

Chapter 1 Commentary on Revelation

Daniel 12 is a prologue to Revelation. It is a prophecy of the end times. Let's take a look at it. I'm using an English translation of the Greek Old Testament, called the Septuagint, since that's what was in use at the time of Christ, and what the Apostles quoted from. It also helps that the Septuagint is in the Public Domain. I also want to note that the Septuagint does NOT have correct numbers a lot of the time, where the Hebrew text does. For example the Hebrew text would say that Seth lived 105 years and begat Enos, but the Septuagint would say that Seth lived 205 years and begot Enos. We don't know why. There are mistakes in the translations as all of the original manuscripts have been lost. Where numbers are concerned, the Hebrew is more reliable. Where the text is concerned, the Septuagint is more reliable. By comparing lots of manuscripts we can weed out what is correct and not. We do know the numbering, which also refers to some dates, in the Hebrew text is correct because things line up chronologically throughout the whole of the Bible. We know the Septuagint is correct in its text because the quotes in the New Testament don't always match up with the Hebrew text but do in the Septuagint. And many references that are in the Old Testament that point to Jesus, and mentioning the "Son" of God, are changed or omitted from the Hebrew text all together. The Hebrew text of our Bibles was copied and copied and copied and copied and the copies we use in our English bibles only date back to about 1,000 AD. Whereas the Septuagint dates back to 250-300 BC, so there is no bias towards Jesus as being the Messiah. All we have to remember is that Satan has been at this for a long time and anything and everything the he can do to trip us up and shake our faith, he will do. Just know that with diligence we can find the truth in all of the lies.

Daniel 12:1 LXX "And at that time Michael the great prince shall stand up, that stands over the children of your people, and there shall be a time of tribulation, such tribulation as has not been from the time that there was a nation on the earth until that time. At that time your people shall be delivered, everyone that is written in the book.

Daniel 12:2 LXX And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproach and everlasting shame.

Daniel 12:3 LXX And the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and the many righteous as the stars forever and ever.

Daniel 12:4 LXX And you, Daniel, close the words, and seal the book to the time of the end; until many are taught, and knowledge is increased."

Daniel 12:5 LXX And I Daniel, saw, and behold, two others stood, on one side of the bank of the river, and the other on the other side of the bank of the river.

Daniel 12:6 LXX And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, who was over the water of the river, "When *will be* the end of the wonders which you have mentioned?"

Daniel 12:7 LXX And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was over the water of the river, and he lifted up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him that lives forever, that *it should be* for a time, times and half a time. When the dispersion is ended, they shall know all these things.

Daniel 12:8 LXX And I heard, but I did not understand. And I said, "O Lord, what *will be* the end of these things?"

Daniel 12:9 LXX And he said, "Go, Daniel; for the words are closed and sealed up till the time of the end.

Daniel 12:10 LXX Many must be tested, and thoroughly whitened, and tried with fire, and sanctified; but the transgressors shall transgress: and none of the transgressors shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

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Daniel 12:11 LXX And from the time of the removal of the perpetual sacrifice, when the abomination of desolation shall be set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

Daniel 12:12 LXX Blessed is he that waits, and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days.

Daniel 12:13 LXX But you, go *your way*, and rest; for *there are* yet days and seasons to the fulfillment of the end; and you shall stand in your inheritance at the end of the days.”

Chapter 1

Revelation 1:1 NKJV The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants; things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ,” what does that mean? In Greek, as in English, you can take it two ways. It could mean the revelation that is being brought to you **by** Jesus Christ, or it could be the revelation **about** Jesus Christ. The book of “Revelation”, which means unveiling, or revealing is both ABOUT and FROM Jesus Christ. God the Father delivered the contents of Revelation to His Son, who is currently “seated at the Father’s right side” (Psalm 110:1). God provided the contents of the message to Jesus Christ to deliver personally to John. God the Father sent it by “His Messenger” to the Apostle John.

A lot of times in the Bible God’s messenger is one of those supernatural beings that we think of as an angel, but there are other times when the exact same Greek word is used that it is simply a person delivering a message... a messenger. The word “ἄγγελος” usually translated angel, which is actually a transliteration NOT a translation of the word, is the common word for “messenger” in Greek. Jesus is called the “Messenger” of God in this passage. The “Angel of the LORD” or “Messenger of God” appeared many times in the Old Testament. He confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant to Abraham in Genesis 22:11-12, 15-18. He was the one appointing Moses to deliver Israel in Exodus 3:2-14. He delivered the Mosaic Covenant to Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai. You can read about this in Acts 7:30-39. The Messenger of God spoke in Jehovah’s/Yahweh’s name, as His authorized agent, and He brought Israel out of Egypt, through the wilderness, into the Promised Land as explained to us in Exodus 23:20-23 LXX. (LXX is Latin for 70. It is used to denote the number of Hebrew priests from the Temple in Jerusalem that translated the Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures into Greek at the behest of Emperor Ptolemy II of Alexandria, Egypt.) He, the Messenger of God, is the child born, the Son given spoken of by the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 9:6-7. He is “The Messenger of the Covenant” for whom John the Baptist prepared the way, and who suddenly came to HIS Temple in Malachi 3:1.

“My Angel” or “My Messenger” in verse one **must** be Jesus because, first, God sent Him to John, and John saw and heard Jesus (verses 12-17) and second, John calls this the “testimony of Jesus Christ.” Hard to deny that one; but there are some that do.

If you look at the rest of the verse, it says, “the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him (that ‘Him’ is Jesus), to show to His servants (Christians, you and I) things which must shortly take place, which actually means to take place quickly when it does begin to happen. It does not mean near in time as some understand it. Compare to Revelation 22:6.

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It's a body of information that God has given to Christ, and Christ has then gone to John, to reveal it to us. So Christ is not only delivering it, it is also about Him. In fact, that phrase, the revelation of Jesus Christ, is used in 1 Peter 1:13 in the New Testament in reference to His second coming. His second coming is called, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ". So It is about Jesus Christ, given by Jesus Christ, concerning the second coming of Jesus Christ. All of these apply.

Note on the word 'servant' here in verse 1... the Strong's Greek word here is *doulos* (δοῦλος) and cannot accurately be translated in English as "servant" or "bond servant". The true meaning is that of a **slave** and is used here, not out of insensitivity to the legitimate concerns of modern English speakers, but out of commitment to accurately convey the brutal reality of the Roman empire's inhumane institution as well as the ownership called for by Christ.

Revelation 1:2 NKJV who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

The phrase "...of all things he saw" at the end of verse two, in Greek can be interpreted "as much as he perceived". That is a very interesting statement "...As much as he perceived". It seems that John could be expressing the limitations of his own understanding. And that is evident throughout the rest of the book. As we read it, John says "I saw this, I saw that, but I did not understand." Then in some cases an angel may tell him what it means, but in a lot of cases nobody does tell him what it means. Well, if John understood it, he puts his explanation in the book. But if he didn't understand it, he didn't put an explanation in the book and it is left to us to figure out. But the phrase, "...as much as he perceived," implies that John reported everything as he saw and heard, whether or not he understood it at the time.

The book of Revelation is unique because it is the only book that comes with both a blessing and a curse. Read the blessing in the next verse.

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

On the other hand, at the end of Revelation it tells us there is also a curse that comes with the book. Revelation 22:18-19 says,

Revelation 22:18 NKJV For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Revelation 22:19 NKJV and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, *from* the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

There are rather severe consequences for anyone that alters this book. I mean, Revelation 9 tells us that some men are going to be tortured for five months and desire to kill themselves, yet not be allowed to do so. Being plagued with the desire to commit suicide and not be able to seems rather dire, but that's just me. God obviously highly values the Book of Revelation.

The last clause in verse 3 tells us something. "...for the time is near." (...Ο ΓΑΡ ΚΑΙΡΟΣ ΕΓΓΥΣ ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς ἐγγύς.) a better rendering would be "the appointed time is ready" (ΚΑΙΡΟΣ + ΕΓΓΥΣ = near or ready). It is used in Matthew 24:32-33, Revelation 22:10.

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TIME

G2540 ΚΑΙΡΟΣ – an appointed time. Appointment.

G5550 ΧΡΟΝΟΣ – a while, a period of time.

G165 ΔΙΩΝ – an age, a space of time, an interval.

G1451 ΕΓΓΥΣ – at hand, near, ready.

What this tells us is that God has appointed a time for the Second Coming. I'm betting we are to spend 6,000 years under the curse, just like the early church fathers believed. It is not going to be some arbitrarily time. It will not happen before that time, and when it does begin, it will all happen quickly and nothing will slow it down. And if we can figure out the biblical chronology, we will know. Daniel said, "the wise shall understand" (12:10).

I know so many believe that "no one knows the day and hour" as Jesus mentioned in Matthew 24:36 and 42. But that does not mean we will never know. Scripture says we will know exactly at a certain point. But this is a **topic for another day**. One which I will cover soon in another study. I am working on it now because of the massive scale of biblical ignorance of today's Christians. And it is a requested topic.

Now here comes John's introduction to the seven churches (assemblies).

Revelation 1:4 NKJV John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Revelation 1:5 NKJV and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

By now every Christian knows that Asia refers to Asia Minor, or modern day Turkey. Then John's greeting: "Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne." There is a lot to unravel here. So let's get to it.

We can see that "grace and peace" are coming from the source... the Father, the Son, and 7 spirits (breaths). Not only are grace and peace being given by the sources, this greeting shows Paul's influence on John. John's introduction is the same Paul's accept with the addition of the seven spirits. This is Paul's signature opening: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Compare it to John's greeting here.

(While we are here, I want to make a quick point and ask a question. In all of Paul's greetings, but not just Paul's, Peter, John, and even James and Jude as well, there is never a mention of the "so-called" third person of the Trinity. Nowhere in the entire Bible, in fact. Read Galatians 1:3; Romans 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; Thessalonians 1:2; Corinthians 1:3; Corinthians 1:2; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:2; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; 1 John 1:3; 2 John 1:3; Even John 1:1-3 talks about the Father and the Son were there in the beginning. And James 1:1 says he is a bondservant (slave) of God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 1:1 mentions God the Father and Jesus Christ, but not the Holy Spirit. My question is, where is the Holy Spirit in all of this? If the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are three co-equal, co-eternal beings, why... There is an answer, but yet again, this is another **topic for another day**. The Holy

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Spirit (Breath) is the link between the local assemblies and the presence of Father and Son in the Temple of God. For this reason we are commanded to “come with boldness to the throne of grace...” in Hebrews 4:16.)

What does it mean to you when you read, “from Him who is and who was and who is to come,”? It simply means that God the Father is eternal. John is simply giving us a deeper description of the Father than Paul did.

What are the seven spirits, or breaths, who are before God’s throne? Zechariah 3:8-10; 4:6-10; Revelation 5:6 give us the answer. (If you read the English translation of the Greek Old Testament (LXX or Septuagint), you will see the name Jesus in many versions. That is because the name Joshua and Jesus are the same name in Scripture. Just different pronunciations in different languages.)

Go first to Revelation 5:6 in your bible.

Revelation 5:6 NKJV And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Keep in mind that the seven spirits are represented here by seven eyes on the Lamb. The Lamb that looked as though it had been slain, who is that? Jesus Christ. Now in this vision, and remember this is symbolic, Jesus doesn’t have seven eyes, at least not as the man Jesus. It is symbolic of something. The lamb, Christ, which he says has seven eyes, calls the seven eyes “seven Spirits”, and he says that these are sent out into all the earth. Using simple logic, if there are seven eyes and they are sent out unto all the earth, what would that mean? What would those eyes be doing? They would be watching. They see what is going on. And there are seven of them. These seven eyes are God’s way of watching everything. Why seven? It is because all of the churches in the world will fall into one of the seven categories of churches spoken of by Jesus in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. (And the seven churches do not represent seven “church ages” like dispensationalists like to teach.)

And for those who are not regular students or do not yet know, the **literal** meaning for ‘spirit’ is breath, or wind. **Figuratively** it means spirit, as in “Casper the Friendly Ghost”. The word breath should probably be used because of the heavy platonic pagan baggage that comes with the English word spirit, or ghost, for that matter. This is also another huge **topic for another day**. But I can assure you that with correct Greek and Hebrew understanding and interpretation of Scripture, there is absolutely no place in Scripture for that way of thinking. If your mother never told you, I’m telling you now, there’s no such thing as ghosts... demons, yes. Ghosts, no. There is a big difference.

But I digress. Back to the topic at hand.

Now go in your Bible to Zechariah.

Let me give you some background on Zechariah. First know that Revelation constantly borrows imagery from the Old Testament. You’ve heard this from me before many times in past conversations about this book. But it’s good to repeat from time to time in order to remember.

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Also remember that the way to understand the Bible is when an author in the New Testament starts to quote something from the Old Testament, you need to go back and read the passage in its entirety and understand the whole context. That is a very important principle when you study your Bible. Then the meaning of that passage is to be brought into that New Testament passage. Scripture MUST harmonize. God is NOT the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Okay, background on Zechariah. Nebuchadnezzar had taken the Jews captive to Babylon; after the 70 years of captivity they were allowed to go back to Israel. Nehemiah had to finish the wall that was started before they were taken captive. The temple was in the process of being built as well. The prophecy of Zechariah was given while the temple was being built.

Zechariah 3:8 LXX Hear now O Joshua, high priest, you and your neighbors that are sitting before you—for they are diviners; for behold, I bring forth My servant the Branch.

Zechariah 3:9 LXX And as for the stone which I have set before the face of Joshua, on the one stone are seven eyes: behold, I am digging a trench,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and I will search out all the iniquity of that land in one day.

Zechariah 3:10 LXX In that day,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘you shall call together every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.’”

Here in verse 9 we see that there is mention of “seven eyes”. We are here determining or verifying who or what these seven eyes are.

Zechariah 4:6 LXX And he answered and spoke to me, saying, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by mighty power, nor by strength, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.

Zerubbabel was the guy in charge of rebuilding the temple. This is a very important verse. What he is saying is that the way you are going to get things done is not by your own strength, or your own wit, but by being in good favor with God. ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ God is the one who is going to do the work and He is going to do it through you.

Zechariah 4:7 LXX ‘Who are you, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel, that you should prosper? Whereas I will bring out the stone of the inheritance, its grace equal to My grace.’”

What is the mountain that He is talking about here? The mountain is the monumental task that he has of rebuilding the temple when there was so much opposition to the rebuilding of it. And He said it is going to become a “plain”, which is level area of land. It’s a contrast. So what does that mean? God, through His spirit, will level the playing field, so to speak. He is saying that even though the job ahead is a big one, God Himself is going to help and it will be easy. Nothing and nobody will stop the task at hand.

Isaiah prophesied something similar in Isaiah 40 about Jesus’ eventual bringing of the Gospel.

Isaiah 40:4 LXX Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and all the crooked ways shall become straight, and the rough *places* smooth.

Isaiah 40:5 LXX And the glory of the Lord shall appear, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God; for the Lord has spoken *it*.”

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Compare also Isaiah 49:11.

Isaiah 49:11 LXX And I will make every mountain a passage, and every path a pasture to them.

This could take off in a whole different direction if I let it. To sum it up, everything, even in the Old Testament, is pointing to Christ. So let's move on.

Zechariah 4:8 LXX And the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

Zechariah 4:9 LXX "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall finish it; and you shall know that the Lord Almighty has sent Me to you.

Zechariah 4:10 LXX For who has despised the small days? Surely they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet of tin in the hand of Zerubbabel: **these are the seven eyes that look upon all the earth.**"

For those who don't know, a plum line is a carpenter's tool. It's a line with a weight on the end and that is how they get things level vertically. The same thing is going on here as in Revelation 1:4. The eyes are observing, watching God's people rebuilding His temple. Keep this in mind because you will run into these eyes again, but that is what you need to know for now.

So in verse 4 those seven spirits are the seven eyes that are observing God's people in the work that they are doing. Of that, there can be no doubt. Now let's examine verse 5.

Revelation 1:5 NKJV and from Jesus Christ, **the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead,** and the **ruler over the kings of the earth.** To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

Here John begins to use a series of titles for Jesus Christ. And these are important titles so pay attention to them.

1st title: The Faithful Witness – Is Jesus Christ the faithful witness? Absolutely. When He came the first time He said that everything that comes out of His mouth was what the Father told me to say. Now He has appeared to give John the revelation of the end times and again He is portrayed as a witness from God the Father with a message from Him. And it says, "His testimony is true." It's the Father's word.

Isaiah 55:3-4 refers to the Son as follows:

Isaiah 55:3 LXX Listen with your ears, and follow My ways; obey Me, and your soul shall live in prosperity; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the sure mercies of David.

Isaiah 55:4 LXX Behold, I have made him a testimony among the Gentiles, a prince and commander to the Gentiles.

2nd title: The First Begotten of the Dead – What does that mean? What does that imply? This is a metaphor. It implies that there are more dead to follow. Jesus was the first one to be resurrected

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from the dead to an immortal state, from “mortal to immortality”, like Paul talked about in 1 Corinthians 15, resurrection, and it implies that there is more to follow. We will see later in Revelation that those will be shown to us.

1 Corinthians 15:35 NKJV But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"

1 Corinthians 15:36 NKJV Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies.

1 Corinthians 15:37 NKJV And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain; perhaps wheat or some other grain.

1 Corinthians 15:38 NKJV But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body.

1 Corinthians 15:42 NKJV So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

1 Corinthians 15:43 NKJV It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.

1 Corinthians 15:44 NKJV It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:51 NKJV Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed;

1 Corinthians 15:52 NKJV in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 15:53 NKJV For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this **mortal must put on immortality**.

1 Corinthians 15:54 NKJV So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and **this mortal has put on immortality**, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

1 Corinthians 15:55 NKJV "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

Also note that when the Bible speaks the word “resurrection” it only refers to those who have been raised immortal. It does not mean those that were brought back to life and are in the same state as they were when they died. When Jesus brought the little girl back to life, she was not resurrected in the sense that the Bible uses it because she simply returned to leave off where she had left. She was not immortal; she would die again later. Jesus was the first to be resurrected, which is raised immortal.

Luke 8:52 NKJV Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, "Do not weep; she is not dead, but sleeping."

Luke 8:53 NKJV And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was dead.

Luke 8:54 NKJV But He put them all outside, took her by the hand and called, saying, "Little girl, arise."

Luke 8:55 NKJV Then her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And He commanded that she be given something to eat.

Jesus is the prototype of the resurrection to immortality. John borrowed this title from Paul in Colossians 1:18.

Colossians 1:18 NKJV And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

3rd title: The Ruler of the Kings of the Earth – first question, is Jesus the ruler of the kings of the earth right now? Is that true today? Not yet. Is He the ruler of George Bush, Joe Biden, Bill Gates? This list could quite literally go on for the rest of my natural life. He should be, but He isn't... at least not yet. God the Father is the one in charge, and everything is according to His plan until Jesus Christ returns and God gives Him (Jesus) dominion over the earth. Right now, the whole world lies in the lap of the Wicked One (1 John 5:19). Jesus will be the Ruler of the Kings of the Earth (Psalm 2:7-12; Daniel 7:13-14; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 19:15).

Psalms 2:7 LXX declaring the ordinance of the Lord: “The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You.

Psalms 2:8 LXX Ask of Me, and I shall give You the nations *for* Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.

Psalms 2:9 LXX You shall rule them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel.’”

Psalms 2:10 LXX Now therefore understand, you kings: be instructed, all you that judge the earth.

Psalms 2:11 LXX Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling.

Psalms 2:12 LXX Accept correction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and you should perish from the righteous way. Whenever His wrath shall be suddenly kindled, blessed are all they that trust in Him.

Daniel 7:13 LXX I beheld in the night vision, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came to the Ancient of Days, and was brought near to Him.

Daniel 7:14 LXX And to Him was given the dominion, and the honor, and the kingdom; and all nations, tribes, and languages, shall serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed.

The Son of man refers to Jesus Christ, and the Ancient of Days is God the Father. God the Father gives Him (Jesus) dominion over the earth.

It is remarkable that Daniel does not attempt to represent this by any symbol. The representation by symbols ends with the fourth beast; and now the description assumes a literal form – the setting up of the kingdom of the Messiah and of the saints. Why this change of form occurs is not stated or known, but the sacred writers seem carefully to have avoided any representation of the Messiah by symbols. The phrase “The Son of Man” – אֲנֹשׁ בָּר *bar ‘ēnāsh* - does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament in such a connection, and with such a reference as it has here, though it is often found in the New, and is, in fact, the favorite term by which the Savior designates Himself.

Revelation 11:15 NKJV Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

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Revelation 19:15 NKJV Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Are you beginning to see that every title in Scripture for Christ, and there are a lot, have deeper meaning? Some last grammatical notes on the last clause in this verse. Let's read it again...

Revelation 1:5 NKJV and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved¹ us and washed² us from our sins in His own blood,

(1) The TR follows a minority reading in this case which has the aorist indicative (past) form of the verb "love." The majority of manuscripts, as well as the older manuscripts, have the present tense. In the Greek, this means He still loves us.

(2) Several manuscripts read "loosed."

The Concordant Literal Version reads:

Revelation 1:5 CLV and from Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Suzerain of the kings of the earth. To Him Who is loving us and looses us from our sins by His blood"

And so you don't have to go look it up yourself, because I can hear my own mother asking, what does that mean?...

suzerain ~ noun

1. a state exercising a degree of dominion over a dependent state especially in its foreign affairs.

Verse 6.

Revelation 1:6 NKJV and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The NKJV reads "kings and priests." A better rendering of the Greek phrase might be "kingdom priests". This Kingdom priesthood of believers will begin with the **future** millennial reign of the Christ, Jesus. I stress future because a great many believe it is either a past or present event. See Revelation 3:12; 20:6.

Revelation 3:12 NKJV "He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

Revelation 20:6 NKJV Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

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Another incorrect interpretation, which was intentional translator bias on the part of the Catholic Church in order to support their giving us the doctrine of the Trinity, and which I have already alluded to earlier, with reference to the idea of “co-equal, co-eternal” beings on the part of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, why is the Son, calling the Father, His God in verse 6? If Jesus has a God, He cannot be equal to that God. Look up these verses: John 20:17; Romans 16:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3; Revelation 3:12 and ask yourself, why do these passages, some of which are direct quotes from Jesus Himself, contradicting the given definition within the concept of the Doctrine of the Trinity as given to us by the Catholic Church?

This is also conflicting with another doctrine given to us by the Catholic Church called Hypostatic Union. It is another of the vast number of doctrines that Martin Luther and the other Reformers continued after the Reformation within the Protestant churches. It is also referred to as the “two natures theory”... Jesus was both fully man and fully God at the same time. This is yet another **topic for another day**.

Where I make this statement, “...topic for another day” I will do specific studies and go back and link them later. These are “sacred cows” for most Christians, although, I admit, many are waking up, and will take extensive time and research to absolutely prove, from Scripture, that they are in fact, false doctrines, doctrines of men. But we are here now studying the book of Revelation. This has been the most requested study thus far, by far; so I want to try to stay focused on it. For those of you who do not already have a “correct” understanding of these topics, please be patient with me. Wait and hear me out before making any judgment calls. I think you will find that the Adversary has been working against Christians, from within the church, for a very long time. These kinds of problems are why the Home Church Movement is growing so rapidly. People instinctively know that something is wrong with today’s churches.

Let’s read verse 6 again.

Revelation 1:6 NKJV and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

We Christians are in training right now in this life for this role of being “kingdom priests”. Check out what Peter says,

1 Peter 2:4 NKJV Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

1 Peter 2:5 NKJV you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:9 NKJV But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Verse 7.

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Revelation 1:7 NKJV Behold, He is **coming with clouds**, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

“Coming with the clouds” is quoted directly from Daniel 7:13, showing that the whole book of Revelation is an expansion of the celestial court of the Ancient of Days described in Daniel 7:9-14, 21-22, 26-27.

Vision of the Ancient of Days

Daniel 7:9 LXX I beheld until the thrones were set, and the Ancient of Days sat; and His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was as pure wool; His throne was a flame of fire, *and* His wheels burning fire.

Daniel 7:10 LXX A stream of fire rushed forth before Him. Thousands *upon* thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand attended to Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

Daniel 7:11 LXX I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which that horn spoke, until the wild beast was slain and destroyed, and his body given to be burned with fire.

Daniel 7:12 LXX And the dominion of the rest of the wild beasts was taken away; but a prolonging of life was given to them for an appointed time.

Daniel 7:13 LXX I beheld in the night vision, and behold, *One* like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came to the Ancient of Days, and was brought near to Him.

Daniel 7:21 LXX I beheld, and that horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;

Daniel 7:22 LXX until the Ancient of Days came, and He gave judgment to the saints of the Most High; and the time was fulfilled, and the saints possessed the kingdom.

Daniel 7:26 LXX “But the court shall be seated, and they shall remove *his* dominion to abolish it, and to destroy it utterly.

Daniel 7:27 LXX And the kingdom and the power and the greatness of the kings that are under the whole heaven were given to the saints of the Most High; and His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all powers shall serve and obey Him.”

He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him... I want you to picture how that could possibly happen. We live on a spherical globe. And “He is coming...” where is He “coming” to? The Mount of Olives, right outside of Jerusalem. Zechariah 14 states that His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:4 LXX And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, a very great division; half the mountain shall lean to the north, and half of it to the south.

Let me also point out that this verse (Revelation 1:7) is a theme for Revelation. The wording is a collection of Daniel 7:13 and Zechariah 12:10. The mourning is often understood as the response of

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those for whom it is too late to be saved. The context of Zechariah 12:10 indicates that the mourning will include true saving repentance.

Zechariah 12:10 LXX “And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and compassion: and they shall look upon Me, because they have mocked Me, and they shall make lamentation for Him, as for a beloved *friend*, and they shall grieve intensely, as for a firstborn son.

He is coming back, from the right hand of the Father at His throne, to Jerusalem. On the way back, something is going to happen between the time He leaves heaven and the time He sets His feet on the Mount of Olives, to defeat the armies of the Antichrist, something is going to happen in that return trip. Do you know what is going to happen? He is going to blow a trumpet and send forth His angels to gather together His elect. Matthew 24.

Let’s go to Matthew 24, beginning in verse 29. And I want you to pay attention to what the passage says about “coming in the clouds,” like what was just read here in Revelation 1:7.

Matthew 24:29 NKJV "Immediately **after** the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

In the time **after** “the tribulation of those days”, the time that He is talking about will happen very quickly once it begins. I want you to keep that in mind for later.

Matthew 24:30 NKJV "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then **all** the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Notice it says “all” the tribes of the earth.

Matthew 24:31 NKJV "And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

By the way, just FYI, when the Bible talks about the “four winds” it’s talking about the North, South, East, and West... the entire world.

Now let’s look back at verse 7 again.

Revelation 1:7 NKJV Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Behold, He is coming with clouds,

“He is coming with the clouds”, that is also what it said in Matthew 24:30.

and every eye will see Him,

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Back in Matthew it said, "...all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall **see** the Son of man **coming in the clouds...**" Then it says that He blows His trumpet and dispatches His angels to pick up His elect, verse 31.

even they who pierced Him. And all the **tribes of the earth will mourn** because of Him. Even so, Amen.

All tribes will mourn is also stated in Matthew 24:30. "Tribes" in the New Testament refers to the 12 tribes of Israel (See Revelation 7:4).

Note also that Acts 1:9-11 mention Jesus' return in the clouds.

Acts 1:9 NKJV Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and **a cloud received Him** out of their sight.

Acts 1:10 NKJV And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

Acts 1:11 NKJV who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come in like manner** as you saw Him go into heaven."

His coming is going to be nearly instant. Jesus made a comment about this. He said, "...as lightning come from the East and flashes even unto the West, so also shall the sign of the coming of the Son of Man be" (Matthew 24:27).

East to west... what does that imply? If all the tribes of the earth are going to see Him, and He is flashing like lightning from east to west, that means He is going to go around the whole earth; with angels scattering around behind Him picking up His elect.

Remember, while this is happening the sun has turned black, the moon has turned blood red, there has been this trumpet blast that everyone on earth is going to hear. And everyone will see this spectacular sight with these angels fanning out picking up His elect.

There is the resurrection also. It doesn't talk about it in this particular passage but you can find it in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. It says that while this is going on the dead will also be raised. And then the people who are alive and remain will be "caught up", by angels, **together** with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

We can clearly see a constant theme throughout Scripture. It harmonizes perfectly if you take out almost 2,000 years of theological baggage.

Now go to John 19:31 for a moment so we can finish up with verse 7 of Revelation 1. Actually, you can pick any place in Scripture to start and everything will tie in together until you have completed the entire Bible. But John 19 is the story of the crucifixion of Jesus.

John 19:31 NKJV Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

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Now that part in parenthesis can, and will in the future, be an entire study of its own. But I am here wanting to talk about Crucifixion for a moment. It would defile the Sabbath if there were bodies hanging on a cross on the Sabbath day, so the Jews often asked if their legs could be broken, which would also mean that the “victims” could not support the weight of their bodies and they would suffocate very quickly, which would actually be more humane.

Crucifixion could be and usually was a long and agonizing death. Under Roman law, no Roman could be put to death in this way. It was a very degrading way to die. Paul, when sentenced to death in Rome many years after the death of Jesus, was not crucified, because he was a Roman citizen. Peter, who was executed on the same day in Rome, and was crucified, because Peter was not a Roman citizen.

Death by crucifixion is really death by suffocation. With the nails through his wrists of the outstretched arms, and the legs bent slightly and nailed through the feet, the victim had to support his own weight. The upper body had to be kept from sagging, for this compressed the lungs and the victim could not breathe. As the victim became progressively weaker and no longer able to support his weight with his upper body, he sagged, compressing his lungs, and suffocated to death.

John 19:32 NKJV Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.

John 19:33 NKJV But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

John 19:34 NKJV But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

John 19:35 NKJV And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

John is saying, “I witnessed this myself, personally, so you can believe it.” He made similar statements about being an eyewitness in his first epistle as well.

John 19:36 NKJV For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."

The latter clause of this verse comes from Exodus 12:46. It's about the Passover Lamb. When the Passover lamb was offered up as a sacrifice, none of it's bones were to be broken. Why did John say that this prophecy was fulfilled when Christ's legs were not broken? It is because Jesus was the sacrificial lamb for all of our sins. He is telling you that the whole idea of the Passover lamb is a symbol of Christ. In fact, Paul calls Christ our Passover in 1 Corinthians 5:7. Another couple of references to Jesus Christ being the Passover lamb are in John 1:29 & 36.

And I do know that a lot of this stuff is not news to most Christians, but posting online may reach others who are not Christian but somehow curious, and they need to have as many “gaps” filled in as possible so that this “Christian stuff” at least makes some sense to them.

Now look at John 19:37:

John 19:37 NKJV And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

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Psalm 22:16 also makes reference to being “pierced”.

Verse 8...

Revelation 1:8 NKJV "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

There are three more titles here. But this is a statement from the Father. He is the **Alpha and Omega**; the beginning and the end, and “**which is, which was, and which is to come, the Almighty**”. We will see, as we move on in Revelation, that Jesus identifies Himself by the same titles.

Here the Father referred to Himself as “the alpha and the omega” (cf. Revelation 21:6, 22:13). The Textus Receptus omits the title “God” after the title “Lord”. It should say, “...says the Lord God,” in order to more definitively convey the awesomeness of the Father.

The phrase “the beginning and the end,” here is not in the oldest manuscripts.

The phrase “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty” is used to deliver the sense of The Eternal Being who is Sovereign Over All. We really need to let it sink in that God the Father is HOLY.

The titles, “Lord” and “God” are applied in Scripture to both the Father and the Son. However, the title “Supreme Ruler, or Sovereign Over All” (**ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡ**) is exclusive to the Father in the LXX as well as the New Testament. It is usually translated “Almighty” or “Lord of hosts.” But both English terms seem inadequate in expressing the full meaning. The real sense is the One who holds total and sole sovereignty and power over everything and everyone, the ultimate authority. That it refers to the Father alone is clear from Jeremiah 3:19 LXX,

“And I said, So be it, Lord, for You said I will set you among children, and will give you a choice land, the inheritance of the Almighty God of the Gentiles. And I said, You shall call me Father; and you shall not turn away from Me.”

Paul paraphrased this passage in 2 Corinthians 6:18. All other references to this title in the New Testament are exclusively in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22). Also in the LXX, the “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL” is distinguished from His “Anointed” (Messiah, Christ).

Amos 4:13 LXX “For, behold, I am He that strengthens the thunder, and creates the wind, and proclaims to men His Anointed, forming the morning and the darkness, and mounting on the high places of the the land. The Lord, God of Hosts is his name” [**ΚΥΡΙΟΣ Ο ΘΕΟΣ Ο ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΩ**].

The title, “SOVEREIGN OVER ALL,” expresses the core of biblical monotheism and explains why the Father is referred to as the “God and Father” of the Son of God (Revelation 1:6). This fact makes the Trinitarian idea of three co-equal and co-eternal persons impossible to reconcile with Scripture. The Son of God has always been under the supreme authority of His Father.

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Revelation 1:9 NKJV I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

“The tribulation”, with the definite article (...**ΤΗ ΘΑΛΙΨΕΙ**...) refers specifically to the time just prior to the Second Coming (cf. Matthew 24:29 and Revelation 7:14). This also means that John will be present in the Great Tribulation. How might that be since he is long dead? The answer can be found in chapter 10. John was given further prophecy through “seven thunders” but told not to write it down, Revelation 10:4. John was told not to write about the seven thunders because, as we will see in verse 11, he will be sent as one of the two witnesses, Elijah the other, to prophecy again in the end times. It is most likely he will tell us about the seven thunders at that time. We will not know why until then. Early Christian writers understood from this passage that John would be raised from the dead in the last days to proclaim the message of the seven thunders as well. (See Hippolytus, App. xxi)

Revelation was written while John was exiled to the Island of Patmos, one of the small Dodecanese islands in the Aegean Sea off the coast of what was Asia Minor. While some would like to put John’s writing of Revelation under the reign of Roman emperor Vespasian (69-79 AD), there is documented evidence that John was exiled to Patmos by Roman emperor Domitian (81 to 96 AD), in AD 95 or 96.

Revelation 1:10 NKJV I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

In Greek this verse actually says, “I came to be, in breath, in the chief day, and I heard behind me a voice, loud as a trumpet,”

**ΕΓΕΝΟΜΗΝ ΕΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΗΚΟΥΣΑ ΟΠΙΣΘ
ΜΟΥ ΘΩΝΗΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΗΝ ΩΣ ΣΑΡΙΓΓΟΣ**

“I began to be in the Breath/Spirit...” This is an interesting phrase. It is used actually twice; it’s used in chapter 4 as well. It’s kind of an obscure statement. My impression is that what was happening to John was of a supernatural nature. He began to sense that God was enveloping him, so to speak. As soon as he began to be in the Spirit, he says, “on the *chief* day he heard behind him a loud voice.” John was brought by God’s Spirit into the realm of spiritual visions. He communicates through His “Spirit” because He is HOLY. (And “spirit” is always in the neuter gender in Greek, never masculine. That should tell you something about the bias in translations.) A holy God cannot come into contact with something that is less than holy. It would defile Him and He would immediately cease being God. Think of it this way. If you place a cancer cell in with healthy cells, and there is no immune system as a go between, the cancer cell will destroy the healthy cells. The healthy cells cannot turn the cancerous cell into a healthy one. It’s too late for that cell. That is why the Father can never make contact with we fallen.

We will also see in chapter 4, when he began to be in the Spirit again, he was immediately caught up into heaven to see the future. Peter also experienced a vision, John is experiencing visions when he sees this, and again in chapter 4. Paul had a similar experience in 2 Corinthians 14. He said whether he was in the body or out of the body, “I can’t even tell”. It was such a strange experience for him that he couldn’t tell if it was just something he was seeing while he was still here, or

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whether he was physically caught up into heaven, or whether only his spirit was caught up into heaven; he couldn't tell. But he could see all these things going on.

Now look at where it says, "the Lord's day". That is not a good translation. It is not a noun; it is an adjective. It's the Greek word *kuriakos*, which is the noun, and *kuriake* is the adjective form of it; so it simply means superior or chief day. ΚΥΡΙΑΚΟΣ (*κυριακός*), ΚΥΡΙΑΚΕ (*κυριακή*) Not "Lord's Day" (*κυριακή* – an adjective derived from "master/lord," having the quality of a "master," the "master/chief/superior Day." It is not a possessive or a personal noun.

There is a quote from Ignatius, one of the early Church fathers, bishop of Antioch, and student of Polycarp, student of John, he uses the exact same term and he defines it for us. His quote is, "And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep (then he uses that same phrase, *τη κυριακη ημερα*) as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days of the week." And that is how he interprets it, the queen or chief day of the week. (Ignatius, to the Magnesians, ix). The Didache, written about the same time, has, "ΚΑΤΑ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗΝ ΔΕ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ ΚΥΝΑΧΘΕΝΤΕΣ," ("According to the superior [day], and, of the Lord, gather together"). (Didache, XIV:1)

Revelation 1:11 NKJV saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

The Textus Receptus adds the phrase, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and,". It does not appear in earlier copies of the TR, it only appears in a few later copies. The phrase does not appear in the Alexandrian Text or the Majority Text either.

That said, this verse tells us something extremely important; that is that it was written for the end-time assemblies that are in Turkey. The book of Revelation was not written to Israel. It was not written to individual Christians. It was written to the local assemblies. You need to keep this fact in mind. In the last days, just before Jesus' second coming, not too long from now, it appears as though He is doing so for the sake of the assembly. This also means that He expects Christians to survive in the end time tribulations by being joined together in local assemblies that are exactly the way God intended them to be originally. This means that you cannot make it as a "lone ranger" Christian. You need to be part of a local assembly that is **living out the teachings of Jesus Christ**. We will see this spelled out very clearly in chapters two and three.

With that said, I personally believe there has to be an exception in the case where simply no other person around you is truly following the commandments of Christ. If you live, as I do, in an area where the churches are absolutely dead. There is no one that even cares to hear the truth but is rather content to show up at some place, sit and listen to, what I call "mainstream" church talk, throw a few bucks in the coffers, then head out until time to do it again... a place where trying to inspire, or explain something about the Gospel message that goes against the "traditional" denominational spew, gets the gossip rolling, then surely God knows the heart, and will make an allowance for that individual. I believe that. Over the years I have heard so many people ask, where can I find a true church? All I can say is, you may not. Noah preached 100 years, yet no one outside of his family went with him.

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And remember, Jesus said that where **two** or more are gathered together in His name, that He is in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20. That is the very reason I started a home church group over 15 years ago. Churches in America, although not just America, are dying. More and more of the true followers are leaving today's modern church due to its absolute paganism and lukewarm attitudes. I believe The Apostasy spoken of by Paul for the end time church is here. (See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4.) Paul's admonition of the time coming when **they will not endure sound doctrine** is absolutely here. Read 2 Timothy 4:1-5. Memorize it. It is undeniable proof of where we stand in God's timeline. But as Paul said, "fulfill your ministry". Soldier on. You must endure to the end. Matthew 10:22; 24:13.

Revelation 1:12 NKJV Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

Revelation 1:13 NKJV and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

John's first vision is important because it is revealing Jesus as the central character in all of the end time drama. And with Jesus being the **only** path to salvation, anything and everything He says, warrants our undivided attention.

Now one thing I stress in biblical understanding is understanding the Old Testament quotes in the New Testament. When we find something in the Old, written in the New, we need to go back and understand the author's understanding and bring that into the New Testament passage. Sometimes it is an exact fulfillment of a prophecy, sometimes it is just a parallel message. But the Old Testament is the foundation of the New Testament. They cannot be separated, though many churches do these days, if you are to have the correct understanding of the Scriptures.

Here we read about the Son of Man standing among 7 individual golden lampstands. In Zechariah 4 a single seven-branch lampstand was depicted. It was a single menorah with 7 lamps that represented the nation of Israel.

Let's look at both the contrasts and similarities between Zechariah and Revelation.

Zechariah 4:1 LXX [*Fifth Vision: The Lampstand and Olive Trees*] And the angel that talked with me returned, and awakened me, as when a man is awakened out of his sleep.

Zechariah 4:2 LXX And he said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I am looking, and behold, a lampstand of solid gold, with a bowl upon it, and seven lamps upon it, and seven oil funnels to the lamps upon it.

Picture this in your mind. It is a single seven-branch lampstand with 7 lamps.

Zechariah 4:3 LXX Two olive trees *are* above it, one on the right of the bowl, and one on the left."

The "two olive trees" mentioned here are also mentioned in Revelation 11 and we are told they represent the Two Witnesses. So you can see that the imagery in Revelation is being directly drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures.

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Zechariah 4:4 LXX And I inquired, and spoke to the angel that talked with me, saying, “What are these things, my lord?”

Zechariah 4:5 LXX And the angel that talked with me answered, and spoke to me, saying, “Don’t you know what these things are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

Zechariah 4:6 LXX And he answered and spoke to me, saying, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by mighty power, nor by strength, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord Almighty.

Zerubbabel was the governor at the time when they were rebuilding the Temple after King Cyrus had granted the Jews permission to go back and rebuild the Temple that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed.

And the final clause in this verse is extremely important for us in the end times. Read it again.

Zechariah 4:6 LXX And he answered and spoke to me, saying, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘**Not by mighty power, nor by strength, but by My Spirit,**’ says the Lord Almighty.

What does that mean? In this case, it was the rebuilding of the Temple of God.

Zechariah 4:7 LXX ‘Who are you, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel, that you should prosper? Whereas I will bring out the stone of the inheritance, its grace equal to My grace.’”

I’ve mentioned this before, but it is important. This is a figurative way of speaking, an analogy, if you will, about the task of rebuilding the Temple because of all of the opposition that was going on at the time.

Zechariah 4:8 LXX And the word of the Lord came to me, saying,

Zechariah 4:9 LXX “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands shall finish it; and you shall know that the Lord Almighty has sent Me to you.

Zechariah 4:10 LXX For who has despised the small days? Surely they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet of tin in the hand of Zerubbabel: these are the **seven eyes** that look upon all the earth.”

Here we read about those seven eyes again.

Zechariah 4:11 LXX And I answered, and said to him, “What are these two olive trees, which are on the right and left hand of the lampstand?”

Zechariah 4:12 LXX And I asked the second time, and said to him, “What are the two branches of the olive trees that are by the side of the two golden pipes that pour into and communicate with the golden oil funnels?”

Zechariah 4:13 LXX And he said to me, “Don’t you know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.”

Zechariah 4:14 LXX And he said, “These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

The two olive trees are two persons. Who are the two persons here in Zechariah? Well, if you understand the context of what was going on, King Cyrus had given the Jews permission to go back

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and rebuild the Temple and city of Jerusalem. After the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and their (the “Jews”) 70 years of captivity had ended, a lot of the Jews did return and began working on the commandment of God to rebuild. They laid the foundation of the Temple, but the non-Jewish opposition, the people who now lived there, didn’t want this “invasion”. You can read all about this in the book of Ezra.

While the rebuilding was stalled for some time, particularly after King Cyrus died, and his son became the king of Persia, today’s Iran, because the enemies of the Jews constantly writing letters to the new King of Persia, the rebuilding was stopped again. But God wanted them to continue to rebuild. In the midst of all of this opposition God sent two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to get them to continue rebuilding.

So we have some imagery here. A lampstand (Menorah) of solid gold with seven lamps on it. And the Menorah has historically been the symbol of the nation of Israel up until the modern establishment of the new State of Israel in May of 1948. Upon the United Nation’s declaring the modern state of Israel as a nation, it’s leaders chose the so-called “Star of David” as it’s new symbol. There is no “Star of David”. It is actually an absolutely pagan symbol chosen to represent the newly formed nation of Israel. But this too, is a **topic for another day**.

So from ancient times up until 1948, the seven-branch Menorah was the symbol of the nation of Israel. And they were trying to rebuild the Temple and replace the Menorah back into the Temple and to light the lamps. The light on the Menorah was never to go out, the priesthood was to keep it lit, but upon its destruction, it was extinguished. The lit Menorah was a symbol of God’s presence among His people.

In Revelation, the Menorah is symbolic of God’s people and the two olive trees are the two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah of old, are the Two Witnesses. And these two prophets, as olive trees, they were the oil from the olives, and were dripping into seven bowls that are going through pipes to the **seven lamps** in Zechariah’s vision, but the **seven churches** in Revelation. The oil required for the lamps to continue burning was being supplied by these two “olive trees” in Zechariah’s vision. So when he asks, “What are these?” the statement that is made in verse 6, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying, ‘Not by mighty power, nor by strength, but by My Spirit,’” That is, you are **not** going to be able to complete the work of God, you will not be able to complete the rebuilding of the Temple, by your own power, or might, but only by God helping to complete it by through His Spirit or Breath.

So how is all of this relating to the book of Revelation? Revelation starts out with seven individual lampstands instead of one seven-branch lampstand. The message is Zechariah was ‘Not by mighty power, nor by strength, but by My Spirit,’. In Revelation it is the same thing. We will see this as we get into chapters two and three. The only way you are going to be able to overcome in the End Times, as local assemblies (home-churches or traditional churches) is by complete faith and reliance on Jesus Christ and obeying His commandments.

You can and will see that there is both a parallels and a distinctions in the Old and New Testaments. The parallel is that the only way to accomplish “enduring to the end” is by the holy Breath (Spirit) being poured into the local assemblies. The distinction is that, in Zechariah’s day, there was only one nation, that of Israel. In the End Times, it is not just the Nation of Israel, but many nations, with

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the Temple of God of the Old Testament being the local assemblies of the New Testament, planting the Gospel of the Kingdom all over the world.

All over the world, in every nation on earth, there are faithful local assemblies. They may be hard to find, but they are there. Because these local assemblies are scattered all over the world is why there are “seven churches” talked about in the book of Revelation. And all the churches of the world will fall into one of the seven “categories” of churches that Jesus is going to talk about in the next two chapters. That is why, perhaps the most important part of Revelation is, in fact, chapters 2 and 3. Deep examination of these chapters reveals to us what is required within the local assemblies for protection through the final seven-year tribulational time period, also referred to as “Daniel’s 70th Week,” the last half of which is called, “The Great Tribulation”.

Now let that sink in. Read that paragraph again if you have to.

Jump down to verse 20 of Revelation 1 real quickly.

Revelation 1:20 NKJV "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

The “lampstands” are the local assemblies, not the lamps. What are the lamps? Look at Revelation 4 for some clarity to this question.

Revelation 4:5 NKJV And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

So you have the ‘lampstands’, which are the assemblies, and you have the ‘seven lamps’, which are the seven Spirits of God. This shows that there is a direct connection between the local assemblies and God’s throne in Heaven. Before the Throne of God, the seven lamps are burning, on the earth are the seven lampstands corresponding to the seven lamps, which are the seven Spirits of God.

Seven Spirits of God? Does God have seven Holy Spirits?

While we are here, I must make mention that the Holy Spirit is NOT a “third person of the Trinity”. The Holy Spirit is a limited manifestation of God’s presence in this creation, this world. That is also why in Greek the Holy Spirit is ALWAYS in the neuter gender. And the neuter pronouns (it/its) should be used when translating from Greek into English. The translators have misled, either intentionally or unintentionally, by translating ‘spirit’ with masculine pronouns (he/him). The Holy Spirit is a part of God the Father, and is therefore HOLY by nature, but is NOT a separate, distinct person. If people are truly seeking truth, they will research this subject, not only of grammar, but also biblical history and teachings, and find out for themselves that what I am telling you is, in fact, true.

This is a topic that goes back to Church history starting with Tertullian (about 160-220 AD), carrying on with the “Arian Controversy” around 300 AD, which was a fight between two “believers”, Arius and Athanasius, and ending up developing into the “Doctrine of the Trinity” as well as the “Hypostatic Union” doctrine (the nature of Jesus) at the Counsel of Nicea under the “auspices” of Emperor Constantine in 325 AD. The whole of the argument was concerning the

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“Godhead”. The Catholic Church punished or put to death those who disagreed with their “interpretation”. And this was not part of the contestation for which Martin Luther brought about the Reformation in the early 1500’s. These doctrines, although NOT original to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, continued with the Protestant churches to this vary day.

Two passages immediately come to mind when explaining this topic: 1 Thessalonians 5:21, and Acts 17:11.

Back to the topic at hand...

I want you to get the picture here. The local assembly is the place where heaven and earth meet. It is the place where the Throne of God, with Jesus seated at His right hand, come and join with the assembly. And this joining together, this fellowship, is made possible by the Spirit of God, the Breath of God.

Revelation 1:14 NKJV His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

Revelation 1:15 NKJV His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

Revelation 1:16 NKJV He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Why was God portrayed in this way? Jesus’ appearance (glory) far exceeded Moses’ appearance when He left the Presence of God (2 Corinthians 3:9-18). In the assembly, we are to be transformed “from glory to glory.” We will see in chapters 2 & 3 that Jesus’ glory contrasted with the local assemblies.

Revelation 1:17 NKJV And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

Jesus applied the descriptive phrase “the first and the last” to Himself, drawn from Isaiah 44:6 & 48:12. In Isaiah 48, it was the ‘Angel of the LORD’ speaking for Jehovah who used this title. And in these verses we also see a little bit of God’s plan to redeem Israel.

Isaiah 48:12 LXX “Hear Me, O Jacob, and Israel whom I call; I am the first, and I endure forever.

Isaiah 48:13 LXX My hand also has founded the earth, and My right hand has fixed the sky; I will call them, and they shall stand together.

Isaiah 48:16 LXX Draw near to Me, and hear these words; from the beginning I have not spoken in secret; when it took place I was there.” And now the Lord GOD, and His Spirit, has sent me.

That final statement, “And now the Lord GOD, and His Spirit, has sent me” is a parenthetical statement by the author. In Greek this final clause can also be read, “And now the Lord God has sent me, *even* His Spirit.” The Concordant Literal Version reads:

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Isaiah 48:16 CLV Draw near to me! Hear this! From the beginning, I did not speak in concealment, nor in a dark place of the earth. From the era of its coming, I was there, and now my Lord Yahweh sends me and His spirit."

This interpretation makes more sense in harmonizing all of Scripture. This "Spirit" is the "Spirit of Christ" which spoke through Isaiah. Compare it to 1 Peter 1:10-11.

1 Peter 1:10 NKJV Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,

1 Peter 1:11 NKJV searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

Also compare Revelation 2:8 & 22:12-13.

Revelation 2:8 NKJV "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

Revelation 22:12 NKJV "And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

Revelation 22:13 NKJV "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

The Son, the Angel of the LORD, applied this title to Himself, not merely reporting the Father's words, as many denominations like to teach in order to push their own bias on the scriptures.

Now read the verse again.

Revelation 1:17 NKJV And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

See also that clause "from the beginning" in this same verse? Compare it to 1 John 2:13-14.

1 John 2:13 NKJV I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father.

1 John 2:14 NKJV I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

Verse 18:

Revelation 1:18 NKJV "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Who is this? It's Jesus, of course. A title that is claimed by Jesus is mentioned again... "the First and the Last." Then in verse 18 it says, He lived, He died, and He is alive forevermore. Only Jesus

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lived, died, and was resurrected. There is no question about that. Without that fact, there is no Christianity, and none of this means anything.

Then it says, "... and have the keys of hades and of death."

This passage needs some real explanation because of the plutonic pagan thinking in today's Christianity. Hades, some translations say 'hell', refers to the common grave of all mankind as opposed to an individual grave. It is an abstract concept (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:55). The terms "death and the grave" (ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾄδης) are parallel abstract concepts in Revelation (20:13, 14). In Greek mythology, ὁ ᾄδης (the Hades) was in the underworld, a place of departed ghosts. But this concept is not at all found in the Bible.

Here is what we know about death taken from John's Gospel.

John 5:25 NKJV "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.

John 5:26 NKJV "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

It's interesting to note that the Jews had a tradition that God had the custody of four keys, which He entrusted to no one, not man, nor angel. Now this is just a tradition, not biblical, but it appears that Jesus was using that tradition in sort of an allegorical way here. Paul did this a few times in his epistles as well... using analogies that his audience understood to get his point across. The four keys were the key of rain, or weather, the key of provision, the key of the barren womb, and the key of death and the grave. So Jesus claimed that fourth key, meaning that 'I am the only one who has the key.' That would essentially be saying that 'I am God' to the Jewish mindset.

There is a Psalm (Psalm 16:10) that says you will not leave my soul in hades nor allow your Holy One to see corruption. And it's quoted by Peter in Acts 2 (Acts 2:27) when he is preaching his sermon and he applies it to Christ.

This is where some Christians get that Jesus was in hell for the three days of His death, to preach to those that hadn't heard the Gospel. An absolutely incorrect interpretation. "If you want to be raised from the dead, you have to go through Me," is essentially all that He is saying.

Revelation 1:19 NKJV "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

This is a very important verse for understanding the chronology of the book of Revelation. All of the things that John wrote in Revelation can be divided into three distinct categories. Revelation 1:19 tells us that these categories are "things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this."

John, in chapter one, records seeing Jesus Christ himself. The things seen and heard during this experience are the "things which you have seen."

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“Things which are” represent things that were from John’s in his present time. This is clearly illustrated in Chapters 2 and 3, which are John’s letters to the seven churches, which existed at that time. These seven messages capture perfectly the “things which are” from John’s perspective.

After John’s exile to the Isle of Patmos was over, he returned to Asia and became an elder and the overseer of these seven churches. He then was able to personally present the messages given to him by Jesus to each of these congregations.

Assuming that the entire book of Revelation is prophetic, some have put forth a theory that the seven churches are prophetic of seven church ages. It is certainly true that any of the messages sent to the seven churches would be applicable to our churches today. Is there a church anywhere that the message to the Ephesians would not be appropriate... “I have this against you, that you have left your first love.” But to say that each of the churches of Revelation 2 and 3 represent church ages is simply not accurate. The simple truth is that the messages to the seven churches fall under the category of “things which are.”

Revelation 4:1 marks the beginning of things which will take place “after this”.

Revelation 4:1 NKJV After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

This is the future from John’s perspective. This starts the prophetic portion of Revelation and it continues through the rest of the book.

Some have taught that the phrase "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." prophesies of the rapture. Later in this series we will explain why this cannot be true. For now, let’s just assume that this passage simply means what it says... now I will show you “ things which must take place after this.”

Revelation 1:20 NKJV "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

We know what the lampstands are, the assemblies (churches). Let’s talk about the stars. These are angels. Remember in the Greek this word that is translated angel simply means messenger. It doesn’t necessarily mean a being from heaven. It can be a mortal man. The “angels of the seven churches” can simply mean the “messengers of the seven assemblies”. Jesus says that the seven stars are in His right hand. What does this signify? What does the term “right hand” mean in Scripture? It means honor or protection. Christ has the seven messengers in His right hand. He is basically saying that the messengers are under His protection while they are communicating between John and the seven churches.

John took over where Paul left off when he was killed for preaching the Gospel. John took over the care of the churches of this area. They didn’t have the Internet. They didn’t have UPS or cell phones. They used messengers; and these messengers were under the protection of Christ because they would have been put to death if the Roman guards at John’s prison or soldiers on the road found out about them. Remember John was in prison for the word of God; for being a witness of

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Jesus. Christianity was somewhat illegal at this time because of the Emperor Domitian. So the seven stars are seven messengers, either pastors or letter carriers.