts. Others held to the teachings of the Nicolaitans as did the church at Ephesus.

2:16-17. Christ warned the church to repent or suffer the same fate that the Antichrist and his followers will experience in the last days, which will include defeat at the battle of Armageddon (cf. Revelation 19:15). He also offered encouragement by reminding the reader that great rewards await the faithful. The '*white stone with a new name*' may be symbolic of a 'ticket' or 'pass' [to heaven] as was the practice of the day. Here's what the New Commentary says on the subject:

“In ancient times, white stones were given to people (with their names written on them) as invitations to special banquets. (This is similar to the practice in modern times of sending engraved invitations.) If this is what Jesus was alluding to, the white stone with the new name could very well signify an open invitation to his wedding feast (Rev_19:9).”

2:18-19. Thyatira, halfway between Pergamum & Sardis, is the focus of these verses although the city was the least significant in Asia. John's description of Christ as '*eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished bronze*' probably portrays a Christ about to judge – especially considering their evil ways and the consequences they'll suffer if they don't repent. But he starts this letter with encouragement and commends the church's deeds, love, faith, and perseverance.

2:20-21. The reference to Jezebel here probably depicts the same spirit of rebellion and sin that we see today in the Church. Originally, Jezebel was the queen of King Ahab hundreds of years before John's time. She incited her husband to act wickedly and was responsible for the death of many of God's prophets. She also led Israel to worship the goddess Ashteroth, the '*Queen of Heaven*' (cf. Jeremiah 44:17, 18, & 25). Jezebel came to a bitter end, but the spirit of rebellion and destruction of authority exist today. *She* hasn't repented, though Christ has given her the opportunity.

2:22-23. Anyone acting under the influence of that '*Jezebel*' spirit will suffer God's wrath unless they repent. Christ reminds us that everyone will reap what they sow.

2:24-29. Christ encourages those in the church who aren't practicing sin to continue their good works until He comes. At that time, they'll receive authority over the nations and receive the '*morning star*'. Just as Christ was the '*hidden manna*' to the church of Pergamum, He was also the morning star (cf. Revelation 22:16) to the church of Thyatira. Of course, He's still these things to those who believe in Him.

The '*Spirit*' in verse 29 may be a reference to the *Holy Spirit* based on Scripture such as 1 Corinthians 3:16.

~ Revelation Chapter Three ~

Contained in this section are the letters to the last three churches: Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

3:1-2. Sardis was 50 miles east of Smyrna and 30 miles southeast of Thyatira. Christ called the church ‘dead’ and warned it to ‘*wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die*’.

No repentance; Jesus will come like a thief and they won’t know the hour; A few haven’t defiled their garments. He that overcomes won’t be blotted out of the Book of Life.

3:3. The church is warned to repent or suffer God’s wrath in the Day of the Lord. A key point to remember: It will be the *Day of the Lord* destruction that will come suddenly and without warning on the unfaithful world – not the appearing of Christ and gathering of the Church. This is in sharp contrast to what those who hold to a pre-tribulation rapture are taught.

*Therefore if you do not wake up, I will **come like a thief**, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. —Revelation 3:3.*

*For you yourselves know full well that **the day of the Lord will come just like a thief** in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. —1 Thessalonians 5:2-3.*

*2Pe 3:10 But the **day of the Lord will come like a thief**, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. —2 Peter 3:10.*

Also in sharp contrast to man’s wisdom is the Biblical concept that we can give up our salvation and fall from grace. Those in the church at Thyatira faced this possible outcome as did members of the church at Sardis as you’ll see in verse 5 (below).

3:4-6. A few in the church are righteous. They and the others who overcome sin and remain that way will be dressed in white and will walk with Christ. We’ll see the manifestation of this in Revelation chapter 7:

*Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are **clothed in the white robes**, who are they, and where have they come from?” I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation**, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” —Revelation 7:13-14.*

In verse 5, Christ makes it very clear that our names can be removed from His Book of Life. Included in this group of people who can lose their salvation will be anyone taking the mark of beast during the Antichrist’s reign.

3:7-8. The city of Philadelphia was 28 miles southeast of Sardis. From Christ’s message, the church there was faithful and obedient and will therefore reap great reward for keeping His Word and not denying Him. Interestingly, there’s no complaint against this group. Only two of the churches in Asia Minor could boast this – Smyrna and Philadelphia.

3:9. As with Smyrna, some at this church claim to be Jews.

3:10-11. Because of their faithfulness, Christ will *keep* them from the ‘*hour of testing*’ that will come upon the whole world to *test* everyone. He admonishes them to remain faithful and persevere so they can keep their heavenly rewards (crowns).

This difficult passage is used by many as proof of a pre-tribulation rapture. They interpret “*will keep you*” as meaning “*completely remove you out of*”, yet a closer look at the Scripture presented in these 2 verses and the original Greek wording reveal something else entirely. Let’s look at the definitions of the original Greek words used for *keep*, *hour*, *testing*, and *test*:

- “*I also will keep you*”: *tēreō* (Strong’s G5083). Defined: To guard by keeping an eye on.
- “*from the hour*”: *hōra* (Strong’s G5610). Defined: Figurative day, hour, season; time.
- “*of testing*”: *peirasmos* (Strong’s G3986). Defined: Putting to proof by adversity or temptation.
- “*upon the whole world to test*”: *peirazō* (Strong’s G3985). Defined: Scrutinize; Examine; Try.

An ability to use this very small piece of Scripture to support an end-times theology also relies on two more things:

1. An assumption that the “*hour of testing*” is referring to the future great tribulation of the Antichrist. While this may be possible, remember that the letters were written for real, honest-to-goodness institutions of John’s time. We know too from the testimonies of martyrs like Polycarp that the persecution of the church in the first and second centuries got much worse and probably felt like the “*hour of testing*” foretold by Christ.
2. Doctrine that insists the church of Philadelphia represents a faithful church that will be raptured out of the Great Tribulation. One major problem with this is that a dispensation theology associated with church ages, also popular with pre-tribulation rapture believers, mandates that the ancient church of *Laodicea* – not Philadelphia – represents this current church age.

Because of the context, definitions of the Greek words used, and the understanding from other Scripture that the saints won’t escape the great tribulation of the Antichrist, verses 10 and 11 could be paraphrased to read: “*I will watch over you during a time that I will allow for testing of the world, but I will come quickly. Persevere through the testing to keep your reward.*”

3:12-13. We’ll see the reference to the bride of Christ and the Temple of God in His everlasting kingdom again in Revelation chapter 21.

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying,

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them . . . —Revelation 21:2-3.

He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. — Revelation 21:7.

There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. —Revelation 22:3-4.

3:14-16. The final audience was in Laodicea, 40 miles southeast of Philadelphia and 100 miles east of Ephesus. If you follow the churches on the map in figure 16.2 (clockwise starting with the Isle of Patmos) you'll see that it forms something of a route that could've been a Roman mail route as some have suggested.

Neither hot nor cold in their faith, this church was '*lukewarm*'. Therefore, Christ said He'll *spit them out of His mouth*. This can't be a good outcome . . .

3:17-19. Known for its wealthy and finely-dressed citizens, and for the manufacturing of eye salve, Christ warns the church members to repent and obtain from Christ:

1. Valuable refining and disciplining as if by fire. (See the section *Tribulation & Beheading* in Chapter 8 of this guide.) Proverbs 3:12 reminds us that "*whom the Lord loves He reproveth, even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights*".
2. White garments of the righteous (e.g. Revelation 7:13).
3. The ability to see the truth and no longer be blinded (e.g. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-11).

3:20-22. We need to overcome sin and remain righteous in order to be with Christ in God's kingdom. Essential to this is giving ourselves to Christ in the new covenant and maintaining a relationship with Him.

~ Revelation Chapter Four ~

Here we see the invitation of John to preview end-times events. He receives a magnificent view of heaven that reveals the throne of God and part of His entourage: Twenty-four elders and the “*four living creatures*”, all giving glory to God.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. John is invited to heaven to be prepositioned to view the end-times sequence of events. This is *not* symbolic of a pre-tribulation rapture of the Church.
2. The twenty-four elders mentioned here are part of God’s hierarchy and not representative of a special few in a Church raptured before the time of great tribulation of the Antichrist.

4:1. John is invited to heaven for a preview of end-times events. Those who hold to a pre-tribulation rapture position see this as a symbolic representation of the gathering of the church. Since John’s invitation comes before the scrolls are opened, some believe the rapture will therefore happen before any of the end-of-the-world events take place. My recommendation is to take this passage at face value and accept it as it is – just an invitation to heaven for the unveiling John must later pass on to the Church.

4:2-3. John sees the throne of God. Emerald and Jasper were precious stones used in the making of the Jewish priest’s breastplate (cf. Exodus 28:17 & 20; 39:10 & 13). God’s radiance as a rainbow can be seen in Ezekiel’s account (cf. 1:28).

4:4. The twenty-four elders (seen next in verse 10) are just that – elders in God’s hierarchy, not raptured saints.

4:5-6a. John further describes the throne of God.

4:6b-9. You’ll find a description of the ‘*four living creatures*’ of heaven here. Isaiah saw the same thing in his vision of the temple of God in heaven (cf. Isaiah 6:1-3).

4:10-11. John sees the twenty-four elders worshipping God and casting their crowns before Him. One pre-tribulation rapture belief I’ve heard: “*The elders are casting crowns. Since the 24 elders are raptured believers and we won’t get crowns until Christ rewards the gathered Church, this must mean John is in heaven after the rapture. This proves we’ll be in heaven before the tribulation . . .*”

Please be careful not to buy into this. The twenty-four elders are part of God’s hierarchy, and their crowns – just as with Christ’s crown – are heavenly crowns not isolated to a reward given at the end to the gathered bride of Christ. John has just been invited to heaven to view the end-times events and is just describing activities happening at the throne of God at the time he’s about to receive his apocalyptic visions.

❖ *Part II: Revelation Chapters 5 – 8:1*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Revelation chapters 5-7
3. Revelation chapter 8 verse 1

The main thrust behind this division of the Revelation is the unveiling of events by breaking the seven seals of the scroll containing the visions. Having earned the right through the purchase of mankind by His sacrifice, Christ is the only one who can break the seals. Included in this section is a glimpse of the Church gathered after the darkening of seal #6. We'll also see 144,000 of God's elect sealed for protection against His impending wrath.

~ Revelation Chapter Five ~

The Lamb of God is about to begin breaking the scroll's seals to unveil last days scenarios.

5:1-4. God is holding a book protected by seven seals. As was the custom, a portion of the scroll would be written on, sealed, and then the process repeated as often as was necessary to write a multi-sectioned document and preserve each section. A strong angel asked, "*Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?*" No one in heaven, on the earth, or under the earth was worthy. John was deeply grieved because of this.

5:5. One of the elders comforted John by telling him, "*behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.*" Because Christ *overcame*, He was worthy to open the book and unseal its sections.

He overcame by purchasing us from the world through his death and resurrection as you'll read in verses 9-10.

5:6-8. John sees a lamb '*as if slain*' with seven horns and seven eyes, which represent the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. The lamb was Christ, who indeed was slain for our sinful nature at His crucifixion. Compare this passage with that of Zechariah 3:9, which most likely refers to the coming kingdom of Christ that will remove the iniquity of that land as also prophesied by Daniel (cf. 9:24).

For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. —Zechariah 3:9.

Seven is often used to depict perfection. So the seven horns may be symbolic of Christ's perfect and everlasting authority. He *has* been given the keys to hell and death, after all. . . . The twenty-four elders are worshipping Christ at this point in John's vision.

5:9-10. The twenty-four elders confirm that Christ alone is worthy to open the book and seals because He has purchased the right to do so. "*Worthy are You to take the book and to break its*

seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.”

5:11-14. Thousands upon thousands of angels, elders, and other creatures praise God and Christ and give them glory.

~ Revelation Chapter Six ~

Major events or eras Jesus told His disciples about on the Mount of Olives can also be seen here from the birth pangs to the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars that will precede the gathering of Christ's bride and the wrath of God.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. Each of the six seals broken in this chapter reveal scenarios that parallel those given by Christ on the Mount of Olives (e.g. Matthew 24:5-30).
2. The first seal represents the false Messiahs Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24:4-5, not *the* Christ or *the* Antichrist. It and the next two seal events are *birth pangs* that will happen with greater intensity and frequency as the end draws near (e.g. Matthew 24:5-8).
3. Christ's weapon in apocalyptic writing is the sword (not bow).
4. The fourth and fifth seals depict the persecution and death that the Antichrist will be granted authority to execute (e.g. Matthew 24:10-26).
5. Seal #6 depicts the darkening of the earth and the mourning of those about to experience God's wrath (e.g. Matthew 24:29-30).

6:1-2. Christ breaks the first seal and reveals the contents. John sees a white horse whose rider is wearing a crown and bent on conquering. The rider's weapon is a bow. Being clothed in white signifies righteousness and the crown depicts authority. While this sounds a lot like Christ, the rider is carrying a bow – not a sword, which is the weapon of Christ. You may remember this discussion from our overview of Revelation chapter one, verses 12-16.

The scene unveiled by the breaking of seal #1 is identical to the first birth-pang Jesus told His disciples about on the Mount of Olives: “*For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will mislead many.*” —Matthew 24:5.

Some make the claim that this rider in white represents the Antichrist that will come in the end, but that's not possible. According to Jesus, this is one of several birth-pangs that will increase with intensity and frequency as the end draws near. It comes before the Antichrist and other end-times events as foretold by Jesus. Finally, seals #4 and #5 preserve Scripture related to the time of the Antichrist – the Great Tribulation. These are after the rider in white seen in seal #1.

6:3-4. Christ breaks the second seal and reveals a red horse whose rider has been given authority to take peace from the world. Compare this to the second birth-pang Jesus told His disciples on the Mount of Olives:

You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom . . . —Matthew 24:5-6.

6:5-6. The third seal is broken and John sees a black horse whose rider is holding a pair of scales. He hears, “*A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.*”

This scene depicts the famine Jesus told His disciples about in advance: “. . . *and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.*” —Matthew 24:7.

6:7-8. With the breaking of the fourth seal, John sees a pale horse whose rider was death; hell followed. Authority over one-fourth of the earth was given to them to kill with sword, famine, pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.

This is the time of the Antichrist’s authority – the Great Tribulation – and most possibly the time of testing Christ talked about in Revelation 3:10.

There are four significant things to know and remember about this passage:

1. Just as death and persecution by the ‘*abomination that causes desolation*’ (cf. Matthew 24:15) follow the third birth-pang of famine in Jesus’ dissertation to His disciples on the Mount of Olives, this event unveiled by the breaking of seal #4 follows the famine hidden by seal #3.
2. In seal #5, John sees those who’ll be martyred for their faith during the Great Tribulation of the Antichrist (*abomination that causes desolation*) as depicted in seal #4.
3. The Greek word for ‘beasts’ in verse 8 (wild *beasts* of the earth) is *therion* (Strong’s G2342), which represents a particularly venomous creature and is the only word used to describe the Antichrist in the Revelation (e.g. Revelation 13, 14, 15:2, 16:2, etc.).
4. God will grant the Antichrist and his kingdom authority over all the earth to kill and persecute for 3.5 years (cf. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:7-8).

6:9-11. Christ breaks the fifth seal and John sees the souls of those martyred for their faith during the timeframe of seal #4. Those killed during that time ask, “*How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?*” They’re given a white robe and told to “*wait until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been*” had been met.

The martyrs mentioned here are in the context of the Antichrist’s time of great tribulation. Christ tells us in Revelation 20:4 that they’ll be resurrected and will reign with Him during His 1,000-year kingdom (see also the section *Beheaded* in Chapter Six of this study guide).

6:12-14. Breaking the sixth seal unveiled a great earthquake and complete darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. This is the darkening Jesus told His disciples about that will precede the gathering of the bride of Christ and the wrath of God (cf. Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26; Joel 2:2 & 3:14-15).

6:15-17. Everyone on the earth at this time will hide themselves in caves and among the rocks of the mountains, saying to the rocks, “*Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?*”

Isaiah saw this coming as well: “*Men will go into caves of the rocks And into holes of the ground Before the terror of the LORD And the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble.*” —Isaiah 2:19.

~ Revelation Chapter Seven ~

Two very important components in the end-times sequence of events are described in this chapter:

1. God seals a remnant of Israel (144,000) for protection against His impending wrath which will be addressed beginning with the next chapter.
2. John sees the bride of Christ in heaven after her gathering just after the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars of Matthew 24:30 and the sixth seal depiction.

7:1-3. After John views the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars and mourning of the sixth seal, he's shown a scene where four angels have stopped the wind from blowing on the earth. Another angel coming from the east has the seal of God and tells the four angels to wait to harm the earth until they've "*sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.*"

I've often wondered about the significance of holding back the wind and have come to realize that we'd be in great distress without wind. It would be difficult for planes to take off and land. Wind generators would stop. There'd be no natural cooling or evaporation. Pollination would be nearly impossible. Smog and pollution would be stationary, producing toxic breathing environments. And I'm sure this is just the "tip of the iceberg".

7:4-8. The angel seals 144,000 of God's people with His seal. This list contains 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel. You may remember from section *144,000 From the 12 Tribes of Israel* in Chapter 6 of this guide that the original tribe of Dan was replaced by the tribe of Manasseh (most likely due to the sinful behavior of its members and idol worship).

7:9. John then saw "*a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes . . .*"

Several key things to keep in mind about this passage:

1. John sees this great multitude just *after* the sixth seal is broken and *before* the seventh seal.
2. The sixth seal revealed the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars that precedes the gathering of the bride of Christ.
3. There are so many people that their number can't be counted.
4. The multitude is made up of people from every nation and language on earth.

Popular among pre-tribulation rapture proponents is the belief that this multitude is a 'tribulation force' made up of people who've been *left behind* after the rapture but who've since repented and accepted Christ. This isn't Scriptural or possible. One compelling reason is the fact that those left behind won't repent of their sinful behavior and will blaspheme God during the time of His wrath (cf. Revelation 9:20-21; 16:9 & 11). It would be pretty hard to get a 'tribulation force' "*which no one could*" count under those circumstances . . .

I've also heard a theory that this multitude will be made up of tribulation Jews on their way to Petra. Please remember that this group is made up of a very large number of people "*from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues*".

So, who are the members of the multitude? They make up the bride of Christ that will be gathered at the darkening following the great tribulation as unveiled in Matthew 24:29 and seal #6.

7:10-12. This great multitude along with all those seen by John in 5:11-14 are praising God.

7:13. One of the elders asks John if he knows who these people making up this uncountable multitude dressed in white robes are and where they came from.

7:14. John doesn't know the answer, so the elder told him, "***These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.***"

Again, this vision came to John after the darkening revealed in the sixth seal. We learned from Christ in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 that the darkening will follow the Great Tribulation of the Antichrist. That darkening will precede the gathering of the Church. John is seeing the Church that had been gathered (raptured) from out of the Great Tribulation of the Antichrist when he sees the multitude.

7:15-17. "*They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes.*"

This multitude, the gathered bride of Christ, will serve God and He will protect them. Compare the Scripture in this passage to that found in Revelation 21:4.

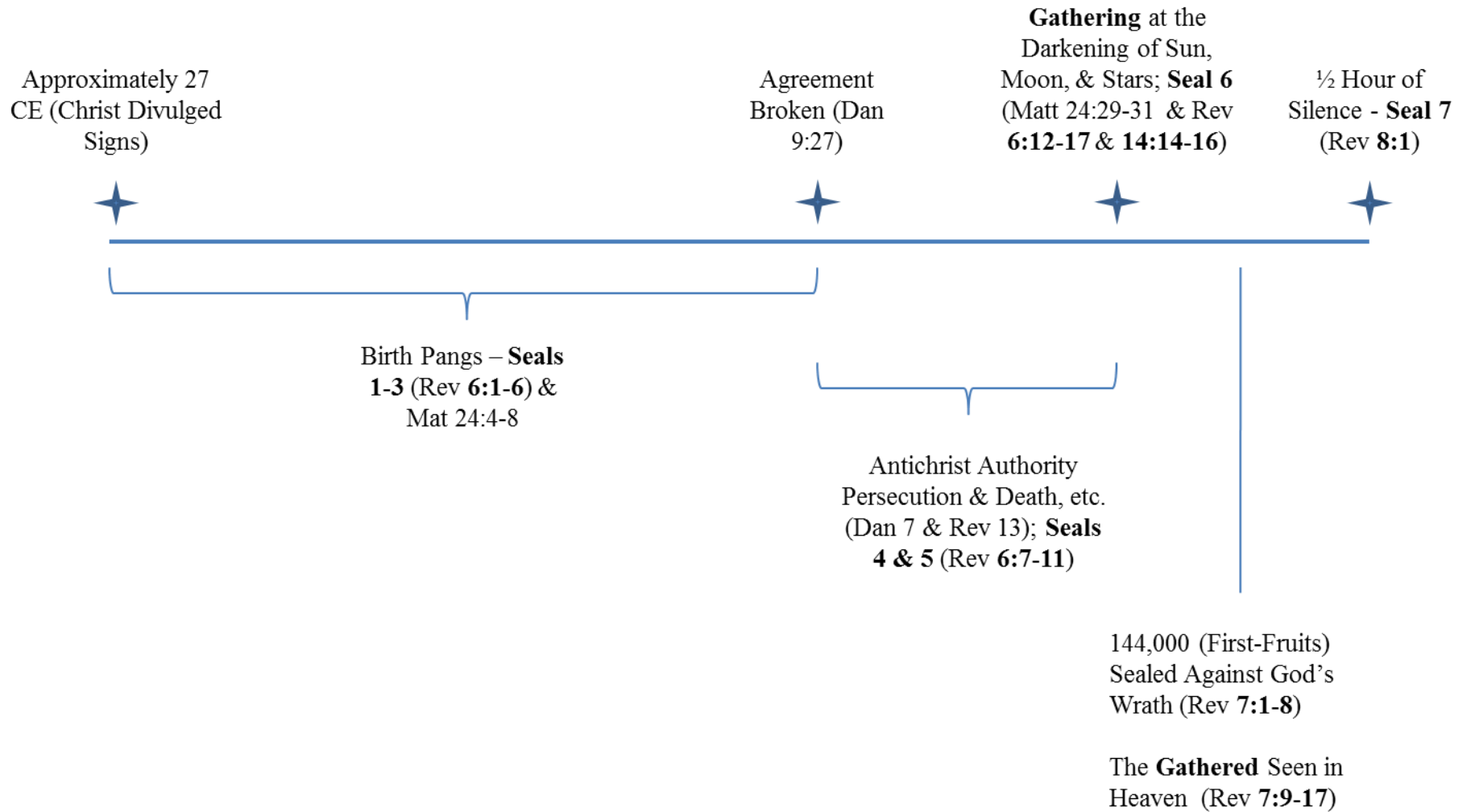
Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.—Revelation 21:3-4.

~ *Revelation 8:1* ~

I've broken this single verse out of chapter 8 and have used it to conclude this section because it's the last of the seven seal revelations. This event sets the stage for God's wrath against the rest of the world *not* gathered by Christ and His angels at His appearing.

8:1. Christ breaks the seventh and final seal, revealing a silence in heaven for *about* half an hour. As you'll learn from the rest of chapter 8, the silence is used for prayer and preparation for God's impending wrath that will begin with seven 'trumpet' judgments.

16.3 Timeline of the Seven Seals
Revelation Chapters 6 – 8:1



Part III: Revelation Chapters 8:2 – 10

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Revelation chapter 8 verses 2-13
3. Revelation chapters 9 & 10

These chapters detail the first half of God’s wrath: The seven trumpet judgments. Chapter 10 introduces the seventh trumpet judgment that will usher in Christ’s kingdom, ending the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist.

~ Revelation 8:2 – 8:13 ~

John sees the first four of seven trumpet judgments being executed.

8:2. John sees seven angels with seven trumpets. As you’ll learn, these are trumpets of God’s judgments – not to be confused with the trumpet blast that will be heard at the gathering of the bride of Christ (cf. Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16).

8:3-6. Another angel (not one of the seven) gathered the prayers of the saints and added them to an incense censer; the smoke went before God. It seems at this point that all heavenly hosts to include the multitude John had just seen were praying in preparation for God’s impending wrath. The angel threw the censer to the earth, causing an earthquake as the other seven angels prepared to administer God’s wrath.

8:7. The first angel sounded its trumpet, producing hail and blood, which were then thrown to the earth. One-third of the earth (including vegetation) was burned up.

8:8-9. The second angel blew its trumpet. “*Something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea; and a third of the sea became blood, and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and a third of the ships were destroyed.*”

8:10-11. Angel number three sounded, destroying one-third of the rivers and streams and poisoning the water. Many people will die because of this.

The waters are poisoned by a *star* that is called *wormwood*. The Greek word for *star* is *astēr* (Strong’s G792), which figuratively or literally means to be ‘*strewn across the sky*’. Wormwood is used only once in the New Testament, but its Old Testament origin is the Hebrew word *la’ānâh* (Strong’s H3939). It basically just means ‘*bitter*’. (NOTE: Jeremiah also referred to this event as recorded in Jeremiah 23:15.)

The Wormwoods are members of the great family of *Compositae* and belong to the genus *Artemisia*, a group consisting of 180 species. It’s likely the reference to wormwood in Revelation chapter here was made to show just how bad the waters would become after the sounding of the third angel’s trumpet.

8:12. One-third of the natural lights will go out with the sounding of the fourth angel.

8:13. As bad as things have been to this point with the first four trumpet blasts, things are about to get worse.

~ Revelation Chapter Nine ~

Trumpet judgments *five* and *six* can be seen here: Demons or demonic forces in the form of scorpions that can hurt (but not kill) those who've accepted the mark of the Antichrist and of 200,000,000 'horsemen'. These two judgments represent woes 1 and 2.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. God's wrath will be just that – His judgment. This is regardless of whether we recognize elements that fit within our own frames of reference. It's best to continue to look at the execution of God's wrath in that light.
2. To follow point #1, the fact that China is the only country capable of having an army of 200,000,000 soldiers doesn't make it the vehicle of destruction of trumpet judgment #6 as some believe.
3. God's wrath will be divided into three 'woes'. Trumpet judgment 5 will comprise the first one.

9:1-2. At the sounding of the fifth trumpet, the bottomless pit (i.e. hell, hades, etc.) is opened to make way for the plague of special locusts you'll learn more about in verses 3-11.

9:3-4. Locusts with power as scorpions are allowed to hurt only the "*men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.*"

9:5-6. They can't kill, but can torment for five months with a sting (as with a scorpion). Those stung will wish they were dead. Many during the cold war era believed the scorpions are symbolic of modern military weapons such as the Apache helicopter.

All I can say to that is this: John is witnessing God's wrath, not man's. It would be better for us to take the prophecy at face value and believe the plague will come from God as stated instead of trying to put the judgment into our own frame of reference, which changes regularly and is very limited.

9:7-10. The *scorpions* described here have these features:

- Their heads appeared to sport crowns.
- Their faces will be like those of men.
- Hair like the hair of women.
- Teeth like the teeth of lions.
- Breastplates of iron.
- The "*sound of their wings will be like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle*".
- Their tails will be like those of scorpions, the sting of which will hurt for five months.

9:11. Their king is Satan – angel of the abyss – called *Abaddon* (Hebrew) and *Apollyon* (Greek). You may wish to review the section of Chapter 8 of this study: *The Dragon – Satan*. As with the Assyrians and their defeat by the Babylonians, God will permit the use of this force of Satan's to accomplish His purposes.

9:12. The **first woe** consisting of **trumpet judgment 5** is past – two more to go.

9:13-15. The sixth angel sounds its trumpet. In response, four angels bound at the great river Euphrates are released for the single purpose of killing one-third of mankind.

9:16-19. The number of armies of the horsemen controlled by the four angels is 200,000,000. The riders have red breastplates. The horses' heads are like those of lions, and they breathe fire, smoke, and brimstone. The horses, which have power to do harm in their mouths and tails, kill one-third of mankind.

Again, a popular approach is to label these as man's weapons of war. While God has indeed used man's forces to accomplish His purposes in the past (as with the ancient Babylonians or the scorpions of Revelation 9:1-11) He hasn't said so in this case. There's no hint that these resources belong to anyone else other than God. It would be better to continue to take the apocalyptic writing at face value as a result.

9:20-21. Those not killed still won't repent and stop their sinful behavior. Not only does this highlight the sinful and rebellious nature of man, but it serves as a reminder that not many if any will repent and be during the time of God's wrath.

~ Revelation Chapter Ten ~

John is shown things he isn't allowed to disclose. We also learn from this chapter that the “*mystery of God*” will be completed at the seventh trumpet, bringing to a close the time of the gentiles as foretold by the prophets and Apostles.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. The *mystery of God* is the inheritance of what was offered to Israel – the salvation of Christ – but has now been given to the rest of the nations (the gentiles).
2. The seventh trumpet will usher in Christ's kingdom, end the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist, and conclude the 490-year timeframe of Daniel's vision (cf. Daniel 9).
3. Some believe the seventh trumpet and the trumpet heralding Christ's appearance at the gathering of the bride will be the same thing. This doctrine therefore holds that the trumpet judgments will not be part of God's wrath and that all believers in Christ will experience those woeful judgments. We'll discuss this further in Chapter 17 of this guide, *Exploring End-times Positions*. Although a ‘trumpet’ is common to both scenarios, my recommendation at this point is that you consider the seventh and final trumpet judgment and the trumpet blast at the gathering of the Church as separate and unrelated events.

10:1-2. A “*strong angel*” (this is probably a description of Christ) shows an open book to John. The word *angel* is used here to depict a messenger, which could indeed be Christ – especially considering that the Revelation is being given to John by Him. His feet are on the sea and on the land, most likely symbolizing the nations of the earth. The scenario would be appropriate considering that the time of the gentiles is about to come to an end with the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

10:3-4. The ‘*angel*’ cried out “*as when a lion roars*”, and the seven peals of thunder bellow. The mention of a lion's roar is intriguing and supports a belief that this is Christ, “the *lion* of the tribe of Judah” (cf. Revelation 5:5). John is instructed to seal up and refrain from writing down what he heard from the ‘*seven thunders*’. We never discover in the Revelation what John had to keep secret. Perhaps it's best. Considering the horrific things we *will* read about, I can't imagine how much worse the things we *won't* read about could be!

10:5-7. The messenger declares that there will be no more delay in **finishing** the mystery of God. This ‘*mystery*’ is the inheritance of the kingdom of God by the gentiles. Christ is showing John that the time of the gentiles will end at the seventh trumpet blast, which we'll explore further when we cover the next chapter of the Revelation.

Here are several verses explaining the *mystery* of God and Christ, revealing that it's the gift of Christ to the gentiles – the nations of the world:

*For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this **mystery**--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation – that a partial hardening has happened to Israel **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in** . . . —Romans 11:25.*

*Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the **mystery** which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, **has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith** . . . —Romans 16:25-26.*

*. . . that by revelation there was made known to me the **mystery**, as I wrote before in brief. By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the **mystery of Christ**, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to be specific, **that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel** . . . —Ephesians 3:3-6.*

*. . . that is, the **mystery** which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to **make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory**. —Colossians 1:26-27.*

Scripture contained in verses 5-6 is reminiscent of what Daniel saw and recorded in 12:7 as follows:

I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time; and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed.—Daniel 12:7.

Interestingly, the end of the ‘*time, times, and half a time*’ as stated in 12:7 above will be at the seventh trumpet judgment (cf. Revelation 11:15). So it’s appropriate that the messenger in Daniel and in the Revelation (again, most likely Christ) is using similar verbiage.

10:8-11. John is told to eat the book the messenger was holding. The contents were bittersweet as he still had more horrors to write about yet an end to this age will come, ushering in a new heaven and earth along with God’s everlasting kingdom.

❖ *Part IV: Revelation Chapters 11 – 13*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*.
2. Review section *Two Witnesses* in Chapter 6 of this guide.
3. Review section *False Prophets* in Chapter 10 of this guide.
4. Revelation chapters 11-13.

The seventh trumpet judgment introduced by chapter 10 will usher in Christ's kingdom, ending the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist. Appropriately, chapters 11-13 detail that timeframe and describe the Antichrist's kingdom, the false prophet, God's two witnesses, and the pursuit of the elect by Satan (through influence of the Antichrist).

~ Revelation Chapter Eleven ~

John is shown a temple where the outer courts will be given to the nations (gentiles) for 3.5 years. He also sees a vision of God's two witnesses that will prophesy during that timeframe. Verses 13-15 outline the seventh and final trumpet judgment that will herald Christ's kingdom and signal the end of the Antichrist's 3.5-year time of authority. This will also mark the end of the 490 years given to Israel to accomplish certain goals (such as end sin and bring in everlasting righteousness).

Verses 16-19 offer a quick summary by the twenty four elders of heaven of everything the rest of the Revelation will detail from Christ's kingdom until God's kingdom in the new age.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. This is the only place in Scripture where we read about the Two Witnesses.
2. The temple John sees is on earth, not in heaven, nor is it a *spiritual* temple . . .
3. The seventh trumpet judgment will herald the end of the Antichrist's reign and the beginning of the 1,000-year kingdom of Christ.

11:1-2. John is told to measure the Temple. He's told to avoid measuring the outer court because it had been given to the gentiles. John is also told that the nations (gentiles) will control Jerusalem for 42 months (3.5 years). Keep in mind that the Temple had been destroyed 20 years before this vision in 70 CE. But it will be rebuilt before the end based on what we learned from Daniel, Jesus, and Paul.

11:3. Two witnesses of God will prophesy for 1,260 days (3.5 years). This is the same length of time the messenger in Daniel 12:7 said would exist from the time daily sacrifice is stopped until the shattering of God's people is finished. We also know from Daniel 7:25 that it will also be the time of authority of the Antichrist.

As a result, we should be able to say that the two witnesses will present their testimony during the time of the Antichrist's authority – the Great Tribulation.

11:4-6. These two heavenly beings who normally stand before God will have the power to consume and destroy anyone who wishes to harm them. They'll also be able to stop the rain, turn water into blood, and strike the earth with plagues as desired. This is reminiscent of Moses' delivery of God's message to the Pharaoh and the consequences of his refusal to listen (cf. Exodus 3:10 – 12:33).

As we discussed in the section of chapter 6 titled *Two Witnesses*, various opinions exist as to what the identity of the witnesses will be. There's no way to know for sure. Regardless of whether they'll be Moses, Elijah, Enoch, or angels, their message will be the same: "Repent, for the time of God's judgment is at hand."

11:7-10. At the end of their 3.5-year ministry, Satan will kill the two witnesses. Their bodies will be allowed to lie out in the open in Jerusalem for 3 days. The nations will rejoice over the death of these heavenly messengers.

11:11-12. God will resurrect the two after 3 days and bring them back to heaven.

11:13-14. Several key points made in this passage, which reflects the timeframe of an hour after the resurrection of the two witnesses:

1. A **great earthquake** will take place.
2. One-tenth of the city will fall during the earthquake.
3. Seven thousand people will die in the earthquake.
4. Those not killed will give glory to God.
5. This, the **second woe, has passed.**

Let's pause for a moment to discuss the timing of the *second woe*. You may remember from our earlier overview of Revelation chapter 9 that the *first woe* will consist of trumpet judgment #5. The second woe will comprise trumpet judgment #6. What will follow the judgment of the second woe is trumpet #7, which will herald the beginning of Christ's reign on earth.

11:15. *"The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."*

We can glean several things from this passage to include that the 1,000-year kingdom of Christ will begin just after the second *woe* is over and, as reported in Revelation 10:7, the mystery of God (time of the gentiles) will be complete at this time.

Just as the complete darkening of the sun, moon, and stars will be a pivotal point marking the gathering of the bride of Christ (e.g. Matthew 24:29-31) and preparation for God's impending wrath (e.g. Revelation 6:12-17), the seventh trumpet blast will mark several things:

1. The end of the last 3.5-year section of the overall 490-year period of Daniel (cf. Daniel 9:27 & 12:6-7).
2. The end of the 3.5-year testimony of God's two witnesses (cf. Revelation 11:3-12).
3. The end of the time of the gentiles to include the 42 months (3.5 years) Jerusalem will be controlled by the nations (Revelation 10:7 & 11:2).
4. The end of the second woe (Revelation 11:14).

5. A great earthquake during the second woe (Revelation 11:13).
6. The start of Christ's 1,000-year kingdom (Revelation 11:15). Goals that Christ's kingdom will accomplish for God's people and Jerusalem according to Daniel 9:24:
 - a. Finish the transgression.
 - b. Make an end of sin.
 - c. Bring in everlasting righteousness (Christ and then God's everlasting kingdoms).
 - d. Seal up vision and prophecy.
 - e. Anoint the most holy (Christ as king).

11:16-19. The twenty-four elders in heaven praise God and worship Him, exclaiming that the time of His future and everlasting reign has begun. The elders recount the events *leading up to* the new-age reign of God to include His wrath, the great judgment, the rewarding of God's elect, and the destruction of the wicked.

Verse 19 gives a glimpse of the temple of God in heaven, which will come to earth at the beginning of the new age after the great judgment. Also represented here in advance is the completion of God's wrath with the seventh bowl judgment (the great earthquake and hail seen in Revelation **16:18-21**).

Therefore, verses 16-19 represent in a couple of paragraphs what we know as chapters 8:2 – 22:5 of this Revelation: The wrath of God, 1,000-year reign of Christ, great judgment, and new heaven and earth.

~ Revelation Chapter Twelve ~

While chapter 11 gave us a glimpse of the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist as it will relate to the two witnesses of God, this one offers a view pertaining to the influence of Satan in the Antichrist's pursuit and persecution of God's *elect* during that time.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. God put stars and resulting constellations in the heavens to signal events and seasons. Several constellations will align themselves just before the war in heaven.
2. Satan and "*the dragon*" represent the same being. He has had, and will continue to have, access to heaven until he's cast down after the war in heaven (12:7-9).
3. The "*woman*" is a remnant of God that will be kept safe by Him during the 3.5-year reign of the Antichrist. This may very well be the 144,000 also sealed by God for protection against His judgments (cf. Revelation 7:1-8).
4. This passage confirms believers in Christ will suffer the wrath of Satan (through the Antichrist), sharply contrasting an opposing theory that all Christians will be gathered before this time in a pre-tribulation rapture.

12:1-2. John sees a sign in the heavens: "*A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars . . .*"

And why shouldn't there be signs in the heavens? God Himself said He put them there for signs and seasons: "*Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years . . .*" —Genesis 1:14.

John witnesses the constellations of Virgo (the woman), Coma Bernice (the twelve stars), and Hydra and Corax (the dragon with seven heads and ten horns) in a particular alignment before the war in heaven. I believe the purpose in showing John this vision of the constellations and their specific position (verses 1-5) is two-fold:

1. To help us understand who the '*woman*' and the '*dragon*' are to set the stage for the rest of this passage (verses 6-17).
2. To show us the position the constellations will be in just before the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist, which will begin with Satan being removed from heaven and the persecution of God's people that will follow.

In verse 1, the sign John sees is the constellation Bethulah (Virgo) – the *virgin*. She represents Israel (hence the 12 stars) who '*gave birth*' to a son – Christ (cf. 12:4).

Interestingly, this constellation is seen every couple of years or so in Jerusalem in late September to early October at the time of Rosh Hashanah, the Feast of Trumpets. Why might this be significant? John's report of the position of these stars at a particular point in time is more real and credible if we believe Christ will fulfill the fall feasts at His return just like he did with the spring feasts during His first coming.²⁷

If you're interested in learning more about the signs God has placed in the heavens, you may want to check out sites like biblicalastronomy.com or watchmanbiblestudy.com.²⁸

12:3-4. Appearing in the sky is another sign: A great red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns (these should be constellations Hydra and Corax). The dragon represents Satan (cf. Revelation 12:9). A sweeping away of “*a third of the stars of heaven*” most likely represents the angels Satan has corrupted and taken with him (see 12:9 for possible confirmation).

John's dragon has seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns. As previously discussed in our study, Satan will influence and guide the Antichrist and his end-times kingdom; this passage just serves as a reminder. Additional references to this ‘*beast*’ that will be controlled by Satan:

- The Antichrist's kingdom that ‘*comes out of the sea*’ (cf. Revelation 13:1).
- The Antichrist's kingdom and a temporary relationship with the *Babylon harlot* (cf. Revelation 17:3, 7, 12, & 16).
- The Antichrist's kingdom as foretold by Daniel (cf. Daniel 7:7-8, 20, & 24).

Also in this passage is the statement that “*the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.*” This shows the position Hydra and Corax will be in with regard to Virgo at the time of the war in heaven.

Satan has influenced many kings and nations over the years, driving them to nearly annihilate the Jews and in diminishing the salvation offered through Christ. In fact, what is most likely represented here is the fact that he caused King Herod Agrippa to order the murder of all children 2 years of age and younger in an attempt to kill Christ (cf. Matthew 2:16-18).

12:5. The son of the ‘*woman*’, Christ, is shown being caught up to God's throne (His resurrection). There should be no doubt that the subject here is Christ. But just in case you need something else to chew on, please consider the following Scripture: Psalms 2:9, Revelation 2:27, and Revelation 19:15.

This ends the vision of the constellations and their alignment at the time Satan and Michael (and their angelic forces) will war in heaven.

12:6. The *woman* (a remnant of Israel) flees into the wilderness (also see 12:14). Perhaps this group will be the 144,000 God also seals for their protection before His wrath.

At least a portion of Israel will be kept safe in an isolated location for 1,260 days (3.5 years). Scripture here mentions that the place is prepared for her by God, so we should accept the destination as a literal location – not a *spiritual* wilderness, or dispersal to all the gentile nations. Also, Isaiah foretold of the movement of Christ from Sela (Petra) to Mount Zion at the end of the Antichrist's reign and the beginning of His own kingdom (cf. Isaiah 16:1-5).

Wikipedia defines *Sela* as: “. . . meaning rock; Arabic: as-Sala’; Greek: πέτρα; Latin: **petra** was the **capital of Edom**, situated in the great valley extending from the Dead Sea to the Red Sea (2 Kings 14:7).”

12:7-9. Israel flees into the desert at the same time there'll be war in heaven. Satan and his angels will ultimately lose and be thrown down to the earth. Why will this be a problem? Because of the incredible wrath and destruction Satan will execute through the Antichrist after losing the war.

Let's take a moment to address a popular belief that the war in heaven has already happened before Adam and Eve were created, and that Satan was thrown to earth at that time. This position isn't Scriptural and is based on taking Isaiah 14:12-14 out of context. Isaiah chapter 14 is an apocalyptic writing that contains an unveiling of the last days. In it, Isaiah is witnessing the Antichrist (labeled as the 'Assyrian' here), Satan's influence on him, and his eventual destruction.

We must also consider the context and timing of verses 6-17 of this chapter in the Revelation, which will occur 3.5 years before the end (as noted by *1,260 days* in verse 6 and '*time, times, and half a time*' in verse 14). Also, as discussed in the section *The Dragon – Satan* in Chapter 8 of this guide, Satan has had access to God and heaven since well after the time of Adam and Eve as shown by the writings of Job (cf. Job 1:6-11) . This "*accuser of our brethren . . . who accuses them before our God day and night*" (cf. 12:10) won't lose that access until he's cast to earth after the war in heaven, which will occur at the beginning of the Antichrist's time of great tribulation 3.5 years before the end.

12:10-13. This Scripture unveils the terrible time of great tribulation. Many of God's people will lose their lives at the hands of the Antichrist, who'll be influenced by Satan.

12:14. We again see that a portion of Israel (probably the 144,000) will be protected by God for 3.5 years. Compare this verse to 12:6 for further confirmation and support for understanding that 1,260 days and '*time, times, and half a time*' are the same length of time and will represent the same timeframe (the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist).

The message behind "*two wings of the great eagle*" is most likely the same as that in Exodus 19:4 where God is reminding Israel how He gathered them up and protected them during the exodus from Egypt. Be careful not to read anything more into this, believing as some have that the Scripture represents a symbol of America or that Jews will be 'airlifted' out by cargo planes in the last days.²⁹

12:15-16. Satan's attempt to destroy this *woman* by water will be thwarted.

12:17. Enraged and filled with wrath (since he knows his time is short), Satan will go after those who "*keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus*".

~ Revelation Chapter Thirteen ~

You'll get a lot of good information here about the Antichrist and his associate, the false prophet. This chapter corroborates what Daniel prophesied (cf. chapter 7) and reminds us that God will give him authority over His elect for 3.5 years (cf. 13:5). Also outlined here is the worship that the false prophet will demand for the Antichrist and the 'mark' he'll force mankind to take in order to buy or sell during the Antichrist's reign.

13:1-2. The beast John witnesses represents the Antichrist's end-times kingdom and is the fourth beast in Daniel 7:7. Notable features of this kingdom that comprises the four beasts Daniel first foretold of in Daniel 7:3-6:

- There were ten horns and seven heads with blasphemous names.
- It was like a leopard (Greece in Daniel's visions).
- Its feet were like those of a bear (Persia in Daniel's visions).
- It had a mouth like that of a lion (Babylon in Daniel's visions).
- Satan will give the Antichrist, who'll lead the beast, his power and throne and great authority.

The features are significant because they show that the Antichrist's kingdom will comprise all regions conquered by the previous Babylonian, Greek, and Persian Empires. The geography will be what is currently the Middle-East made up of predominantly Muslim nations (you may wish to refresh your memory by reviewing the section of Chapter 8 titled *The Antichrist*).

Although we'll cover the topic again in greater detail in our overview of Revelation chapter 17, this might be the best time to introduce information found there about this beast – the Antichrist's kingdom. What we'll discuss will help you to make sense of the 'heads' and of the next couple of verses. Let's start by looking at the Scripture contained in Revelation 17:9-11:

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are . . . seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not [the Antichrist], is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. —Revelation 17:9-11.

The seven heads represent seven kings/kingdoms that will have controlled the Middle-Eastern regions throughout history from the inception of 12 tribes of Israel until the destruction of the Antichrist and his Empire. They're broken down as follows:

- Five that have *fallen* by 90 CE: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece.
- One that *is* (at the time of the Revelation to John): Roman Empire.
- The other that *hasn't come* (by John's time) but would be in power for a short time in the future: Most likely the Ottoman Empire (Turks) since they assimilated the lands previously ruled by the eastern half of the Roman Empire.
- A final, eighth, kingdom: Antichrist's Empire.

13:3-4. One of the beast's seven heads looks as if it had been slain, but the fatal wound is then healed. Knowing this, the whole world is amazed and follows this kingdom. A popular belief

exploited by the *Left Behind* series and other similar sources is that the Antichrist himself will receive a fatal head wound and then be resurrected miraculously.

While this may be entertaining and one possible interpretation, a more likely scenario will be one where one of the previous heads (kingdoms) will be revived and become very powerful. My opinion is that this ‘revived’ kingdom will be that of the Antichrist’s since we now know from our discussion of chapter 17 (above) that the principality of the Antichrist will have also been from one of the previous seven kingdoms (Revelation 17:9-11).

You’ll learn in verse 14 that the fatal wound had been caused by a weapon of war (represented by the word *sword*). This supports a position that the Antichrist’s kingdom will be a revived kingdom previously defeated through war (as all the previous ‘*beast*’ Empires had been).

13:5-6. The Antichrist will speak out against God and have authority over His people for 42 months just as Daniel prophesied (cf. 7:25). Again, this shows that 42 months and *time, times, and half a time* equal the same time frame (3.5 years) just like 12:6 & 14 showed us that 1,260 days *and time, times, and half a time* are the same. So, to review: 42 months = 1,260 days = *time, times, and half a time*. All three refer to a 3.5-year period of 42 30-day Jewish months.

13:7. Satan, through the Antichrist, will have the authority (given by God) to “*make war with the saints and overcome them*”. Daniel foretold of this time hundreds of years before the Revelation had been given to John (cf. 7:21 & 25).

13:8. Everyone whose names are *not* in the book of life will worship the beast. This is confirmed by the Scripture contained in 14:11. It’s critical to understand that our names *can* be removed from the Lamb’s book of life. For instance, those who worship the beast and/or take his mark will have their name blotted out.

13:9-10. People will go into captivity and be killed by weapons of war during the Antichrist’s authority. Perseverance and the faith of the saints will be tested from this time on. Luke foretold of the captivity and death in his account of Jesus’ response on the Mount of Olives (cf. 21:24). Paul refers to this type of activity in his letter to the Romans (8:35). Finally, these verses just offer another view of the great tribulation of the Antichrist as also seen in the unveiling by the broken fourth seal (cf. Revelation 6:8).

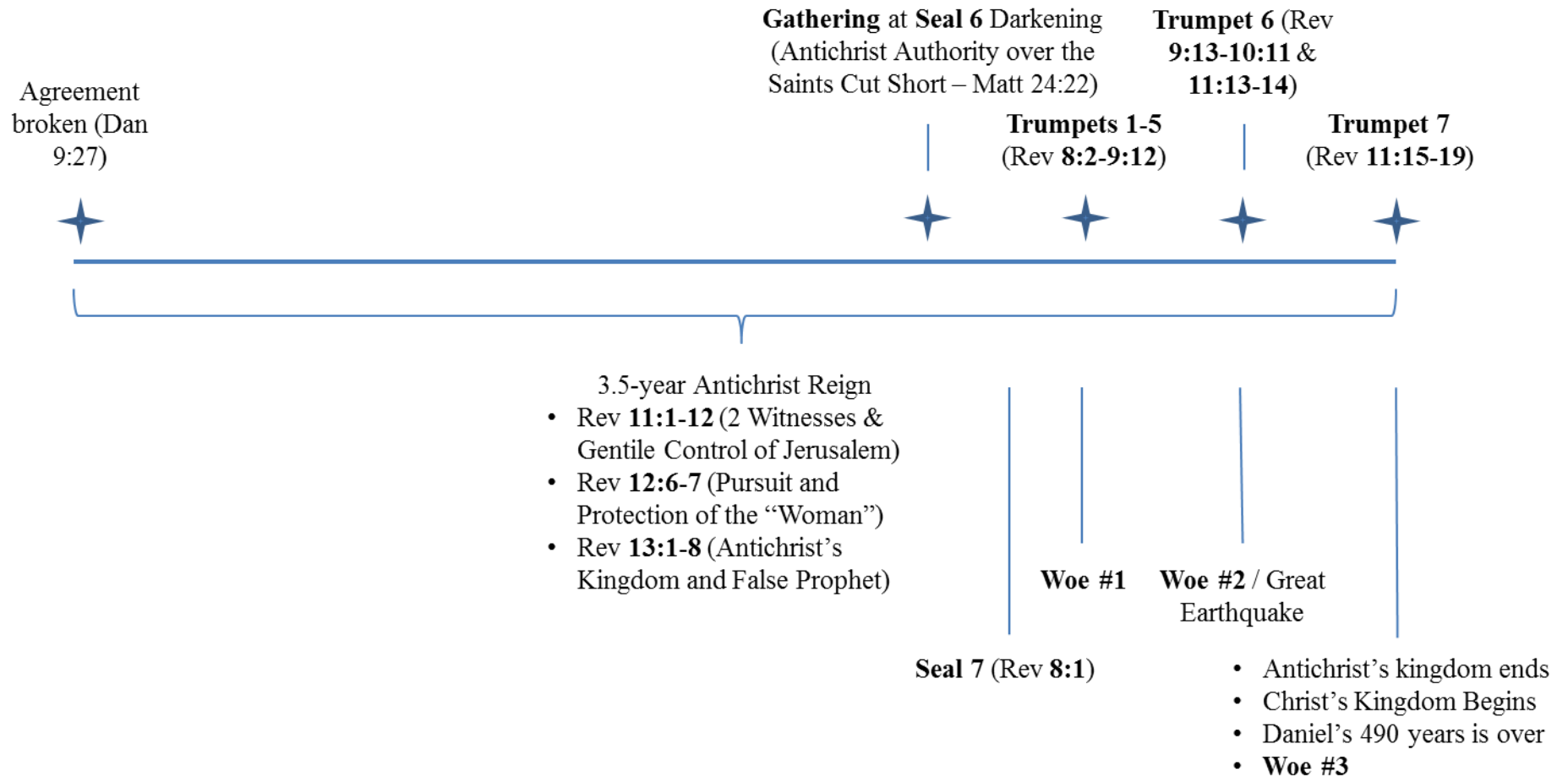
13:11-12. Verses 11-18 pertain to the false prophet of the Antichrist. This beast will come from “*the earth*”, suggesting his origin will be a particular region. This entity will be very deceitful, appearing as a lamb while speaking as a *dragon*. The false prophet will take action on behalf of the Antichrist, having all his authority while in the Antichrist’s presence. All inhabitants of the earth will be made to worship the Antichrist by this false prophet.

13:13-14. The false prophet will perform great signs and wonders to include bringing down fire from heaven. Mankind is deceived by these signs and wonders and told to make an image to the Antichrist (or his kingdom). Again, the significance of the statement “*the wound of the sword and has come to life*” is that the Antichrist or his kingdom will have come from one of the previous Empires that had suffered what appeared to be a complete military defeat.

13:15. This associate of the Antichrist will bring the image of the beast to life and kill anyone who doesn't worship it. We don't know what this image will be like or of what form the worship of it will take, although many have wondered whether it will somehow be connected to the world via the Internet.

13:16-18. Everyone wishing to buy or sell will be forced to accept a mark on the right hand or forehead. It will either be the name of the Antichrist or the number of his name (somehow related to 666). Subtopic *Sealing Followers – the Mark* in section *The Antichrist* (chapter 8) addresses this Scripture in greater detail.

16.4 Timeline of the Antichrist's Reign & Trumpet Judgments
 Revelation Chapters 8:2 – 13



❖ *Part V: Revelation Chapters 14 – 16*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Revelation chapters 14-16

This section highlights the 144,000 who'll be with Christ at the beginning of Christ's reign on earth and the last of God's wrath: The seven bowl judgments. In chapter 14, John also sees several angels who will preach the Gospel to all nations before the end, gather the bride of Christ, and administer God's wrath.

~ Revelation Chapter Fourteen ~

Interestingly, this chapter through verse 5 continues the vision from chapter 13. It then offers additional information related to the preaching of the Gospel to all nations before the end, the gathering of the elect, and the execution of God's wrath against everyone else.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. Verses 1-5 continue the vision of chapter 13 and describe the 144,000 as seen with Christ at the beginning of His kingdom and just before the execution of the seven bowls of God's wrath.
2. Verses 6-7 depict the preaching of the Gospel to all nations. This is most likely the end-times event Christ spoke of on the Mount of Olives (e.g. Matthew 24:14).
3. Verse 8 signals the destruction of figurative *Babylon*, which will be described further in Revelation 16, 17, & 18.
4. The two harvests in this chapter reflect the gathering of the elect (e.g. Matthew 24:30) and the destruction of the wicked (those not gathered by Christ) by the wrath of God. Both are represented as harvests of grapes.

14:1-5. Christ appears on Mount Zion with the 144,000. The voices, making up the sound John hears coming from heaven, sing a new song to God, the four living creatures, and the twenty-four elders. The only ones on earth who'll be able to learn this new song being sung in heaven will be the 144,000 Jews protected by God's seal.

Revelation 15:2-4 will reveal that the voices singing in heaven are those of the souls beheaded for their faith during the reign of the Antichrist, and that the time of this vision is just before the seven vial judgments (the last seven plagues) of God will be administered.

This group is most likely the 'woman' from Revelation chapter 12, who God will keep safe for the duration of the Antichrist's wrath in a place prepared by Him for this very purpose (cf. 12:6). Why do I suggest the 144,000 and the 'woman' are the same?

1. Petra (ancient Sela) will be the starting point of an end-times trip to Mount Zion to obtain His kingdom and will therefore most likely be the location where God will keep the group safe for the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist (Isaiah 16:1-5).

2. The 144,000 follow Christ “*wherever He goes*”.

Scripture divulges qualities of the 144,000 such as:

- They’ve not had sexual relations with women.
- They don’t lie.
- They’re blameless.

See *144,000 from the 12 tribes of Israel* from Chapter 6 of this study for more about this group.

14:6-7. An angel gives a final warning to the earth: “*Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.*” It’s possible that the angel’s Gospel represents the 3.5-year testimony of the two witnesses, but there’s no definitive proof. Regardless, this instance of preaching the Gospel is most likely that part of the end-times progression as noted by Christ on the Mount of Olives (cf. Matthew 24:14 & Mark 13:10).

14:8. Scripture here depicts the destruction of “*Babylon*” (see *Babylon – the Great City* in Chapter 9 of this guide for addition information).

14:9-11. Another angel warns that anyone receiving the mark of the beast will suffer God’s wrath. This would be appropriate because anyone accepting the mark will have made a choice to not follow Christ and will not be gathered with the bride of Christ at His appearing. Also contained in this reference is a reminder that their name will be blotted from the Lamb’s book of life and that they’ll suffer an eternity in hell as a result (cf. Revelation 13:8).

14:12-13. The saints who persevere during this time of the Antichrist and remain faithful will receive their rest and reward during the ‘*harvest*’ coming in 14:15-16.

14:14. Christ is about to reap these two harvests at the end of the Antichrist’s time:

1. The bride of Christ (e.g. Matthew 29-31) in verses 15 & 16.
2. Everyone else not gathered in the first harvest. These humans will suffer God’s incredible wrath (cf. verses 18-20).

14:15-16. Christ is told to put in His “*sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.*” This harvest follows the blessing given to the righteous in 14:13.

14:17-20. God’s wrath, which will follow the ‘*rapture*’, is shown here as the second harvest. It will conclude with the battle of Armageddon and the resulting incredible bloodshed (cf. 19:15-21).

*I will gather all the nations And bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with them there . . . Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations. **Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full;** The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. —Joel 3:2-14.*

~ *Revelation Chapter Fifteen* ~

Primarily, this chapter reflects the preparation of the remainder of God's wrath.

15:1. John sees seven angels holding seven plagues, which will finish the wrath of God. NOTE: Some believe that the plagues administered by these angels *are* the complete wrath of God to then be able to say that the previous trumpets *are not* part of His judgments of wrath. But as you can see here, they will complete God's wrath made up of the seven trumpet judgments (cf. 8:2-11:15) *and* the seven plagues.

15:2. The vision continues with a view in heaven of those who had remained faithful during the time of the Antichrist. Because they won't worship the Antichrist or his image or accept his mark, they'll be killed by beheading (cf. 20:4). John is probably seeing the souls of those who'd been martyred for their faith (cf. 6:9-11 – the fifth seal).

15:3-4. These souls in heaven sing the song that no other on earth but the 144,000 can learn. Therefore, these must be the voices John hears singing the song in 14:2-3:

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders . . . —Revelation 14:2-3.

Christ is on Mount Zion at this point with the 144,000; the rest of God's wrath is about to begin.

15:5-8. The angels prepare to administer the seven vials (bowls) full of the remainder of God's wrath. John sees them in God's temple in heaven and notes that no one will be able to re-enter the heavenly temple until the angels have finished releasing the seven plagues.

~ Revelation Chapter Sixteen ~

The remainder of God's wrath is administered here. Also reflected in this Scripture is the destruction of figurative *Babylon*, which I believe will be Jerusalem based on what we've learned so far in this guide (e.g. Chapter 8).

16:1. The angels are told to administer the seven bowls filled with wrath.

16:2. Angel #1's plague: Everyone who accepts the mark of the Antichrist and worships his image will receive a "*loathsome and malignant sore*".

16:3. Angel #2's plague: Everything left alive in the oceans after the second trumpet judgment will die after the water turns to blood.

16:4-7. Angel #3's plague: All fresh water of the earth is turned to blood as the salt waters had been. Although Scripture doesn't say so, everything left alive after the third trumpet judgment will probably die at this point.

16:8-9. Angel #4's plague: Inhabitants of the earth are "*scorched with fierce heat*". Despite this, survivors curse God and won't repent.

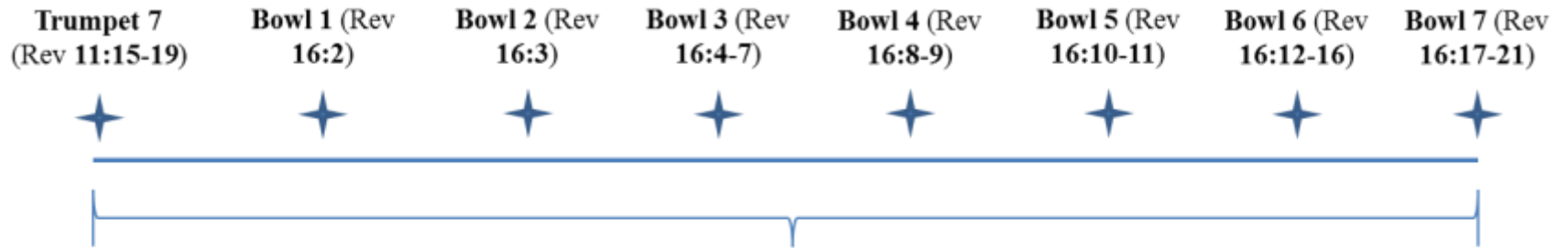
16:10-11. Angel #5's plague: The Antichrist's kingdom and its inhabitants are made to suffer great pain. They still won't repent of their behavior.

16:12-16. Angel #6's plague: The Euphrates River is dried up to make way for forces coming from the east. Spiritual principalities from, or associated with, the Antichrist, Satan, and the false prophet gather the armies of the world for the battle of Armageddon.

16:17-21. Angel #7's plague: Hailstones weighing about 100 pounds will come down upon the inhabitants of the earth, yet they still won't repent.

At that time, the greatest earthquake known to man will split Jerusalem into three parts. This is when '*Babylon*' will be destroyed. Chapters 17 and 18 will reveal additional information about it and its destruction.

16.5 Timeline of the Seven Bowl Judgments
Revelation Chapters 14 – 16



- Antichrist’s Kingdom Ends
- Christ’s Kingdom Begins
- Daniel’s 490 Years For Israel’s Redemption Are Over
- The 144,000 Are on Mount Zion With Christ & Learn a New Song From Heaven (Rev **14:1-5**)
- Those Who Overcame the Antichrist and Stayed Righteous Sing This Song (Rev **15:1-8**)

Most Likely the 30-Days
Following the End of the 1,260-
Day Period of the Antichrist’s
Reign (Total = **1290 Days** as Seen
in Dan 12:11)

- Greatest Earthquake Known to Man (Rev **16:18**)
- Babylon the Great City Destroyed (Rev **16:19**)

❖ *Part VI: Revelation Chapters 17 – 19*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Review *Babylon – the Harlot* in Chapter Nine – *Babylon: Past, Present, & Future*
3. Review *Babylon – the Great City* in Chapter Nine – *Babylon: Past, Present, & Future*
4. Revelation chapters 17-19

Scripture contained in this section focus on end-times Babylon – the *harlot* and *great city*, the marriage celebration in heaven, and the battle of Armageddon.

~ Revelation Chapter Seventeen ~

Half of this chapter describes “*Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots*”, an unfaithful bride that will enter into a temporary alliance with the Antichrist and his kingdom. The second half goes into great detail about that kingdom foretold of by Daniel (cf. chapter 7).

Key Points or Considerations:

1. Israel’s role throughout history as God’s unfaithful bride and the description of her clothing and adornment make her an ideal candidate for the harlot.
2. The spiritual principality that will drive/influence the Antichrist’s kingdom was also associated with one of the first five kingdoms to rule that region of the world: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, or Greece.
3. *Babylon*, the *great city* highlighted in verse 18, will most likely *not* be New York City or the World Bank as some suggest, but will most likely be Jerusalem instead. The most compelling reason of several is that the Antichrist and his kingdom will rule the world during this time from that location.

17:1-2. One of the angels administering God’s wrath in chapter 16 is about to show John the judgment and destruction of “*the great harlot who sits on many waters . . .*” This unfaithful bride, whom I believe to be Israel (see *Babylon – the Harlot* in Chapter Nine of this guide) has engaged in immoral acts with the nations of the earth. My opinion is that this is a reference to her and her unfaithful act of entering into the *covenant of death* with the Antichrist (thus *cheating* on God in a sense).

17:3. The *harlot* will have a relationship with the Antichrist’s kingdom.

17:4-6. The woman’s clothing and adornment are interesting and mirror that worn by Israel’s priests (e.g. Exodus 39:8-13). If the harlot is indeed Israel, then it’s possible the ‘*covenant of death*’ will be orchestrated by one of her priests.

Scripture here has labeled the woman as “*Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth.*” This is indeed a mystery as declared by the passage. As you’ve discovered, though, multiple descriptions of *Babylon* in the Revelation closely resemble those given to ancient Babylon by prophets at the height of that Empire and during the exile of Judah.

Hebrews in Babylon adopted sinful practices of astrology, divination, idol worship and child sacrifice. The influence on God's people was devastating and the sinful behavior earned her the title of 'harlot' by her husband, God.

We also see here that the *harlot* will be responsible for the blood of the saints. This has been true of Israel throughout history and mirrors what Jesus and Paul said during their ministries on earth (cf. Matthew 23:37; Acts 7:52; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15). But the ultimate bloodshed of God's people will come at the hands of the Antichrist, made possible by the 'covenant of death' entered into by Israel through deception. This is most likely the focus of 17:6 even though, as we've seen in Scripture, Israel has always had a hand in the bloodshed of her saints.

17:7. The angel is about to demystify the *harlot* and the *beast* she'll have a relationship with (Antichrist's kingdom).

17:8. As discussed in our overview of Revelation chapter 13, the *beast* the harlot is riding will be empowered by Satan, and its spiritual principality had also influenced the kingdom before John's time (before the Roman Empire). Those of the earth not in Christ's book of life, which has existed since the beginning of the world, will be unwise as to the Antichrist and his kingdom.

17:9-11. So, Christ in His mercy offers wisdom to help us discern good from evil and avoid the end-times deception. The following explores these verses and matches the kingdoms to specific time frames based on what we know of historical fulfillment:

Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are . . . seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. The beast which was and is not [the Antichrist], is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction. —Revelation 17:9-11.

The seven heads represent seven kings/kingdoms. Some have already come and gone by John's time, but not all. History and Scripture help us to understand which kingdoms the seven heads represent:

- Five that have *fallen* by 90 CE:
 1. **Egypt** (722 BCE)
 2. **Assyria** (605 BCE)
 3. **Babylon** (539 BCE)
 4. **Persia** (331 BCE)
 5. **Greece** (63 BCE)
- One that *is* (at the time of the Revelation to John): **Roman Empire**.
- The other that *hasn't come* (by John's time) but would be in power for a short time in the future: This can only be the **Ottoman Empire** (Turkish) which captured Constantinople in 1453 and lasted until 1918. Each of the Empires above conquered the next, assimilating the people and geographical regions in the process. In keeping with this progression, the Turks conquered the Roman Empire and acquired all its territory in the Middle East.
- A final, eighth, kingdom: Interestingly, Christ tells John these things about the principality of the Antichrist:

- “*Was, but is not*”: This informs us that the principality will be from one of the “*five that have fallen*”.
- “*Also an eighth*”: He’ll be the principality of the eighth kingdom (Antichrist’s kingdom).
- “*One of the seven*”: The Antichrist’s spiritual principality will be from one of the previous seven kingdoms. Of course, we already know this because he “*Was, but is not*”.
- “*Goes to destruction*”: We know that the Antichrist will be thrown into the lake of fire along with his false prophet after being defeated by Christ at the battle of Armageddon (cf. Revelation 19:20).

17:12-14. The ten horns of the Antichrist’s beast represent ten kings/authorities that will initially reign with the Antichrist, giving him all power and authority that’s theirs to give. We see here a reference to the battle of Armageddon.

Insight given here mimics Scripture penned by Daniel regarding the makeup of the Antichrist’s kingdom, tribulation of God’s people, and the ultimate defeat of the Antichrist by Jesus:

*I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them until the Ancient of Days came and **judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.***—Daniel 7:21-22.

*As for the **ten horns**, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. **But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.*** —Daniel 7:24-26.

17:15. *Water* in Scripture represents multitudes of people, from separate languages and nations in this case. The reference suggests there’ll be something of an international element to the Antichrist’s kingdom.

17:16-17. The ten rulers associated with the Antichrist will make the harlot “*desolate and naked*”. Just like Israel’s label as a *harlot* and her responsibility in the *bloodshed of the saints* makes her a good candidate for the Babylon harlot, so does this outcome, which Christ said Israel was destined for:

I will also give you into the hands of your lovers, and they will tear down your shrines, demolish your high places, strip you of your clothing, take away your jewels, and will leave you naked and bare. —Ezekiel 16:39.

For thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I will give you into the hand of those whom you hate, into the hand of those from whom you were alienated. They will deal with you in hatred, take all your property, and leave you naked and bare. —Ezekiel 23:28-30.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! — Matthew 23:37-38.

17:18. “*The woman whom you saw is the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth.*” This passage has led some to believe the harlot is New York City because of the United Nation’s presence there. But in context, it’s referring to the ‘*great city*’ where the Antichrist will rule from at the time of his destruction. This will be Jerusalem, an integral part of the *harlot* Israel, based on Old Testament prophecy, the Antichrist’s presence in the Temple as foretold by Daniel, Jesus, and Paul, etc.

~ *Revelation Chapter Eighteen* ~

The saga of future, figurative Babylon continues with this section of Scripture related to her destruction as the harlot and as the location of the Antichrist and his associates – “*the great city, which reigns over the kings of the earth*” (cf. 17:18).

Several themes discussed here had already been foretold in what were likely near-far prophecies aimed at *ancient* Babylon by Jeremiah and Isaiah as you’ll see below.

18:1-6. “*Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great!*” The entire world will be involved in immoral acts with her as it had done during the time of *ancient* Babylon. We’ve already seen this mentioned in 14:8 & 17:2, but you can read about it in Isaiah’s oracle concerning the “*Wilderness of the Sea*” (cf. 21:1-10).

Jeremiah uttered the same basic message, which may very well be a near-far prophecy for ancient Babylon and future, figurative Babylon considering the recurrence of it in the vision to John well after original Babylon had been destroyed.

*Flee from the midst of Babylon, And each of you save his life! Do not be destroyed in her punishment, For this is the LORD'S time of vengeance; He is going to render recompense to her. **Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of the LORD, Intoxicating all the earth. The nations have drunk of her wine; Therefore the nations are going mad. Suddenly Babylon has fallen and been broken . . .***—Jeremiah 51:6-8.

18:7-19. The arrogance of this figurative Babylon is seen by Scripture references such as “*I SIT as A QUEEN AND I AM NOT A WIDOW, and will never see mourning*” and “*For this reason in one day her plagues will come . . .*”

Isaiah’s prophecy about ancient Babylon mimics the description given to John about the *future* Babylon:

Yet you said, 'I will be a queen forever.' These things you did not consider Nor remember the outcome of them. Now, then, hear this, you sensual one, Who dwells securely, Who says in your heart, 'I am, and there is no one besides me. I will not sit as a widow, Nor know loss of children.' But these two things will come on you suddenly in one day: Loss of children and widowhood. They will come on you in full measure In spite of your many sorceries, In spite of the great power of your spells. —Isaiah 47:7-9.

Verse 16 reflects the same message contained in 17:4: “. . . saying, *Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls . . .*”

18:20-23. These verses contain more information regarding the destruction of future, *figurative* Babylon.

18:24. Just like Scripture contained in 17:6, this verse addresses the fact that the *harlot* will be responsible for the blood of the prophets, saints, and all who'll be slain during the reign in '*Babylon*'.

Jeremiah foretold of this too in his prophecy about ancient Babylon and its impending destruction by the Assyrians: "*Indeed Babylon is to fall for the slain of Israel, As also for Babylon the slain of all the earth have fallen.*" —Jeremiah 51:49.

I find it very interesting, and significant, that Christ quoted ancient prophecies to John in these visions about the future '*Babylon*'. What this reminds us of is that the harlot's behavior and immorality will rival that of ancient Babylon, warranting the same destruction orchestrated by God.

~ Revelation Chapter Nineteen ~

We'll get to learn John's vision about the marriage to Christ by his betrothed (the Church) and of the destruction of the Antichrist and his armies in this passage.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. Verse 15 serves as yet another reminder that the weapon of Christ is the sword (not bow as is the weapon of false Messiahs in seal #1 of chapter 6).
2. The bride of Christ and the group of warriors seen with Christ in verse 14 will *not* be the same, but will be distinct groups in heaven.

19:1-5. The hosts of heaven are glorifying God and praising Him for the destruction He will bestow upon 'Babylon'. This is the judgment of Babylon we read about in chapter 18 of the Revelation.

19:6-10. A mighty voice in heaven praises God and declares that it's time for the marriage of the bride of Christ to the groom. Note that this occurs just after the judgment/destruction of *Babylon*.

19:11-16. Christ is seen here riding a white horse and is called "*Faithful and True*" and "*The Word of God*" and "*King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*". John sees Christ and the armies of heaven following him, also on white horses. The white clothing and white horses reflect the purity and righteousness of those in heaven including Christ, His bride, and the warriors.

We're reminded here that the weapon of Christ is the sword. So although the white horse and rider in the first seal of Revelation chapter 6 may suggest righteousness, the rider carries a bow and isn't Christ – the rider represents false righteousness of *false Messiahs* as previously discussed in this study (e.g. Chapter 14).

Before moving on, we must address a minor sticking point. Because the gathered Church and heaven's warriors are dressed in white, some believe that the bride attending the marriage supper of Christ and the warriors in this passage will be one and the same. This is unlikely since heaven has a hierarchy separate from the bride of Christ that includes warriors, and the Bride is seen later coming down from heaven in the Revelation given to John. Please see *The Bride: Marriage* in Chapter 7 of this guide for additional information.

19:17-18. The birds of the sky are being called together for the "*great supper of God*". This gives us a rough idea of the amount of carnage that will be produced by Christ's destruction of the Antichrist and his armies. Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Jeremiah also prophesied about this feast:

You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field. — Ezekiel 39:4.

They will be left together for mountain birds of prey, And for the beasts of the earth; And the birds of prey will spend the summer feeding on them, And all the beasts of the earth will spend harvest time on them.—Isaiah 18:6.

The dead bodies of this people will be food for the birds of the sky and for the beasts of the earth; and no one will frighten them away.—Jeremiah 7:33.

19:19-21. Christ defeats the Antichrist and his *armies*, throwing him and the false prophet into the lake of fire and killing the rest.

❖ *Part VII: Revelation Chapters 20 – 22*

RECOMMENDED READING:

1. Review the appropriate portion of Chapter 14 of this guide – *Part II: Introduction to the Revelation*
2. Revelation chapters 20-22

A lot will take place in the timeframe reflected by the remaining three chapters of the Revelation. Once the Antichrist and his false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire, and his armies destroyed, Satan will be bound and held captive in hell for 1,000 years. At the end of that time, he'll be released for one more confrontation. The next few passages also unveil the great judgment of God, His kingdom, and a warning to leave the Revelation given to John as-is.

~ Revelation Chapter Twenty ~

In this chapter, John reports on Satan's 1,000-year captivity in hell and Christ's reign during that time. With Him will be those beheaded for their faith (seen first after the breaking of the fifth seal in chapter 6 of this Revelation). At the conclusion of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released for one final confrontation before being destroyed by the lake of fire. John witnesses the great judgment and destruction of those not found in Christ's book of life.

Key Points or Considerations:

1. Yes, there *is* a lake of fire. As I said at the beginning of this study: We'll be in one group or the other in the end and will either join the rest of the bride of Christ in heaven or suffer the lake-of-fire judgment seen here.
2. Although *everyone* found in the book of life will be present in the New Jerusalem (cf. Revelation 21:27), there's no indication that anyone other than the 144,000 and those beheaded during the Antichrist's time will be with Christ on earth during His reign.

20:1-3. Satan is thrown into hell, which is sealed to hold him there for 1,000 years. He'll be released for a short time at the end of 1,000 years to gather the nations together against God for a final battle just like he did at the battle of Armageddon (cf. 20:8-9). It will be interesting to see what a world without Satan's influence for 1,000 years will be like.

NOTE: Some believe that there will be no 1,000-year (millennial) reign of Christ, or that it's symbolic of the Christian era we're currently in. We'll discuss this further in the next chapter of our study. Significant points to keep in mind:

1. While some spiritualize or allegorize the binding of Satan to mean that Christians have power over him, his evil influence has been at work and will be until he truly is *bound*.
2. The nations are still deceived and corrupted by Satan and his spiritual principalities. This will not be the case during the millennial reign of Christ while Satan is 'bound'.
3. This millennial reign of Christ is sandwiched in Scripture between the end of God's wrath when Satan is restrained in hell and the Great Judgment preceding the new age.

20:4-6. John sees the souls of those beheaded for their faith and for not following the Antichrist (he had previously seen them after the breaking of the fourth seal in Revelation chapter 6). They'll come to life and reign with Christ for 1,000 years in what is called the "*first resurrection*". After being raised to life, they'll become priests of God and of Christ and won't suffer the lake-of-fire death that those not in the book of life will suffer at the great judgment (cf. 20:11-15).

20:7-9. Satan will again gather the nations for battle against God as he'll also influence *Gog of Magog* to do at the battle of Armageddon. Fire from heaven will devour this great army as it surrounds Jerusalem containing Christ's kingdom and its holy inhabitants. Where will the nations come from? Remember that one-third of Israel will still be left alive when Christ's kingdom begins (Ezekiel 5 & Zechariah 13). And although most of mankind will have been killed by the plagues of God's wrath, some will be alive afterward to help repopulate the earth.

20:10. Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire upon the crushing defeat described in verse 9. As previously discussed in Chapter 8 of this guide, hell and the lake of fire are generally different locations. *Hell* (generally), *hades*, and the *abyss* are different labels for the same place – a temporary repository for souls (and for Satan during his 1,000-year incarceration) located deep within the earth. The lake of fire will be a place filled with fire and brimstone where Satan, his angels, and any human not found in Christ's book of life will be tormented *forever and ever*.

Let's pause for a moment to discuss the concept of '*forever and ever*'. From a very young age, I'd heard that the consequences of sin without Christ would be death. But I'd also heard that anyone not 'saved' would be thrown into *hell* where they'd burn *forever*. Fear of cooking without dying for eternity did the trick . . . for a while. Two things for you to consider on this issue:

1. The Greek word used for '*forever*' in verse 10 is *aiōn* (Strong's G165) – the same word used for '*age*' as in '*end of the age*' from Matthew 24:3. This introduces a strong possibility that the torment from the lake of fire will end at the conclusion of *this* age after the great judgment and as the new age begins when God's kingdom is established.
2. Christ called the lake of fire the second death (cf. 20:14), again suggesting a completion and final disposition of those raised for judgment and then thrown into the fire and brimstone.

Regardless, you'll definitely want to be a part of the bride of Christ. Otherwise, your final destination will most likely be separation from God, torment for a time, and then . . . nothing.

20:11-15. John witnesses in this passage the great judgment of God. Everyone not transformed at Christ's appearing and the gathering of the bride will be raised at this time. Included in this group will be those who'd lived and died before the gift of salvation from Christ was possible; they'll be judged by their works. The other half of this group will be anyone who had the opportunity to accept Christ and receive this great gift of salvation but didn't.

~ Revelation Chapter Twenty One ~

Here, John sees the passing of this age and the dawning of a new one where God will dwell with mankind on earth. Of special note is the list of sinful behavior, the practice of which will keep us out of the Lamb's book of life and therefore out of God's kingdom. There will only be two choices, so it stands to reason that anyone who *practices* sinful behavior will therefore end up in the lake of fire after God's end-of-the-age judgment.

21:1-2. John has witnessed the passing of the previous age (the one we're in now) and the dawn of the new age and a New Jerusalem coming out of heaven from God.

21:3-5. God declares that the tabernacle of God is now among men. He'll dwell with them, and protect them. There'll be no more sadness, death, or pain. This is what Isaiah wrote about when he penned:

He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. —Isaiah 25:8.

21:6-8. Christ tells John that He is the “*beginning and the end*” – the one who'll give freely from the “*springs of the water of life*”. This passage also serves as a reminder that people who *practice* sinful behaviors such as these will *not* inherit the Kingdom of God. Here's a list of the sinful practices and what Scripture reflects about them:

- Cowardice.
- Unbelief [in Christ as the Son of God].
- Acts **abominable** to God. Several of many based on Scripture such as Leviticus 18, Deuteronomy 7, 22, 23, and Proverbs 15 are:
 - Sexual immorality:
 - Gay and lesbian sexual acts (these contradict God's intended relationships)
 - Bestiality
 - Pursuit of nudity (in context, this may be abominable because of the sexual acts, adultery, or incest the pursuit of sensuality can lead to)
 - Adultery
 - Graying the lines between the roles and dress of men and women (e.g. Deuteronomy 22:5).
 - Idolatry (also listed below).
 - Mistreatment of the weak or of the property of others.
- Murder.
- Immorality.
- Sorcery.
- Idolatry.
- Lying.

21:9. One of the angels who'd taken part in dispensing the seven vial (bowl) judgments invites John to see the bride of Christ.

21:10-21. John then sees the Holy City – New Jerusalem – coming from heaven. He notes the following features:

- Twelve gates (3 in each direction) made up of a single pearl with 12 angels at each gate.
- The names of the 12 tribes, one on each gate.
- Twelve foundation stones representing each of Christ's 12 apostles.
- Footprint: 1,500 miles long by 1,500 miles wide (2,250,000 square miles).
- Walls that are 72 yards thick.
- Walls made up of various precious stones.
- Street of pure gold.

21:22-27. There'll be no physical temple because God and Christ will be the temple, and no additional light will be needed because they'll illuminate the city. It will be always be open to those whose names had been in the Lamb's book of life at the great judgment preceding the new heaven and earth. There'll be no one inside who practices the sinful behavior we listed earlier in our discussion of verses 6-8 because they'll have been tossed into the lake of fire at that judgment.

~ Revelation Chapter Twenty Two ~

The unveiling of the new heaven and earth, and of God's kingdom, continues with verses 1-5. Jesus finishes the Revelation by issuing a warning to change nothing about it or suffer lake-of-fire consequences. I've encountered a significant number of people who do modify this Revelation, declare it symbolic, or disregard it altogether to fit a particular eschatological standpoint. If you fall into one of these categories, I beg you to reconsider your position based on Christ's warning in this last chapter of His Revelation.

22:1-2. John sees the water of life and the tree of life.

22:3-5. The kingdom of God and Christ will last until the end of *that* age – however long that may be. We're reminded of the amazing illumination of God's glory as we also saw in 21:23-25. This ends the apocalyptic visions and descriptions spanning from the time of the letters to the churches in chapters 2-3, through the time of the birth pangs and Antichrist, and until the new heaven and earth.

22:6-7. The angel tells John that what he has seen is true and meant for the servants of the Church. Christ then tells John that He'll come quickly. Those who listen and heed the prophecy contained in the Revelation will be blessed.

22:8-9. The angel also tells John that he's a servant of God just like John is, just like the prophets had been, and as those who heed the words of the Revelation will be.

22:10-11. John is instructed to make the prophecy known, "*for the time is near*". Those who are righteous and holy must keep themselves that way.

22:12-13. Christ reiterates that He'll come quickly and that judgment will follow. Some people mistake this for a separate pre-great-judgment judgment meant only for the gathered Church. There'll be just one judgment meant where Christ will "*render to every man according to what he has done*". Remember that Christ's appearing (second coming), His 1,000-year reign, and the final judgment (mentioned in this passage) will all be part of this current age.

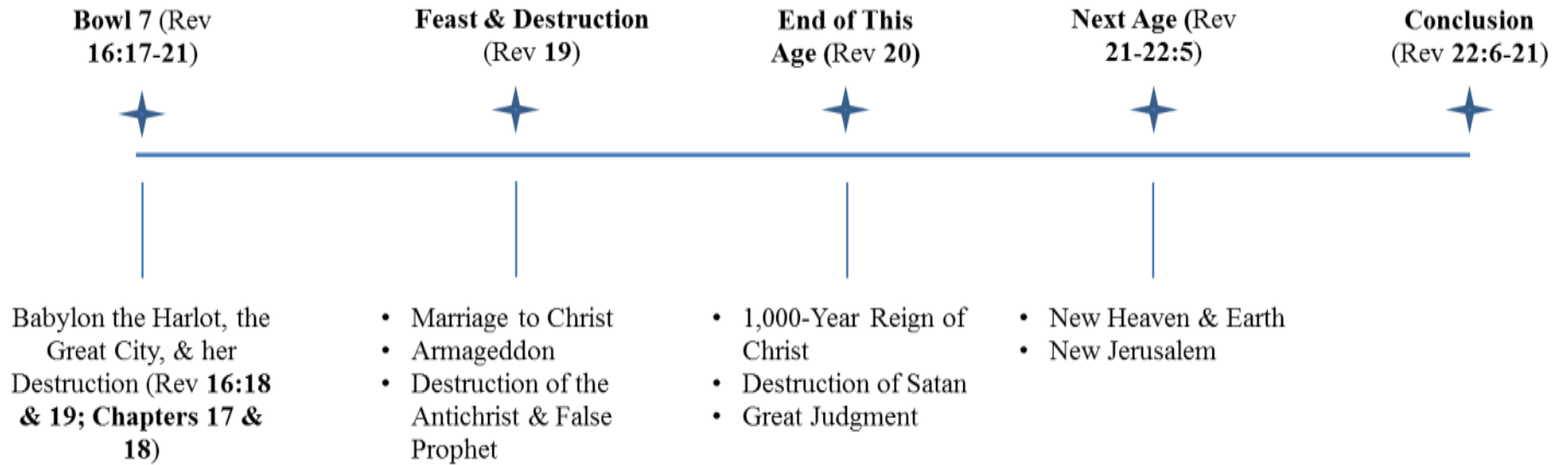
22:14-15. We're reminded that the righteous will inherit the kingdom while everyone else who'd practiced the kind of sin we discussed in our overview of 21:6-8 won't.

22:16. Jesus again states that the Revelation given to John is for the churches.

22:17. Those who wish to be partakers of God's kingdom are encouraged to do so.

22:18-21. Anyone modifying the Revelation given to John will lose their inheritance and suffer the lake of fire judgment. This passage is one of several that serve as a reminder that we can give up our salvation under certain circumstances.

16.6 Timeline of the Rest of the Revelation
Revelation Chapters 17 – 21



Checkup – Chapter 16

The following questions are meant to check your understanding of what we've covered so far and provoke additional thoughts and questions that I hope will elevate your learning to a higher level. You don't have to answer Private Challenge/Discussion questions (or share the answers publicly if you do). They're just for your own consideration or group discussion.

Answers to all questions can be found in Appendix D.

1. Who is the author of the Revelation? Who gave it to that author?
2. What do the seven lampstands of Revelation chapter one represent?
3. What do the seven stars of the first chapter of Revelation represent?
4. In His letters to the churches, Christ has nothing against two of them. Which are they?
5. Why is Christ the only one who could break the seals and reveal the end-times events in chapter five?
6. Which timeframe is unveiled by broken seals 4 and 5 in Revelation 6:7-11?

7. Revelation 6:12-17 covers the breaking of the sixth seal, which outlines the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars that will precede _____ and _____ (also check out Matthew 24:29-31).
8. What is the background or nationality of the multitude reflected in Revelation 7:9-17 (seen by John immediately after the darkening of the sixth seal)?
9. From what did the multitude in question #8 come out of?
10. Which trumpet judgment comprised woe #1 of Revelation 9:12?
11. Which trumpet judgment or other events comprise woe #2 of Revelation 11:14?
12. The seventh trumpet blast (Revelation 11:15) will pinpoint certain apocalyptic events. What will they be?
13. Which two 3.5-year-long scenarios are unveiled in Revelation chapter 11?
14. Which 3.5-year-long scenario is unveiled in Revelation chapter 12?

15. What will be happening during the 3.5-year timeframe unveiled in Revelation chapter 13?

16. Please summarize what's happening in Revelation 14:2-3 and 15:2-4. Things to consider:

- a. Who's singing the song in heaven?
- b. What group contains the only earthly beings that can learn that song?
- c. What's the context of this vision?

17. What's the theme of Revelation chapters 17 and 18?

18. Revelation 17:9-11 gives insight as to the spiritual principality (or principalities) that will be involved with the Antichrist's end-times kingdom. Please describe who the following entities were or will be (when John wrote down the Revelation):

- a. The five that *have fallen*.
- b. The one that *is*.
- c. The one that *will come*.
- d. The *eighth* ruler.

19. What are the primary points or themes of Revelation chapter 19?

20. According to Revelation 20:4-6, who'll be with Christ during His 1,000-year reign?

21. Are hell and the lake of fire the same thing?

22. *Private Challenge / Discussion:* Do you believe the judgment reflected in Revelation 20:11-15 and the ‘sheep’ and ‘goat’ judgment of Matthew 24 describe the same event? Why? Why not?
23. *Private Challenge / Discussion:* Revelation 21:8 gives a short list of sinful behavior that will keep us out of God’s kingdom and put us into the lake of fire at the great judgment. What do you think someone practicing any of those behaviors could do to become one who “*overcomes*” as in 21:6-7?
24. Who is the intended audience of the Revelation?
25. *Private Challenge / Discussion:* The word ‘church’ isn’t used in the Revelation after the seven letters of chapters 2 and 3. A popular theory of those who hold to a pre-tribulation rapture: This is proof that the rapture will happen before any of the events of the great tribulation (reign of the Antichrist). What are your thoughts now that you’ve gone through the entire Revelation? Do you agree? Why? Why not?
26. What consequences await those who modify the Revelation given by Christ (22:18-21)?

APPENDIX B.1: End of the age Definitions & References

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
Age (World) – End of	<p>Can represent the physical earth (see Strong’s G1093 below) as in Revelation 21:1 (. . . <i>And I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . .</i>) but also represents an era. Most verses to the right use the Greek word aiōn (Strong’s G165 below) to depict the current ‘age’. We’re in the ‘last days’ but the end of the current era/world/age won’t occur until after the following events have passed: Antichrist, 3.5-year Great Tribulation, God’s wrath, Christ’s 1,000-year kingdom, and Great Judgment.</p> <p>G165: aiōn (ahee-ohn’) properly an age; by extension perpetuity (also past); by implication the world; specifically (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future): - age, course, eternal, (for) ever (-more), [n-]ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end).</p> <p>G1093: gē (ghay) Contracted from a primary word; soil; by extension a region, or the solid part or the whole of the terrene globe (including the occupants in each application): - country, earth (-ly), ground, land, world.</p>	<p>Psa 19:4 Isa 62:11-12 Mat 12:32 Mat 13:39-40 & 49 Mat 24:3 Mat 28:20 Gal 1:4 Eph 1:21 Eph 2:7 Col 1:26 Tit 2:12 Heb 6:4-5 Heb 9:26</p>
Antichrist, The	<p>The wicked principality that will enter into a <i>covenant of death</i> with God’s people roughly 7 years before Christ’s second coming/appearing. Midway through the timeframe, he’ll dishonor the agreement, set up shop in the 3rd Temple, and begin a 3.5-year reign of terror. The coming Antichrist will be empowered by Satan (e.g. see Ezekiel chapter 28) and is called the <i>Mystery of Iniquity</i> by Paul and <i>Abomination of Desolation</i> by Christ. Also see <i>Beast</i>.</p> <p>Some characteristics of the <i>Antichrist</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2Th 2:3 Gathering won’t occur until the Son of Destruction • 2Th 2:4 Exalts himself above God and sits in the Temple • 2Th 2:7 Mystery of Lawlessness 	<p>Isa 14:12-17 Isa 16:4, 6, & 14 Isa 25:10 Eze 28 Dan 7 Dan 9:26-27 Dan 11:36-45 Hab 3:1-19 Mat 24:15 Mar 13:14 2Th 2:3-9</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2Th 2:8 Lawless One, destroyed at Christ’s coming • 2Th 2:9 Empowered by Satan • Mat 24:15 & Mark 13:14 Abomination of Desolation [standing in the Temple] <p>See Chapter 8 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>1Jn 2:18 1Jn 4:3</p>
Babylon Harlot	<p>A figurative term used to identify a spiritual ‘<i>harlot</i>’ and place of tyrannical authority during the 3.5-year reign of the Antichrist. The <i>harlot</i> is most likely Israel based on Old Testament references, and the location of the figurative entity will most likely be Jerusalem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jerusalem – That ‘<i>great city</i>’ as Sodom and Egypt were in Rev 11:8. • The context of Rev 16:19 suggests Jerusalem and Babylon are synonymous. • Isaiah referred to Jerusalem as a <i>harlot</i> (Isa 1:21). <p>Other key points related to the term <i>Babylon/Harlot</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for persecution/death of the Saints (Rev 17:6 & 18:24). • Arrogant: “<i>I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow . . .</i>” • Destroyed by the Antichrist and his kingdom (Rev 17:16). <p>A popular belief that the Babylon Harlot is the Catholic Church and that the Antichrist will be a Pope has existed at least since the time of Martin Luther in the 16th century. This is unlikely considering today’s lack of authority, military might, and location of the Catholic Church headquartered in Rome.</p> <p>See Chapter 9 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Isa 1:21 Isa 47:1-15 Jer 4:30 Jer 51:49 Eze 16 Zec 2:4-7 Rev 16:18-19 Rev 17:1-18 Rev 18</p>
Beast	<p>The Beasts of Revelation chapters 4-6 are living creatures (G2226 below) found at the throne of God, but the term often symbolizes kingdoms or authorities. The only <i>beast</i> word used to represent the Antichrist or his kingdom in the New Testament is G2342 (therion) – something dangerous/venomous. This sets the</p>	<p>Rev 6:8 Rev 11:7-8 Rev 13:1-4 Rev 13:16-18</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>Antichrist or his realm of authority apart from other kingdoms represented by the term <i>beast</i> elsewhere in Scripture. A related beast reference is a label used to identify the False Prophet of the Antichrist (Rev 11:13-17).</p> <p>The beast kingdom headed by the Antichrist will be composed of 8 leaders/authorities (7 plus the Antichrist).</p> <p>G2226: zōon (dzo'-on) A live thing, that is, an animal: - beast.</p> <p>G2342: thērion (thay-ree'-on) A dangerous animal: - (venomous, wild) beast.</p> <p>See <i>Antichrist</i> (above) and Chapter 8 of this guide.</p>	<p>Rev 14:9 & 11 Rev 15:2 Rev 16:2 Rev 16:13 Rev 17:3 Rev 17:7-8 Rev 17:11-13 Rev 19:20 Rev 20:4 & 10</p>
Bride of Christ	<p>Everyone who's given themselves to Christ since the time of His ministry around 27 CE. This group has entered into a covenant with Him and is referred to as the bride who'll attend the <i>marriage supper of the Lamb</i>. This <i>marriage</i> will happen in heaven after the bride is raptured (gathered) from the earth just before God's wrath begins against the rest of the world. References to the right are related to both bride and groom.</p> <p>See Chapter 6 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Mat 9:14-15 Joh 3:28-30 Rev 19:7-9 Rev 21:1-2 & 9 Rev 22:17</p>
Christ's Appearing (Epiphaneia)	<p>Epiphaneia (G2015) These passages refer to Christ's appearance when He <i>comes</i> and the things His return to earth will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defeat of the Antichrist • His kingdom • Judgment of the living and dead • Rewards for the righteous 	<p>2Th 2:8 1Ti 6:14 2Ti 4:1 & 8 Tit 2:13</p>
Christ's Coming (Parousia)	<p>Parousia (G3952) All of these passages refer to Christ's coming at the end and the subsequent gathering of the Church. His first visit brought His birth, life,</p>	<p>Matthew 24:3, 27, 37, & 39</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven – a fulfilling of the <i>spring</i> feasts of the Lord. The purpose of His second coming will be to gather those faithful to Him, destroy the unfaithful, and establish a 1,000-year reign in Jerusalem – a likely fulfilling of the <i>fall</i> feasts.</p> <p>The Greek word used to represent Christ’s second coming is <i>parousia</i> (Strong’s G3952 below). In context and when comparing Scripture, we find that it’s a presence (not a quick ‘here and gone’) and that several events will happen during His coming/appearing – <i>parousia</i>: Gathering of the saints by His angels, accompanying the 144,000, and the 1,000-year reign. The following are several examples of the use of this particular word:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mat 24:3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” • 1Co 15:23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His <i>coming</i>. • 2Th 2:1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the <i>coming</i> of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, • 1Jn 2:28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His <i>coming</i>. <p>Common to a pre-tribulation rapture position is the belief that Christ’s appearing at the gathering won’t be His actual second coming, and that the second coming will happen later when Christ defeats the armies at Armageddon. They separate <i>appearing</i> and <i>coming</i> into two separate events. Unfortunately, this introduces an unscheduled visit before the second coming (appearing) which the Bible relates directly to the gathering. This position isn’t Scriptural and creates a serious theological problem that requires much allegorizing and symbolizing to rationalize. The Bible records only one second appearing/coming.</p>	<p>1Co 15:23 1Th 2:19 1Th 3:13 1Th 4:15 1Th 5:23 2Th 2:1 & 8 Jam 5:7-8 2Pe 3:4 1Jn 2:28</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>Heb 9:28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.</p> <p>G3952: parousia (par-oo-see'-ah) a being near, that is, advent (often, return; specifically of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked); (by implication) physical aspect: - coming, presence.</p> <p>Related to Christ's coming are things that will be revealed when He comes. The Greek word for revelation in this case is <i>apokalupsis</i> (G602). Passages using the word (as it relates to Christ's return) are affiliated with the gathering of the Church that will happen at His coming. They promise relief at the revelation of Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:7) and reflect longing and eagerness in waiting for what will be praise, glory, honor, and grace when we see Him.</p> <p>Related Scripture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romans 8:19 • 1 Corinthians 1:7 • 2 Thessalonians 1:7 • 1 Peter 1:7 • 1 Peter 1:13 • 1 Peter 4:13 	
Christ's Kingdom	<p>See <i>1,000 Year Reign of Christ</i>. References on the right may also include the Kingdom/reign of God that will be eternal and will occur after Christ's 1,000-year kingdom of Christ and the Great Judgment.</p> <p>See Chapter 16 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Isa 11:1-16 Isa 24:23 Isa 25:8-12 Isa 27:13 Isa 28:5-18 Isa 62:1-12 Oba 1:17-21 Zec 9:9-17</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
		2Ti 4:1-4
Covenant of Death	<p>The agreement <i>the</i> Antichrist will enter into with God’s people (Daniel 9:27 & Isa 28:15) roughly 7 years before Christ returns to earth. He’ll go against the covenant after 3.5 years and begin a reign of terror against God’s chosen – Jew and Christian alike. The agreement will be cancelled by the destruction of the Antichrist and binding of Satan by God (Isa 28:16-18).</p> <p>See Chapter 8 of this guide for additional information.</p>	Isa 28:15-18 Dan 9:27
Daniel’s Seventieth Week [of years]	<p>The 70th week of years – or final 7 years – in a 490-year period prophesied by Daniel. The Hebrew word for ‘week of years’ is depicted below by Strong’s H7620. This 7-year period will conclude the 70 weeks of years as shown to Daniel to do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish the transgression. • Make an end of sin. • Make atonement for inequity. • Bring in everlasting righteousness. • Seal up vision and prophecy. • Anoint the most holy. <p>All of these goals will be accomplished when Christ gains His kingdom at the 7th trumpet (Rev 11:15).</p> <p>Sixty-nine weeks of years (483 years) would pass from the command to rebuild Jerusalem and its walls until Christ’s crucifixion (Dan 9:25-26). Daniel then prophesied about Jerusalem’s destruction by Roman forces (Dan 9:26).</p> <p>The last – 70th - ‘week of years’ (years 484-490) will start with a covenant between the Antichrist (spiritual principality that drove the Roman empire) and ‘many’ to include Israel (Dan 9:27).</p>	Dan 9:24-27

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>H7620 shâbûa' shâbûa' shebû'âh (shaw-boo'-ah, shaw-boo'-ah, sheb-oo-aw') Literally sevens, that is, a week (specifically of years): - seven, week.</p> <p>See Chapter 12 of this guide for additional information.</p>	
<p>Darkening of the Sun, Moon, & Stars</p>	<p>Extremely important sign that will precede Christ's return and the gathering of Christians and God's wrath. This critical landmark helps us understand that the gathering and wrath of God that follows will occur in close proximity. Scriptural examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe 2:10 & 31: Before the Day of the Lord destruction (God's wrath) • Mat 24:29: Before Christ appears and His angels harvest Christians • Revelation 6:12-13: Before the rest of the earth realizes God's wrath is about to begin. <p>Not to be confused with a partial darkening that will occur during the time of God's wrath (Rev 8:12).</p> <p>Also see <i>Seal #6</i>.</p>	<p>Isa 13:10 Joe 2:10 & 31 Joe 3:15 Eze 32:7 Amo 5:18 Zep 1:15 Mat 24:29 Luk 21:25 Act 2:20 2Pe 3:10 Rev 6:12-13</p>
<p>Day of Christ / Jesus / the Lord Jesus / Redemption</p>	<p>Christ's appearing and the gathering of Christians by the Lord's angels. Redemption. Unlike the Day of the Lord that includes God's wrath, this day is a manifestation of the blessed hope of Christian believers – the <i>rapture</i>. Scripture shows that the Day of Christ, Day of Jesus, Day of the Lord Jesus, and Day of Redemption all refer to the same event: Christ's appearing and our gathering.</p>	<p>1Co 1:7-8 1Co 5:4 -5 2Co 1:14 Eph 4:30 Php 1:6 & 10-11 Php 2:15-16 2Th 2:1-2</p>
<p>Day of the LORD / Day of God</p>	<p>Great destruction of the earth and its inhabitants by God after the gathering of Christian believers. The great wrath of God will be preceded by a complete darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. This time will also include the battle of</p>	<p>Isa 2:10-19 Isa 13:6 -13 Isa 24</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>Armageddon (Rev 16:14).</p> <p>See <i>God's Wrath</i> for additional information and greater detail.</p>	<p>Jer 30:7-8 Joe 1:15 Joe 2:1-32 Amo 5:16-18 Amo 9:11-15 Oba 1:15-21 Zep 1:14-15 Zec 14 Mal 4 Act 2:17-21 Rom 2:16 1Th 5:1-9 2Pe 3:10-18 Rev 16:14</p>
<p>Day equals 1,000 Years</p>	<p>An assumption by some that one of God's days equals 1,000 of our years. A byproduct of this assumption is a theory that the 6,000 years since creation were represented by the 6 days of creation, and that the 7th day represents the coming 1,000-year reign of Christ. Proponents of this theory believe Christ will return very soon since about 6,000 years have passed from the creation of our world. While there may be something to this, Scriptural comparison between day and 1,000 years in context is meant to show that God's timing is His timing and that He'll do what He wants <i>when</i> He's ready.</p>	<p>Psa 90:4 2Pe 3:8-9</p>
<p>Dragon - Satan</p>	<p>Satan, who'll empower the Antichrist. The reference of Isa 14:12-17 describes him directly; the others to the right include the word <i>dragon</i>.</p> <p>See Chapter 8 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Isa 14:12-17 Rev 12 Rev 13:2, 4 & 11 Rev 16:13 Rev 20:2</p>
<p>Elect/Chosen</p>	<p>God's chosen – Jew and Christian alike. The Old Testament word used to</p>	<p>Isa 45:4</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>describe the Jews as God’s chosen (e.g. in Isa 45:4 and 65:9) is Strong’s H972 (see below). The New Testament uses the Greek word eklektos (Strong’s G1588) to refer to those in Christ as God’s chosen. For instance, it’s used to label those who’ll be gathered (raptured) in Matthew 24. The same word is used for <i>elect</i> and <i>chosen</i>, and both depict followers of Christ. Examples include:</p> <p><u>Elect:</u> Mat 24:31 And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His <i>elect</i> from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. Rom 8:33 Who will bring a charge against God's elect?</p> <p><u>Chosen:</u> Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are <i>chosen</i>. Rev 17:14 These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and <i>chosen</i> and faithful.</p> <p>G1588: eklektos (ek-lek-tos') Select; by implication favorite: - chosen, elect. H972: bâchîyr (baw-kheer') Select: - choose, chosen one, elect.</p> <p>See <i>Elect: Woman, Wheat, & Offspring</i> in Chapter 7 for more information.</p>	Isa 65:9 Isa 65:22-25 Mat 22:14 Mat 24:22 Mat 24:24 & 31 Mar 13:20 Mar 13:22 & 27 Luk 18:7-8 Luk 23:35 Rom 8:33-35 Rom 16:13 Col 3:11-13 1Ti 5:21 2Ti 2:10 Tit 1:1 1Pe 1:2 1Pe 2:3-4 & 9 2Jn 1:13 Rev 17:14
Fall Feasts of the Lord	<p>The last 3 of the 7 feasts of the Lord, all of which are shadows of things to come. Christ fulfilled the first 4 with his sacrifice on the cross and resurrection during His first coming. He’ll fulfill the final 3 feasts, which are held in the fall, during his 2nd coming. One belief is that Christians will be gathered at the Feast of Trumpets, God’s wrath will begin on the Day of Atonement, and Christ will reign for 1,000 years as a type of Feast of Tabernacles – Sukkot). Each Fall Feast is listed below along with approximate annual dates:</p>	Lev 23:24 (Trumpets) Lev 23:28 (Atonement) Lev 23:41-44 (Sukkot)

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. THE FEAST OF TRUMPETS (Rosh Hashanah); Tishri 1; Starts ‘10 Days of Awe’ 2. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT; (Yom Kippur) Tishri 10 3. THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (Sukkot) Tishri 15 	
False Messiah(s)	<p>Many have, and will, come claiming to be the Messiah (the Christ). Jesus seemed to make a distinction between two groups of imposters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Those who’d come <i>before the end</i> – part of the birth pangs as represented by the first of broken seals 1-3 (Mat 24:5-6 & Rev 6:2). - One or more that would come <i>at the time of the Great Tribulation</i> and deceive the Elect through great signs and wonders (Mat 24:21-27). <p>See Chapter Ten of this guide for a more in-depth discussion of this topic.</p>	Mat 24:5-6 & 21-27 Rev 6:2
False Prophet	<p>A being that will exercise the power of the Antichrist and will do many things on his behalf:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause the world’s inhabitants to worship the Antichrist (Rev 13:12 & 15). • Do great wonders such as bringing fire down from heaven (Rev 13:13). • Deceive the world’s inhabitants (Rev 13:14-15). • Put to death those who refuse to worship the Antichrist or his image (Rev 13:15) • Cause all who will accept it to receive a mark on the right hand or forehead in order to buy or sell in those days (Rev 13:16). <p>In Revelation 13:11-12, we learn that this false prophet of the Antichrist will be something wicked in sheep’s clothing and therefore able to deceive mightily. But he’ll be destroyed at the end of God’s wrath in the same way as the Antichrist – both will be thrown into the lake of fire.</p>	Rev 13:11-17 Rev 16:13 Rev 19:20 Rev 20:10

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
God's Wrath	<p>The Day of the Lord/Day of God destruction against those who remain on earth after the gathering of the dead and alive in Christ. God's wrath is represented in the Revelation given to John by 7 trumpet and 7 vial judgments as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trumpet judgments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hail & fire; 1/3 trees and all green grass burned up. (Rev 8:7) 2. Great mountain of fire into the sea; 1/3 sea became blood, 1/3 sea creatures & ships destroyed. (Rev 8:8) 3. Star called Wormwood fell on 1/3 rivers; men died from the bitter water. (Rev 8:10-11) 4. One-third sun, moon, and stars darkened. (Rev 8:12) 5. Locusts like scorpions released from the pit, with teeth like lions, hair like women, faces of men, and armored. Given power to hurt men (not one of the 144,000 sealed by God) for 5 months; men seek death but will not find it. (Rev 9:1-12) 6. 200,000,000 'horsemen' kill 1/3 men on earth. Those alive still don't repent! (Rev 9:13-21) 7. Christ gains his kingdom (Rev 11:15) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mystery of God finished (Rev 10:7) b. Christ's kingdom, ending the 3.5 years since Antichrist entered the temple, and finishing the 70th week of Daniel. (Rev 11:2-3; Dan 9:27; Dan 12:7) • Bowl/Vial Judgments: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sores on those with the mark of the beast or who worship the beast. (Rev 16:2) 2. Everything remaining in the seas killed. (Rev 16:3) 3. Rivers turned to blood. (Rev 16:4-7) 4. Men scorched by the sun, but none repented. (Rev 16:8-9) 5. Kingdom of antichrist full of darkness and pain, but none repented. (Rev 16:10-11) 	<p>Isa 2:10-22 Isa 24:1-23 Isa 24:1 Isa 47:1-15 Eze 5:10-17 Eze 32:6 -16 Eze 38 & 39 Joe 2:1-32 Joe 3:1 -16 Mic 5:10 -15 Zep 1:7-18 Zep 2:1-3 Zep 3:8 -10 Mat 3:7 Mat 13:39-43 Mat 13:49-50 Luk 3:7 Joh 3:36 Rom 1:18 Rom 2:5-6 Rom 5:8-9 Rom 12:19 Rom 13:4 Eph 5:6 Col 3:4-6 1Th 1:10 1Th 5:1-9 2Th 1:7-10 Rev 6:12-17 Rev 8-10 (Trumpets) Rev 11:18</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>6. Euphrates River dried up and men gathered for the battle of Armageddon. (Rev 16:12-16)</p> <p>7. Terrible earthquake dividing Jerusalem into three parts; Great hail stones from heaven. (Rev 16:17-21)</p> <p>Also see <i>Day of the LORD / Day of God</i> and Chapter 16 of this guide.</p>	<p>Rev 14:7 Rev 14:9-11 Rev 14:18-20 (Harvest) Rev 15:1-8 Rev 16:1-21 Rev 19:15</p>
<p>Gospel Preached [to all Nations]</p>	<p>One of several actions that will take place within the sequence leading up to the very end. This preaching of the Gospel was foretold by Christ in Matthew 24:13-14 and represented by an angel in Revelation 14:6-7. The sequence of events in Matthew 24 and Revelation 14, and the occurrence of the ‘preaching’:</p> <p>Matthew 24</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The events also portrayed in the first 4-5 seals (false Christs, war, famine, and death/persecution) 2. Gospel preached to all nations 3. The end (rapture and wrath) <p>Revelation 14:6-20</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gospel preached to all nations 2. Rapture (harvest) 3. Wrath <p>Some believe the preaching of the Gospel mentioned here in Scripture is symbolic of our ongoing effort to make disciples of all nations and that Christ can’t return until we’ve reached every soul on the planet. Not only would this be impossible to accomplish, but it’s not Scripturally sound and is based on allegory. And we’re on God’s timetable, not ours.</p> <p>See <i>Two Witnesses</i> in Chapter 6 of this guide for a description of who may be the ones to preach the Gospel before the gathering and subsequent wrath (the 2</p>	<p>Mat 24:13-14 Mar 13:9-10 Rev 14:6-7</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	harvests in Matthew 13 and Revelation 14).	
Great Judgment, The	<p>The time at the end of Christ’s 1,000-year reign when all who weren’t gathered at Christ’s appearing will be judged and will receive consequences of their actions (or lack thereof): They’ll either be found in the Lamb’s (Christ’s) Book of Life and spared or thrown into the <i>lake of fire</i> otherwise.</p> <p>Anyone who’s accepted Christ – entered into the marriage covenant so-to-speak – and remained His will be gathered and not be subject to this great judgment. Therefore, the New Testament usually presents this judgment from the perspective of those who’ll be judged and destroyed at that time. Here are a couple of examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mat 10:14-15 Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. • Mat 11:21-24 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day. Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you. <p>See Chapter 16 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Dan 12:1-3 Mat 10:15 Mat 11:22 & 24 Mat 12:36 Mat 13:30 Mat 13:40-43 Mat 25:31-46 Luk 10:14 Joh 5:22 Joh 5:27-29 Joh 12:30-32 Rom 2:2-8 Rom 14:9-10 2Co 5:10 2Pe 2:4 & 9 2Pe 3:6-13 2Th 1:5-10 Heb 9:26-28 1Jn 4:17 Jud 1:6-7 Jud 1:14-15 Rev 20:11-15</p>
Great Tribulation, The	Represents the 3.5-year authority of the Antichrist and is referred to in Scripture	Deu 4:27-30

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>as the time of Jacob’s Trouble. Helpful Scripture references:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of Jacob’s Trouble: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jer 30:7 • Will begin midway through the 7-year agreement with the Antichrist: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan 9:27 ○ Mat 24:15 ○ Mar 13:14 • The 3.5-year persecution of God’s people just before the end: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan 7:20-25 ○ Dan 12:7 ○ Rev 13:5-7 • A time like no other – past, present, or future: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan 12:1 ○ Mat 24:21 • Will require patience on the part of the Saints during this time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rev 13:10 ○ Rev 14:12 • Antichrist’s wrath/authority shortened (stopped before the end of the 3.5-year period) for the sake of the <i>elect</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mat 24:22 • Ended by the darkening of the sun, moon, & stars and gathering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mat 24:29-31 ○ Mar 13:24-27 ○ Rev 6:12-17 • What those ‘harvested’ at the darkening of the sun, moon, & stars were gathered (raptured) out of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mat 24:29-31 ○ Rev 7:9-17 <p>See Chapter 8 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Jer 30:5-7 Dan 7:20-25 Dan 12:1 Dan 12:7 Mat 24:9 Mat 24:21 Mat 24:29-31 Mar 13:19-20 Mar 13:24-27 Luk 21:22-24 Rev 7:9-17 Rev 13:5-7</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
New Heaven & Earth	The <i>world to come</i> after this era ends. God will reside forever with His people at the creation of the new heaven and earth, which will occur after the Great Judgment.	Isa 25 & 27 Jer 31:31-40 Joe 3:17 -18 Zec 14 Rev 21:1-27 Rev 22:1-5
One Hundred and Forty-four Thousand	<p>Representatives of Israel in the form of 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel.</p> <p>The following are key points about this group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sealed for protection against God’s impending wrath (Rev 7:3-8 & 9:4) • Seen with Christ on Mount Zion during the time of God’s wrath, but before the 7th trumpet when Christ will gain His kingdom and enter Jerusalem. They follow Him wherever He goes (Rev 14:1). • There’ll be a new song in heaven that no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth (Rev 14:2-3). • Redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb (Rev 14:4). • They will be virgins and without fault (Rev 14:4-5). <p>Little is known about this group ‘redeemed from among men’, but God clearly sets them apart and protects them during the time of His wrath. Again, this is most likely part of the remnant God promised to bring back in the last days; they’ll be in Jerusalem with Christ.</p> <p>See <i>144,000 from the 12 tribes</i> in Chapter 6 for more information.</p>	Joe 2:32 Zep 3:13-15 Rev 7:3-8 Rev 14:1-5

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
<p>One Thousand Year Reign of Christ</p>	<p>Also known as Christ’s Kingdom. Events associated with, and surrounding, the reign of Christ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prophesied by Daniel and recorded as one of the events to conclude the 70 weeks of years (490 years) period. (Dan 9:24). • Christ will gain His kingdom at the 7th trumpet of God’s wrath (Rev 10:7 & 11:15). • Those martyred for their faith by beheading during the wrath/authority of the Antichrist will be resurrected and will reign with Him. (Rev 20:4). • Satan will be released near the end of it to again test man only to finally suffer destruction by being thrown into the lake of fire. • The reign and era of this ‘age’ will end with the great judgment of God and creation of a new heaven/earth. <p>See <i>Christ’s Kingdom</i> and Chapter 16 of this guide for additional information.</p>	<p>Rev 20:1-10</p>
<p>Rapture</p>	<p>Gathering of Christ’s chosen after the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars (e.g. Mat 24:29-31). Although the word ‘<i>rapture</i>’ isn’t used in Scripture, it’s based on the Latin word <i>rapio</i> (caught up) and is a good way to refer to the gathering (harvest) that will happen at Christ’s appearing (e.g. Mat 13:30 & 2Th 2:1-3).</p> <p>Those gathered out of the Great Tribulation at Christ’s appearing are seen in Heaven just before God’s wrath begins in a vision given to John by Christ (Revelation 7:9-17). Note that this transformation will happen at the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars (cf. Matthew 24:30-31) – the same sign also preceding the wrath of God (cf. Revelation 6:12-17).</p> <p>Sequence of the end:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. False Messiahs and increase in war/famine (seals 1-3) 	<p>Mat 13:30 Mat 24:30-31 Mar 13:26-27 Joh 14:3 Php 3:20-21 Col 3:1-6 1Co 15:49-52 1Th 4:13-17 2Th 2:1-3 1Pe 2:12 Rev 7:9-17 Rev 14:15-16</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Persecution and death at the hands of the Antichrist (seals 4-5) 3. Darkening of the sun, moon, and stars (seal 6) 4. Gathering at Christ's appearing - rapture (seen afterward in Revelation 7:9-17) 5. Short silence (seal 7) 6. God's wrath 	
Remnant of Israel	<p>Dispersed descendants of the 12 tribes of Israel brought back to their home in the last days as promised by God. The return was made possible in May 1948 after roughly 1900 years of Diaspora (dispersion). Christ will reign over them for 1,000 years upon entering Jerusalem and gaining His kingdom at the 7th trumpet judgment.</p> <p>See <i>Remnant of Israel</i> in Chapter 6 of this guide for more information.</p>	<p>Isa 1:9 Isa 10:17-22 Isa 11:1-16 Jer 23:3-8 Jer 31:6-11 Eze 6:8-12 Eze 14:21-22 Joe 2:32 Amo 5:15-20 Amo 9:11-15 Mic 2:12 Mic 4:6-7 Mic 5:3-15 Zep 2:7-9 Zep 3:13-14 Zec 8:2-8 Rom 9:27 (Isa 1:9)</p>
Restrainer	<p>He who keeps Satan at bay currently. Satan will empower the Antichrist to act wickedly during the 3.5 years of his authority after the restrainer no longer holds him back. Although pre-tribulation rapture proponents claim the restrainer is the Holy Spirit to support an early, secret rapture, several points including Scriptural references suggest it's the Archangel Michael:</p>	<p>Dan 12:1 2 The 2:7-12</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Antichrist (mystery of iniquity) and his works will be revealed at the removal of the ‘restrainer’ (2 The 2:7-12). 2. Michael, the protector of Israel, arises at the time of the Great Tribulation (Dan 12:1). His ‘arising’ is probably necessary to war in heaven with Satan at that time (Rev 12:7-13). 3. Michael and his angels will battle Satan and cast him to earth in great wrath toward Jew and Christian at the beginning of a 3.5-year period (Rev 12:7-13). 4. God’s Holy Spirit brings wisdom and understanding to believers. He’s never mentioned in the same context as restraint, war, etc. as the Archangel Michael is (e.g. Acts 9:31, 1 Corinthians 12, & John 14:26). 	
Saints	<p>Holy ones as depicted by the Greek word Hagios (Strong’s G40 below) used hundreds of times in the New Testament to depict holy things and people. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Saint</i> is used 62 times in NT – always for Christian or Angel except once for OT Saints in Mat 27:52) • <i>Holy Ghost</i> (286 times) • <i>Holy City</i> (24 times) • <i>Holy Place, Believer, and Angel</i> (4 times) <p>Considering context is vital to understanding the intended use and determining whether Scripture is referring to an angel or Christian believer when using the title of <i>Saint</i>. Otherwise, one could erroneously believe the word saint refers to a believer coming back to earth with Christ instead of an angel coming to gather believers as in these verses where <i>Saint</i> indicates angels:</p> <p>Jud 1:14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his <i>Holy Ones</i> (<i>Saints</i> in King James).</p>	<p>Mat 25:31 Mat 27:52-53 Mar 8:38 Luk 9:26 Act 9:13 Rom 1:6-7 1Co 6:2-3 1Co 14:33 Eph 1:1 Php 4:21 Col 1:2 1Th 3:13 2Th 1:7-10 Jud 1:14-15 Rev 13:7 Rev 14:10 Rev 14:12-15 Rev 16:6-7</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>1Th 3:13 To the end he may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his <i>saints</i>.</p> <p>The following offers additional examples of the use of the word <i>saint</i> in the New Testament:</p> <p><i>Saints</i> as believers in Christ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2Th 1:10 When He comes to be glorified in His <i>saints</i>. • 1Co 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, <i>saints</i> by calling, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. • 1Co 14:33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the <i>saints</i>. • Rev 13:7 It was also given to him to make war with the <i>saints</i> and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. (Compare with Daniel 7.) • Rev 14:12 Here is the patience of the <i>saints</i>. <p><i>Saints</i> as those who've died before Christ was crucified and resurrected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mat 27:52 The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the <i>saints</i> who had fallen asleep were raised. <p>G40: hagios (hag'-ee-os) Sacred (physically pure, morally blameless or religious, ceremonially consecrated): - (most) holy (one, thing), saint.</p>	
Seal #1	<p>First in a scroll in the Revelation and broken to reveal false Messiahs leading up to the end. The false Christ in this display is dressed in white and wears a crown, indicating righteous authority. However, his weapon is a bow, not the weapon of Christ – the sword. Compare the false Christs mentioned in Mat 24:5 with the representation in Rev 6:2. Contrary to a popular belief, this doesn't represent <i>the</i></p>	<p>Mat 24:5 Rev 6:2</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	Antichrist depicted later in Matthew 24 and whose authority is represented in the 4 th and 5 th seals below.	
Seal #2	Second in the scroll and broken to reveal an increase in war/violence as the end approaches. Compare this to what Jesus told His disciples about this in Mat 24:6.	Mat 24:6 Rev 6:4
Seal #3	Third in the scroll and broken to reveal an increase and intensity in famine and earthquakes as the end approaches. Compare this revelation to what Jesus told His disciples in Mat 24:7.	Mat 24:7 Rev 6:5-6
Seals #4 & #5	Fourth and fifth in the scroll, broken to unveil the death and persecution during the authority of the <i>beast</i> (the Greek word Therion is the only ‘beast’ word used to represent the Antichrist or his kingdom). The souls of those killed during this time cry out for an end to the slaughter as seen in the 5 th seal and are also identified in Revelation 20:4 as those who’ll reign with Christ for 1,000 years after being raised. Compare the revelation in these broken seals with Mat 24:9-22.	Mat 24: Rev 7-11 Rev 20:4
Seal #6	Sixth in the scroll and broken to unveil a complete darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. This event will signify the end of the Great Tribulation and will herald Christ’s coming, the gathering of believers, and the onslaught of God’s Day of the Lord wrath. Also see <i>Darkening of the Sun, Moon, & Stars</i> .	Isa 2:19-22 Mat 24:29 Rev 6:12-17
Seal #7	Seventh and last in the scroll, broken to reveal the half-hour of silence that will occur after the darkening revealed in the 6 th seal but just before God’s wrath begins on the rest of the earth – those not gathered at the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars.	Rev 8:1
Temple [of God]	The 3 rd Jewish temple in Jerusalem. Daniel, Jesus, and Paul recorded that the Antichrist will set himself up in the Temple during his 3.5-year reign. The Temple may be used for this purpose since Scripture also shows us that the	Dan 9:27 2Th 2:4 Rev 11:1-2

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	<p>Antichrist and his kingdom will exercise authority from Jerusalem at the end. So, contrary to the belief of some, this will be a physical structure and isn't alone symbolic of the body of Christ.</p>	
<p>Three-and-a-Half Years: Time, Times, and Half a Time</p>	<p>A 3.5-year time period (1 + 2 + .5): Time (not plural) = 1 Times (plural) = 2 Half (or translated as 'dividing' of time) = .5</p> <p>The Hebrew word for Time as in Daniel 7:24-25 is Iddan (Strong's H5732 below) which suggests a year-long period. The Hebrew word for Time in Daniel 12:7 is represented by Strong's H4150 below and also indicates a year.</p> <p>While most Bible scholars seem to agree that this translates to a 3.5-year period, some disagree and argue that 'times' may not be '2'. Revelation 12:6 and 12:14 appear to be referring to the same period and yet use two different methods of describing the epochs: Time, times, and dividing of time, and 1,260 days – both equal 3.5 360-day (Jewish) years. Also, the time of the Antichrist's authority is labeled as time, times, and the dividing of time by Daniel and 42 months (1,260 days) in Revelation 13:5; both describe the same timeframe.</p> <p>H5732 'iddân (id-dawn') a set time; technically a year: - time.</p> <p>H4150 mô'êd mô'êd mô'âdâh (mo-ade', mo-ade', mo-aw-daw') properly an appointment, that is, a fixed time or season; specifically a festival; conventionally a year; by implication, an assembly (as convened for a definite purpose); technically the congregation; by extension, the place of meeting; also a signal (as appointed beforehand): - appointed (sign, time), (place of, solemn) assembly, congregation, (set, solemn) feast, (appointed, due) season, solemn (-ity), synagogue, (set) time (appointed).</p>	<p>Dan 7:24-25 Dan 12:7 Rev 12:14</p>

Key Words/Phrases	Definition	References
	Also see <i>1,260 days</i> and <i>42 months</i> .	
Three-and-a-Half Years: 1,260 Days	<p>Depicts the last half of the 7-year period that will begin with an agreement between the Antichrist and many others to include Israel. This reference in Scripture is synonymous with other references of 42 months and time, times, and dividing of time. Jewish years were 360 days long. One thousand two hundred and sixty days therefore represents 3.5 years.</p> <p>This specific label depicts these events or timeframes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of the 2 witnesses (Rev 11:3). • Length of Antichrist’s wrath + another 30 day period (Dan 12:11). • Israel taken care of in the ‘desert’ (Rev 12:6). <p>See <i>Time, Times, and Half a Time & 42 months</i>.</p>	Dan 12:11 Rev 11:3 Rev 12:6
Three-and-a-Half Years: 42 Months	<p>Also a depiction of the last half of the 7-year period Daniel spoke of (Dan 9:27). Since there are 12 months in a calendar year, this timeframe equals 3.5 years. This will be the length of time the Temple Mount will be under gentile control (Rev 11:2) and represents the Antichrist’s authority over the Saints (Rev 13:5).</p> <p>The fact that 42 months and 1,260 days are in the same context of Rev 11:2-3 lends credence to the claim that they’re the same timeframe.</p> <p>See <i>Time, Times and Half a Time & 1,260 days</i>.</p>	Rev 11:2-3 Rev 13:5
Two Witnesses	<p>Two heavenly hosts sent to earth to prophesy/witness to the world for 3.5 years (1260 days) during the authority of the Antichrist. They may be the ones who’ll carry out the preaching just before the gathering and wrath of God (see <i>Gospel Preached [to all Nations]</i>).</p> <p>See <i>Two Witnesses</i> in Chapter 6 of this guide for additional information.</p>	Rev 11:3-10

APPENDIX D: Answers to Checkup Questions

Chapter 16

1. **Who is the author of the Revelation? Who gave it to that author?** Christ, given to him by God.
2. **What do the seven lampstands of Revelation chapter one represent?** The seven churches of Asia Minor at the time of the Revelation (about 90 CE).
3. **What do the seven stars of the first chapter of Revelation represent?** The angels of the seven churches.
4. **In His letters to the churches, Christ has nothing against two of them. Which are they?** Smyrna and Philadelphia.
5. **Why is Christ the only one who could break the seals and reveal the end-times events in chapter five?** Because *He was slain, and purchased for God with His blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation* (cf. Revelation 5:9).
6. **Which timeframe is unveiled by broken seals 4 and 5 in Revelation 6:7-11?** A three-and-a-half-year reign of the Antichrist allowed by God, the persecution and death it will bring, and the souls of those killed for their faith during that time.
7. **Revelation 6:12-17 covers the breaking of the sixth seal, which outlines the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars that will precede _____ and _____ (also check out Matthew 24:29-31).** The gathering of the bride (Church) and God's wrath against the rest of the world.
8. **What is the background or nationality of the multitude reflected in Revelation 7:9-17 (seen by John immediately after the darkening of the sixth seal)?** The multitude is made from *every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues*. In other words, there's no particular background or nationality.
9. **From what did the multitude in question #8 come out of?** The great tribulation during the authority of the Antichrist.
10. **Which trumpet judgment comprised woe #1 of Revelation 9:12?** Five.
11. **Which trumpet judgment or other events comprise woe #2 of Revelation 11:14?**
 - a. Trumpet judgment #6 (Revelation 9:13-21).
 - b. "*And in that hour there was a **great earthquake**, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.*"—Revelation 11:13.
 - c. You may also wish to add that the seventh trumpet is about to sound (Revelation 11:15).

12. **The seventh trumpet blast (Revelation 11:15) will pinpoint certain apocalyptic events. What will they be?**
- Woe #3.
 - The beginning of Christ's kingdom.
 - The official end of the Antichrist's authority given to him by God.
13. **Which two 3.5-year-long scenarios are unveiled in Revelation chapter 11?** Control of the city of Jerusalem by the nations (gentiles) and the testimony of God's two witnesses.
14. **Which 3.5-year-long scenario is unveiled in Revelation chapter 12?** Pursuit and persecution by Satan (through the Antichrist) of a remnant of Israel and of those who hold to the testimony of Jesus Christ. The remnant will be kept safe by God during this period.
15. **What will be happening during the 3.5-year timeframe unveiled in Revelation chapter 13?** This will be the time of authority of the Antichrist. *The* false prophet will assist him.
16. **Please summarize what's happening in Revelation 14:2-3 and 15:2-4. Things to consider:**
- Who's singing the song in heaven?** Those who'd been victorious over the Antichrist by remaining righteous and not accepting his mark or worshipping him.
 - What group contains the only earthly beings that can learn that song?** The 144,000
 - What's the context of this vision?** The song is being sung after the end of the trumpet judgments and before the bowl judgments. Christ has just gained His kingdom and the 144,000 are with Him on Mount Zion. There is still one woe to go.
17. **What's the theme of Revelation chapters 17 and 18?** Babylon – both as a harlot who has entered into a relationship with the Antichrist and as the location where she and the Antichrist will be. I believe these to be Israel and Jerusalem.
18. **Revelation 17:9-11 gives insight as to the spiritual principality (or principalities) that will be involved with the Antichrist's end-times kingdom. Please describe who the following entities were or will be (when John wrote down the Revelation):**
- The five that *have fallen*:** Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece.
 - The one that *is*:** Rome.
 - The one that *will come*:** This was probably the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire based on the pattern of conquest.
 - The *eighth* ruler.** This will be the Antichrist's kingdom.
19. **What are the primary points or themes of Revelation chapter 19?** The marriage of the bride to Christ, and the destruction of the Antichrist and his armies at the battle of Armageddon.
20. **According to Revelation 20:4-6, who will be with Christ during His 1,000-year reign?** Those beheaded during the Antichrist's great tribulation, which were then resurrected for this purpose. Also with Him will probably be the 144,000 protected by God during that time and seen with Christ on Mount Zion as He gained His kingdom.

21. **Are hell and the lake of fire the same thing?** No. Hell (or hades or the abyss) is a temporary holding place for spirits released from the dead. The lake of fire is where those not in Christ's book of life will be thrown into after the great judgment of God. This is also where Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet will eventually go.
22. ***Private Challenge / Discussion:* Do you believe the judgment reflected in Revelation 20:11-15 and the 'sheep' and 'goat' judgment of Matthew 24 describe the same event? Why? Why not?** Answers may vary.
23. ***Private Challenge / Discussion:* Revelation 21:8 gives a short list of sinful behavior that will keep us out of God's kingdom and put us into the lake of fire at the great judgment. What do you think someone practicing any of those behaviors could do to become one who "overcomes" as in 21:6-7?** Answers may vary, but should reflect repentance, which is a change of heart that brings about a change in behavior. Behavior is a repeated pattern, which suggests intent. Jesus taught us that intent to sin is just as bad as the act itself (cf. Matthew 5:28). Changing the heart/intent by doing the right things for the right reasons and avoiding sinful behavior because it's the right thing to do would be a great place to start.
24. **Who is the intended audience of the Revelation?** Everyone that hears and heeds the prophecy, although the seven churches of Asia Minor comprised the immediate audience.
25. ***Private Challenge / Discussion:* The word 'church' isn't used in the Revelation after the seven letters of chapters 2 and 3. A popular theory of those who hold to a pre-tribulation rapture: This is proof that the rapture will happen before any of the events of the great tribulation (reign of the Antichrist). What are your thoughts now that you've gone through the entire Revelation? Do you agree? Why? Why not?** Answers may vary.
26. **What consequences await those who modify the Revelation given by Christ (22:18-21)?** Removal from the book of life and all that entails to include destruction in the lake of fire after God's great judgment.