

Daniel and Revelation

Texts Examined

In Light of

Dispensational Doctrines

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Daniel and Revelation Texts Examined

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PROPHETIC TIME VEHICLE

TIME LINE

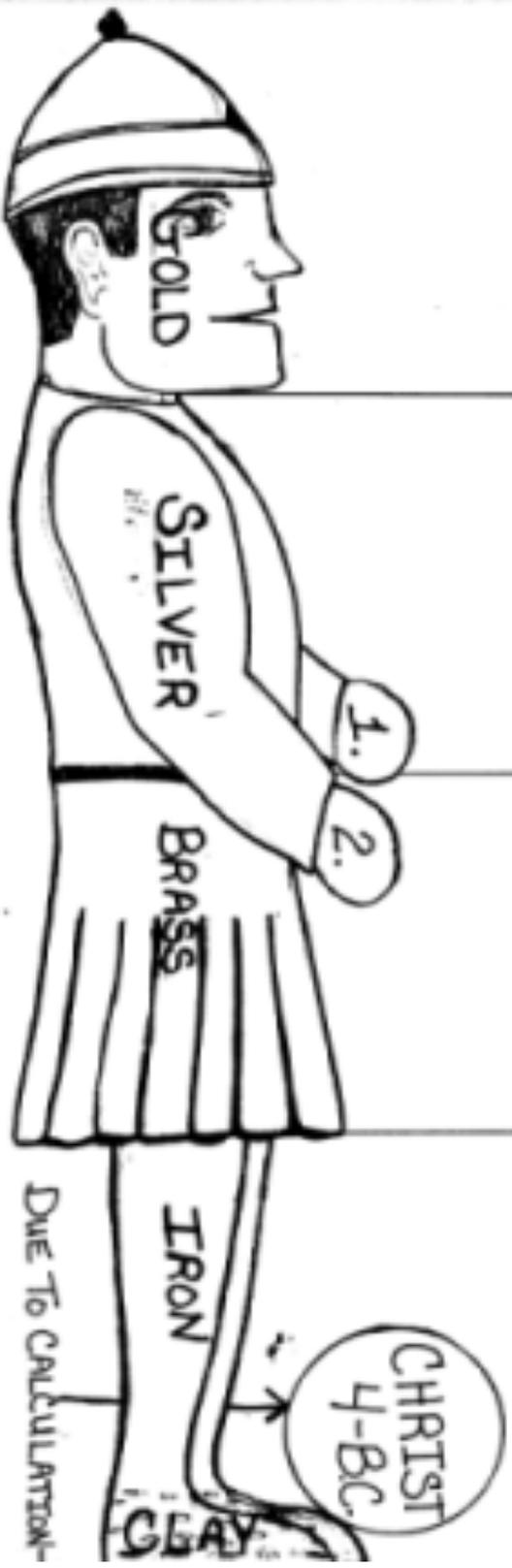
DANIEL 2:31-45

BABYLON
546 B.C.

MEDO-PERSIA
459 B.C.

GRECIAN
407 B.C.

ROMAN
226 B.C.



*AS NEAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED DATES ARE BASED ON THE ANSTEY-MAURO-CHRONOLOGICAL SYSTEM.

ERROR B.C. WAS HELD 4yr TO LONG. CHRIST 1ST ADVENT WAS ACTUALLY- 4B.C.

CHAPTER ONE

**The Truth Concerning Nebuchadnezzar's Image
(A Time Line to the Establishment of the Kingdom)**

Daniel 2:31 Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

32 This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass,

33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

34 Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

44 And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Part One

An Introduction to the Prophecy

As we begin to study this passage of Scripture text, we can see that the Prophet Daniel was exercising his prophetic office. Daniel recounted to Nebuchadnezzar the dream that had troubled him and also gave the interpretation in the succeeding verses.

In a dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw what verse 31 denotes as "a great image." Through the vehicle of this image, God established a vital prophetic truth. He established a prophetic time line for when the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom, as verse 44 declares. As we examine this passage, we want to consider the truth concerning Nebuchadnezzar's image, which is a time line to the establishment of the kingdom. In Part 1, we want to gain an introduction to this prophetic passage.

As we begin to consider this prophetic passage, one question that comes to mind is, Does prophecy have any relevance to us today? When we look back in the annals of prophetic writings, do they have any substance beneficial to you and me? In response to that I would ask, are the realms of religion entertaining any confusion concerning the time when the Kingdom of God was established? In the realms of religion, there is great confusion and diversity of teachings concerning when the kingdom was or, as some teach, will be established. As we look into this prophetic text, we cannot view it as a recital of history, though there must be an element of history to give it a prophetic time frame. However, when we live in such a day when the tendency in religion is toward the dispensational persuasion and the teaching of the postponement of the kingdom, we need to have an understanding of the truth based in the Scriptures. This lesson is very relevant to our day, not a mere history recital.

In Mark 9:1 Jesus spoke some vital words when He said, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." If the Kingdom of God has not yet come, then there is no power; and if there is no power, then there is no ability for you and me to have victory in our lives. Therefore, this is a basic truth, yet a very crucial one. We can only have victory by having power, and Jesus intimated that power comes with the kingdom.

God does not want anyone to be confused concerning biblical truths. In 1 Corinthians 14:33 the Apostle Paul penned, "For God is not the author of confusion." If we study to show ourselves approved, as the Apostle Paul admonished the young minister Timothy, then we can rightly divide the truth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah declared that truth "shall sweep away the refuge of lies" (Isaiah 28:17).

Today there is much confusion over our land, and even contradiction, concerning the Kingdom of God. Those who are of the dispensational persuasion teach that the kingdom is a future event. By examining this text, we can see when the Scriptures establish the Kingdom of God as a reality.

When we consider prophecy, we need to understand that it holds a valuable and important place in the scheme of Scriptures. Why is that? According to 2 Peter 1:19, prophecy is sure. Second Peter 1:16-19 states: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty [he was relating the account of when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration, recorded in Matthew 17:1-8]. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word [What is it?] of prophecy."

Peter brought up the miraculous event that occurred on the Mount of Transfiguration, where he referred to himself as an eyewitness, and then he contrasted it and let us know that something was even more sure than miraculous occurrences. In verse 19 he said, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy." Prophecy is more sure than miracles. Why is that? First of all, prophecy can be historically verifiable. History is historically and factually verifiable. However, many times miraculous experiences are not verifiable. Something historical and verifiable can be enjoyed by all, whereas often miracles are only enjoyed and viewed by a select few.

We want to survey Daniel, Chapter 2, and see what occurred. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream, and it troubled him so much that "his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him" (verse 1). Afterward, he called all the magicians, the astrologers, and the sorcerers to see if they could tell him the dream or the interpretation, but they could not. (Babylon still cannot reveal the truth today; it is not committed to Babylon.) Nebuchadnezzar could not remember the dream, and because he was so exasperated that they could not tell him the dream, he issued a decree that all the wise men were to be slain (verses 12-13).

Verse 14 tells us that when Arioch, the captain of the guard (or the original Hebrew says "the chief of the executioners or slaughtermen") came to Daniel, Daniel petitioned the king for additional time. Verse 16 tells us, "Then Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and that he would shew the king the interpretation." The king, no doubt, was disposed to give Daniel additional time because of his previous record. Daniel 1:17 reads, "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Though Daniel, Chapter 2, is the first recorded instance of when he gave an interpretation or understanding of a dream, before this time he evidently had established a reputation as being one who had that gift and ability. Therefore, the king granted him the extra time. In Daniel 2:17-18 we find that Daniel and the three Hebrew children had a hastily called prayer meeting, and then God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel.

As we look at the dream and the interpretation, we must be mindful that this alone reveals to us the nature of prophetic language. Because it needed to be interpreted, we know that its nature was that it was a figurative expression. It was not something to be understood literally; it required a spiritual man, under divine unction, to give understanding.

By the help of God, let us look at the dream and the interpretation. First, we need to understand that the burden of the dream was not for the time then present, but it was heralding a coming event. In Daniel 2:29

Daniel began to speak, saying, "As for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, *what should come to pass hereafter*: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass." Daniel was even plainer than that in verse 28, when he said, "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be *in the latter days*." The burden of that particular dream was not for that era, but *for the latter days*.

Biblically speaking, what are the latter days? The Greek-English Septuagint says "in the last days." We want to establish by the Bible what the last days are. In reality, the prophecy is a time line employed by God to convey the prophecy from the day in which Daniel revealed it to the institution of the New Testament. Remember that Daniel 2:29 states that this "should come to pass hereafter." Verse 28 expands on that and says "what shall be in the latter days," or the last days. Let us find out when these last days are, and we will have greater insight into what was being heralded forth in this prophecy.

Let us view Acts, Chapter 2, in light of our study. On the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 33, Peter said in verses 16-17: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel [and then he quoted Joel 2:28]; And it shall come to pass in the last days" The Apostle Peter, speaking under divine inspiration, let those people know that the last days were ushered in when the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost. Biblically, when we consider what the last days are, we find that the last days, or the last dispensation of human history, began on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost dispensation was ushered in.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream has as its main burden something that God wanted to communicate about this Christian dispensation beyond any confusion. He wanted to establish when the Kingdom of God was to begin. In the midst of the king's dream, which Daniel related, He said in Daniel 2:34, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces." One facet of the burden of this dream was not so much the image. The image was nothing more than a prophetic vehicle to get to the pertinent point of when the stone would come, or when this stone would make the advent into this time world. In verse 44 Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom."

Daniel 2:31 says, "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image." Why did he see an image? God deals with man where he is, and Nebuchadnezzar was an idolater. Therefore, an image would immediately command his attention. Daniel 1:2 says, "And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand [speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, according to verse 1], with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god."

Who was Nebuchadnezzar's god? Jeremiah 50:2 says, "Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces." When he took those sacred things into the temple of his god, it was into the temple of Bel, because he was a worshiper of Bel. Therefore, when God wanted to get his attention, He worked on a level on which Nebuchadnezzar could relate by bringing an image before his mind.

Part Two

The Image and What It Represents

In Part 1 of this chapter, we were introduced to this prophetic passage where Nebuchadnezzar dreamed and saw a metallic image. This image was a vehicle to transport us from the day of the Prophet to the time of the establishment of the Kingdom of God. In Part 2 we want to examine this image. It was composed of

at least four different metallic substances: gold, silver, brass, and iron. They are in sequence in the prophecy. Daniel 2:32 tells us that the image's head was of fine gold.

Verses 37-38 state: "Thou, O king [addressing Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon], art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." This head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar; however, it was not referring to him personally, but to that which God had given him. These four metallic substances represented four kingdoms, or world empires, and the first was the Babylonian empire. Was Babylon a world empire? Daniel 5:18-19 reads: "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: And for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him." When this prophecy said in Daniel 2:38, "And wheresoever the children of men dwell . . . hath he given into thine hand," that prophecy was true. He ruled a vast, worldwide empire.

Why was the empire called a head of gold in Daniel 2:38? Isaiah 14:4 reads, "That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!" Babylon was known as the city of gold, or the golden city. It was a golden kingdom in a golden age. Babylon and its metropolis lay in a garden of the east, and the city lay in a perfect square. It was a cube—fifteen miles on each side, surrounded by a wall that was three hundred fifty feet high and eighty-seven feet thick. Inside this outer wall was an inner wall, and it had one hundred fifty solid brass gates. Its hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The city was surrounded by a moat and stocked to withstand a ten-year siege.

Nebuchadnezzar built a great temple with many decorations of pure gold. Inside the temple stood a golden table where a golden image of the god Bel, or Merodach, stood. It is said that the golden table and image weighed fifty thousand pounds. Golden lions and figures of gold were also found in fifty-three other temples of Bel and the one hundred eighty altars of Ishtar. No wonder it was called the city of gold.

The Greek historian, Herodotus, known as the father of history, said this: "In the shrine is a great sitting figure of Bel, all of gold on a golden throne, supported on a golden base with a golden tablet standing beside it. I was told by the Chaldeans that to make all of this, it took more than twenty-two tons of gold. Outside the temple is a golden altar, and there is another one, not of gold, but of great size, on which full-grown sheep are sacrificed. The golden altar is reserved for the sacrifice of sucklings only. On the larger altar, the Chaldeans also offer something like two-and-a-half tons of frankincense every year at the festival of Bel. In the time of Cyrus, there was also in the sacred building a solid gold statue of a man, fifteen feet high. Bel and his throne were constructed with twenty-two tons of solid gold. No doubt, you have heard of the golden cup, the bowl at the temple held 2500 gallons and was three inches thick. One gold lion weighed five hundred fifty pounds."

We can see why it was referred to as *the city of gold* and why Babylon and that empire were referred to as *the head of gold*. After this fine gold that was the head, Daniel 2:32 speaks of "his breast and his arms of silver." What do these denote? Verse 39 says, "And after thee [speaking of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian empire] shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee." What do "his breast and his arms of silver" represent? The two arms and the silver represent the succeeding empire, the Medo-Persian empire. The reason it had two arms was that the kingdom was a dual kingdom with two aspects. It was made up of the Medes and the Persians; yet they had one breast, signifying that one thing united them in their hearts and purpose. The Medo-Persian empire was in direct succession to the Babylonian empire. Notice that the head was not severed from the breast and the arms, but they were connected, just as they were chronologically

and historically, because the Lord was using this image as a time line to get us from Daniel's day to the advent of the stone, Jesus Christ.

In Daniel 5:25-28 we can read of the handwriting that appeared on the wall to Belshazzar to let him know that the Babylonian empire was going to swiftly and severely come to an end. Verses 28 and 30-31 read: "PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. . . . In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old." The Medo-Persian empire immediately succeeded the Babylonian empire. Daniel 6:15 says, "Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed." Here we find that it was the successive empire. The two arms symbolize the duality of that kingdom, made of two diverse components, the Medes and the Persians, under Darius and Cyrus. Again, the joint breast shows that they came together and shared a common purpose.

Daniel 2:39 says, "And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." This tells us of a third kingdom, in chronological succession. This was the next world empire that occurred consecutively. Daniel, Chapter 10, gives us a glimpse of what it is. Verse 20 reads, "Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come." The Grecian empire succeeded the Medo-Persian empire.

Daniel 11:1-4 reads: "Also I in the first year of Darius the Mede, even I, stood to confirm and to strengthen him. And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

These verses of Scripture are a very lengthy prophetic passage, but let us look at it in overview. When Daniel was given understanding of this prophecy, verse 1 says this was in the first year of Darius the Mede. Verse 2 says, "And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all." Here we find there were yet four more Persian kings after Darius. History tells us that the three he spoke of were Cyrus II, Cambyses, and Darius Hystaspes. When he spoke in verse 4 of the fourth, who would be richer than them all, he was speaking of Xerxes, which gives us a total of six Medo-Persian kings. Xerxes made an expedition against Greece and was disastrously defeated by what verse 3 calls "a mighty king." Who was this mighty king who defeated Xerxes? He was Alexander the Great, the famous Grecian king. It took him only five years to conquer the then-known world. When he was thirty-two years old, he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. He died with a broken heart, a drunken sot, at the age of thirty-three; thus, fulfilling Proverbs 16:32, which states, "He that ruleth his spirit [is better] than he that taketh a city." He could take the world, but he could not control his own passions. On his deathbed (this is historically verifiable), he divided his kingdom into four major divisions, to his four generals, just as the prophecy declared. This fulfilled Daniel 11:4, which reads, "And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven."

After this, Daniel 2:32 tells us that another transition occurred. We are coming right down sequentially in historical time, without any breaks, pauses, gaps, or postponements, from the very day when Daniel revealed to Nebuchadnezzar that the Babylonian empire was the head of gold. We read where the handwriting appeared on the wall, and that night Belshazzar (Nebuchadnezzar's grandson) was slain, and

the Medo-Persian empire (denoted by the two arms and the common breast) succeeded Babylon as the succeeding world empire. Then we found that Xerxes, the last Medo-Persian king, made a disastrous incursion against Alexander the Great and was disastrously defeated. This third kingdom of brass defeated the Medo-Persians. However, because the man could not control his own spirit, when the mighty king arose, it was but a short time, and he divided his kingdom among his four generals. That was the third kingdom, the Grecian empire.

In Daniel 2:33 we see something else represented: "His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." This verse portrays the fourth set of elements. The image went from gold, to silver, to brass, and then to iron and clay, the fourth set of substances. This fourth set of substances represents a fourth kingdom. Daniel 2:40 says, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise." This verse talks about a fourth kingdom that successively followed the Grecian empire. This was the Roman Empire, the empire that was in control at the time of Christ's First Advent. One way that we know this is that it was the last empire enumerated before the stone appeared, and the stone appeared when these legs and feet were still in power.

When did the stone, Christ Jesus, appear and make His Advent? What world empire was in control? Luke 2:1 tells us, "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, [Who was he? The Roman emperor, the ruler of the Roman Empire.] that all the world should be taxed." Now, one could not levy something of that nature against all the world if he was not the world ruler. Rome was at its zenith under Augustus Caesar. Rome still has lasting influence today. The calendars we use are Roman calendars. July is derived from the name *Julius*, August is derived from the name *Augustus*. These names were the names of Caesars. Augustus ruled over three hundred million people.

We read in Daniel 2:33 that there were two legs. This was an identifying factor, because Rome later became known as an eastern division and a western division. The two legs were the eastern and western divisions of the empire, and the ten toes were the ten minor kingdoms that made up the Roman Empire. So Daniel was giving us a prophetic symbol for identification. These identifying factors establish beyond any doubt that he was speaking of the Roman Empire.

Look again at Daniel 2:43, which says, "And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." What does this mean? Although it says "they shall mingle themselves," it also says "they shall not cleave." What does this tell us? Although they had political agreements and alliances and intermarriages of agreement, they never lost their ethnic differences; therefore, just as iron is far inferior to brass, silver, and gold, they were not a united or strong empire. Notice that there is a deterioration of fineness in the quality of the metals, yet there is an increase in fierce, brute strength. Iron is much stronger than gold in the sense of endurance and brute strength. Then we find a deterioration of this fourth kingdom in the quality of strength that it enjoyed. How did it lose its strength? The deterioration came by division. The kingdom was divided into two legs: the eastern and the western empires. In A.D. 270 the kingdoms were divided into ten minor kingdoms.

Notice that verse 41 states that "the kingdom shall be divided," speaking of the Roman kingdom. Now that we have established what the various components of this image represent, we can see that these kingdoms were in direct chronological succession, bringing us to the point in history when the Kingdom of God was established.

Part Three

The Kingdom of God Is Established

Now I want you to notice when the stone came, and remember that the mission of the dream was to reveal what would occur in these last days when the stone was to arrive. (The last days, according to Acts 2:16-17, are when this Christian dispensation commenced. God was using this image to get us from Daniel's day to Christ's day, when Christ was to come and establish the kingdom.)

We have gone to great lengths to show that these kingdoms were in direct chronological succession, without any gaps or postponements. So it is with this stone. Daniel 2:34 tells us, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands." Daniel 2:45 says, "Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain . . ." What was the mountain? Christ came from old Judaism. The mountain was Mount Sinai. This stone was cut out of the mountain, old ancient Judaism, without hands. In other words, man had nothing to do with the matter. It was the result of the virgin birth, a divine incarnation. What is the stone? A host of Scriptures definitely prove that Christ is the Stone; let us read one. Acts 4:10-11 says: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone . . ." Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the Stone.

Daniel 2:34 says, "Thou sawest till that a stone [Jesus Christ] was cut out . . ." Verse 45 says it was cut "out of the mountain without hands," a symbolic picture of the virgin birth.

If you look at the Scripture text closely, you will see when Christ was to come and when the kingdom was to be established. Again, Daniel 2:34 says, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay." Christ made His Advent when these feet of iron and clay were the ruling empire. What was that empire? It was the Roman Empire. Luke 2:1 tells us that Caesar Augustus was the Roman emperor, and Rome was the empire in power when Jesus Christ made His entrance into this time world. Daniel 2:34 says He "smote the image upon his feet," or when Rome was in power.

Verse 44 teaches us, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom," letting us know that right in the days of these kings (the ones mentioned previously in the second chapter of Daniel: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecia, and Rome) the God of Heaven would set up a kingdom. This did not happen two thousand years afterward. Modern millenarians have what they call a "postponement theory." They say that because the Jews did not accept Jesus Christ, God had to postpone His plans for the kingdom, that now those toes have to reach out for two thousand years, and that sometime later God will establish a kingdom. No, dear heart! In the days of "these kings," the God of Heaven set up the kingdom.

The Chaldean version of verse 44 says "in the days of these kingdoms," letting us know that the Kingdom of God was set up during the domain of one of these four world empires. I repeat, millenarians and those of the dispensational persuasion want to move the toes all the way out to the end of time. Nebuchadnezzar saw a well-proportioned image. The entirety of the image does not even cover six hundred years, and yet they want to stretch the toes out 1730 years; that would be a very disproportionate image. There is no indication in the Scriptures that this image was anything but proportionate. Daniel 2:35 says, "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together." This lets us know that when the stone smote this image in the feet, they were still historically, chronologically together: there was no separation by time or space; they were in chronological succession. It says they were "broken to pieces together."

Verses 38-40 only refer to four kingdoms. Verse 44 says, "And in the days of these kings [one of these

four kingdoms, or empires] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom." Someone may say, "Well, it talks about the toes here, and there are ten toes and ten minor kingdoms; those minor kingdoms became broken and dispersed, and later on, God will set up a kingdom." That is not what this text says. It does not speak of the stone smiting the toes; it says the stone smote the image in the feet. The Scripture does not bring up the thought of the ten minor kingdoms; that was merely for identifying purposes only. They were to identify the Roman Empire beyond any doubt, but it was not when the ten toes were separate powers that they were smitten. The Scripture says they were broken in pieces *together*, when they were in chronological sequence to one another. This teaches us very plainly when Jesus Christ made His First Advent and when the kingdom was established. When did Christ come? Galatians 4:4 says, "When the fulness of the time was come" In other words, when the image was full and complete, that is when Christ was to come. The image is nothing more than a time line for God to use to get us prophetically from Daniel's day to Christ's Advent and the institution and establishment of the kingdom.

Daniel 2:35 says, "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together [right when they were *together* in chronological succession], and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone [Christ] that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." That is when the God of Heaven set up a kingdom. This mountain is the kingdom, or the church.

I want you to see that this mountain which filled the whole earth is the kingdom that God said He would set up. The Hebrew Epistle was penned in the proximity of A.D. 63 to A.D. 69. Hebrews 12:22-23 says: "But ye are come unto mount Sion [the writer gave several expressions], and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn" These descriptions denote various facets and aspects of the church. In verse 22 Paul called it Mount Sion, but verse 28 says, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom" He let us know that this mountain is the kingdom, or the church. When Jesus Christ came, He said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church."

This stone, Jesus Christ, that smote the image in the feet, came during the Roman Empire. He set up a kingdom that the Scripture teaches "shall stand for ever" (Daniel 2:44). The last world empire was the Roman Empire. When Jesus came and ushered in the kingdom, it was the last universal kingdom, and every man "presseth into it" (Luke 16:16). Thank God, this kingdom is a present reality. While others dream of an age to come, He is reigning in our hearts today!

We are in this kingdom because the God of Heaven set it up. All those other kingdoms rose and fell. They enjoyed a zenith, but then they had a demise. However, the Kingdom of God shall never be destroyed because our Ruler is the King of kings. I thank God for this kingdom! I trust that the Spirit of God has given you understanding and made this truth clear to you.



Babylonian

V.4 - "**Lion**" is the king of beasts, and Babylon the city of gold was a kingdom of kingdoms (Daniel 2:37). "**Eagle's Wings**" The eagle is the king of the birds. Eagle's wings denotes the rapidity with which Nebuchadnezzar made his conquests. Eagles fly higher than other birds symbolizing the great height to which this kingdom soared. "**A Man**" - This represents the man who best denotes this empire which was the man, King Nebuchadnezzar.

Medo-Persian

V.5 - "**A Bear**" - Media had the largest species of bear. "**Three Ribs in the Mouth**" - This is a reference to the fact of where a bear crushes its prey, and Medo-Persia crushed the three provinces that made up the Babylonian empire: Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. "**Raised Up Itself on One Side**" - One side of the dual kingdom became prominent. The Persian element of the kingdom became the one side of the empire that became the most powerful and predominant.

Grecian

V.6 - "**Leopard**" - A leopard is known for its swiftness and rapid movement. This empire rapidly conquered the then-known world in five years, a feat yet unequalled in history. "**Four Wings of a Fowl**" - Rather than v.4 (eagle's wings) indicated they would not soar as high, as long, or as far as Babylon. "**Four Heads**" - Represents the four generals to whom the kingdom was divided amongst following the death of Alexander the Great.

Roman

V.7 - "**Great Iron Teeth**" - This corresponds with the figure given in Daniel 2:33 - "legs of iron," which was the fourth kingdom - Daniel 2:40. This was the kingdom in power when the Stone, Christ, arrived in His First Advent (Luke 2:1). This proves that this was the Roman Empire. "**Ten Horns**" - Also identifies that this was the Roman Empire because the empire was comprised of and dissolved into ten minor kingdoms.

CHAPTER TWO

The Four Beasts and the Truth Concerning the Great Tribulation

Daniel 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.

2 Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.

3 And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

5 And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.

6 After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.

7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

Part One

The First Three Beasts

In this passage of Scripture, we can see that the Prophet Daniel, according to verse 1, had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed. As he described this occurrence, he said that he saw four great beasts. It is needful that we properly identify and understand those beasts, because a proper understanding of them and viewing them as they are in truth clarifies a point of great confusion in the realms of religion. As we study those beasts and correctly identify them by the Bible, they reveal to us when the tribulation occurred.

Sad to say, those of the dispensational persuasion do as the Apostle Peter declared in 2 Peter 3:16: they do not teach them in the proper manner. Peter said they "wrest [or twist], as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Millenarians teach that the Great Tribulation will immediately follow the closing of the dispensation of grace. Those of the dispensational persuasion believe that this dispensation of grace will be followed by a tribulation period that they denote as the Great Tribulation. One dispensational writer penned these words: "Be ready to go in the rapture and avoid being here for the time of Jacob's trouble." These types of teachings saturate our airwaves and fill religious periodicals over our land today. Sad to say, they fill the minds of the masses in our society with false doctrine.

By the help of God, we want to examine this prophetic text to see what truth this Scripture reveals to us, thereby laying to rest the confusing teaching that millenarians advocate concerning the Great Tribulation. Daniel received what he denoted in our Scripture text in verse 2 as a "vision by night." Verse 1 tells us that it was in the first year of Belshazzar. This was the year 462 B.C.—sixty-two years after Nebuchadnezzar had his dream where he saw an image portrayed. Nebuchadnezzar received his dream and saw the image in 524 B.C. Therefore, between Daniel, Chapter 2, and Daniel, Chapter 7, sixty-two years of time elapsed.

I want you to notice an obvious distinction between the two dreams. In Daniel, Chapter 2, when Nebuchadnezzar received his dream, he was a worldly man and an idol worshiper, so he saw kingdoms as very precious things. Therefore, they were revealed to him through the vehicle of precious metals. He saw

what he could relate to. God always deals with man on a level that he can understand.

Daniel was a spiritual man. He was a prophet of God, and he saw those kingdoms by their true nature: he saw them as wild, savage beasts. Also, he saw the spirit that motivated those kingdoms. A heathen king saw them as something precious, but a true man of God saw them as wild and savage: the lion, the bear, the leopard, and the fourth dreadful beast.

What did Daniel see? Verse 3 of our Scripture text says, "And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another." He said that he saw four great beasts. What do those four beasts represent? Daniel 7:17 gives us insight: "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [or kingdoms; the word *kings* and *kingdoms* are used interchangeably in this text], which shall arise out of the earth." So these four great beasts of verse 3 represent four kings, kingdoms, or world empires, according to verse 17.

Daniel 7:23 reads, "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth *kingdom* upon earth, which shall be diverse from all *kingdoms* . . ." By identifying and understanding the truth concerning those kingdoms, we can lay another dispensational falsity to rest: the false teaching of a future great tribulation.

Notice that the four great beasts, in verse 3 of our Scripture lesson, rose from the sea. Biblically, what does the sea represent? Isaiah 57:20 tells us that "the wicked [speaking of people] are like the troubled sea." *Webster's Dictionary* says the definition of the word *sea* is "a mass of water; a large body of water."

Let us see by the Bible what the waters represent. Revelation 17:15 says, "And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." When we read of water in these Scriptures, it represents people. Therefore, when the Scripture says those beasts came up out of the sea (a great mass of water), it is letting us know that this was a massive move of people. It was not a small occurrence, but it was a massive move that involved great multitudes of people. Even a noted dispensationalist said this: "The sea in Scripture imagery stands for the populace." Even he had enough insight to recognize that *sea* represents the populace, or the people.

Each of those four kingdoms rose from the minds of people. They were not of divine origin. This is in contrast to when John received a revelation. In Revelation 21:2 he wrote, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven . . ." In contrast to this divine origin from whence the true kingdom and the church came, each of those beasts came up from the sea, or the minds of men.

Each of those kingdoms were humanly devised, and their natures were that of man; in other words, they were fleshly. This was the reason the figure of wild beasts was employed, because they represent uncontrolled passions, wild appetites, and insatiable desires that unregenerate flesh has. When a group of people such as that comes together with a common bond and a common cause, the result is wild, savage beasts. Those kingdoms were dictated and operated under the auspices of unregenerate, deeply degenerated minds of men who were satisfying their lustful, sinful passions and natures.

As we begin to study about the beasts that Daniel enumerated in Chapter 7, it is very noticeable that the Lord gave Daniel more explicit details than He gave Nebuchadnezzar, and rightly so. Titus 2:11 states, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." God in His faithfulness appears to all men, but He does not appear to the ungodly as He appears to the godly.

In verse 4 of our Scripture text we are introduced to the first beast: "The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it." This lion-like beast had the wings of an eagle. What do those figures, or symbolic expressions, represent to us? They are not literal representations, because Daniel let us know those beasts represent kingdoms; so they are figurative expressions.

What do they convey to us? The first beast, which was like a lion, represents ancient Babylon. The lion is considered to be the king of beasts, and Babylon, that city of gold, was known as the kingdom of

kingdoms. The Scriptures associate lions with kings. Proverbs 19:12 states, "The king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion." Proverbs 20:2 reads, "The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion." So we can see a connection between a king or kingdom and this lion. This is not the only identifying factor; it gets clearer.

Although this lion represents Babylon, the Scripture gives us a further identifying factor. Verse 4 says it had eagle's wings. Just as the lion is the king of beasts, the eagle is the king of birds. This clearly represents the Babylonian empire, because that kingdom was depicted as the first and the greatest of earthly empires.

God, speaking through the Prophet in Habakkuk 1:6-8, declared: "For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful: their judgment and their dignity shall proceed of themselves. Their horses also are swifter than the leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat." He said in verse 6 that He raised up the Chaldeans, and then in verse 8 He said "they shall fly as the eagle."

Babylon and the Chaldeans refer to the same people. The distinction is that Babylon was the locality and the Chaldeans were the type of people they were. Daniel 7:1 declares, "In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon" Daniel 5:30 says, "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain." These two verses are speaking of the same Belshazzar, the king of Babylon. The Chaldeans were the people over whom he ruled.

How else do we know that this lion-like beast with wings of an eagle represents Babylon? Again, our Scripture lesson says in verse 4, "I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it."

In Daniel, Chapter 4, you will find that Nebuchadnezzar took the glory to himself for great Babylon, and he was warned. Yet, even in the face of divine warning, Daniel 4:30 tells us that the king said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?" He was exalted because the empire was as fierce as a lion, a ruthless kingdom that conquered all the then-known world. It was as an eagle: it soared to great heights and reached levels that no others could reach, just as an eagle can fly where no other creatures can fly.

Although Nebuchadnezzar was warned about his brash pride, in the face of warning he still boasted and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?" What happened? Daniel 4:33 says, "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." He had the eagles' feathers and nails like birds' claws, but the wings were plucked, or clipped. He did not soar too high when he was down on all fours eating grass like an animal and having the dew land upon him. God plucked the wings of that eagle, King Nebuchadnezzar, and Babylon no longer soared so high.

What is the second beast? Verse 5 of our Scripture text states, "And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side" That second beast was in direct chronological succession to the first beast. There were no splits, gaps, or postponements. The second beast was as a bear. Notice that it says "it raised up itself on one side." In other words, it had two sides, but one side became more dominant. The bear represents the Medo-Persian empire. It was a dual kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, but the Persian side rose up and became more dominant.

We also see this substantiated in Daniel 8:3 in another type of vision: "Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last." This ram had two horns, but one was higher,

just as it said of the bear in Daniel 7:5. This reiterates that one portion of the empire became more dominant. Daniel 8:20 states, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." Here we can clearly see that the ram with the two horns represents the Medo-Persian empire. This corresponds with Daniel 7:5, where it raised itself up on one side.

Notice in verse 5 that the bear had three ribs in its mouth. A bear crushes its prey in its mouth. The three ribs reference the fact that the Medo-Persian empire crushed the three provinces that made up the Babylonian empire: Babylon, Lydia, and Egypt. Just as a bear crushes its prey in its mouth, so the second beast crushed those three provinces to succeed Babylon as the world empire. So we find that this second beast represents the Medo-Persian empire.

Our Scripture text tells us in verse 6, "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it." This leopard-like beast had four heads and four wings, and they were diverse from one another. Notice that it mentions another like a leopard with four wings and four heads. That represents the third kingdom in direct succession, or the Grecian empire, with its king, Alexander the Great.

Why is the third beast represented as a leopard? The leopard is known for quick movements and remarkable swiftness. Alexander conquered all the then-known world in five years at thirty-two years of age. That was a feat that has never yet been equaled in history.

Notice, though, that verse 6 denotes this beast as having "four wings of a fowl." Grecia had four wings, and Babylon had eagle's wings. An eagle has only two wings, but this creature had four. This lets us know that the rapidity with which Alexander the Great conquered the then-known world was much quicker than anything that had ever been seen in history and has been unequaled, even to this date.

Also, notice in verse 6 that the beast had the wings of a fowl, but in verse 4 we see that Babylon had eagle's wings. What does that teach us? Fowls' wings are not near the quality of an eagle's wings. Babylon soared to a zenith and a height for a prolonged period of time that Grecia would never know. Those wings of a fowl rather than an eagle's wings indicates that it would neither soar as high, as long, or as far as Babylon had.

How else do we know that this beast represents the Grecian empire? It says the leopard-like beast had four heads. Isaiah 9:6 reads, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." What is upon the shoulders? The head. In the Scriptures heads denote government.

Daniel 8:21-22, in the form of another vision, gives clarity: "And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn [or power] that is between his eyes is the first king [the first king was Alexander the Great]. Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power." When Alexander the Great conquered all the then-known world, he sat down and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, and he died a drunkard's death at the age of thirty-three. Before he died, he took his four generals and divided his empire into four different political powers. They became four separate heads of government, thus the four heads. So it did not continue. Daniel 8:22 tells us, ". . . being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation . . ." What nation was it? According to verse 21, it was Grecia.

Part Two

The Fourth and Final Beast

In Part 1 of this chapter, we began to examine this prophetic vision. By properly understanding this Scripture text, we can refute a false and damnable interpretation of the Great Tribulation. Previously, we

learned that Daniel saw four beasts, representing four kingdoms. The first beast represents the Babylonian empire; the second, the Medo-Persian empire; and the third, the Grecian empire.

Now let us look at this fourth and final beast in Daniel, Chapter 7. Verse 7 reads, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." This fourth beast was much more diverse than all the rest. The other three were given some type of animal image from the wild kingdom. This beast was so diverse and such a hideous beast that no animal attachment was made to it.

Notice its identifying factors. It had great iron teeth and ten horns. The ten horns of this beast in Daniel 7:7 are the same ten horns that we find on the great red dragon in Revelation 12:3 and the first beast in Revelation 13:1. Those horns are an identifying factor so that we might know what entity this is. The horns denote political power. Again, Daniel 8:20 says, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." Those horns denote political power, or political entities. Therefore, the ten horns that we find in Daniel 7:7, as well as in the Revelation, are the ten minor kingdoms, or political powers, of which this vast empire was comprised.

Again, each one of those kingdoms was in direct chronological succession with no gaps between them. What was the fourth kingdom, which chronologically succeeded Grecia and was ultimately divided into ten minor kingdoms? It was the pagan Roman Empire. I repeat, those ten horns are the same ones portrayed in the Revelation. This beast made a transition between the old economy and the new economy, because its time spanned both dispensations, or eras. There was the pre-Christian era pagan Rome and the Christian era pagan Rome, but it was the same entity.

Another identifying factor was that it had great iron teeth, which corresponds with the iron we found in Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2:33, where it tells of the legs of iron, referring to the Roman Empire. Daniel 2:40 says, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron." Here we see the same symbol for the fourth kingdom that we see in Daniel, Chapter 7, for this fourth beast.

Iron was the fourth portion of that image. Daniel 2:33 says, "His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." The fourth kingdom that verse 40 says was strong as iron was the kingdom represented in Daniel 2:33 with legs of iron and feet part of iron and part of clay. That was the kingdom in power when Christ, the Stone, came on the stage of action. Daniel 2:34 says that the stone cut out of the mountain smote the image in the feet, which were part of iron and part of clay, while this kingdom was in power.

What political entity, or world kingdom, was in power at the time of Christ's First Advent? Luke 2:1 tells us, "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Christ made His Advent when Caesar Augustus, the Roman emperor, ruled the then-known world. Therefore, pagan Rome was in power. Let us look more closely at that fourth beast, as it reveals a truth to us that much of religion fails to see today. Our Scripture text states in verse 7, "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth." Again, be reminded that both here and in Daniel, Chapter 2, this iron represents pagan Rome.

Now let us go back even further in prophecy to 1451 B.C. We read in Deuteronomy 28:47-49: "Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. The LORD shall bring a nation against thee from far" Verses 50, 52-53 tell us: "A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young .

. . . And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, . . . thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee."

In this passage of Scripture, we have an account that is very sobering and astonishing. What was the instrument that was going to commit these atrocities? Again, verse 48 reads, "Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck . . ." What did we find that iron represented? It was pagan Roman, and it was the iron in the dream concerning the image revealed in Daniel, Chapter 2. Then, there was the iron in the beast in Daniel 7:7. In Deuteronomy 28:48 it refers to a yoke of iron.

Why is this prophecy important? Because in these verses in Deuteronomy, Chapter 28, biblically we can see what the Great Tribulation is. Described in graphic detail in Deuteronomy, Chapter 28, in 1451 B.C., is a prophecy speaking of how Rome would be the instrument to commit the atrocities that the Bible would call "the great tribulation." In verse 53 we read, "And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body . . ." The famed Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote that this was literally fulfilled when Titus and the Roman armies besieged Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He told of a mother named Mary, the daughter of Eleazar from the country beyond Jordan, who killed her child for food and then publicly confessed it.

Jesus said in Matthew 24:15-21: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

I want you to notice that Jesus employed the phrase "great tribulation." This is where much of religion lifts this term and teaches a future, worldwide time of tribulation. However, we must ask several questions concerning this: Is this still a future event? Is this a worldwide event? and Does the tribulation have a seven-year duration as dispensationalists claim? Let us examine these questions. First, is this a worldwide tribulation, as many teach? Jesus said in verse 16, "Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains."

If it were a worldwide, universal tribulation, where could one flee? No matter where one would go, he could not flee. Jesus was the One who mentioned the thought of fleeing, letting us know it was possible and also advisable. If this were a worldwide tribulation, no one could flee.

Second, is it of seven years' duration as millenarians teach? Again, look at Jesus' words in verse 20: "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." If it were of seven years' duration, what would it matter about fleeing on the sabbath or in the winter? If it were of seven years' duration, it would take in many sabbaths and seven winters. Again, we can see that this is contrary to what the Scriptures teach. As a matter of fact, Jesus said in verse 22, "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." It is not a period of some supposed seven years, but rather it lasted days.

What was Jesus speaking of in this text? In verse 21 He called it a "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." When was this to take place? Notice that in verse 15 He referred to it as "the abomination of desolation."

Do the Scriptures make clear what this desolation is? Certainly so. Luke 21:20-24 reads: "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them

which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days [not years] of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

Jesus said in verse 20, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." Here He referred to the same desolation that Matthew penned in Matthew 24:15 when He called it the "abomination of desolation." However, in Luke 21:20 He gave us insight. He let us know it would be when Jerusalem was compassed with armies. Now when did this happen? Do you remember the prophecy we read in Deuteronomy 28:48? It happened under the yoke of iron, under pagan Rome. This fourth dreadful and terrible beast that had great teeth of iron was the one that God used to surround Jerusalem. The Great Tribulation took place when Jerusalem was surrounded with armies. It is an historical event, not a future event.

Those armies spoken of were Roman armies. This was in direct fulfillment of the prophecy of Deuteronomy, Chapter 28. Notice how clearly and how closely the historical record mirrors the prophetic account in Deuteronomy, Chapter 28. When we read the historical account written by Josephus, we see how right Jesus was about that terrible event.

Josephus wrote of those fearful days of siege and famine and said this: "Then did the famine widen its progress and devoured the people by whole houses and families. The upper rooms were full of women and children that were dying of famine. And the lanes of the city were full of the dead bodies of the aged. The children, also, and the young men wandered about the marketplace like shadows, all swelled with famine and fell down dead wheresoever their misery seized them.

"As for bearing them, those that were sick themselves were not able to do it. And those that were hardy and well were to turn from doing it by the great multitude of those dead bodies and by the uncertainty that there was how soon they should die themselves. For many died as they were burying others, and many went to their coffins before the fatal hour was come. Nor was there any lamentation made under these calamities, nor were heard any mournful complaints. But the famine confounded all natural passions, for those who were just going to die looked upon those who were going to the rest before them with dry eyes and open mouths; a deep silence also and a kind of deadly night had seized upon the city. And every one of them died with their eyes fixed upon the temple."

Josephus told the dreadful story of a woman who in those days killed, roasted, and ate her suckling child. He wrote that even the Romans, when they had taken the city and were going through it to plunder, were so stricken with horror at the sights they saw that they could not but stay their hands. When the Romans were come to the houses to plunder them, they found in them entire families of dead people. The upper rooms were full of corpses. They stood in such horror at this sight that they went out without touching anything. Josephus himself shared in the horrors of the siege, and he told that ninety-seven thousand people were taken captive and enslaved, and one million one hundred thousand died.

The Great Tribulation that religion is yet looking for today occurred in fulfillment of the prophecy in Deuteronomy, Chapter 28, in A.D. 70. Jesus said in Matthew 24:21, ". . . such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." Josephus wrote in his book *War of the Jews*, "I shall therefore speak my mind here at once briefly that neither did any other city suffer such miseries nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than this was from the beginning of the world." Josephus told of bodies being piled five feet deep and of the ground being so full of crosses where the Romans crucified those who remained that there was no room for any more crosses. The Romans had no

regard, just as the prophecy in Deuteronomy said, for the young or the old. They used their swords on women who were with child and cut out the unborn babies, threw them up in the air, and caught them on the tips of their swords in sport.

The atrocities are almost unspeakable. It is no wonder that Jesus called it a "great tribulation" in Matthew 24:21. He said there was never one like it before and would never be another one like it. No wonder Daniel described the Roman beast in Daniel 7:7 as "dreadful and terrible." *Smith's Bible Dictionary* tells us that this desolation of Jerusalem took place on Friday, August 9, A.D. 70, the same day that centuries earlier Nebuchadnezzar went in and took Jerusalem. Why was Nebuchadnezzar able to take Jerusalem and carry away the sacred vessels? The people failed to stand for truth. Why was the desolation of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 allowed to transpire? Because Jesus came to His own, and His own received Him not.

When we are entrusted with precious truth, it puts us in an extremely responsible position. Jesus was trying to let us know many truths through these lessons. One truth that we want to get across to you is that each of those beasts represents a kingdom and that those kingdoms were in chronological sequence, with no splits or gaps. Those beasts were used as a prophetic time line to reveal truths that God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that men would misappropriate and misapply.

I trust that you can see, through the avenue of these four beasts as a prophetic vehicle to get us from Daniel's day down to the New Testament era, that this Great Tribulation (which false religion touts as a future event) came in direct chronological sequence in our Scripture lesson. It was foisted upon Jerusalem by that dreadful and terrible beast known as the pagan Roman Empire. Though those of the dispensational persuasion take these Scriptures and apply them to some future age, when we lay line on line, precept upon precept, and rightly divide the Word of Truth, we can see that the Great Tribulation is not a future event, but an historical occurrence. The truth of God's Word sweeps away the refuge of lies.



BABYLONIAN

526 B.C.



MEDO-PERSIAN

459 B.C.



GRECIAN

407 B.C.



ROMAN

226 B.C.



TEN MINOR KINGDOMS

270 A.D. WICKERSHAM'S HIST.

**"DIVISION & DECLINE OF ROMAN
EMPIRE OCCURRED IN 270 A.D."**



LITTLE HORN MORE STOUT

270 - 1530 A.D.

**"TIME, TIMES & DIVIDING
OF TIME." DANIEL 7:25**

CHAPTER THREE

The Little Horn and the Truth Concerning Antichrist

Daniel 7:7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.

8 I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.

Part One

The Fourth Beast

As we view this passage, we see another Scripture used by those of the dispensational persuasion, which unfortunately fosters error and disseminates confusion. In verse 8 the Prophet penned, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn . . ." This is a passage that noted dispensational writers employ to denote as the antichrist.

The late Dr. John R. Rice, in his book entitled *The Second Coming of Christ in Daniel*, commented on Daniel 7:8, stating, "The antichrist, this little horn coming up among those ten kingdoms, is none other than the man of sin himself." H. L. Wilmington, of *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*, wrote, "The little horn who is none other than the antichrist . . ." Initially, this may not sound totally inaccurate, but we must view it in light of the millenarian's concept of the supposed antichrist. Dr. John R. Rice described him as "that one great antichrist to come after the rapture of the saints." We can clearly see that dispensationalists teach a singular, personal antichrist and that he is to come in the future. They hold both a futurist and a literalist interpretation concerning antichrist.

In view of these teachings, we want to examine our lesson text. To understand the little horn spoken of in verse 8, we must understand the surrounding context. Daniel 7:1 tells us that "Daniel had a dream and visions of his head." In this dream he declared that "four great beasts came up from the sea" (verse 3). In this vision, or dream, the four beasts represent four kings, or kingdoms.

Verse 17 reads, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings . . ." The words *kings* and *kingdoms* are interchangeable. We know that because verse 23 says, "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms . . ." Again, verse 17 declares, "These great beasts, which are four, are four kings [or kingdoms], which shall arise out of the earth." Daniel envisioned these four beasts, and they represent four kingdoms, or four world empires. Through the vehicle of what Daniel 7:3 denoted as four great beasts, Daniel came down chronologically, from his days in the Babylonian empire to the Christian dispensation, which was established on the Day of Pentecost in A.D. 33.

Verse 4 says, "The first [beast] was like a lion, and had eagle's wings." This first beast represents the Babylonian empire, which was established in 526 B.C. Verse 5 says Daniel beheld "another beast, a second, like to a bear." This was the Medo-Persian empire. It had two sides: Media and Persia, but the latter side became dominant. The Medo-Persian empire was established in 459 B.C.

Verse 6 tells us, "After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard . . ." This leopard-like beast with four heads was the Grecian empire. After the demise of Alexander the Great, it had four separate heads,

which represented his four generals among whom he had split his kingdom just before his death. The third beast was the establishment of the Grecian empire in 407 B.C.

Verse 7 says he saw "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible," which was more diverse than the other beasts depicted in the dream. This fourth beast, depicts the pagan Roman Empire, which was established in 226 B.C. I want you to note that this prophecy follows direct chronological succession. There are no breaks, gaps, or postponements. That takes on great significance as we consider the little horn that became more stout than his fellows. It was also in direct chronological succession to the beasts.

Verse 7 tells us that this fourth beast was dreadful and terrible and that it had ten horns and great iron teeth. The significance of the ten horns and great iron teeth is that these symbolic references serve as identifying factors. They give us insight as to what this figure represents. Daniel 7:23 says, "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth . . ." This fourth beast corresponds with the fourth kingdom upon the earth mentioned in Daniel 2:40. In Daniel, Chapter 2, Nebuchadnezzar received a dream, and through the avenue of that dream, God revealed to him in chronological sequence what would occur from the time of Nebuchadnezzar down to the advent of the Stone, Jesus Christ. The four metallic substances represent four diverse kingdoms in chronological succession.

Daniel 2:40 talks about the fourth kingdom and states, "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron." That corresponds with Daniel 2:33, which says, "His legs [were] of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." What is the importance of that? Daniel 2:34 tells us, "Thou sawest till that a stone [which we know was Jesus Christ] was cut out without hands [depicting the virgin birth], which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay . . ." This teaches us that the Advent of Jesus Christ came while the kingdom represented by iron was in power.

What kingdom was represented by iron? Luke 2:1 reads, ". . . there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed." Caesar was the Roman Emperor, the ruler of the pagan Roman Empire, and that was when the Stone, Jesus Christ, came forth, born of a virgin, or cut out without hands. Man had nothing to do with it. He was born during the rule of pagan Rome. Since Christ came and smote this image while the fourth kingdom was in force, this lets us know the fourth kingdom was the pagan Roman Empire. When we come back to Daniel 7:7, we can see that this fourth beast that had the great iron teeth was a symbol of the pagan Roman Empire.

Why did this beast have ten horns? What did they represent? What is the significance of them? Daniel 7:24 says, "And the ten horns out of this kingdom [speaking of the Roman Empire] are ten kings [or kingdoms] that shall arise." Those ten horns were kingdoms that were going to rise out of the pagan Roman Empire. Machiari, the Roman historian, described the Roman Empire as "comprised of ten gothic tribes." Upon the decline of the Roman Empire, they became the minor kingdoms. They were as follows: 1) the Huns, 2) the Ostrogoths, 3) the Visigoths, 4) the Franks, 5) the Vandals, 6) the Suevi, 7) the Bergundian, 8) the Heruli, 9) the Anglo-Saxon, and 10) the Lombards. These were the ten gothic tribes of which the Roman Empire was comprised.

When did the ten horns rise out of this beast? Wickersham, in his book entitled *Nineteen Hundred Year Church History*, states on page 104, "A.D. 270 the division and decline of the Roman Empire." Those ten horns rose into being as political entities in A.D. 270. What caused those horns to arise as separate political entities? What caused the demise of the pagan Roman Empire? Revelation 12:1, which has its time setting as the beginning of the Gospel Day, reveals that John saw "a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." This is nothing more than a picture of the church in her morning-time pristine glory when she appeared on the stage of time. As soon as she appeared on the stage, Revelation 12:3

tells us, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns . . ." This is another figurative expression of this beast that we saw in Daniel 7:7.

Revelation 12:7 tells us that as soon as the woman appeared on the stage of action, "there was war." A spiritual war resulted between Christ and the church against the dragon and his angels. Revelation 12:8 says the dragon did not prevail. Verse 9 tells us he was cast out. Revelation 12:11 reads, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." When this beast, or dragon, was cast down, Rome became divided and declined and divided into the minor political entities in A.D. 270.

The ten horns spoken of in Daniel 7:7 take us right down sequentially to A.D. 270. Daniel 7:24 lets us know that those ten kings, or kingdoms, would arise. Verse 8 says, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn . . ." A little horn came up among the ten.

Dispensationalists say that this little horn in Daniel 7:8 refers to a future coming antichrist. One publication states, "Bible prophecy reveals that the years just ahead will see a rebirth of the ancient Roman Empire in Europe and end-time confederation of ten nations or groups of nations where they merge in Europe, headed by a super dictator." On the contrary, this is not what that Scripture teaches at all. This Scripture nowhere speaks of any type of rebirth. Verse 8 says very clearly that the horn came up "among them." This little horn did not come up centuries later. Everything we have studied so far has been in direct chronological sequence, and so was this. This little horn came up into power right while those ten minor kingdoms were enjoying their power in A.D. 270.

Thus, we have established the prophetic time setting for the appearance of the little horn. In the next section, we will identify what this symbol represents.

Part Two

The Little Horn

Daniel 7:8 says this little horn "came up among them." What is the antecedent of the word *them*? Verse 7 lets us know it came up among the ten horns. What does this tell us? This fourth beast in verse 7 was the pagan Roman Empire.

Since this beast was Roman and the horns were what comprised the pagan Roman Empire, then it must, of necessity, follow that the little horn must be something Roman as well. What was this horn? Daniel 7:8 states, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn." The little horn had a historical beginning and followed in chronological sequence. Daniel 7:24 says, "And the ten horns out of this kingdom [out of the fourth kingdom, of which verse 23 speaks—the pagan Roman Empire] are ten kings [the ten minor kingdoms] that shall arise [when Rome was defeated by the church in A.D. 270]: and another shall rise after them." Another what? Another horn. Verse 8 calls it a "little horn." Verse 20 tells us that its "look was more stout than his fellows."

What is this horn? How can we identify it? Look at its features. We read in verse 8, "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." We have at least two identifying factors: it had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking great things.

Daniel 7:20-21 gives us a little more insight: "And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up [which is the little one], and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a

mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."

Verse 8 says it had eyes like the eyes of a man. It took on a human representation. It also says in verse 8 that it had a mouth speaking great things. Daniel 7:21 says it made war with the saints. Where else do we see this spoken of? In Revelation, Chapter 13. Again, we are coming right down in chronological succession. This directly succeeded pagan Rome, and it was best denoted or represented by a man who spoke great things and who made war with the saints.

Where else do we see descriptions of this nature? Revelation 13:1 reads, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns." In Revelation 12:3, when it was in its pagan form, the crowns were on the heads, which were seven different heads (or types) of government that Rome had in its pagan form. However, in this form notice that the crowns moved from the head to the horns, letting us know the political power then rested in the minor kingdoms.

Verse 2 continues ". . . and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw [notice the characteristics of this beast] was like unto a leopard [going right back to the four beasts in Daniel, Chapter 7], and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." All the previous beasts of Daniel were incorporated in this beast in Revelation 13:1-2. This beast had the nature and spirits of all the previous heathen kingdoms. Revelation 13:5 tells us, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things," which was exactly what it said in Daniel 7:8. Also, Revelation 13:7 says, "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints," just as it says in Daniel 7:21.

What is this beast that Revelation 13:2 speaks of? Just as the little horn took on a human representation in Daniel 7:8, when the Scripture says that it had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking, so the representation of this beast in Revelation 13:2 is also a man, or a human representation. What is that representation? Revelation 13:18 says, "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; [this is a human representation, letting us know the best way to identify this beast is by the flesh and blood representation that it takes on; then it gives us the insight of how to do that] and his number is Six hundred threescore and six [or six hundred sixty-six]."

We need to understand that before the invention of a separate numerical system, which was not until the tenth century A.D., the letters of the alphabet were used for numbers. There was no separate numerical system until approximately A.D. 1000. At the time these writings were penned, alphabetical systems doubled as numerical systems, one of which we call Roman numerals. In this system V equals 5, I equals 1, C equals 100, and so on. How can we identify who this beast is? We can identify this human representation by the bearer of the number, "Six hundred and threescore and six." Whom might that be? If you will look on the jeweled letters inscribed on the mitre that the Pope of Rome wears, you will see the Latin inscription: "VICARIUS FILII DEI," which means "Vicar of the Son of God." The numerical expression of that Latin phrase, VICARIUS FILII DEI, equals exactly six hundred sixty-six. So who is this man who is the human representation of this system? The Pope of Rome, or the office of the Pope.

Remember, this system has to be something Roman, because this fourth beast was the pagan Roman Empire. Right among them came another little horn, right up among them in direct chronological succession, but of Roman origin. Therefore, it must, of necessity, be Roman as well. It is papal Rome, or Roman Catholicism.

The word *vicar* in *Webster's Dictionary* means "one who is in the place of or has taken the place of another." Christ has not relinquished His place to any man. He has usurped this authority.

During this period of time, those who held the papal office fulfilled the prophecy of 2 Thessalonians 2:4: "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." They had "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies" (Revelation 13:5), and they held exclusive sway over the world during that time known as the Dark Ages. Their power was virtually unfettered until a reformer was enlightened concerning a truth and wielded the sword of truth and laid a deadly wound to the papal beast. Martin Luther and his followers devised the Augsburg Confession, which was drawn up in Augsburg, Germany. They were the Lutheran Articles or Confession of Faith, thus breaking Rome's exclusive rule and establishing the first Protestant sect.

You may ask, "Do we biblically know that is so?" Revelation 13:5 gives the time delineation: "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue [how long?] forty and two months." Let us do some prophetic time reckoning. The Jewish calendar month had thirty days in a month. Thirty times forty-two is 1260 days. The Bible tells us in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6 to give each day for a year. So 1260 days equals 1260 years. If you subtract A.D. 270 from A.D. 1530, you get 1260 years. That is when this occurred. This was the exclusive rule of papal Rome during the period from A.D. 270 to A.D.1530.

Daniel 7:8 says that when this little horn came up, "there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots." What were these? Three of the ten minor kingdoms (the Heruli, the Ostrogoths, and the Lombards) were overthrown to give papal Rome her first political power. Historically and biblically, this little horn, more stout than his fellows, was in direct chronological sequence to pagan Rome. This hardly qualifies for what Dr. Rice says is "the one great antichrist to come after the rapture of the saints." Was this little horn the antichrist? Not by the description of dispensationalists, because they claim one great antichrist. First, they claim that antichrist is one, but during this 1260 years, from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530, if you will look in *Funk & Wagnall's New Encyclopedia*, you will find that it lists two hundred thirty-seven popes. Second, they claim that the antichrist comes after the rapture. That certainly is not true in this Scripture, because we can see it has a historical setting, not a futurist setting.

How do they teach his nature? Estep, in his book *Antichrist Kingdom* refers to "the world's number one atheist." Another writer says that his sin or blasphemy is "downright barefaced infidelity." Were any of the popes of Rome atheists? No, they all have been highly religious people. Revelation 13:4 says, "And they worshipped the dragon . . . and they worshipped the beast." By the dispensationalists definition, the ones represented by this little horn of Daniel 7:8 could not be the one great antichrist to come after the rapture.

The verses in this prophetic text have followed in direct chronological order. God knew the fallacies that would be taught since He knows "the end from the beginning" (Isaiah 46:10). Therefore, He has given us airtight prophecies against such falsity.

I trust that you can see that this "little horn" that verse 8 speaks of is not some personal futurist antichrist, but rather the office held by a man who represents the system that immediately succeeded pagan Rome, the system of papal Rome. Thank God, the truth being rightly divided can clear away all the foggy mists of false religious teaching.

Part Three

Antichrist

In this part we will address the biblical truths concerning antichrists. What does the Bible teach about antichrist? The word *antichrist* (singular) appears in the Bible only four times. The word *antichrists* (plural)

appears only once. These terms appear in only two places in the Bible: in the First and Second Epistles of John. In both Epistles combined, it is mentioned in only four verses.

Let us examine these verses. The first one, in 1 John 2:18, reads, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Here John employed the word *antichrist*. What does this word mean? *Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament* tells us it is the Greek word *antichristos* and means "an opponent of the Messiah." *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* is a little more expansive in its definition and says this: ". . . adversary of the Messiah. John employed it of the corrupt power and influence hostile to Christian interests, especially that which is at work in false teachers who have come from the bosom of the church and are engaged in disseminating error."

Millenarians advocate that antichrist is a singular individual of a political nature, that he is an atheist, and that he is a person to come in the future. However, notice that the Bible teaches the opposite of that. Again, 1 John 2:18 says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist [singular] shall come, [This is future tense. You see, they were hearing that same thing back in John's day. Notice what he went on and said.] even now [in A.D. 100] are there many antichrists."

John acknowledged the same falsity that we hear over our land today. In this verse John dispelled two of the false ideas that religion holds concerning the antichrist.

Let us look at 1 John 2:22, which reads, "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son." Here it says, "He is antichrist." Who? Look at it closely. This is not referring to just one individual. The clear implication is that anyone who meets this condition or falls into this category is antichrist.

What kind of liar was John talking about? It says, "He that denieth that Jesus is the Christ." Men run off with the word "denieth" and assume that it means a verbal denial. Notice, it does not speak of a verbal denial. How does one deny that Jesus is the Christ? The Apostle Paul gave us insight in Titus 1:16, which says, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him."

They deny that Jesus is the Christ, not by verbally denying Him or by denying His existence, but by denying His position as Christ. The word *Christ* in the Greek is *christos*, meaning, "the anointed One." They deny allowing His anointing to work in their lives and allowing the anointed One the unction, or the Holy Spirit, to guide, direct, and order their lives. They deny that, yet they profess, and that is the reason they are antichrist.

Titus 1:16 reads, "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him." The Amplified Bible makes it even stronger. It says, "They profess to know God . . . but deny and disown and renounce Him by what they do." One can profess with his lips, but if what he does denies and denounces Him as Lord and as Christ, the anointed One whose anointing guides one's life, it can produce a condition of antichrist. Such a one is no atheist.

John wrote in 1 John 2:26, "These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you." Atheism does not seduce the church. Remember that John called such a one a liar in 1 John 2:22. Why? Because that individual is living a lie, professing that he is a Christian. Such a one may even preach and teach, otherwise he could not seduce others; yet he lives a lie by failing to allow the anointing of the Spirit to lead, guide, and operate in his life.

In 1 John 2:27 John countered the thought of being antichrist with this: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you." He was not saying that we do not need services where we are taught or the benefit of teachers, but he was saying that you do not have to blindly accept what they teach. In other words, you have the privilege

of having the anointing or the unction within you to discern truth when you hear it. This contradicts the thought of this being some type of civil, political leader, because John was speaking of one who was out to seduce and deceive.

Let us look at another passage that lays all three dispensational falsities to rest. We read in 2 John 1:7, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Notice the wording John employed. He refuted all the positions millenarians hold. He began by saying, "For many deceivers . . ." First, he let us know that it is in the plural when he said many. This debunks the idea of one great antichrist.

Second, notice he said they were deceivers, not atheists or a political or civil leader; but rather one who deals in spiritual commodities. Third, John penned this in A.D. 100, and he stated that "many deceivers are [present tense] entered into the world." This clearly shows that they are not something to come in the future. John experienced them in A.D. 100, and they have confronted the church ever since.

We have looked at every text where the words *antichrist* and *antichrists* are recorded except one. This last passage reveals what an antichrist really is. In 1 John 4:1-3 we read: "Beloved, believe not every spirit [we do not have to accept things at face value], but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets [Notice that these spirits do not just float around and inhabit the atmosphere; they have bodies. They dwell in people, and they are false prophets.] are [present tense] gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come [they were hearing it then]; and even now [A.D. 100] already is it in the world."

Notice the things that John stressed, the truths that he reiterated here. Verse 3 says, "even now," in A.D. 100. It was not something out in some future time. Also, he told us that antichrist is a spirit. What does this reveal to us? First, it reveals to us that a spirit is behind it. What type of spirit produces this? What causes a people to profess Christianity and yet live a lie, to deny Christ by the works in their lives, and to seduce and deceive others into thinking that living that way is acceptable and to join them? John called it the "spirit of antichrist."

Consider the words of Dr. Adam Clarke: "Every man who opposes the Spirit of the Gospel, and every teacher and writer who endeavors to lower the Gospel standard to the spirit and taste of the world is a genuine antichrist. No matter where or among whom he is found, everyone who opposes his reign in the world or in others or in himself is an antichrist." An antichrist is one who professes but does not possess, because he or she is not for Christ but against Him. The word *antichrist* means "against Christ."

When people read 1 John 4:3, it is very easy to assume they were denying the incarnation of Jesus Christ, because verses 2-3 read: "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist." John was not talking about verbal confession. This Scripture does not say a thing about that. Again, verse 2 says, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth [confesseth what?] that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh . . ." What flesh? The flesh of that individual; in other words, he was saying that the way they live or the spirit they manifest confesses whether or not Jesus Christ is in their flesh.

Verse 3 says, "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." He did not say anything about verbal confession. It was talking about what a person's spirit confesses. That is the reason you can meet someone from across the sea and feel that you have known that person all your life. Your spirit bears witness with their spirit that he or she is a child of God, because that person has the

same spirit. The spirit is in their flesh, and their spirit is confessing that Jesus has come in the flesh; not in His flesh, but in that person's flesh. Someone can sit around the congregation for thirty or forty years and make great professions, yet you can have an uneasy feeling every time you get around that individual. Why? Because that person's spirit is confessing something different from what your spirit is confessing. If one is professing and his spirit is not confessing, this is that spirit of antichrist.

Again, verse 3 is not speaking of the incarnation of Christ, but rather it is speaking as the Apostle Paul said in Galatians 4:19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Those people, in essence, had become antichrists. The Galatians had become converts, but judaizers came in; and then they fell.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians in Galatians 5:4, "Ye are fallen from grace." They had lost their experience with Christ. Galatians 3:3 tells us they had begun in the Spirit but had been switched over to the flesh, yet they continued to profess. They had lost the inner reality, so Paul was telling them in Galatians 4:19, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again." In other words, although they had already been born again once, they needed to be converted again. Paul said, "I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

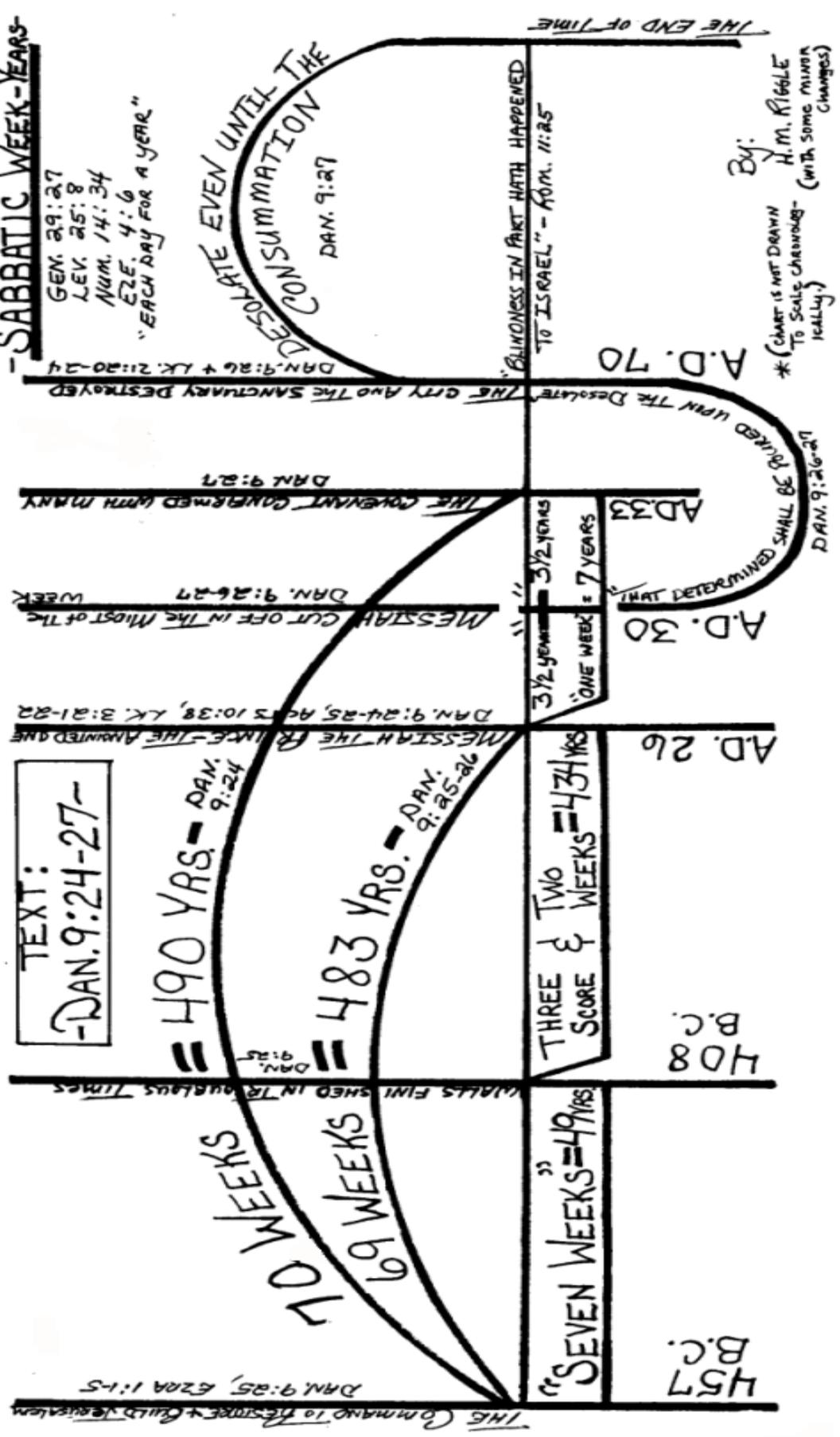
The incarnation that is so vitally necessary is not the incarnation when Christ came forth of a virgin, but the incarnation of Christ's being formed in our flesh. This is what John was speaking of in 1 John 4:3, when he said, "And every spirit that confesseth not . . ." He was not speaking of a verbal confession. They are not people who rise up and become atheistic and say they do not believe in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Now, these people are seducers. They are of a religious nature. As Dr. Clarke said, they oppose His reign and oppose the Spirit of Christ. As *Thayer's* said, they come from the bosom of the church, because they could not become antichrist had they not once been a part of the people of God.

Again, 1 John 2:18 says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." Where did they come from? Verse 19 tells us, "They went out from us, but they were not of us." In other words, they were not of us in the sense that they were not really in the position they ought to have held. Something occurred and they went out, not so much physically at first. They went out doctrinally and their spirits changed; yet they continued to profess while their spirit no longer confessed. First John 4:3 says, ". . . and this is that spirit of antichrist."

Contrary to what millenarians advocate, the antichrist is not one individual. We have read repeatedly that John said there are many. It is not a political leader or an atheist, because we found that, according to the Scriptures, they are seducers and they deceive. We found it is not something to come in the future, but those who, through their spirit, confess not Christ living in their lives, yet they profess. I trust that you can see that the little horn, which millenarians advocate as the antichrist to come at a future time, was nothing more than a prophetic fulfillment of the offices of the papacy that came in direct chronological succession to pagan Rome through the beast of papal Rome. (See Chronological Time Sequences Chart on page 53.)

Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." What does truth make you free from? Truth makes you free from error, or falsity. Truth does not set you free from sin. The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin (see 1 John 1:9). Truth frees you from false conceptions, false doctrines, and erroneous thinking.

DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS ~



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CHAPTER FOUR

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks: A Time Line to the End of Old Israel as the People of God

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Part One

Introduction

In this passage of Scripture is a prophecy that has become the source of much confusion and false teaching in the realms of religion. We want to look at this prophetic passage because this text is one of the more pronounced texts used by dispensational advocates to teach many of their false teachings.

The burden of this prophetic account is recorded in verse 24, which declares, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people . . ." In this passage the Prophet Daniel received a startling and sobering revelation concerning how much longer Old Testament Israel would remain the people of God. By the help of the Holy Spirit of God, we want to study this prophecy as a time line to the end of old Israel as the people of God.

As we consider this text, we must first understand what prompted the giving of this prophetic utterance. When Daniel received the prophecy in this lesson, many things were occurring in Old Israel. They were in captivity, and Daniel understood that the time of captivity was nearing an end. Daniel 9:2 says, "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books [he was speaking of the prophetic writings of Jeremiah and others] the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."

Verse 4 reads, "And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession." Daniel 9:20 tells us, "And whiles I was speaking, and praying . . ." Gabriel appeared, and verse 22 states, "And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding." Of what did Gabriel come to give Daniel particular understanding? Daniel 10:14 says, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." The vision was that he might understand what was to befall Old Testament Israel.

In this prophecy he revealed to Daniel the future of Old Testament Israel. The latter portion of Daniel 10:1 reads, ". . . he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision." Verse 2 tells us, "In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks." Why was Daniel mourning? Because he understood the

vision, and he understood that an end was coming concerning Old Testament Israel being the people of God. He understood Daniel 9:24, which says, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." Daniel realized the words meant that after seventy prophetic weeks, old Israel (or Israel after the flesh) would no longer be God's people. That was the reason Daniel was mourning for three full weeks.

Again, Daniel 9:24 says, "Seventy weeks are determined . . ." The Hebrew word for the word translated in English as *determined* is *chathak*, which literally means "to cut off." Daniel realized that after the seventy weeks passed, old Israel would be cut off. Did this occur? The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 11:20, "Because of unbelief they were broken off." The burden of Daniel's prophecy was to establish the time line for how much longer Israel would be the people of God.

Many who are of the dispensational persuasion, such as the noted dispensational writer C. I. Scofield, feel that Israel will be restored as a political, sovereign entity with a king, with the Old Testament being instituted again, and with sacrifices being offered in a temple, which they believe will be rebuilt. On the contrary, Daniel understood, through the words of this prophecy, the exact opposite of this stance.

Verse 24 of our lesson text employs a prophetic time symbol: "Seventy weeks are determined." Those seventy weeks served as a time line. Israel's seventy years of captivity had just ended, and the seventy weeks came in direct chronological succession and were ready to commence. They went from Daniel's day down to when old Israel was cut off as a people of God.

What were those seventy weeks and how are they to be reckoned? They were sabbatical week years. We are dealing in prophetic language. That type of time reckoning was very familiar to the Hebrews. Genesis 29:27 reads (Laban was speaking to Jacob concerning Rachel), "Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years." Here we find that the symbol of a week represented seven years. Laban instructed Jacob to fulfill her week, so he labored seven more years. A week, which is composed of seven days, in biblical prophecy is actually seven years; therefore, seven days equal seven years.

When our lesson text in Daniel 9:24 speaks of seventy weeks, it is seventy times seven days per week, which equals four hundred ninety years. We find the delineation of prophetic reckoning throughout the Scriptures. In the Book of Numbers, Chapter 14, after Israel had sent spies into Canaan and they crossed over at Kadesh-barnea and were there for forty days, Moses told the people how long they would be sentenced to wander in the wilderness. We read in verse 34, "After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year." A prophetic day represents a year.

Ezekiel's prophecy bears out the same truth in Ezekiel 4:6. The Prophet Ezekiel penned, "And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year." Again, a day equals a year in prophetic time.

When did the time measurement spoken of in Daniel 9:24 begin? Our lesson text in Daniel 9:25 says, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." The commencement point of this prophetic time measurement was when the commandment went forth to restore and to build Jerusalem.

When was the decree issued? Isaiah 44:26-28 and Isaiah 45:1 declare: "That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof: That saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers: That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut."

The above prophecy speaks of Cyrus. According to biblical history, Solomon built a beautiful temple. However, because the people of God fell into apostasy after that, God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to come in and desecrate the temple, destroy it, and carry away the sacred vessels to Babylon (these were the same vessels Belshazzar brought out in his drunken feast). God allowed the people to be carried into captivity for seventy years. At the end of the seventy years, the seventy weeks of this prophetic time commenced. God had King Cyrus issue a decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

The prophecy in Isaiah is very explicit, naming out about 150 years before the birth of Cyrus that Cyrus was to be the agent whom God was going to use to bring it to pass and telling what would occur. Did it occur? Ezra 1:1-3 states: "Now in the first year [just as soon as he took power] of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me [God laid it on his heart in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy] to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem." Here we read that the prophecy was fulfilled.

Did Cyrus send forth a commandment? Ezra 4:3 says, "But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us." Here is the commandment that Daniel 9:25 speaks of when it says, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem."

Cyrus, king of Persia, issued the command that Ezra 4:3 declared. When did this take place? According to the Anstey-Mauro Chronological System, it was 457 B.C. Our lesson text speaks of "the commandment to restore" in verse 25 in the King James Version. However, the Hebrew word for *restore* is the word *shuwb*, which means "to return from exile." That was exactly what they did. Ezra 2:1, after the command was given, declares, "Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city." They did exactly what the prophecy said. It said that it was a commandment to restore, or the Hebrew says, "to return from exile." They came out of captivity at the command issued by Cyrus in 457 B.C.

Part Two

The Sixty-Nine Weeks

In Daniel 9:25 we find three segments to this prophetic time symbol. It reads, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment [Cyrus issued the command in 457 B.C.] to restore [or to return from exile] and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks [that is the first segment of the time figure], and threescore and two weeks [that is the second segment of the time figure; the third segment is in verse 27 when he speaks of the one week]: seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

We find that it is segmented into three portions. First, verse 25 speaks of the seven weeks (remember that seven days are in a week; seven times seven is forty-nine, which equals forty-nine years). This was the period of the first time segment in verse 25. This was the time from Daniel's day in 457 B.C. to Malachi's day in 408 B.C. when they built again in troublous times, as verse 25 declares. Were they in troublous times?

Ezra 4:4 tells us, "Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building." It was indeed a troublous time, so troublous that, according to Nehemiah's writings in Nehemiah, Chapter 4, they had to work with an implement of building in one hand and an implement of warfare in the other.

Nehemiah 4:16-18 reads: "And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded." That was the era of time from when this commandment went forth (when Cyrus issued it in 457 B.C. until Malachi in 408 B.C.), and after these forty-nine years the building was done.

When literal Jerusalem was being built again in troublous times, we find that this was the fulfillment of that seven weeks. Verse 25 speaks of "threescore and two weeks." Notice that no descriptive phrases are surrounding it. That lets us know that nothing occurred in that period of time. A score equals twenty, and threescore equals sixty; therefore, threescore and two equals sixty-two weeks. This was the segment that comes up to the time of Messiah the Prince.

During the sixty-two prophetic weeks, there was no prophetic activity. Sixty-two times seven is equal to four hundred thirty-four years. This was the four hundred thirty-four years of silence from Malachi the Prophet in 408 B.C. until John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ and He received His anointing in A.D. 26.

It was the four hundred thirty-four years, between Malachi and John the Baptist, when man did not hear from God. Some refer to it as "the intertestamental period." During that time, many spurious books were written, such as First and Second Maccabee and others that false religion uses for doctrine. In II Maccabee 12:44-45 you will find recorded teachings concerning offering prayers for the dead, from which Roman Catholicism has derived their doctrine. It was derived from an era of darkness, when man did not hear from God in a public forum.

This sixty-two prophetic weeks gets us from Malachi the Prophet to the baptism and anointing of Jesus Christ in A.D. 26. Every Bible scholar admits that it was not until A.D. 500 when they started calculating B.C., or *Before Christ*, and A.D., or *Anno Domini*, meaning *in the year of our Lord*. When they started calculating the distinction between B.C. and A.D. in A.D. 500, they held B.C. four years too long; so in A.D. 26 Christ was actually thirty years old.

Now, we have gone (in verse 25) through the "seven weeks," or the forty-nine years, from 457 B.C. when the commandment was issued to 408 B.C., forty-nine years later when the temple and Jerusalem had been rebuilt. Then, verse 25 speaks of "threescore and two weeks," or four hundred thirty-four years, from Malachi to Messiah the Prince. If you add sixty-two weeks, or the four hundred thirty-four years and the forty-nine years, you have a total of four hundred eighty-three years or from 457 B.C. to A.D. 26, where you now have sixty-nine weeks.

Most Bible scholars, even sectarian teachers, will concur up to this point. They will concur with the sixty-nine weeks. The point of great contention is what followed the sixty-nine weeks, the seventieth week.

Part Three

The Seventieth Week

Most religious advocates will agree with the time reckoning up to this point; however, the confusion arises concerning what occurred at the conclusion of the sixty-nine weeks. What followed the sixty-ninth

week? According to dispensational teachers, the seventieth week has not occurred yet. The noted dispensationalist H. A. Ironside said this: "These things were not fulfilled because Israel did not accept the Messiah, and so God postponed the seventieth week until a future time. Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, we have a great parentheses, which has now lasted over nineteen hundred years. The seventieth week has been postponed by God Himself. The moment Messiah died on the Cross, the prophetic clock stopped. There has not been a tick upon that clock for nineteen centuries."

Let us examine the Scripture to see if that idea is accurate. Verse 26 states, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." Now, when Christ made His First Advent.

think for a moment. What is after the threescore and two weeks? We found in verse 25 the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, were from 457 B.C. to 408 B.C. Immediately following the seven weeks were sixty-two weeks, or four hundred thirty-four years, in direct chronological succession.

Notice that there were the seven weeks and then the sixty-two weeks. The sixty-two weeks were after the seven, so it was actually after sixty-nine weeks. After the sixty-ninth week, Messiah was cut off. What was after the sixty-ninth week? It was the seventieth week. Had the seventieth week been postponed and not arrived yet, then Messiah could not have been cut off. I hope that you can see the folly of dispensationalists' false teachings.

Our lesson text states, "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." I repeat, had the seventieth week not come, then Christ could not have been cut off. Had He not been cut off, then He could not have died for man's sins. Had He not died for man's sins, then we could not have salvation. No doubt, that is the reason those in sectarian religion still live in sin.

Let us examine the Scripture in Isaiah, Chapter 53, that speaks of the atonement. Verse 8 says, "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living." Bear in mind that nothing takes God by surprise. Isaiah 46:10 lets us know that He knows the end from the beginning. Psalm 119:89 reads, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." He knew from the council halls of eternity past what John 1:11 would say: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

How can we be certain that this seventieth week has occurred? Let us consider what the Scripture says occurred in the seventieth week. Verse 27 tells us, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week." The word "he" is a pronoun. Dispensational teachers say this "he" is the antichrist. They go back to verse 26 and say that "he" refers to the entire passage. Verse 27 says "he," and in verse 25 is the antecedent, "Messiah the Prince." In other words, verse 25 is saying, "Messiah the Prince shall confirm." Dispensational teachers use this verse to say that an antichrist will make and break a covenant. Contrariwise, the word "confirm" in no way suggests any making or breaking of a covenant. The word *confirm* in the Hebrew is the word *gabar*, which means "prevail"; it is never translated "make" or "break."

What did the Messiah come to do? Verse 24 describes six things that occurred to confirm the new covenant: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression" This was the first thing that occurred. Literally this phrase is "to finish transgression." Did Jesus do this? When He yielded up the Ghost in John 19:30, He said, "It is finished." What was finished? Isaiah 53:5 says, "But he was wounded for our transgressions." Hebrews 9:15 reads, ". . . by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions" Christ came in His First Advent to finish transgressions.

The second thing mentioned that occurred in verse 24 was "to make an end of sins." Christ did this in His First Advent. First John 3:5 says that "he was manifested to take away our sins." First John 3:8 reads,

"He that committeth sin is of the devil; . . . For this purpose [for sin] the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The work of the devil is sin. Christ came to make an end of sin.

The third thing that occurred in verse 24 was "to make reconciliation for iniquity." The word used for *reconciliation* is the same word used in the Book of Leviticus, where it is rendered "to make atonement." Surely Christ came in His First Advent to make atonement. It is a present reality. The latter part of Hebrews 2:17 says that He came "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Second Corinthians 5:19 states that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Titus 2:14 tells us that He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." Did Christ make reconciliation for iniquity? Certainly so.

The fourth thing that occurred in verse 24 was that Christ came "to bring in everlasting righteousness." Second Corinthians 5:21 declares, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Christ came to bring everlasting righteousness. Each thing that Daniel 9:24 says would occur took place by the work of Jesus Christ in His First Advent.

The fifth thing that occurred in verse 24 was that Christ came "to seal up the vision and prophecy." The phrase "to seal" is derived from the ancient custom of attaching a seal to a document to show that it was genuine. Christ sealed Old Testament prophecy by fulfilling it and then by shedding His blood and yielding up the Ghost in direct fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy. He sealed it with His blood.

The sixth thing that occurred in verse 24 was "to anoint the most Holy." Religionists take that and immediately think of an Old Testament tabernacle, or the Old Testament Jerusalem. On the contrary, "to anoint the most Holy" does not refer to a place, but rather a person, and that person is Jesus Christ. Luke 1:35 states, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." What is the "most Holy?" No one is more holy than Jesus Christ. Hebrews 1:3 tells us that He is the express image of God's person. Was this "most Holy" anointed? Acts 10:38 says, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power."

In Daniel 9:27 we see a seventh confirmation of the new covenant. Why are there seven confirmations of the new covenant? Because it is a perfect and complete covenant. Again, verse 27 reads, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [seven years]: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease . . ." What is the midst of the week? Since each day represents a year, and there are seven days in a week, it is talking about seven years. Since a week is seven years, the midst of a week would be three and one-half years, and Christ was crucified after three and one-half years of public ministry. He was cut off in the midst of the week.

When the Scripture says "he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease," what is it talking about? The Old Testament sacrifices and oblations ended when Christ, our Sacrifice, offered Himself once and for all. No more sacrifices or oblations were needed; they ceased for time and eternity.

Hebrews 9:26 says, "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Christ became our sin offering. Hebrews 10:12 reads, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Right in the midst of the week, the sacrifices and the oblations, the old Levitical ordinances, ceased because there was no longer a need for them, since Jesus, the perfect Sacrifice, had been cut off in the midst of the week.

When we add three and one-half to A.D. 26, when Jesus was anointed while He was being baptized of John, that takes us up to A.D. 29 and one half. Then what occurred? Daniel 9:27 says, "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [or seven years]." When Christ first came, John 1:11 tells us that "He came to his own." He came to the Jewish nation first. Daniel 9:27 says, "And he shall confirm the covenant

with many." Of whom was He speaking in this prophecy? Verse 24 tells us, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." Those with whom He was going to confirm the covenant for the first seven years were His people.

Daniel 9:20 states, "And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel." Daniel was speaking of old Israel. Christ was going to confirm the covenant with His people first. He said in Matthew 15:24, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Even when the morning-time brethren began to preach, it says in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first."

The morning-time brethren were duty bound and obligated to go to the Jew first, but something occurred. We read in Acts 13:45-46: "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [the Jews]: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." The Jewish people refused God's offer of mercy. With the saving of Saul (the Apostle Paul) in A.D. 33, who became the Apostle of the Gentiles, the seventy weeks (or the four hundred ninety years) ended, and old Israel was cut off.

In the Book of Acts, up to Chapter 9, the Apostles had predominantly worked among the Jews. It was not until Chapter 10 that we read of Peter going to Cornelius' house. That is the first recorded account of a Gentile being approached. In Acts, Chapter 9, we have the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. In the commission from the Lord that Ananias received concerning Saul, he was told in Acts 9:15, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles." Paul's call was to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

When Paul saw Christ on the Damascus Road and went to the street called Strait, Ananias prayed and Saul got a real experience of salvation and was called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. That was in A.D. 33, four hundred ninety years after Cyrus issued the commandment in 457 B.C. When you add 457 B.C. and A.D. 33, you get a total of four hundred ninety years; and it ended in A.D. 33 with the conversion of Saul, who became the Apostle Paul. According to Romans 11:13, Paul said, "I am the apostle of the Gentiles." He told them in Acts, Chapter 13, that seeing they judged themselves unworthy, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Then Israel was cut off. The salvation of the Apostle Paul and the severing of old Israel fulfilled, or concluded, the seventieth week.

Part Four

The Position of Old Israel

What happened to old Israel after they were cut off? Daniel 9:26 says, ". . . the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." This is not a reference to some supposed antichrist coming and making a covenant with the Jews and then breaking it and bringing in a tribulation period. Verse 27 states, ". . . for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate."

Jesus referred to this abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15 when He said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)."

Luke made it a little clearer in Luke 21:20 when he wrote, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." When did this occur and of what desolation was he speaking? Daniel 9:27 reads, ". . . for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate." It was

when verse 26 says "the prince . . . shall come." This is a different prince than the Messiah. When Daniel wrote of "Messiah the Prince" in verse 25, the Scripture has a capital P; however, when referring to Titus, the Scripture has a lower case p. Prince Titus and the Roman armies came in A.D. 70 and made Jerusalem a desolate place.

What happened to old Israel? Jesus said in Matthew 23:38, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Our lesson text says in verse 27, ". . . he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation [or the end of the world]." Israel will never again be a favored people as a literal seed. Old Israel has forever been cut off as a people, because of their rejection of the Messiah, which means "the anointed One."

Jesus told literal Israel in Matthew 21:43 very clearly, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Of what nation was He speaking? John the Baptizer said in Matthew 3:7-8: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." If the literal Jews get in the Kingdom of God today, they must get in the same way every one else does: they must bring forth fruits for repentance. God has taken it away from old literal lineage and has given it to a nation bringing forth the fruits of repentance. A transition occurred when the new covenant was implemented, and it went from a literal nation with a literal birth to a spiritual nation with a spiritual birth. Matthew 21:43 says, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [the literal Jews], and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." What are the fruits? They are the fruits of repentance.

What is the nation? It was a new nation. Galatians 6:15-16 says: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule [being a new creature], peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." The New Testament Israel of God is made up of new creatures, and as many as walk according to this rule are new creatures.

Let us study to learn where the word *Israel* originated. In Genesis, Chapter 32, when Jacob wrestled with Christ and a conversion took place, his name was changed from Jacob (which means "supplanter or trickster") to Israel) which means "power with God or prevailed with God"). Everyone who is a new creature has prevailed with God. When individuals become new creatures, they walk according to a new rule, they have power with God, and they are the New Testament Israel of God. Romans 2:28-29 states: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

When Jesus Christ came, a transition took place. The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that "old things are passed away." He was actually speaking of the Old Testament economy, of how the Old Testament economy passed away and a new and living way came in, a better covenant with a better sacrifice, with better promises. That was the new covenant of which he was speaking.

Our lesson text is not speaking of an antichrist, the reestablishment of Jewish sacrifices, or a tribulation period as dispensationalists suppose. It rather serves as a time line to give clear understanding of when old Israel came to their end as a favored people, or the people of God.

There are other indicators of that change. One other indicator is Gabriel. He appeared at the beginning of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:21, which states, "Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel" Gabriel came to give Daniel the vision, to give him the prophecy that the seventy weeks, or the four hundred ninety years were going to commence. We read in Luke 1:19, when Zacharias was in the temple, "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am

sent to speak unto thee." He spoke to him about the birth of John the Baptist, which was the herald to announce the coming of the Messiah and the ushering in of the seventieth week. Gabriel appeared at the beginning, or the commencement, of the seventy weeks, and he again appeared toward the end when the seventieth week was ready to commence.

The attributes spoken of throughout this prophecy are not something for some future point in time, but they are realities that Jesus Christ came to bring and did bring in His First Advent. Old Israel as a people would not receive those. Because Christ came to His own and His own received Him not, old Israel was broken off and a new branch was grafted in. That new branch is a nation made up of people who are new creatures, who walk according to this rule. Now there is a new nation, a new Israel. Those whom Galatians 6:15 says are new creatures can enjoy the work wrought by our perfect Sacrifice and enjoy the seven perfect attributes of the plan of atonement that He brought in His First Advent. (At the conclusion of this chapter, you will find a chronological table putting some of the prophetic events we have studied in Daniel, Chapter 7, in chronological sequence.)

Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." What does truth free you from? The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanses* us from all sin, but thank God, truth will set you free from error, or false teachings. You can have an understanding so that you can enjoy the benefits of what Jesus came to bring as a present reality. You do not have to be duped by religious teachers who teach that you cannot enjoy them, because they are here for you now. With the understanding of truth, you will no longer look for Old Testament worldly sanctuaries as Hebrews, Chapter 9, talks about. You will no longer seek literal temples and tabernacles, but you will see a spiritual Israel and new creatures walking according to a new rule, living and walking in newness of life. This is the reality and experience that the prophecy pointed to that would be realized with the Advent of the Messiah, and thank God, we are privileged to enjoy it today.

- CHRONOLOGICAL TIME SEQUENCES -

DAN. 7:4	DAN. 7:5	DAN. 7:6	DAN. 7:7	DAN. 2:34	DAN. 7:13	DAN. 7:10	DAN. 7:7	LUKE. 21:24	DAN. 7:8	DAN. 7:8	DAN. 7:21-22
BABYLON	NEO-PERSIAN	GABRIEL	PAGAN ROME	STONE CAME	ASCENSION OF JESUS		"STAMPED HIS OWN FEET WITH THE FEET OF THE BEASTS"	JEERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES - DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM	"THE ANGELS" THE DECAY AND DIVISION OF THE PAGAN ROMAN EMPIRE	"ANOTHER LITTLE HORN AFTER THEM" PAPALISM	"PREVAILED UNTIL" 16 th CENTURY REFORMATION
526 B.C.	459 B.C.	407 B.C.	221 B.C.	4 B.C.	A.D. 33	A.D. 33	A.D. 70	A.D. 70	A.D. 270	A.D. 270	A.D. 1530



1530
- 270
1,260 YEARS
Which equals "Time, Time
& The Dividing of Times"
DAN. 7:25, REVI. 12:6-14

MAKE PERSONAL NOTES HERE:

CHAPTER FIVE

The Truth Concerning the One Thousand Year Reign

Revelation 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Part One

The Angel, the Key, and the Chain

This passage of Scripture is one of the most misapplied, misconstrued texts of the entire Book of Revelation. By the help of God, we want to rightly divide the Word and study the truth concerning the one thousand year reign.

Many truths are incorporated in these verses, but we want to identify who the writer was speaking of and what actually occurred in this passage. The latter portion of verse 4 says that "*they* lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." We must identify who "they" are and see by the Bible when this thousand years actually occurred.

Those of the dispensational persuasion teach that this is yet a future event. The noted dispensational writer, the late Dr. John R. Rice, in his commentary on the Book of Revelation commented on this passage and stated, "The beginning of the kingdom age, the millennial reign of Christ on earth" The word *millennium* does not appear anywhere in the Scriptures. When we speak of dispensational advocates, we refer to them in that manner because they are of the persuasion that human history is divided into seven dispensations and that we are in the sixth dispensation, the church age, that it will be followed by the seventh dispensation, which they teach is the kingdom age. However, Jesus clearly stated in Luke 16:16, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth *into* it." You certainly cannot press into something that does not exist. Our Scripture text is the seed bed for the teaching of this supposed one thousand year millennial reign. Let us examine these verses by the help of God to see what truth is conveyed in these verses.

In the Book of Revelation we must recognize that the nature of the Revelation language is not as many men construe it to be. Many read it merely at face value. Revelation 1:1 declares, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it." This lets you know the manner in which He conveys these truths: he said they are *signified*. The word *signified* means "revealed by signs." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines the word *sign* as "a symbol." Therefore, the nature of the language of the Revelation is symbolic.

Let us look at our Scripture text and the symbols employed there to see what they actually convey. The Book of the Revelation is comprised of seven distinct series, and each series begins at the inception of the Gospel Day and goes through to the consummation. Revelation, Chapter 1, is predominantly an introductory chapter. Chapters 2 and 3 are the letter series, which lists the seven congregations in Asia Minor by name, with each of the names and congregations representing a period of this Gospel Day.

In Chapter 4 the scene changes. Chapters 4 and 5 are an introduction to the seal series, and the seals commence in Revelation, Chapter 6. There are also other series through the Revelation. Revelation, Chapter 20, begins the sixth series. This chapter is an entire series in itself. How do we know that? The preceding chapter closes with the end of time.

Revelation 19:20 reads, "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." This verse takes us to the end of time. Revelation, Chapter 20, commences a new series; therefore, its time setting is the beginning of the Gospel Day. The last verse of the chapter (verse 15) reads, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." This takes us to the close of the Gospel dispensation.

Verse 1 says, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven." Remember, these are symbolic representations. These angels are not celestial beings. The word *angel* in the original Greek is the word *aggelos*, which means "a messenger" or a symbol of a minister or a ministry. Revelation 1:20 says, "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels [messengers or ministers] of the seven churches [or the Greek says *congregations*]."

Those *angels* connote messengers delivering a divine message. We can see that by reading Galatians 4:13-14, where the Apostle Paul declared: "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God." What did he do? Verse 13 tells us he preached the Gospel to them.

Revelation 22:8-9 states: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God." That angel was not a celestial being. He was a divine agent employed to convey a message from God to man. When the Scripture says that the angel came down from Heaven, the angel is a picture of a ministry. Verse 1 says, ". . . an angel come down from heaven." This ministry is a divinely-called ministry.

Look at the calling of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:1 where he said, "Paul, *called* to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God." In Galatians 1:1 he wrote, "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ." Paul received a divine call, but where did this divine call come from? It came from Jesus Christ. We can see this call described in Acts 9:3 when Paul was on the road to Damascus: "And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven." Verse 15 tells us, "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

Our Scripture text says in verse 1, "I saw an angel come down from heaven." This lets us know that the call to declare and deliver that message (the call to the ministry) was a heavenly call. It came down from God out of Heaven. Notice that he still had power. This coming down is not referring to a fall, or an apostasy, because when he came down he still had power. It was denoting a divine call from Heaven.

Notice what this angel was equipped with when he received the call. Again, verse 1 of the Scripture lesson reads, "And I saw an angel [a messenger or a minister] come down from heaven [he received a divine call

that came from Heaven, and he was automatically equipped with something], having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand." When the call came, he was equipped with what verse 1 denotes as "the key and a great chain."

What are these symbolic of? In Matthew 16:19 Jesus declared, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Jesus spoke of "the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Notice that the word *keys* is used in Matthew's Gospel in the plural. When the plural is employed without a specific number attached to it, it represents two. What are the two keys given to the ministry that enables them to "bind" as Matthew 16:19 says, or as Revelation 20:2 says "bound him"? The two keys are the Word and the Spirit.

In our Scripture text in verse 1, what does it symbolize when the word *key* (singular) is employed? In Luke 11:52 Jesus said, "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge." Where does knowledge come from? Jeremiah gave a prophetic utterance in Jeremiah 3:15. He said, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Where does the ministry get this knowledge and what is the source of the knowledge with which they feed the saints? What is the charge to the ministry? In 2 Timothy 4:2 the charge is to "preach the word." Knowledge is derived from the Word. It is the Word that pastors feed the saints, and the Word is this key of knowledge.

We can see it illustrated in Revelation 3:7, which says, "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." What is the key of David? Verse 8 reads, "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word." The key that opens the door is the Word, and it is the Word that opens men's understanding and gives them knowledge concerning truth. The key of the Word opens and shuts; however, it takes more than the Word to overcome the power of the enemy.

In Revelation 9:1 we see a fallen ministry, and they had the key: "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth [the stars are the messengers or the ministers]: And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the *key* of the bottomless pit."

Without the other key, or the chain, all they did was let the forces of the enemy out. They had no power to bind. Revelation 9:3 states, "And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth." The key without the chain loosed the power of the enemy in a greater way. A false ministry today is trying to preach the Bible without the Spirit of God, and it is causing more confusion and letting more of the devil loose. Verse 1 of our Scripture lesson says that this angel had both the key and a great chain. I repeat, without the chain they merely let the forces of the enemy out.

What is the great chain? Stop and consider where the power to bind resides. Is it merely in the Word? No, or that fallen angel could have bound rather than to have turned things loose. In 1 Corinthians 2:4 Paul said, "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The power to bind is in the Spirit.

In Matthew 12:28-29 Jesus said: "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?" What was He talking about? Who binds the strong man in verse 29? In verse 28 He let us know that the power to bind is through the Spirit of God.

In the New Testament we are not ministers of only the letter. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 3:6, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." We are able ministers of the New Testament because we are ministers of the Spirit. The ministry we see portrayed in Revelation 20:1 had both the key and a great chain, or in other words, both the Word and the Spirit. That is still the evidence of a true God-called ministry.

Part Two

The Binding of the Dragon

What did the angel do once he was equipped? Verse 2 of our Scripture lesson says, "And he laid hold on the dragon." This is the same character, or the same dragon, that we are introduced to in Revelation 12:3, which states, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." What is this great red dragon that we see portrayed? Remember that we are dealing in symbolic expressions. Revelation 20:2 reads, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan." Revelation 12:9 says, "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan."

Those who are of the literal persuasion run off with the thought that this great red dragon must be Satan personified, but you need to remember that we are dealing with symbolic expressions. This dragon is not the devil personified. In both texts the Emphatic Greek *Diaglott* renders it as an accuser and an adversary. These words are not used to portray the devil personally, but they are symbolic of a system through which the enemy worked.

Let us look at other places where these words are used. We read in John 6:70, "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" The next verse says that "He spake of Judas Iscariot." The word *devil* in this verse is the same word employed in the Revelation, and the Greek renders the word "accuser." What was Judas Iscariot? He was an accuser, or a betrayer, not the devil personified. Judas Iscariot was being used as an accuser, or a betrayer, by the enemy.

Matthew 16:23 states, "But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan." This was the same person to whom Jesus said in verse 17, "Blessed art thou," and it was in the same setting. Was Peter personally Satan? Certainly not. The Greek word is "adversary." Therefore, Jesus was saying, "Get behind Me, you adversary."

What does the dragon in Revelation 20:2 represent? Revelation 12:3 gives some identifying factors: the seven heads and the ten horns. In Isaiah 9:6 the Prophet penned, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." The head is upon "his shoulder," so the head or heads represent government. Rome in its pagan form had seven different heads, or types of government. The horns denote political powers.

Daniel 8:20 reads, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings [or kingdoms] of Media and Persia." These horns represent political powers. Rome was comprised of ten minor political entities. This dragon symbolizes the pagan Roman Empire. In fact, on the shields that the Roman soldiers bore was the insignia of a great red dragon. Pagan Rome was the first opposing force to the morning-time church.

When the church came on the scene on the Day of Pentecost, Revelation 12:1 says, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." This describes the morning-time church in her pristine glory. As soon as she came on the scene, Revelation 12:3 says "there appeared another wonder." There was an opposing force.

Revelation 12:7 tells us there was war. The war was between Michael (Christ) and His angels (His ministry) and the dragon (paganism) and the teachers of false paganistic religion. Revelation 12:11 says that

"they overcame him." In our lesson text in Revelation, Chapter 20, we can see how they overcame him. They overcame him with the key and the chain—the Word and Spirit.

How could the dragon be bound? Revelation 20:2-3 reads: "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan [or accuser and adversary], and bound him a thousand years And cast him into the bottomless pit." That is not as literalists describe. We are not going to take a log chain and chain the devil to the bottom of a bottomless pit. In Mark, Chapter 5, you can read of a man named Legion who had demons in him. Verse 3 tells us that "no man could bind him, no, not with chains." Now, if men could not bind a man possessed of the devil, how could you begin to bind the devil himself with a literal chain? Again, we are dealing in figurative expressions.

When the Scripture speaks of the bottomless pit, it means that it has no foundation. Through the preaching of the Word under the anointing of the Spirit, the ministry showed people that the paganistic religions of Rome had no basis in truth and no Bible foundation for men or organizations to build their lives upon. First Corinthians 3:11 declares, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ is the only acceptable foundation.

When the morning-time brethren came forth in A.D. 33 and began preaching God's eternal Word under the unction of the Spirit of God, they exposed the fact that paganistic religion had no Bible foundation. In Acts, Chapter 19, we can see how this dragon was cast down into the bottomless pit, or shown as not having any biblical base of truth. Acts 19:18-20 says: "And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed." They prevailed because of the Word preached under the unction of the Spirit, and the key and the chain revealed that the false system had no Bible foundation and bound it up.

Again, Revelation 20:2-3 reads: "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan [the accuser and adversary], and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more."

What is this seal? Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:13, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, [Paul was writing to the Ephesians, the same people who were in the pagan stronghold of the goddess Diana, a multiple-breasted black idol that supposedly dropped down from Jupiter (Acts 19:35), which they worshiped and revered. When truth came in, the worship of the goddess Diana was shown to be false and the Ephesians trusted and believed after they heard the Word of Truth.] The gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

How did they set a seal? The seal is the Holy Spirit. As long as the people had the seal (the Holy Spirit) to give them understanding concerning the falsity of paganism, he stayed bound and could deceive them no longer.

Let us look at this thousand years in Revelation 20:2. It reads, "And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." Although the dragon was bound, the enemy was very much loose. When was this thousand years verse 2 speaks of? It had to be subsequent to the time of the dragon, or pagan Rome, because the day of pagan Rome's free operation had passed. It had to succeed pagan Rome; in other words, it had to come in chronological succession to pagan Rome, because pagan Rome had been bound and cast into the bottomless pit and had a seal set upon him so that he should deceive the nations no more. Therefore, it must be a period of time subsequent to the era of pagan Rome.

What succeeded pagan Rome? In Revelation, Chapter 12, we saw a description of the dragon, the warfare that commenced, and the overcoming of that dragon in Revelation 12:11. In direct succession, in Revelation, Chapter 13, we see what succeeded the dragon. Revelation 13:1 tells us, "And I stood upon the

sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." Here we see several indicators. First, we see the same identifying factors: the seven heads of government and the ten horns, or the ten minor kingdoms from which it derived its political power. It stands as an identifying factor and lets us know that we are dealing with something of a Roman nature, but notice that the crowns moved. The crowns were on the heads in its pagan form (Revelation 12:3), but in Revelation 13:1 the crowns were moved to the horns, or the ten minor kingdoms. Thus, the centralized power of the Imperial Caesars had been broken. The power of paganism was broken and replaced by another type of power.

This power is a system best identified by a man. Revelation 13:18 tells us, "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; [The number of the beast is the number of a man. What is that number?] and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

Every student of history knows that before they devised numerical systems (in approximately A.D. 1000), alphabetical systems doubled as numerical systems. The Romans used a system that we call Roman numerals. On the miter of the popes of Rome is a Latin inscription, "Vicarius Filii Dei," which means, "Vicar of the Son of God." If you give a numerical expression to that, you come up with a numerical expression of 666.

V	5	U	5	I	1
I	1	S	0	D	500
C	100	F	0	E	0
A	0	I	1	I	1
R	0	L	50		
I	1	I	1	Total	666

This lets us know that the number of that man reveals to us who that beast is. The man who bears that inscription and number is the man who fills the office of the popes of Rome, letting us know that this beast that has a Roman nature is Roman Catholicism, or papalism.

Notice the time frame for this beast. Revelation 13:5 states, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months." Again, we are dealing in symbolic, or prophetic, time. If you take forty and two months, with thirty days to a Jewish calendar month, you get 1260 days. According to prophetic time reckoning given in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6, where it says, "I have appointed thee each day for a year," a day represents a year. Therefore, you have 42 months, and 42 times 30 days to a Jewish calendar month is 1260 days, each day for a year equals 1260 years. If you take from A.D. 270, when this system began to be formed, until A.D. 1530, when the first Protestant sect was organized, and subtract 270 from 1530, you get 1260 years, or the period in its entirety during which this beast had sway and rule.

How do we know that the dates are accurate? *Wickersham's The History of the Church* tells us that the decline and division of the Roman Empire occurred in A.D. 270. Also, in A.D. 1530 the first Protestant articles of faith were drawn up at the Diet of Augsburg in Augsburg, Germany, creating the first Protestant sect. As you can see, both dates are historically verifiable. Papal Rome began to rise in A.D. 270.

Part Three

Identifying the Thousand Year Reign

When was this one thousand year period. Previously, we found it was a period after the dragon (paganism) was bound. So, what about the thousand years spoken of in Revelation 20:2? The rule of Catholicism ended in A.D. 1530 with the rise of Protestantism. Our Scripture lesson speaks of a thousand years. When we go back a thousand years from that date, we arrive at A.D. 530.

Did something occur in A.D. 530? *Fisher's History of the Christian Church*, page 98, says this: "It was around two hundred years after Constantine, the first supposed Christian Emperor of the Roman Empire, that paganism had vanished." Constantine's reign was A.D. 322 to A.D. 330. Constantine's reign ended in A.D. 330, and paganism vanished about 200 years after Constantine. If you add 200 years to 330, it brings you right up to A.D. 530, when paganism had vanished. This is just what our lesson text says: the dragon was bound and cast into the bottomless pit.

Fisher's History of the Christian Church, page 138, reads, "In A.D. 530 the decisions of the many synods was approved by the Roman Bishop Boniface II." In A.D. 530 paganism had vanished. It was, as our Scripture lesson states in verse 2, "cast into the bottomless pit." The Roman Bishop Boniface II was regarded as the first universal Bishop, thus the date A.D. 530.

The thousand years spoken of in Revelation 20:2 is not a time symbol. You cannot use years to symbolize years. Any time less than a year can be used as a symbol: you can use days, weeks, and months, but you cannot use a year to symbolize a year, so this is not a time symbol. The thousand years in verse 2 is actually a thousand years of time, and it was that period of papalism from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530.

The only place where the word *years* in the plural appears in the Revelation is in Chapter 20. Nowhere is the word *years* employed in the Revelation other than in this chapter, and it is used six times: in verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Just as the number seven is the biblical number that represents perfection, the number six represents imperfection. This dark night of papal rule was the most imperfect era to which the church had been subjected.

The last phrase of Revelation 20:4 says, ". . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Who are *they*? The earlier portion of verse 4 gives insight: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus."

When you read of "the souls of them that were beheaded," immediately one thinks of the martyrs, but remember that this is symbolic. Who are these souls? The souls do not always represent only the inner portion of man. We read in Genesis 12:5, "And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan." The word *souls* often refers to people.

If "they" were disembodied souls, their reign would not be a thousand years; it would be eternal. This text is speaking of a people "who lived and reigned." They were as Romans 6:11 says: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." They were *alive* unto God.

Revelation 20:6 says they had experienced the first resurrection, which is the one that makes you blessed and holy: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Nothing in any literal resurrection changes one's spiritual state, but this resurrection made the participants blessed and holy. What type of resurrection was it? Ephesians 2:1 tells us, "And you hath he quickened [or made

alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins." These are they who had a spiritual resurrection. They were alive unto God; they lived and reigned.

What does it mean when it says they were beheaded? Remember, this is symbolic. Who is ordained to be the head of the saints, or the head of the church? Colossians 1:18 says, "And he [the antecedent of *he* is found in verse 13: 'his dear Son'] is the head of the body, the church." Christ is the Head of the church. During this time from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530 (the thousand years), the prevailing condition was according to verse 4: they were beheaded, or cut off from the Head; in other words, Christ was not allowed to be the head during this dark papal night.

Who was regarded as the head of the church during this period? *Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, page 23, says, "Who is the visible head of the church? Our holy father, the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the vicar of Christ on earth and the visible head of the church." This is how those saints were beheaded: the Headship of Christ was denied during this period of time. There was no public message and no visible church during this dark age. The church in this era was in the catacombs and caves, hidden from public view. They lived and died in catacombs and caves.

No doubt, you have heard the saying, "He has found his niche." Do you know how that saying developed? When one died, the saints made a little place in the side of the cave's wall, which they called a *niche*, and that is where they buried that one. They lived and died underground in the catacombs and caves. When a saint died, he or she was buried in a niche.

Revelation 12:6 says, "And the woman [who we know is the church spoken of in verse 1] fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." In the same 1260 years, from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530, she had to be hidden. Who fed the church during this period of seclusion? Revelation 11:3 states, "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days." This same period of time, from A.D. 270 to A.D. 1530, the Word and the Spirit kept these people alive so they could live and reign with Christ.

Someone may say, "I don't think they had anyone living and reigning during that period." Who were the martyrs? They were the people who had victory. Revelation 11:3 mentions the two witnesses. Who are the two witnesses? Jesus let people know in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness." What is one of the witnesses? The Gospel, or the Word. What is the other witness? Hebrews 10:15 tells us, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness." The two witnesses who fed the church were the Word and the Spirit.

Though the church was underground in catacombs and caves, Revelation 20:6 says, "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign." Right in the midst of this terrible time in history, in the midst of this dark age, there was still a people who had victory.

Revelation 1:5-6 reads: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests." Those who had been washed by His blood and saved are the ones who are the kings and the priests. Revelation 5:10 states, "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 20:6 says, "And [they] shall reign with him." Did they? In Romans 5:17 the Apostle Paul said, "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 2:14, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

Even in this time known as the Dark Ages, God still had a victorious people. Their understanding might have been meager, but Titus 2:11-12 teaches: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." They had enough understanding from the two witnesses (the Word and Spirit) that God preserved a remnant in the catacombs and caves, and they lived and reigned with Christ during this thousand years, from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530.

Though the prevailing conditions were that they lived in a day when the headship of Christ was denied and discarded, verse 4 says they were on thrones. They were still reigning; in other words, they still had victory in their hearts and lives. God is always faithful. I trust that you can see that this passage has nothing to do with some future supposed millennial reign, but rather portrays the victory of the saints and the faithfulness of God during a period of time of the Gospel Day known as the Dark Ages, from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530.

We have endeavored to show the falsity of this false dispensational teaching called the millennium. Dispensational teachers want to take this text and put it out into the future, but the Scriptures are very clear. God is not the author of confusion, and we do not need to be in confusion concerning these truths. I trust that you can see from the historic scheme when this actually occurred and that you can see the faithfulness of God to His people in every era of time. He was faithful to a people in those eras that suffered such great things, and thank God, He has an ample amount of grace and strength for us to triumph in the period of time in which we live.

CHAPTER SIX

What Does the Bible Teach About the Rapture?

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Part One

What Is the Rapture?

Anyone exposed to religious teaching has been exposed to the terminology of "the rapture." The Scripture text referenced above is one frequently employed by advocates of this doctrine. This teaching raises several questions such as, What is the rapture? What does it mean? and Is it a Bible teaching? These are questions that we want to address in this chapter.

The word "rapture" does not appear in the Bible. It is a term that was coined by religious teachers. Some attribute its beginning to the Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth century. Those who are studied in that era state that when the reformers of the sixteenth-century reformation began to apply many prophetic Scriptures to the papacy, Rome countered with the development of futuristic interpretations of a host of Scriptures. In this development the term "rapture" was coined.

According to *Webster's New World Dictionary*, the word *rapture* means "a carrying away or being carried away in body or spirit." The common teaching espoused by pre-millennial dispensationalists states that Christ will come "as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2) and steal away the church; they say then there will be a tribulation period, after which Christ will supposedly come again to set up the kingdom and usher in an age of millennial reign. Let us consider some of the supposed proof texts used by advocates of this teaching to see if this is what the Bible teaches.

First, let us consider our Scripture text: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first [not first before unbelievers, but before 'we which are alive']: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the dead in Christ] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." This passage speaks of the Lord descending with a *shout* and with the *trump*. This would hardly seem compatible with a secret stealing away. Also, Acts 20:28 tells us that He "purchased [the church] with his own blood." Why would He need to steal away something that He purchased?

Jesus let us know that when He makes His next Advent into this world, it will be a universally observed event. In Matthew 24:27 Jesus said, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The Scriptures do not teach multiple returns of Christ or multiple resurrections. Acts 24:15 speaks of "a [singular] resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust [occurring at the same time]." The Bible speaks of only one future coming of our Lord. Hebrews 9:28 refers to it by saying, ". . . shall he appear the second time . . ."

The Apostle Peter penned in response to the question, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:4) that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). Again, we read of "a great noise," which is incompatible with the idea of a

secret stealing away. Also, we see that when "the day of the Lord" comes, the same day the Apostle Paul spoke of in 1 Thessalonians 5:2, then "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [verse 16: the dead] in the clouds" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). On that same day "the earth . . . shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). When that day comes, everyone will be taken, not just the saints. Consider Jesus' words in Matthew 24:37-39. In verse 36 Jesus said, "But as the days of Noe were, so shall the coming of the son of man be." Verse 39 says, "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Those in the ark had a far different fate than those who were outside the ark, but "the flood came and took them all away." The same water that was death to many raised those in the ark to safety.

Why did both Paul and Peter speak of the Lord's coming "as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10)? Look at how Jesus used the thought of a "thief." In Matthew 24:43 He said, "But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have *watched*, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up." Jesus referred to a thief in the sense that he comes at an unguarded hour.

He preceded this verse with the words of verse 42, which states, "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." He followed verse 43 with the admonition of verse 44, where He said, "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." We can clearly see that the term "thief" was not referring to illegal activities, but rather He was instructing us to "watch." If you read 1 Thessalonians, Chapters 4 and 5, in continuity, you will see that this is the thought conveyed there. The Apostle Paul said (concerning those who were watching), "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:4).

Some take the prophecy of Zechariah 14:4, where the Prophet penned, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives," as an indication that Christ will come again after "the rapture" and stand upon this earth. However, according to the Scriptures, Christ will never set foot on this earth again. Notice in verse 4 the phrase "in that day." This is a prophetic phrase referring to this Christian dispensation. Acts 1:10-12 lets us know that it was "from the mount called Olivet [or Olives]" that He ascended into Heaven. All the things that the Prophet said would occur in this passage are spiritual realities experienced in this New Testament dispensation.

Part Two

Is the Rapture a Bible Teaching?

Let us examine another Scripture text that advocates of this persuasion use to support their erroneous position. Matthew 24:40-41 states: "Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Do these verses of Scripture not conclusively prove that "the rapture" will occur, stating that some will be taken and others left? We found that the Scriptures teach that Christ is only coming "the second time" (Hebrews 9:28), and when He does, this event will be seen universally (Matthew 24:27). When He comes, there shall be "a resurrection . . . both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15), and then "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up" (1 Thessalonians 4:17). When we all are "in the air," "the earth . . . and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2 Peter 3:10). Second Corinthians 5:10 tells us that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

What was Jesus referring to when He spoke of the "two . . . in the field" and the "Two . . . at the mill"? Those verses should not be taken literally. Why? Because Jesus said, "Then shall *two* be in the field" and

"Two women shall be grinding at the mill." If they were literal, there would be many more than "two." What was Jesus revealing here? The Bible speaks of "the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:3). Christ had a unique ability to reduce things to a very simple level. When He spoke of humanity, He reduced them to two positions: those who are with Him and those who are against Him. Jesus said in Matthew 12:30, ". . . he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." In Matthew 7:18 He spoke of a "good tree" and a "corrupt tree," and in Matthew 25:32-33 He mentioned the "sheep" and the "goats." Jesus was letting us know that at His Second Advent, there will be only two types of people.

Jesus said, ". . . two be in the field." In Matthew 13:38 He told us, "The field is the world." Therefore, He was telling us that regardless of the many positions that people think they can occupy, in His sight there are only two types of people in the world: "he that believeth" and "he that believeth not" (Mark 16:16).

What does the Scripture mean when it says, ". . . the one shall be taken, and the other left"? Jesus was referring to the ultimate disposition of souls that will take place as a consequence of His Second Coming. In Matthew 25:33-34 He stated: ". . . he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The saved are "taken" to their eternal reward. However, to those on "the left hand," He shall say unto them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41). They are not taken into Heaven, but rather they are left to the fate that they have chosen. In Matthew 24:41 He spoke of "Two women . . . grinding at the mill." They ground out meal to make bread. This portrays that at His Second Coming there will be true religion and false religion, both working to get their bread (or their doctrine) to the people. In biblical reality there are only "two women," or two types of religion: "pure" religion and "vain" religion (James 1:26-27). There is only one true church, and all else composes the false church; both will be working right up to the time of Christ's Second Advent.

The doctrine of a supposed rapture is one of many "damnable heresies" (2 Peter 2:1) and "doctrines of devils" (1 Timothy 4:1). Why such strong language? Why is it not just a false doctrine? Why is it "damnable"? It causes people to feel that after the rapture occurs, they will have a second chance. It causes people who want to continue in their life of rejection and sinfulness to feel, "When the rapture comes, I'll know how much time is left, and then I'll get saved." That thinking causes people to rest their salvation on something that will never occur. The Bible says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Dear one, do not put off your salvation. Today is the day of grace. Do not rest your salvation in the teachings of men. I trust that the Spirit of God has revealed the truth to your heart that there will not be any event occurring such as men call the rapture. Do not postpone gaining a real experience of salvation because of the false teachings of men. When Jesus comes again, it will be to "judge the quick [alive] and the dead at his appearing" (2 Timothy 4:1). If you are not saved, won't you be saved now?