

At World's End – Our Imminent Crisis

The Mystery of Revelation 17 Revealed

We Haven't a Moment to Lose

Table of Contents:

Introduction	Pg 3
Acknowledgments	Pg 5
Preface	Pg 6
Chapter 1: Daniel the Prophet	Pg 9
Chapter 2: Revelation 12 – The Cosmic Controversy Between Christ and Satan	Pg 19
Chapter 3: Revelation 13:1-10 – The Sea Beast: Rise of the Papal Church	Pg 29
Chapter 4: Revelation 13:11-17 – The Earth Beast: Rise of the United States of America and Apostate Protestantism	Pg 37
Chapter 5: Revelation 13:18 – Wisdom, Understanding, and Calculation	Pg 44
Chapter 6: Revelation 17:1-6 – The Great Harlot	Pg 47
Chapter 7: Revelation 17:7-11 – Identification of the Beast	Pg 55
Chapter 8: Revelation 17:12-17 – The Harlot’s Daughters	Pg 65
Chapter 9: Revelation 17:18-18:5 – Babylon the Great is Fallen	Pg 69
Chapter 10: The Critical Comprehension of the Three Angel’s Messages	Pg 71
Epilogue	Pg 77
Appendix A: Chart of the Seven Heads	Pg 79
Appendix B: Cardinal Electors	Pg 81

Introduction

You are about to embark on a journey through part of the Revelation of Jesus Christ as given to John the apostle. As you carefully consider this study, it is my prayer that you will gain new and vital understanding that will change your priorities forever. By letting the Bible interpret itself, I have come to an understanding of this vital prophecy that is critical for how we all order our lives going forward.

I have been richly blessed in my life, and I attribute that to the goodness of the Lord. Growing up in a Christian home with a younger sister, I was given Biblical understanding by my parents from a very young age. It was our custom to go to church weekly. We were enrolled in church school, and I have an MBA with emphasis in healthcare.

My father worked in sales and insurance, and my mother, a master's prepared registered nurse practitioner, worked in a number of different settings. My first job was in the accounting department of a faith-based hospital, and I was honored to continue work in faith-based hospitals during my healthcare career, nearly half of which were in the roles as chief financial officer, chief operating officer, and chief executive officer.

Through challenging circumstances and by God's design, I was unable to find work. What I didn't understand in 2013, I know now was and is God's plan for my life. When we put our lives in His hand, we really don't know where He will lead. That said, I would rather be under His care and guidance than following my own plan to achieve earthly "success." Though we don't know on a day-to-day basis what's next in our lives, we have the assurance that all our needs will be provided. I say "we" because I'm happily married, and we have two wonderful, God-fearing children and grandchildren.

While serving as CEO in 2009, I initiated a weekly Bible study at the hospital open to everyone, including community members. The format was simple. We started out in the gospels reading and discussing the wonderful words and works of Christ. We progressed to other books in the New Testament and then into the Old Testament. After my role ended, a number of the Bible study members requested that we continue studying, which we did in our home. The time came when several people requested to study the book of Revelation. From my background I was reasonably comfortable with understanding most of scripture, but I knew enough about the book of Revelation to know that to understand it, we first needed to study the book of Daniel.

The Bible was inspired by God and written by about forty people, spanning a 1,600-year period. Even though many different people wrote the sixty-six books of the Bible, they provide a God-inspired picture of His plan for humanity with complete continuity. This alone is a miracle. The book of Daniel contains five foundational prophecies, and the principles of interpretation of these prophecies are to be consistently used when studying the book of Revelation.

After receiving the request to study Revelation, I made an effort to make sure I could adequately speak about the prophecies, their interpretation, and respond to questions. In November 2013, I set about a deliberate process in my personal study to understand God's overall plan for redeeming humanity, and to be able to address the prophecies with reasonable confidence. The book of Daniel is relatively literal in its prophetic descriptions with some important symbolism; however, the book of Revelation is nearly completely written using symbols and symbolic language that draws and summarizes God's plan for humanity from the rest of Scripture starting with Genesis. Revelation either references or alludes to the Old Testament over 500 times. Both books contain prophecies that reference events future to when they were given, and that repeat and enlarge on previous dreams and visions. I created a chart tracing out time prophecies and important events in order to see how they fit together.

One of the ways that I like to understand information is to get the big picture initially, then with all the data present, drill down to specific details. On my chart, I placed Bible texts as references, then drew timelines for the time prophecies, and wrote summary descriptions of various events starting at about 850 B.C. and spanning through the Second Coming of Christ.

In August 2014, one of our study members asked, "Mark, can you lead us in Bible study through the chart in chronological order?" I quickly agreed, knowing a significant time investment in the project would be necessary as the Bible is so interrelated with many references throughout it of significant events and allusions to vital spiritual themes.

I started creating one page study guides for the purpose of breaking up the studies into short lessons. I completed my initial draft of some ninety pages of notes in the form of study guides in January 2015 and added a second chart that spans from creation, recorded in the book of Genesis, to the beginning of the initial chart starting in 850 B.C. As I studied, Revelation unfolded, including the following understanding.

What follows is an amazing understanding of the "mystery" of the riddle in Revelation 17. I pray all will receive and be blessed by a better understanding of God's plan for all humanity. This prophecy is an increasingly urgent topic as nearly all Bible prophecy has been fulfilled. We have but little time remaining to share the everlasting gospel with the world. I consider the purpose of this study to direct our attention to God's Word, the Bible. The Bible is primarily how God speaks to all of us. The great truths contained therein are the roadmap to spending eternity with our Creator with a side benefit of providing each of us the greatest peace that we can experience this side of Heaven.

I pray the Lord will richly bless us and guide in our lives as we surrender all to Him. Always ask for the Holy Spirit for wisdom as we open His Word and that He will transform our characters to become compatible with the principles of Heaven each day.

- In Christ, Mark LaRose

Acknowledgments

I wish to recognize several people that have contributed directly to my understanding. Tim Roosenberg has spent many years of His life studying Daniel 11 and 12. His work led me to an understanding of this challenging prophecy for the first time in 2011 and it dovetails completely with Revelation. I believe an understanding of Daniel 11, is a prerequisite to understanding the timing of Revelation 17. Tim's website is <http://www.islamandchristianity.org>.

Likewise, during my search to understand Revelation 17, I believe that the Lord led me to the website of two people, Wendell Slattery and Ronald Johnston in December 2014. These men have dedicated their study to the Lord, and I am convinced have the correct understanding and calculation foretelling the identification of the man of sin. Their website is <http://666man.net>.

I also wish to thank Tom Menocal for his assistance and encouragement in this project.

I have gratefully received invaluable technical assistance and highly informed questions from Melissa Hanson and from John W. Peters, Ph.D., M.Div., by divine appointment.

Importantly my wife, Terri, my life companion who demonstrates caring, compassion, and above all prays for me all the time, I love you always and forever.

Finally, I acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ who is able to transform our characters when we surrender our will to His. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

Mark LaRose

Unless otherwise noted, Bible quotes are from the New King James Version

The Holy Bible, New King James Version[®]
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. All rights reserved.

ESV refers to The Holy Bible, English Standard Version[®]
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good news Publishers. All rights reserved.

KJV refers to King James Version, 1611, public domain.

Preface

Mankind, as far back as records exist, has tried every way imaginable to design and create religions to fill the spiritual void found in each of us. Many have sought to fill this emptiness with work, the pursuit of money and power, myriads of addictive behaviors, substance abuse, and potentially most deluding, false religion. Some have discovered peace through a thorough knowledge and understanding of God's Word, leading to a relationship that transcends our earthly lives. Unique to Christianity is a God that redeemed all that would accept "The Christ" as their Saviour.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through Him might be saved." John 3:16-17.

However, Satan has infiltrated and deceived the vast majority of the thousands of Christian religions in the world today. The only certain way to determine absolute truth is to compare it to what God's Word says. There must be no discrepancy. The Bible is the ultimate history book, boasting a 100% accuracy rate, with countless archeological confirmations, as well as many prophecies that have since come true. There are only a few unfulfilled prophecies remaining and the shocking understanding of the events predicted by Revelation 17 is one of those!

Does God exist? Who is God? While a thorough study of these questions is beyond the scope of this study, a systematic, prayerful reading of the Bible will reveal the nature and character of the true God. The Bible uses many, many different names for God that attempt to describe His character. This study shows that God is made up of the Father (Ancient of Days, Daniel 7:9), Son (Christ, Jesus, Saviour), and Holy Spirit (Comforter, Counselor), collectively referred to as "Lord." God's adversary is named in Revelation 20:2, "He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan..."

The true God has uniquely demonstrated His love for every person through the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. The question is, how will God get the attention of the 7.7 billion people living today, all of whom He died for, in order for each to make an informed decision of whom to worship?

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called god or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

The Bible reveals who the "man of sin" is. This man of sin is also known as the "son of perdition", "the lawless one", "the beast", "the eighth king", "(but belonging to the

seven).” This study will demonstrate that the “666” man is living *today* and will soon assume persecutory power! “And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the lord will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

As we start our study, Paul’s counsel to Timothy is vital to *believe*:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Paul admonished the believers in Thessalonica, “Do not despise prophecies.” 1 Thessalonians 5:20. Concerning prophecy Peter said, “For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:21. Furthermore, Amos 3:7 tells us, “Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” The Bible is literally God’s inspired Word! If this fact is not *believed*, this study will seem like nonsense.

The question of which Bible version to use is an important one. The best approach is to use literal translations from the original language. As noted earlier, this study primarily uses the New King James Version for its ease of readability. Others include the English Standard Version and the King James Version, overall, the most accurate. It is always healthy to compare these and others in order to, as much as possible, gain understanding and context of the writer’s intent. A good concordance is invaluable, and the author has used www.abibleconcordance.com for its ease and ready access. Occasionally it is quite useful to try to understand the meaning of the original language. Short of actually learning Arabic, Greek, and Hebrew, the author has found an Internet resource to be very helpful; www.blueletterbible.org.

The following study is expository, meaning that the literal meaning of each word in scripture and its relationship to others in its context is of utmost importance. This is known as exegesis; a critical explanation or interpretation of a text. The historical-grammatical hermeneutical method of understanding the writers’ original intended meaning is utilized here.

As we begin our study in the book of Revelation, there are several important things to know. The first of seven blessings in the book is recorded in Revelation 1:3, “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.” One needs to consider this blessing prayerfully and with great care; it’s an amazing statement and a promise! It is conditional on our actions (*read, hear, and keep*).

There are a number of important principles of interpretation necessary to understand the book of Revelation. It’s important to be consistent by using the same principles,

pattern, and understanding of the book of Daniel as we study the prophecies in Revelation. *Every* word deserves prayerful, careful consideration. Even the absence of a word we might otherwise expect, when comparing scripture, has meaning.

Isaiah provides key counsel for successful Bible understanding when he writes, “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, Here a little, there a little.” Isaiah 28:10, repeated for emphasis in verse 13. Pay close attention to repetition in scripture. In Genesis, for example, we read, “And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.” Genesis 41:32.

Like the visions given to Daniel, most everything in Revelation is future to John’s time. “I will show you things which must take place after this...To show his servants the things which must shortly take place.” Revelation 4:1; 22:6. Nearly all of the book of Revelation is written using symbolic language, determined by context. When endeavoring to understand symbolic words, we must first look for definitions and correlations elsewhere within all the prophetic books, including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, then the Bible as a whole, followed by historical facts and events. There are several well-known historical events referenced in this study that, should the reader wish to verify or gain additional information on, are easily accessed via internet search.

Both Daniel and Revelation are written using a number of complex word patterns, including chiasmic structures. A chiasm is a writing style using repetition of similar ideas in the reverse order, like a mirror image of words and meanings. This is done to clarify and emphasize important points. Prophetic events and topics in Revelation are built by *progressive repetition* adding detail just as we find in the prophecies in Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10-12.

In order to appreciate and understand the meaning of God’s messages to us in the prophetic books of the Bible, we rely on His promise to provide knowledge of His Word, “...I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.” Proverbs 1:23.

Father in Heaven, please work in our lives and provide your Spirit to guide the mind of the reader with wisdom to understand Your Word. May we all find spiritual peace by adhering to your Word and committing our minds to You alone. May we understand prophecy according to your will and purpose for our lives. Amen.

Chapter 1

Daniel the Prophet

In order to begin to understand the book of Revelation, one must thoroughly understand the prophecies of Daniel. It is imperative to be familiar with Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the image in Daniel 2 and the particular additional facts shown to Daniel enabling him to interpret the king's dream. In addition, there are certain aspects necessary to understand about the dreams given to Daniel as recorded in Daniel 7 and 8. Indeed, Jesus said, "...when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand)..." Matthew 24:15. The word "understand" is very important and we will study the significance of it later in Revelation 13:18.

The dreams and visions in the book of Daniel are complete and significant studies on their own, so for the purpose of this study only the minimum facts necessary for the interpretation and understanding of the prophecy in Revelation 17 will be considered. However, the author encourages at least a casual reading of all twelve chapters of Daniel to familiarize the reader with the story and the prophecies.

The rise of the Babylonian empire was precipitated by a series of civil wars and internal strife starting in 627 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar's father, Nabopolassar, established himself as the king of the city of Babylon during this period emerging as regional leader after rooting out Egyptians from the southern Mesopotamia area. Nabopolassar died of natural causes in 605 B.C., and Nebuchadnezzar quickly assumed control of the empire, proceeding to extend its boundaries to include a vast area of the Middle East and parts of Asia Minor.

Did the people God chose to represent His character to the world, the twelve tribes of Israel, have to suffer at the hands of this pagan power? Certainly not! Why did God allow the captivity of Judah and the destruction of the city and temple dedicated to Him built by Solomon nearly 375 years earlier? Of many Bible references of this crucial time following the fall of the northern tribes to Assyria earlier in 722 B.C. (e.g. 2 Kings 24:10-17; 2 Chronicles 36:15-21; Jeremiah 25; 27:22; Micah 4:10), perhaps Jeremiah says it best;

"And the Lord has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. They said, 'Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the Lord has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.' Yet you have not listened to Me," says the Lord, "that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt." Jeremiah 25:4-7

God pled with the people to turn back to Him, and He pleads today for all who would follow Him to repent and turn away from false worship, the worship of “the works of your hands,” and to listen to Him via His Word, and *do* His commandments (Revelation 22:14).

In the first of three campaigns against Judah, Daniel and his three friends were taken captive (predicted in Isaiah 39:6-7) from Jerusalem to Babylon in 605 B.C., detailed in Daniel 1. In 603 B.C., both King Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel were given the same dream of an image representing the kings, kingdoms, and spiritual powers to follow until the end of sin on earth! The kingdoms were illustrated by metals that deteriorated in value from one to the next, along with increasing in hardness as time progressed.

“...then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” Daniel 2:35.

Through the symbolism represented by this image, the Lord revealed the civil and religious powers that were to directly affect His chosen people, the *literal* nation of Israel, and after they rejected Him as the Messiah, its successor, a people known in Scripture as *spiritual* Israel; those actuated by Jesus’ commission to make disciples of “all nations.” (Matthew 28:19). The kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome have come and gone according to this and the subsequent prophecies of Daniel 7, 8, and 11. Just over 2,600 years later, we are living at the time of the final powers represented by the feet and toes of the image with Jesus’ return to come next!

“Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.” Daniel 2:45.

Just as the different metals in the image represented kingdoms opposed to God’s people, the “Stone” and the “Mountain” in this particular passage represents a “King” that ultimately rescues His people. What or who does the stone in Daniel 2:35, 45 represent? Jesus! We read in Matthew 21:42-44,

“Jesus quoted to them from Psalm 118:22-23, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

Some fifteen hundred years before Christ's ministry on earth, Moses referred to the Lord as the "Rock" in Deuteronomy 32:3-4. Consistently, 1 Samuel 2:2 provides proof that a "Rock" or "Stone" in the Bible is also a symbol for God: "No one is holy like the Lord, for there is none besides You, nor is there any rock like our God." Here, "Lord" and "God" refer to the three members of the Godhead. Specifically, 1 Corinthians 10:4 identifies the "Rock" as Christ: "...and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."

Literally, mountains are made up of rocks. So, if Jesus, represented by the "Stone," was "cut out of the *mountain* without hands" what does the symbol, "Mountain," represent? This is a crucial question since the symbol "Mountain" appears in Daniel 2 and again in Revelation 17:9. The angel revealing the prophecy to John indicates that the seven "heads" of the scarlet beast are seven "mountains" and, in turn, "they are also seven kings." (ESV). As in Daniel, this language is clearly symbolic in nature. By comparing texts the Bible interprets itself on this matter by identifying "Mountain," in the context of Daniel 2, as a symbol for God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, of whom will fill "...the whole earth" with the glory of God (Psalm 72:19), as it was before sin! Looking further in Daniel, we read:

"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us."..."Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the *holy mountain of my God.*" Daniel 9:16,20.

Daniel equates "holy Mountain" with "Your city Jerusalem." Considering Daniel 11:45, we are given a possible symbolic *literal* fulfillment, and certainly the *spiritual* fulfillment of error coming *between* people and the true God. "And he (King of the North) shall plant the *tents of his palace* (counterfeit worship and doctrines) between the *seas* (people) and the *glorious holy mountain* (worship of our Creator God)..." This is a warning that false worship has been substituted for truth and true worship as defined by the God of the Bible.

The proper understanding of the symbolic term "mountain" is critical. We see both *literal* applications and *spiritual* applications through the *symbolic* meanings of God's city, "Jerusalem" and Satan's city, "Babylon." We find the origin of Babylon in Genesis 11; the account of the Tower of Babel in the land of Shinar. Some of the descendants of Noah rebelled by building a tower, a "high place," ignoring God's promise not to destroy the earth by flood again. From the ruins of Babel, it is likely Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was built. Later, Babylon is identified as a "harlot" and "mother of harlots."

Conversely, we find reference to Jerusalem in the story of enemy kings, including the

king of Shinar, attacking the cities where Abram's nephew Lot lived, in Genesis 14. God provided a miraculous victory to Abram's servants numbering just three hundred and eighteen. In recognition and with gratitude, Abram brought tithes and offerings to Melchizedek, king of Salem (Psalm 76:2), also referred to as Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:2, 14; 2 Chronicles 3:1; 33:15), Sion, Mount Zion, and Jerusalem. The site where the Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice Isaac is where Solomon was directed to build the temple, later rebuilt as the Jewish Second Temple, and is known today as the Dome of the Rock. Throughout the Bible we find many texts alluding to a mountain, or "high place" as important for worship practices. Where there were no natural mountains, people constructed buildings such as ziggurats to place their gods for the purpose of worship. Many mistakenly believe that Jerusalem is itself a holy place, however the Bible clarifies that only God is holy. It is His *presence* that makes a place or an object "holy" such as the "burning bush" Moses encountered as recorded in Exodus 3.

To demonstrate the understanding God's *presence*, as well as the pagan belief that gods were present in objects and certain locations, we examine some representative texts:

Moses wrote, "You will bring them in and plant them In the *mountain* of Your inheritance, In the place, O Lord, which You have made For Your own dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established." Exodus 15:17.

This correlates with Psalm 77:13a, "Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary," as well as Revelation 21:22 noting of the New Jerusalem: "But I saw no temple in it, for the *Lord God Almighty* and the *Lamb* are its *temple*."

"Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them. ... Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud. The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights." Exodus 24:12, 16-18.

What made Mount Sinai (also known as Horeb) significant was God's presence. God chose a *mountain* to reveal His presence and provide a written confirmation of His Law, the Ten Commandments.

The explicit direction from God was, "You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree." Deuteronomy 12:2. Likewise, in 1 Kings 20:23 the king of Syria was told, speaking of Israel, "...Their gods are gods of the hills..."

"Yet I have set My King on My holy *Hill* of Zion." Psalm 2:6. "I cried to the Lord

with my voice, and He heard me from His holy *hill*." Psalm 3:4. "Lord, who may abide in Your Tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy *hill*?" Psalm 15:1. "Who may ascend into the *hill* of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place?" Psalm 24:3. "Oh, send out Your light and Your truth! Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy *hill* and to your tabernacle." Psalm 43:3. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in His holy *mountain*. Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is *Mount Zion* on the sides of the north." Psalm 48:1-2. [

The words "hill," "mountain," and "mount" are translated from the Hebrew (H2022) "*har*." In Psalm 48, we see reference to God dwelling in "the north," a fact Satan understands (Isaiah 14:13) and attacks, symbolically referenced in Daniel 11:44 as "...news...from the *north*." Lucifer ("Satan" after the war in Heaven; Revelation 12), one of the covering angels assigned to protect God's law residing in the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly Sanctuary, aspired to be, not like God (represented by "fiery stones"), but to *replace* the *Son of God*:

"You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the *holy mountain of God*; You walked back and forth in the midst of *fiery stones*. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the *fiery stones*." Ezekiel 28:14-16.

Isaiah also understood the spiritual application of the term "mountain."

"Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the *mountain* of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the *mountains*, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the *mountain* of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Isaiah 2:2-3. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my *holy Mountain*, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Isaiah 11:9. "Even them I will bring to My *holy mountain*, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on My altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations." Isaiah 56:7. "Then they shall bring all your brethren for an offering to the Lord out of all nations, on horses and in chariots and in litters, on mules and on camels, to My *holy mountain Jerusalem*, says the Lord..." Isaiah 66:20.

As we have seen since sin entered our world, the enemy of souls has counterfeited everything that is important to the God of the universe. Satan's counterfeit of the city

of Jerusalem is the city of Babylon, initially *literally*, now *spiritually*. The Lord told Jeremiah,

“And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea For all the evil they have done In Zion in your sight,” says the Lord. “Behold, I am against you, O destroying *mountain*, who destroys all the earth,” says the Lord. “And I will stretch out My hand against you, Roll you down from the *rocks*, And make you a burnt *mountain*.” Jeremiah 51:24-25.

Here, God refers to Babylon as a false “mountain” of gods (rocks). As described by the prophet Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel, God’s chosen people Israel were worshiping false gods.

“Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when their slain are among their idols all around their altars, on every high hill, on all the mountaintops, under every green tree, and under everything, wherever they offered sweet incense to all their idols.” Ezekiel 6:13.

He writes, “For on My *holy Mountain*, on the *mountain* high of Israel”, says the Lord God, “there all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, shall serve Me” Ezekiel 20:40a. Alluding to Heaven, Ezekiel 34:11-15 indicates that the True Shepherd, God Himself will feed *spiritual* Israel on the “mountains” of Israel.

“Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My *holy mountain*! Let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble; For the day of the Lord is coming, For it is at hand: And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in *Mount Zion* and in Jerusalem there shall be *deliverance*, as the Lord has said, Among the remnant whom the Lord calls.” Joel 2:1, 32.

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days
That the *mountain* of the Lord’s house
Shall be established on the top of the *mountains*,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow to it.
Many nations shall come and say,
“Come, and let us go up to the *mountain* of the Lord,
To the house of the God of Jacob;
He will teach us His ways,
And we shall walk in His paths.”
For out of Zion the law shall go forth,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Micah 4:1-2.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, the *mountain* of the Lord of hosts, the holy

mountain." Zechariah 8:3. In this text the Lord is referring to Jerusalem in its re-created state after the one thousand years in Heaven. When we compare this to three texts in Revelation that define the characteristics of those who will *not* be in the holy city, we see the contrast between those who are called the "City of Truth" in contrast with Revelation 21:8, 27; 22:15, indicating that no liars will be a part of the "city." Spiritually speaking, "Jerusalem" is, or represents, the people of God. The term "Mountain," as used in the above references, is a symbolic representation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit from whence our deliverance comes!

From these references, a picture is portrayed of Satan endeavoring to create his own *symbolic* "mountain." Spiritually, this leads us to believe that worship directed other than to God, is indeed, worship of a form of Satan, a "mountain" of false gods.

A deeper analysis of Bible texts associated with "mountain," may be found at: www.danieland revelationrevealed.com in the Study Notes for Daniel 2.

In 553 B.C. Daniel was given another dream, recorded in Daniel 7. This dream featured four beasts that correlate with the kingdoms represented by the image in Daniel 2. There are several principles here that will be used to assist in the interpretation of Revelation 17. We notice that the leopard beast, which represented Greece, had four heads. This foretold the kingdom being split between four of Alexander the Great's generals, occurring in 301 B.C. Just as Daniel 2:37-38 identified Nebuchadnezzar *and Babylon* as the "head of gold," the "heads" of the leopard represented "lines of kings" ruling each of four regional "kingdoms" of Greece. The territory held by each of these four generals then fell sequentially over the next 133 years, an interpretive principle applicable to the "heads" of Revelation 17:10.

The fourth beast of Daniel 7 is described as having iron teeth and "ten" horns, followed by a little horn with eyes and a mouth that uprooted three horns. While history shows that the number "three" is a literal number, we read in Daniel 1:20 that Daniel and his three friends were "ten" times better than all the magicians and astrologers. This leads to an understanding that the number "ten" was symbolic of their superiority and likewise symbolic for the *dozens* of tribes that assumed power after Imperial Rome fell in A.D. 476. In scripture, "horns" are used to represent powers as well as kings and kingdoms. "And his brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand: And there was the hiding of his power." Habakkuk 3:4 KJV. (Daniel 7:24; 8:3-9, Zechariah 1:18-21 and Revelation 5:6 for further clarification).

A vital interpretive principle is found in Daniel 7:17; "Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth." We know that the four beasts correlate to the image and represent the *kingdoms* of the earth that persecuted God's people. This verse tells us that these "kingdoms" are also known as "kings" and since we know that each of these powers had a number of *individual kings*, we may say the four beasts the Bible indicates are four "kings," represent *lines of kings*. For example, during the nearly

645 years that Imperial Rome ruled the world, it was led by many “kings.” Also noteworthy is these kingdoms arise out of the “earth” indicating that these are civil powers that in many instances subjected themselves to a greater evil influence. We will examine and identify an evil *spiritual* power in Revelation 17:2, 18, controlling nations and civil governments in the world today!

About two years after Daniel’s dream recorded in Daniel 7, he was given another dream in 551 B.C. In this dream, recorded in Daniel 8, he was shown a ram with two horns and a goat with one large horn that was then broken and replaced by four horns. These represent the kingdoms of Medo/Persia and Greece that would follow Babylon. Consistent with the purpose of prophecy to reveal the *future*, there was no representative beast for Babylon even though it did not fall to Medo-Persia until twelve years later in 539 B.C. The two horns of the ram represent Media and Persia. The higher of the two horns coming up last represented Persia, according to Daniel 8:3, 20. This logical and consistent principle of prophecy revealing the *future*, as opposed to reviewing history, is crucial to a correct interpretation and understanding of Revelation 13 and 17.

The initial large horn on the goat that was subsequently broken represented Alexander the Great, who died at a young age, followed by a regent awaiting the maturity of offspring. Subsequently, this line was replaced by four generals who split the kingdom in 301 B.C. Both the ram and the goat illustrate a prophetic time continuum that starts with the beast body itself, proceeding to the head(s), and then on to the horns. This vital interpretative principle is consistently used in Revelation 12, 13, and 17, with exceptions in Revelation 12:3-5, 7-9, 13 for the purpose of providing historical perspective to the reader about the origin of the enemy of souls, Satan.

It is noteworthy that the “little,” “talking” horn in both Daniel 7 and 8 initially grew horizontally (against other kingdoms on earth as Imperial Rome, initially established as a republic), and then vertically (against God in Heaven, as papal Rome). This “horn” power is described as being different from the other kings described (Daniel 7:23-24). It was this little, talking horn that the reformers such as Wycliffe, Luther, Calvin, and the Wesley’s taught represented the Roman Catholic papal system. This approach of assigning prophecy to actual events is known as historical-grammatical and was decidedly very unpopular with the papal church during this time. In response to this interpretive method, the erroneous interpretive concepts of Preterism (the belief that all Bible prophecy has already taken place), and Futurism (the belief that Bible prophecy relates to the future taking place just before Jesus returns) were formulated and promoted by priests Luis De Alcasar and Francisco Ribera, respectively.

The Bible is very clear that God’s people, the saints, were preserved throughout history by divine guidance. Just as civil kingdoms persecuted God’s people in Biblical history, they have continued to do, as prophesied, in the 1,920+ years since John’s vision on Patmos in A.D. 95/96. The “Mountain” representing the Godhead (Kings and the

Kingdom of God), has preserved the “truth” and His people. Today His people exist in religions and cultures throughout the earth. The membership of the Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant religions is made up of a large number of faithful people, many of whom have submitted to, and had their characters transformed by Jesus, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus promised according to John 14:15-18. During the time of the end, God’s people will leave everything, including churches and families, in order to follow Him and His Word (Mark 13:12-13), explicitly.

In summary, we will consistently apply the interpretive principles found in Daniel to Revelation, by discerning the following meanings:

- The literal types of the Israelite offerings and sacrifices pointed to Jesus as Messiah, the “Antitype.” Jesus *replaced* these services with the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper. However, the literal worship elements of the Jewish economy have symbolic meaning to be applied to God’s end-time remnant people; *spiritual* Israel.
- The word “mountain” in prophetic passages is a symbol for a kingdom (either good or bad), and “kingdoms” are ruled by “kings.” As *literal* mountains are made up of rocks or stones, *spiritual* “mountains” represent “kingdoms” ruled by individual “kings.” The spiritual Mountain in Daniel 2:35, 45, had one “Stone” (“Lord” and “God” in 1 Samuel 2:2) carved out of a “mountain.” When the “cutting” is done, the “Stone” will supersede then destroy all the kingdoms of this world. Just as the gold head of the Daniel 2 image represented a king, a kingdom, *and* a line of kings, the “Stone” represents Jesus (who is God the Son), His kingdom (His remnant people), *and* His territory (the earth made new). Thus, a symbolic, *spiritual* mountain is comprised of a grouping of “gods;” either the true God, made up of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or false “gods” (*literal* Babylon is known to have worshiped dozens of deities). Likewise, this study reveals *spiritual* Babylon also has designated “heads” as “kings” and “mountains” arrayed against the true “Mountain” of God.
- The number “ten” is symbolic, representing a large number (Daniel 1:20; 7:7)
- The term “beast” represents a power that is *persecuting* God’s people. It may be civil or religious, taking the form of kings, kingdoms, or nations (Daniel 7:17, 23, 24; 8:20-22)
- “Heads” are powers that represent “kings” which, in turn, represent “lines of individual kings” (Daniel 2:37-38)
- “Kingdoms” refers to an authority with legislative powers over a people, having a *literal* or *spiritual* application, based on context (the “kingdom” that Christ receives in Daniel 7:13-14 is the saints themselves, correlating with the parable of the Ten Minas in Luke 19:11-27). In addition, “kingdoms” have territory.
- A specific total number of “kings” arise simultaneously, even though some cease to exist as time progresses forward (such as the four generals of Greece)
- “Horns” represent “powers” and “kings” (Psalm 75:10; 92:10; Ezekiel 29:21; 34:21; Daniel 7:7-8,20,24-25; 8:3,6-7,20; Habakkuk 3:4; Zechariah 1:18-21; Revelation 5:6)

- The continuum of time is represented in a “beast” starting at its “tail,” progressing to its “body,” then to its “heads” and “horns” (Daniel 7 and 8). Thus, when the heads of the beast appear, the beast itself becomes inactive, while the heads become active.

Chapter 2

Revelation 12 - The Cosmic Controversy Between Christ and Satan

The apostle John was a young man when he was called and privileged to walk with Jesus during his ministry here on earth. He was witness to tremendous church growth throughout empire of Imperial Rome and beyond in the decades following Christ's ascension in the spring of A.D. 31. This fulfilled the seventy week prophecy of Daniel 9:24 and specifically Daniel 9:27 indicating that, "...in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering." This prophetic time prophecy of 490 years from the giving of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem provided for in 457 B.C. confirmed in startling accuracy that in the middle of the seventieth week, three and a half years from the beginning of Christ's ministry, He was crucified.

One by one the apostles were martyred for their faith. The city of Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70 as foretold by Jesus in Matthew 24. Finally, John himself was exiled in A.D. 95 during the reign of Emperor Domitian. His exile ended upon the accession of Emperor Nerva in A.D. 96. While in prison on the Isle of Patmos, John was given the visions of Revelation. The book of Revelation is a complex literary masterpiece, including chiasms, and like the book of Daniel, the events are built by progressive repetition, each time adding important details to the original scene or event. This makes the study and understanding of just a portion of Revelation challenging since it is heavily interrelated with the prophetic books, especially Daniel. Revelation is a summary of all sixty-five previous books in symbolic language; the culmination of God's plan of salvation for humanity. As such, all previous scripture should first be prayerfully read and considered in order to comprehend Revelation. In the spirit of keeping this study as brief as possible, the author attempts to present just the pertinent facts necessary for understanding Revelation 17. This requires a thorough verse-by-verse review of Revelation 12 and 13 to ensure consistent interpretations are applied.

Revelation 12:1-17 is a summary of the great cosmic controversy between Christ and Satan.

"Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth." Revelation 12:1-2.

Throughout the Bible a woman represents a body of faith or church. For example:

"For your Maker is your husband" Isaiah 54:4; "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." 2 Corinthians 11:2; and "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." Revelation 19:7.

A chaste, pure woman dressed in white, a bride, represents the saints being prepared to meet the Groom (Christ). Conversely, a harlot, or a woman dressed accordingly (other than pure white), represents a people *claiming* to be of the true God, however, actually being of the “synagogue of Satan” (Revelation 2:9; 3:9). These claim to believe in Christ however don’t do His works. They have not the true character of Jesus. Jesus, then, is the *Husband* of all the saints. Jesus is not only the Bridegroom, He is our Creator, our “Maker,” as Isaiah 54:5 points out. Of our Creator, the writer of Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Our God, then, is the Creator of time, space, and matter, calling us to worship Him on the seventh day as a memorial to His literal six-day creation. (Exodus 20:8-11; Revelation 14:7). A prayerful study of this typology will quickly reveal the gender confusion strategy of the enemy of souls.

Jesus is the “Sun of Righteousness” (Malachi 4:2), and the church’s knowledge of Him is represented as being clothed with the sun (Isaiah 60:1-3; 61:10). As the moon has no light of its own but reflects the light of the sun, it represents the reflected knowledge of Christ and the scriptures that testify of Him. The plan of salvation, as foreshadowed in the earthly sanctuary services and furnishings testified and continue to testify of Jesus (John 5:39). The offerings and sacrificial types, however, did not provide salvation, something that the Jews, the people God had chosen to represent His true religion, had lost sight of at the time of Jesus’ ministry.

By appearing under the feet of the pure woman/church, the moon is subjected to its proper position, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet...” (Psalm 119:105). This provides a true understanding that the earthly sanctuary/tabernacle and services were patterned after the great original Sanctuary in Heaven and its services (Hebrews 8:1-6). These serve as a foundation to guide the church to the Source of Light and Life, Jesus (1 Kings 5:3; Psalm 47:3). “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” Psalms 19:1.

Fittingly, on the head of the woman/church was a garland of twelve stars representing, initially, the twelve sons/tribes of Jacob (Israel) that God ordained to share the knowledge of Him on earth (Genesis 15:5; 37:9). The twelve apostles spread the gospel throughout the world following Christ’s sacrifice *closing* the era of the *types* represented by the offerings and sacrificial services (Matthew 27:51). God’s chosen people, literal Israel, were honored to host the birth of Jesus, however, He was born into the pain of deep apostasy within the Jewish nation (Isaiah 59:9-15; 60:1-3; Joel 2:17). Referring to John Baptist Jesus said: “I am ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the Lord,”’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” John 1:23. God’s church then, to paraphrase Daniel 12:3, is made up of the wise, who turn many to Christ’s righteousness, shining as stars in the firmament.

“And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third

of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born." Revelation 12:3-4.

John is here introduced to Satan, who appears as a red-colored dragon, having seven heads, ten horns, and diadems, or crowns, on its seven heads (Revelation 12:9; 20:2). The dragon's color, red, represents sin, according to Isaiah 1:18. This introduction to the dragon is repeated and expanded upon in Revelation 13:1 and 17:3, a process we see in the book of Daniel and repeated many times in the book of Revelation. Subjects are introduced, then later repeated and enlarged upon, adding more detail and clues to identify their meanings.

The diadems or crowns on the heads of the dragon, suggest that Satan controls the seven heads that, in turn, are leaders of the *body* of the dragon. John is then taken back in time where he is shown that the dragon's "tail" drew a third of the stars of heaven, throwing them to the earth (Luke 10:18). It was the dragon's "tail" that convinced one-third of God's angels to give their allegiance to Satan. We see the continuum of time represented by the configuration of the dragon, starting with its *tail* near the time of creation (Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:7), progressing to the *body*, and then on to the *heads* and *horns*. This becomes apparent as more detail is added in Revelation 13:1-10 and 17:1-18.

For those who are students of Daniel, this time continuum is illustrated in the Daniel 2 dream of the image, with time represented as an imaginary line starting with the head and traveling straight down through the "feet" and "toes" that exist, and are destroyed, together. This time continuum is consistent with interpretation of the beasts shown and described in Daniel 7:4-8; 19-25. As Daniel is a deep study on its own, the leopard beast with four heads will serve as an example. The leopard "body" represented the nation of Greece, and its initial leader, Alexander the Great. After Alexander the Great died, four of his generals, represented by the four heads, broke the kingdom into four areas. Likewise, the goat of Daniel 8:5-8, identified as Greece in Daniel 8:21-22, depicts the very same power as the leopard in Daniel 7. The large horn foretold of Alexander the Great, that when broken was replaced with four horns; the four generals who agreed to each rule separate territories of Greece in 301 B.C. In each case, the "body" of the animal represents the kingdom and, as time moved on, the heads and horns represented subsequent "kings" and *lines of kings*.

She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne." Revelation 12:5.

This "Male Child," born to rule all nations, referred to Jesus. Jesus was born in the lineage of the people God chose to share the truth; to share the gospel to all nations; literal Israel. Claiming to be prince of our current world, Satan did his best to "devour" Jesus by instigating King Herod to kill all the babies in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:10-18). He

then tried to entice Him to use His divine powers for His own benefit, in order to negate His sacrifice for our sins during the forty days in the wilderness, before His baptism. Jesus returned to Heaven, being “caught up to God” after His ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection, as Luke wrote in Acts 1:9-11. Addressing the rule with a rod of iron is outside our current study, however at the close of the pre-advent judgment (Daniel 7:9-14; 8:13-14; 12:1; Revelation 15:8), Christ will be granted an uncontested *kingdom* comprised of His remnant people. Speaking of the nations of the world, John wrote, “He shall rule them with a rod of iron;” “And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.” Revelation 2:27; 19:15. (Psalm 2:9).

“Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” Revelation 12:6.

God’s pure church, His bride, was forced to flee religious persecution into a literal and spiritual wilderness where the Bible truths were hidden and protected. God foreordained that the first great tribulation of religious persecution, empowered by civil laws, would last 1,260 years, expressed in prophetic time as “days.” This Bible prophecy is so vital for our understanding that it is referenced in seven verses; Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5. The principle of one prophetic day equaling one literal year is supported in Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:4-6, Genesis 29:27, and Leviticus 25:1-7, and subsequently by the fulfillments of the Biblical prophecies based on *prophetic time* and *literal time*. A final tribulation will shortly begin according to Jesus’ description in Matthew 24:4-14.

The prophetic 1,260-year time period began on March 12, 538, when General Belisarius, under Emperor Justinian I, freed Rome from the Ostrogothic siege initiated over a year earlier. Immediately, Justinian’s code, Corpus Juris Civilis, was placed into effect, declaring Christianity the state religion, uniting the Roman Catholic Church with the civil authority of Eastern Rome. Anyone not connected with the Christian church became a non-citizen having no rights. The abomination of enforcing religion with civil laws was finally broken near the end of the French Revolution (1789-1799) when General Berthier took Rome for Napoleon, declaring an end to the papacy on February 15, 1798. Pope Pius VI was imprisoned five days later and taken to France where he died the following year.

“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Revelation 12:7-9.

Here we are given additional information from when the dragon was introduced in verses 3 and 4, using the “repeat and enlarge” principle of the prophetic books of Daniel

and Revelation. "Michael" is identified as Jesus, consistent with the events described in Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; and Jude 9. A prayerful study of Job 1 and 2 leads to an understanding that there are other worlds created by God in the universe and that Satan, the usurper, represented earth in God's universal councils, because Adam and Eve chose to believe Satan who had taken the form of a serpent. Lucifer, referred to as the "son of the morning" in Isaiah 14:12, was created as a special angel with the duty to protect God's law as one of two "covering" angels (Ezekiel 28:14), bringing to mind the ark of the covenant containing the Ten Commandments. He was amazing in beauty according to Ezekiel 28:13. After the war in Heaven, Satan and all the deceived angels were "cast out;" however, he retains the power to transform himself into "an angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14).

"Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down." Revelation 12:10.

The loud voice speaking to, and heard by John, is of human origin. This is known because it refers to "our God" and "our brethren." Though scripture tells us that when people die they return to dust, it also identifies a small group of people that have been taken to Heaven. These include Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and an unknown number resurrected with Jesus (Matthew 27:50-53; Ephesians 4:8) after their graves were broken open during the earthquake at Christ's crucifixion.

The Bible aptly identifies Satan as the accuser of the brethren, known as God's people in 1 Chronicles 21:1; Job 1:6; Psalm 109:6; and Zechariah 3:1. We see Satan "cast down" from his position as the greatest created individual in the universe by diminishing his power and authority in stages,

1. Driven out of Heaven with one-third of the angels near creation,
2. Failing to prevent Christ's resurrection, Satan lost his representation of earth
3. At the future close of the pre-advent judgment (Daniel 12:1b) when the saints ("a kingdom") are entrusted to the "Son of Man" (Jesus) by the "Ancient of Days" (The Father) according to Daniel 7:14,
4. When Satan is confined to earth (the bottomless pit) at Christ's second coming, and finally,
5. When he will be thrown into the lake of fire after one thousand years spent on the desolate earth (Revelation 20:1-3, 7, 10).

Continuing in Revelation 12:11, we read,

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death ("when faced with death" NASB). Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you,

having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Revelation 12:11-12.

The blood of the Lamb represents our daily justification by Jesus through His sacrifice for our sins. Isaiah confirms our justification, “He shall see the labor of his soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:11.

John, in his gospel, wrote, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29b. Consistently, John adds, “To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood” Revelation 1:5. (1 Corinthians 15:3; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:2; Revelation 5:6, 9-14). Amazing grace!

The testimony of God’s people is to be a witness through immersion baptism (Mark 1:9-11; 16:15), sharing the gospel (Malachi 3:16; Matthew 10:32-33), and the sanctification process apparent in our lives through the ongoing transformation of character (2 Corinthians 3:2-6). Jesus said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Matthew 5:48 KJV. Of major importance during the time of the end, the saints (*spiritual* Israel) have the responsibility to understand and share the meaning of the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12, to *everyone on earth*. We will briefly study parts of this passage in chapter 10. God’s people will stand firm in the face of adversity and martyrdom. The writer of Hebrews points out, “You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin” Hebrews 12:4. Paul assures us in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that all temptation is escapable through the faith of God.

Those who believe in Christ our Saviour and have their characters transformed by Him are described as heaven *dwellers* even though we are still inhabitants of this earth.

“Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.” Psalm 91:9-12. (Revelation 13:6; 21:3).

The word “woe” used in Revelation 12:12 is significant in scripture, always foretelling doom and destruction. Jesus used the term “woe” many times including when He condemned the leaders of literal Israel, the scribes and the Pharisees, (Matthew 23:13-33; Luke 11:42-51). In terms of timing, some interpret this “woe” in Revelation, as a reference to the third woe/seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15. If so, the “sounding” of the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15a) occurred on September 11, 2001, the shocking event that drew worldwide attention to the third holy war in history initiated by the “King of the South” (“radical” Islamists; Daniel 11:25-43), as foretold in Daniel 11:40a. This event triggered the United States and Western European countries to invade Iraq on March 19, 2003 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq),

however, this war was initially opposed by the Roman Catholic Church. With the pace of violent acts against Christians committed in the name of Islam increasing, Pope Francis changed the position of the Catholic Church by making calls for the nations of the world to intervene to protect Christian people groups, including writing a letter to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Secretary General of the United Nations on August 9, 2014 (http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140809_lettera-ban-ki-moon-iraq.html). The interpretation that the “King of the North” of Daniel 11:23-45, the papal church *coupled* with the legislative and military force of “Christian” nations, fulfills the initiation of the “whirlwind” prophecy of Daniel 11:40 is outside this study, however there is no conflict between these interpretations.

In the aforementioned interpretation of Daniel 11 and Revelation 8:13-9:21; 11:15a, the last three trumpets are described as three “woes” and represent the holy wars between Christianity and Islam:

First woe: Arab Islam and apostate Christianity, followed by

Second woe: Ottoman Islam and apostate Christianity, and finally,

Third woe: Radical Islam and apostate Christianity.

God’s pure church, His bride and future kingdom of saints, is always caught in the literal and spiritual *middle* of Satan’s devising schemes. Both “kings” of Daniel 11, the *South* and the *North*, are enemies of God and His remnant people.

As inhabitants of the earth and sea, we are warned that Satan will make the lives of God’s people very difficult. God’s people are admonished to “dwell” on heaven while they yet live on earth. Earth and sea *dwellers* are those people who follow the earth beast image of Revelation 13:11-17 and the sea beast of Revelation 13:1-10. These *think on* or *settle for* earthly things rather than *thinking on* or *abiding in* heavenly things. Paul describes these as those “...who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” Romans 1:25.

“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.” Revelation 12:13-16.

Here, John is shown details concerning the ongoing war between Christ and Satan, and some tactics to be used. Satan and the fallen one-third of heaven’s angels, known as demons he deceived, were to attack God’s pure church, represented by the woman of Revelation 12:1.

Throughout Scripture, a virtuous woman is used as a symbol for God's pure church (Ephesians 5:23-27). The church was given speed to escape and protection represented by the two wings of a great eagle (Exodus 19:1-5; Deuteronomy 28:49; Matthew 23:37). The pure church is nourished by God's Word and avoids false doctrines (Isaiah 8:20). "Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: For I am called by Your name, O Lord God of hosts." Jeremiah 15:16. The term "a time and times and half the time," is a direct link to Daniel 7:25, and is referencing the 1,260 year period of tribulation, the first great tribulation Jesus described in Matthew 24:21 and Mark 13:19-20. In this parallel prophecy, we are about to see the final, global tribulation to occur before Jesus returns. Many were protected by being put to rest and continue to await the sound of Jesus' trumpet when He returns. We also see Satan being described as the serpent, a direct reference to the temptation in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5; Revelation 20:2).

"Then he said to me, the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues." Revelation 17:15. As water is a symbol for peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, Satan caused armies to pursue the pure church into the *literal* wilderness, creating a *spiritual* wilderness of false doctrines in an effort to extinguish the truth of God's law and the grace extended by Jesus' sacrifice. Revelation 12:16 alludes to Protestants escaping religious persecution in Europe, establishing colonies in the Americas. In addition, there were some nations, including the Ottoman Empire, that assisted God's people by blocking armies sent to persecute them, providing shelter during the time of the reformers, most notably Martin Luther. Later, the French Revolution was largely a rebellion against the papal church system that persecuted those attempting to adhere to the truths of the Bible, as well as people who desired to abandon all laws to pursue immorality, secularism, and atheism.

A pure woman, representing God's people, went into the wilderness. A harlot, the organized papal church formed in the early centuries by mixing pagan worship elements with the pure word of God as a compromise to gain power. Her harlot daughters (apostate "protestant" Christian religions), formed during, and after, the 1,260 year tribulation that ended in 1798.

"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17.

The King James Version more accurately renders the "rest of her offspring" as "remnant of her seed." This remnant, or small portion, studied to the point of understanding that the earthly sanctuary offerings and sacrifices both typified Jesus' sacrifice and were a model of the true sanctuary in Heaven. How does Satan make war? By creating a counterfeit trinity of the true Father, Son, and Spirit. Satan himself is the abyss/bottomless pit beast (Revelation 11:7), initiating and spreading atheism,

evolution, secularism, and sexual immorality that arose so blatantly in the 1700's, leading up to, and during, the time of the French Revolution referenced in Revelation 11:7-13. He is behind the unifying of nations acting against God's law and all those who adhere to it. Satan infiltrated the Christian church causing it to arise from among the peoples and enforce its own doctrines and teachings by civil legislation, blaspheming God by persecuting the saints (1 Timothy 1:13). Satan is causing apostate Protestants to overturn the fourth commandment, via their influence on civil authorities, by supporting legislation in direct opposition to God's Word. Through an evil trinity of spiritualism, the papal church system, and apostate Protestantism, God's people are even now subjected to terrible persecution that is becoming worldwide in scope right before our eyes.

Revelation 12:17b provides the definition of the end time saints: they are those that keep the Ten Commandments and the testimony of all God's prophets out of devotion and honor for the Creator and Saviour, receiving the new covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-33. John further defines the saints as those who,

“Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”
Revelation 14:7.

This text specifically calls attention to the fourth commandment:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day” “Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8, 11. (*Emphasis added*)

Finally, the Book of Revelation reveals Jesus, the Divine Author of Bible prophecy: “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10.

In summary, we will consistently apply the interpretive principles found in Revelation 12, by discerning the following meanings:

- A “woman” refers to a group of people claiming to believe in God, a “church”
- A headdress such as a “garland” or “diadem” or “crown” denotes a commitment to either God or Satan depending on application and context
- The continuum of time is represented as starting at the rear or tail of a beast and progressing forward to the body, heads, and horns
- The configuration of the dragon (Satan) shows he has been influencing a false or counterfeit “Christian church,” as well as the nations, throughout earth's history and is further referenced and described in Revelation 13 and 17
- “Wilderness” is *literally* indicative of a sparsely populated area, and *spiritually* represents the inability to influence or control a large population
- “Water” in the form of a “flood,” represents people as defined in Revelation 17:15

- The “pure woman” has “offspring” referring to the true Christian remnant

Chapter 3

Revelation 13:1-10 – The Sea Beast Rise of the Papal Church

John had been taken in vision to the temple in Heaven (Revelation 11:19) for the description he recorded in Revelation 12. For Revelation 13, John is taken in vision back to earth where he is shown, and describes, two beasts, followed by a call for wisdom. In this chapter, we study the attributes of the first beast from the sea, using the Bible itself to interpret the meaning of the symbolic terms used.

John is shown in vision the rise of a great power coming from a populated area symbolized by the sea (Revelation 17:15).

“Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.” Revelation 13:1.

This sea beast comes up within large population centers and Revelation 11:2 warns that the “Gentiles” would be hostile to the saints. The attempt to enforce ecclesiastical uniformity without regard to literal Biblical guidance began in the middle of the second century. Though not invested with legislative power, Pope Pius I (A.D. 140-155) decreed that Easter should only be kept on a Sunday. John was earlier shown that the Gentiles would “...tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.” Revelation 11:2b. The “holy city” represents *spiritual* Jerusalem (the saints) and the forty-two months equates to 1,260 days/years (42 x 30 days), consistent with interpretative principles applied to the *prophetic time* prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation. As noted earlier in Revelation 12:6, the papal system received enforcement powers in A.D. 538. The term “beast” is used in Daniel 7 and 8, next appearing in Revelation 11:7, “... the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against *them*.” “*Them*” refers to the Old and New Testaments, that testify of God’s truth and inspired prophecies from His “mouth” (Revelation 11:5). Further, the Bible teaches us to “Worship God! For the *testimony* of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” Revelation 19:10b. The consistent pattern is that whenever the word “beast” is used, it refers to persecution of the saints and bias against every law and institution associated with the true, Creator God.

This beast is configured similarly as the dragon in Revelation 12. Consistent with the prophecies in Daniel, additional detail is added; the ten horns have “crowns” and there is a blasphemous name on each of the seven heads.

As we consider the blasphemous name, the Bible indicated blasphemy is committed by falsely claiming to be God (John 10:33), claiming the power to forgive sins (Matthew 9:3; 26:65; Mark 2:7; Luke 5:21), or by persecuting God’s true people (1 Timothy 1:13). Satan has deceived many by carrying over an *earthly* priesthood from pagan tradition

into the papal church as well as some other professed Christian religions. This is a direct affront to Christ's ministry as our High Priest in Heaven because only He can forgive sin through the blood of His sacrifice. This is to be expected because Satan counterfeits God and truth in every imaginable way. The fact that there is a blasphemous name (singular) on the seven heads, *of the beast*, provides evidence that this beast is a monolithic, religious power. Civil powers do not claim to forgive sin, though through the influence of religious pressure they have, and do persecute, either overtly or by choosing not to enforce their own religious freedom laws. The seven heads on the beast are "kings" or leaders of a religious power. This persecuting beast, described as a "little/talking horn" power in Daniel 7:8; 8:10-12, was to largely rely on outside enforcement to do its bidding, as foretold in Daniel 8:23-24. A blasphemous name replaces the "crowns" on the seven heads of the Revelation 12:3 dragon, representing spiritual domination granted by Satan, rallied and aligned against the God of Heaven.

The sea beast was also described as having "ten" horns *with* crowns. The "crowns" denote that these powers will be granted authority by a greater power, the "dragon." We will learn much more about these "horns" in chapter 8, covering Revelation 17:12-17. Consistent with the beasts of the book of Daniel, these "ten" horns derive power from the beast they are situated on. As we learned in Daniel 1:20 and 7:7, 20, the number "ten" can represent any significant number and as in Daniel, it is symbolic for a substantial number.

John describes the sea beast as follows:

"Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of the lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. Revelation 13:2.

A review of Daniel 7 shows these very same animals were identified with civil kingdoms. However John lists them intentionally in reverse order as if he was looking back in time, which is accurate. A careful reading of this verse shows that this sea beast had the *characteristics* of the kingdoms represented by the animals in Daniel 7. Daniel was shown these kingdoms *future to his day*. Looking *back* from John's day (A.D. 95-96) the leopard represented Greece, known for being fast, cunning, calculating, and stealthy. The bear represented Medo-Persia, known to use great deadly force and absolute, unchangeable laws to control its subjects. The lion represented Babylon, that spoke with great authority, having power over all the earth (Daniel 2:37-38). The great beast of Daniel 7 that represented Imperial Rome is not here listed simply because Rome was at the height of its power when John was given the Revelation vision, and he certainly was well aware of its great strength! Today, we have the benefit of looking back in history noting that Imperial Rome and, specifically, the power of the Western Roman empire evolved into papal Rome, just as the prophecy of the little/talking horn of Daniel 7 (553 B.C.) and 8 (551 B.C.) foretold, having all the evil *characteristics* of the former *civil*

kingdoms that ruled the world. John's sea beast did not represent these past kingdoms; it just had the *characteristics, including image worship*, of each of them.

How did the civil power of Imperial Rome transfer to papal Rome? Literally, Satan gave the blasphemous sea beast, (the papacy), the city of Rome when Emperor Constantine moved the capital to Byzantium, renaming it Constantinople (current day Istanbul) in A.D. 330. This left the Bishop of Rome as the leading figure and power structure remaining in the city. Papal Rome went on to control Europe from 538 to 1798, using civil authority to enforce religious tenets, an "abomination of desolation," legislating and persecuting matters of conscience it defined as heresy. Spiritually, the "Christian" Roman church, seeking to convert the pagan society of the Roman empire, integrated pagan practices, holidays, and icons into the worship traditions of the church. (For further study on the prophetic characteristics of this religious power, see Daniel 7:8, 11, 20-21, 25; 8:9-12, 19, 23-25; 11:23-45).

The vision continued and John wrote:

"And I saw one of his heads as if it has been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast."
Revelation 13:3.

This verse provides a major clue to identify the seven heads that lead the sea beast. As we learned previously in Daniel 7:25; 12:7 and in Revelation 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; 13:5, God was initially to preserve His people through an extended period of persecution for 1,260 years, spanning from 538 to 1798. Various characteristics of the papal church during this period, known as the "Middle Ages" or "Dark Ages," were revealed to John and recorded in Revelation 2:18-3:6. On February 20, 1798, the head of the papacy, Pope Pius VI, was taken prisoner and the power of the Roman Catholic Church was removed completely for a short time, allowing Bible truth to flourish. John was shown, however, this "deadly wound" was to be healed and the whole world would follow the sea beast at a later time. Interestingly, the pope next elected to take the place of Pius VI, chose to take the name Pius VII. In addition, in 1929 Italy entered into the Lateran Treaty granting sovereign status to the Vatican, ruled by Pope Pius XI. Coincidence? Not likely!

We are provided a preciseness that cannot be ignored considering current events in the world today. Indeed, the prophecy starting with the following verse, like Matthew 24, is a prophetic parallel, with initial *and* end time fulfillments.

"So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worship the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" Revelation 13:4.

Jesus made it abundantly clear that true worship is incompatible with non-Biblical doctrine. "And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of

men." Matthew 15:9. One does not have to look too far to find many manmade worship traditions that have no Biblical foundation. Here we see that by worshiping the sea beast/papacy, people are worshiping the power behind it, Satan. These that blaspheme God by claiming salvation through His Son but denying His Laws are said to be members of the "synagogue of Satan" in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9. The Roman Catholic Church makes it abundantly clear that its authority is greater than God's Word. "Sunday is our mark of authority...the church is above the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact." The Catholic Record of London, Ontario, Canada, September 1, 1923 (<http://biblelight.net/c-record.htm>; <http://biblelight.net/Sources/Catholic-Record-6-shade.gif>).

In a letter from T. Enright Csr, Bishop of St. Alphonsus Church, St. Louis, Missouri, June, 1905, we read:

"Dear Friend, I have offered and still offer \$1000 to any one who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound, under grievous sin to keep Sunday holy. It was the Catholic Church which made the law obliging us to keep Sunday holy. The church made this law long after the Bible was written. Hence said law is not in the Bible. Christ, our Lord empowered his church to make laws binding in conscience. He said to his apostles and their lawful successors in the priesthood "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be binding in heaven." Mth. 16:19. Mth. 18:17. Luke 16:19. The Cath. Church abolished not only the Sabbath, but all the other Jewish festivals.

Pray and study. I shall be always glad to help you as long as you honestly seek the truth.

Respectfully,

T. Enright Csr" <http://www.iaua.name/Letter.html> (as of 03/19/2018)

As the papacy is perceived to be on high moral ground and the voice of "Christianity" in our time, no individual or entity is successfully "able to make war" against, or criticize it, to the point of diminishing its growing power and influence in the world today.

"And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven." Revelation 13:5-6.

The papacy exercised persecutory power for forty-two *prophetic months* (1,260 days/years, ended in 1798). It developed a spiritual arrogance that was absolute in power.

“I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one, coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.” Daniel 7:8. (The three horns were significant Arian tribes led by kings, opposed to the papal religion, eradicated by civil powers at the church’s bidding, between 534 and 556. This history is beyond our current study).

The papacy blasphemed God by claiming the pope to be the Vicar of God or God’s representative on earth, with the power to forgive sins by its priests, substituting for Christ’s intercessory work in the heavenly Sanctuary (Hebrews 8-10; Revelation 8:3). The papacy directly, and indirectly used leverage over the kings of nations it controlled, to kill millions of God’s people during the “Middle Ages.” It did its best to silence the reformers, many of which identified the Roman church, as symbolized by the sea beast.

There are interesting parallels as forty-two months is three and a half years. This is not only the length of Christ’s ministry, it’s also the length of time that France banned Christianity (11/26/1793 to 6/17/1797), initiated by the Reign of Terror (Revelation 11:7-10), during the French Revolution. Indeed, three and a half years is the length of time God withheld rain (a symbol for the Holy Spirit) when Ahab (representing civil authorities), joined with his pagan wife Jezebel (representing the papal church), and the prophets of Baal and the Asherah (representing apostate Protestant “daughters”) in opposition of the prophet Elijah (representing God’s end time remnant people). These are excellent studies and parallels for us to further understand that there are no coincidences in Scripture.

In Revelation 13:6, we see the papacy blaspheming God. The phrase, “he opened his mouth,” is a precursor to important speech. The papal church blasphemes three things; God’s name (an insult to God’s character), God’s “tabernacle” (typifying the plan of salvation in the symbols of each of its articles of furniture), and those who dwell on heavenly themes, God’s people. Earlier, it was noted that the saints are to dwell on (meaning *think on*) Heaven while continuing to reside on earth. Interestingly, Paul’s prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 parallels and identifies the character attributes of this same beast; “...the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Satan has always wanted to be God, to reside in the “sides of the north” (Isaiah 14:12-15), to receive worship. He is the “dragon” power behind the papacy that claims to be the true church while all other churches are false. Satan claims to switch places with the Son of God, substituting his *priesthood* for that of Christ’s (Hebrews 9:11-15). In Daniel 8:11a we read, “He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host.” Jesus, our Messiah, is the Prince of the “host;” His people of all the ages (Daniel 9:25). Satan deceived church leaders to take an ecumenical approach to growing the church by integrating pagan practices into worship. Spiritually, paganism was, and continues to be, “exalted” by the celebration of Easter, adapted from the

fertility goddess Estere, by the pagan belief that spirits came back to their tombs (Halloween, or Holy Evening), turning the pagan holy fir tree into hot crossed buns, and Christmas, an adaptation of the sun god, Deus Sol Invictus. False "Christian" doctrines include the concept of "original sin," "infused righteousness," "sacraments," "transubstantiation," merit based eternal life, and "indulgences," none of which have Biblical support. "The mighty Catholic Church was little more than the Roman Empire baptized." Alexander Clarence Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church*, p. 148. We must avoid any and all false spiritual meaning associated with these *religious* holidays and rituals of human origin that might inadvertently lead others to believe God sanctioned them as sacred in any way.

"It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation." Revelation 13:7.

The sea beast/papacy persecuted God's people for 1,260 long years, temporarily ceasing in 1798. This lengthy period was referred to as the "tribulation" by Jesus, as recorded in Matthew 24:21-22, 29 and Mark 13:19-20, 24. This is an important point to understand and those who prayerfully read and study these two gospel sources, within the larger contexts of these chapters, will gain great insight. Much of Christendom is deceived on the nature of the final tribulation still to come believing that it will last either three and half or seven years punctuated by a *partial* rapture. To be sure, there will be a great persecution known as Jacob's time of trouble such as the world has never before experienced (Jeremiah 30:5-7; Daniel 12:1b). This interpretive error is inconsistent from what the Bible says, providing misunderstanding of the time prophecies relating to the "tribulation" and is giving false comfort that God will provide a *second chance*, after first coming to rescue the righteous. There is no Biblical support for these theories. The Bible is very clear about Jesus' return. Ever since the seemingly fatal wound the papal church was dealt in 1798, it has been getting stronger, extending its power via its sovereign state status within the nations of earth, and influencing wars through civil governments and the United Nations, while building influence in the United States. Soon,

"All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If anyone has an ear, let him hear." Revelation 13:8-9.

How will they worship him? By choosing to ignore the Ten Commandments, specifically the fourth that starts with "Remember." The "Book of Life" is a reference to God's written archives mentioned directly at least seven times in the Bible (Exodus 32:33; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 20:12; 21:27). Those who have accepted Christ's robe of righteousness (Isaiah 61:10) will keep God's law out of devotion and respect for Him. Their names will remain in the Book of Life. It is the law itself that defines what sin is. It is here that we are directed to Jesus, the Lamb of God that was slain for our sins (1 Peter 1:19-21). Revelation 13:9 pronounces an emphatic

command for all to pay close attention to these words:

“He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.”
Revelation 13:10.

The papacy teaches a blended, corrupted system of worship that leads people into the captivity of sin (Romans 7:23; 2 Timothy 3:6). For centuries the papacy persecuted all who refused to follow its pagan practices (Daniel 8:23-25). Literally, Napoleon declared an end of the papacy on February 15, 1798. General Berthier arrested Pope Pius VI on February 20, taking him to France, where he died in prison in 1799. *Spiritually*, Jesus will put an end to Satan’s counterfeit religions when He receives the kingdom of the saints and soon after that, will *literally* return to resurrect the saints and to take His living remnant people, the “kingdom,” (Daniel 7:14) to Heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).

The patience and faith of all the saints will take the form of all those who resist defilement and ask for Christ’s sanctifying, character transforming power in their lives. “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:12. We, living in the era of the church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22), are greeted with Jesus’ offer in verse 20, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.” Amen! Again, those claiming to be followers of Jesus, but lie, are described as being of the “synagogue of Satan” in Revelation 2:9; 3:9. May we each leave the lukewarm Laodicean church and join the church of Philadelphia described in Revelation 3:7-13 by opening the door of our hearts for Jesus!

In summary, we consistently carry forward the interpretive principles found in Revelation 13:1-10, by discerning the following meanings:

- Just as we understand “water” to represent people, a “sea” represents a large population (Isaiah 17:12; Jeremiah 51:13; Revelation 17:15)
- The “sea beast” is the Roman Catholic Church system, referenced in Daniel 7:8; 8:9 as the “little, talking horn” power
- The term “beast,” is used when a civil or religious power, coupled with civil authority, persecutes God’s people, coercing matters of conscience
- The “heads” represent the lines of leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, the popes
- “Crowns” indicate a power that is coronated by a higher power

Special note to Christian readers: The Christian “church” is comprised of approximately 2.4 billion people, dispersed among thousands of church systems and organized religions. The Roman Catholic Church system is the largest, and most enduring, of all. While nearly all of these church structures are corrupted by non-Biblical doctrines, the individual members have, or will have, opportunity to learn and acknowledge the absolute truths of the Bible before earth’s probation is closed. It is in the spirit of God’s

grace and absolute truth, that this study exposes and discusses the meaning of the symbols in Bible prophecy specifically provided by God for the last generation.

Chapter 4

Revelation 13:11-17 – The Earth Beast Rise of the United States of America and Apostate Protestantism

The Lord continued to reveal the future to John in vision and he wrote:

“Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.” Revelation 13:11.

This beast has two horns that are *like* a lamb however it is not a lamb. Beginning with the Genesis account of Cain and Abel, continuing throughout the Old Testament sacrificial services, the lamb is always a symbol for Christ. This continues in the New Testament with John the Baptist recognized Him by saying “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29 (Revelation 5 provides a summation). This beast is seen coming out of the earth, meaning that this power was to arise differently than the powers preceding it that came from the “sea” (Daniel 7:3). Recalling that Revelation 12:16 spoke of the “earth” helping the woman (the saints), we are given a picture of a power with a Christian foundation emerging from a sparsely populated area. Its two horns do *not* have crowns, significant because the “ten” horns on the sea beast *did* have crowns. This earth beast is the United States of America (USA), and it was formed as a republic with no kings or monarchy. It was initiated as a Christian nation, and its power comes from two founding principles, republicanism and Protestantism, including civic and religious freedom for all. The people groups forming the USA had escaped religious persecution and governments that did not grant equal rights to all its citizens. By forming its Constitution with both freedoms, the USA became the most powerful and successful nation the earth has ever witnessed.

Revelation 13:11 continues, indicating that the earth beast spoke as a dragon. A civil power “speaks” through its legislative branches. The USA then, speaks according to Satan, the dragon. For over two centuries the USA has been a shining light on earth for its Judeo Christian values, including a legal structure that has not conflicted with God’s law. We have seen a steady decline in society during the past five or six decades, similar to the fate that France experienced leading up to, and during, its revolution (1789 – 1799). Foretelling that era, Revelation 11:8 says of France, “...the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt...” Sodom was known for its sexual depravity (Genesis 19), and Egypt denied the existence of God (Exodus 5:2), both of which have become common in the USA in the past few decades. Indeed, much of Revelation 11 has a dual fulfillment including both revolutionary France and the end time worldwide rebellion against God.

While in decline, the USA had not “spoken,” using legislation to compel people to act against their conscience, up until 2015. On June 26, 2015 the highest legislative body in the nation, the Supreme Court, overturned God’s institution of marriage being only

between a man and a woman. This ruling is a direct affront to God, His law, and creation itself. Further, this relationship runs counter to the Biblical concept of Jesus as the “Bridegroom” and His church symbolized as the “bride.” Coupled with the seventh-day Sabbath as a sacred memorial to the Creator, these two institutions had their origin in the creation week (Genesis 1-2). This ruling is leading to a rapid increase in lawlessness and licentiousness, and an overall decline of the world’s civilization will occur. This growing anarchy is leading to a populous movement in the USA that will demand that their legislators pass laws to legislate a false worship by its own definition, a works-based form similar to that of Cain’s offering (Genesis 4), in a failing bid to regain God’s blessing in the face of societal decline and disasters of all kinds.

“And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” Revelation 13:12.

The “first beast,” the papacy, lost the civil powers to enforce its doctrines in 1798 and has ever since been plotting to regain the authority to persecute those who hold that the Bible is God’s unerring Word, always taking precedent above the laws of man. As was earlier discovered, the term “beast” is used when a civil or religious authority is persecuting the saints. From a prayerful, careful reading of this verse, the Lord is telling us that the papacy will initially regain persecutory powers (its “deadly wound” will be fully “healed”), in Western Europe, where it has enjoyed close governmental relationships for many centuries (e.g. <http://blog.acton.org/archives/99351-who-really-benefits-from-polands-sunday-shopping-ban.html>). The relationship between the papal church and the various governments of Western Europe, was foretold in the dreams of the image in Daniel 2. The various metals in the image represented nations. In Jeremiah 18:6, we see the Lord equating Israel, invested with God’s true religion, as clay in a potter’s hand. Daniel 2:41 describes the feet as “iron mixed with *miry* clay” KJV. This miry, or “sticky” clay, represents a close relationship. (The composition of the clay in the toes is distinctly different in Daniel 2:42, using the Aramaic word “chasaph,” meaning “brittle” ESV). The USA will adopt the same false worship forms, then cause all the earth’s nations to follow the same practices, possibly via some leveraged position, use of the United Nations (e.g. <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>), or appeal for religious revival amid global unrest, wars, and terrible natural disasters. Legislation will be demanded by a populous movement eager to exchange freedom for supposed safety, without regard for constitutional rights. They will state that for the “common good” certain individual rights will need to be waived. It will be urged by a vast majority that the earth needs a “sabbath” rest, thereby causing “...*the earth*...to worship” the day of the “first beast,” Sunday. These terrible events are certain, as Jesus described in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, however, the antidote is not legislation or even the practice of religion; it is complete and total surrender to Jesus our Saviour. Nevertheless, using similar reasoning as did Caiaphas when he said “...it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish”

(John 11:50; 18:14), the USA will finally justify setting aside the First Amendment right to exercise freedom of religion and compel and enforce worship contrary to the Ten Commandments.

The Catholic Church unashamedly claims to have used its authority to change the Sabbath from the seventh-day to the first-day. Apostate Protestant leaders have followed the Sunday institution in the face of overwhelming evidence that the papacy is symbolized by the little/talking horn of Daniel 7 and 8, directly fulfilling the prophecy "...And shall intend to change times and law..." Daniel 7:25. The Catholic Catechism changes the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 by completely eliminating the second commandment about idol worship, eliminating "seventh day" from the fourth commandment, then dividing the tenth commandment into two, in order to retain "ten" commandments. In addition, Pope Gregory XIII (1572-1585) instituted the calendar used today in most of the world. The Gregorian calendar was introduced in 1582, changing the start of a new day from the evening, instituted at creation (Genesis 1), to midnight.

The passage of Daniel 11:23-45 reveals much about the papacy, here identified as the King of the North. One point made has bearing here. Daniel 11:45a says of the papacy, "And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain..." This symbolic language indicates that its doctrines have been placed *between* the people (seas) and the Godhead (glorious holy mountain), testified of by God's Word. These false doctrines have obstructed true worship, according to the Bible, between the people and God the Creator through a compelled, counterfeit "sanctuary" of worship (Daniel 8:11). This action recalls 2 Thessalonians 2:4, "...he sits as God in the temple of God..." Conversely, the Bible teaches, "Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary" (Psalm 77:13a), as the writer of Hebrews describes so well in Hebrews 8:1-6. John was shown Christ's ministrations in the heavenly Sanctuary, witnessing in Revelation 5:6, "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..."

As a complete repudiation of the Creator, Sunday sacredness will be legislated in the USA, demanded by a distraught, popular voice of the multitudes along with apostate Protestant leaders. Legislative leaders controlling the three branches of the United States government will comply, despite and in disregard to the Constitutional right of religious freedom. This earth beast, then, is the United States government and its agencies of enforcement, encouraged by the religious "right" of apostate Protestant leaders, fostering an ecumenical relationship with the Roman Catholic Church.

"He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven upon the earth in the sight of men." Revelation 13:13.

Revelation 13:13 indicates that God will grant Satan the power to *literally* counterfeit Elijah's experience on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16-45), though this time the immediate

outcome will be different. Those who have armed themselves with God's Word will not be deceived, however this evil angel will have the appearance of a wonderful manifestation of light. Satan will use this manifestation to communicate unbiblical doctrines by impersonating Christ (Matthew 24:23-25; Mark 13:21-23; Luke 17:22-37; Galatians 1:6-9). He will call for *Sunday* sacredness and worship.

There are also *spiritual* fulfillments in the form of false revivals, preceding a true revival the Bible calls the latter rain, indicating that the Spirit will come with far greater power than the former rain that took place on the Day of Pentecost just after Jesus returned to Heaven, forty days after His resurrection. Just as God's "fire" represented the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Satan's "fire" is a symbol for "unclean" spirits that will deceive a large percentage of the earth's inhabitants. (For further study on the *former* and *latter* rains, see Deuteronomy 11:1-17; Isaiah 10:27; 58:12; 60:1-3; Ezekiel 43:2; Hosea 6:3; Joel 2:1-32; Habakkuk 2:3,14; Malachi 3:7-16; 4:5; Acts 1:14; 2:1-4,17,21; 3:19-20).

"And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived."
Revelation 13:14.

In Revelation 13:14, we find a clear description of the coming actions, leading to religious persecution in the United States. The United States will make an image, a copy of Sunday legislation that will have first been enacted in Europe, and the actions taken will be similar to the powers held by the papacy before its "wound" in 1798. The United States, encouraged by apostate Protestant leadership, with the backing of a swelling populous voice, will become the "false prophet" referred to in Revelation 16:13; 19:20.

The earth beast/USA/false prophet will set up a system providing enabling legislation that prescribes punishments for those who firmly follow God's law rather than man's.

"He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed." Revelation 13:15.

Laws concerning Sunday sacredness will initially be a minor intrusion under the guise of promoting family values, environmental protection, spiritual wellbeing, physical rest, and national allegiance shared with the majority. They will *not* be religious in nature, *initially*. As society continues its rapid decline into lawlessness, and, in the face of increasing "natural" disasters, persecution of seventh-day Sabbath keepers, those honoring the Bible literally as God's Word, will increase with penalties becoming more stringent, up to, and including, death.

What will trigger these laws? It's not hard to see the third holy war conflict between so called Christian peoples and nations warring with Muslims and Islamic nations, leading to a test of national loyalty differentiating those who follow one or the other. Already, leaders are talking about administering an "ideological test" to determine the sincerity of immigrants. Interestingly, Islam's holy day is Friday, while the "Christian" holy day is Sunday. One way of identifying Muslim believers in the many countries under attack, would be to have them repudiate their religion and affirm Sunday sacredness as a test of citizenship, and to receive state benefits. God's people will watch and see how this conflict develops, praying for the opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus with our Muslim friends and neighbors. Already, those who believe in the literal Bible have been labeled as *extremists* and *fundamentalists* in the United States, and by Pope Francis. The time is rapidly approaching when all people will be faced with a choice to either follow God's Ten Commandments, acknowledging that He exists and is our Creator, or, the laws of man. Satan demands complete allegiance. Our Redeemer pleads for it but does not force it.

Naturally, the saints will be cast in the most negative, derisive light possible. Every past action and communication will be brought to light in order to embarrass, coerce, and discredit God's people. The vast majority will compromise absolute Bible truth in order to avoid personal conflict and earthly loss. As leaders yield their integrity for earthly power and comfort, Satan will, just as he did with King Herod and throughout the dark ages, influence wave after wave of persecution in order to force allegiance to him. Similar to the story of Esther in the Bible, an order will go forth to kill all Sabbath keepers on a certain date. (Esther 3:12-13).

One of the early punishments designed to induce all to acknowledge the laws of man, including Sunday sacredness, will be to restrict commerce.

"He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." Revelation 13:16-17.

This restriction will grow to become a worldwide law, and will likely be touted as a way to monitor and control trafficking of illegal substances, goods, and services. The technology, both hardware and software, is operational and could easily be accomplished, even retaining cash but requiring a "smart" identification card or biometric scan for every transaction. Already vast data banks have years of historical data on every person who travels and/or communicates electronically.

Here, we are introduced to the "mark of the beast." In Isaiah 66:19, the Lord describes it as a "sign" that will be set among "Those who sanctify *themselves*..." (Isaiah 66:17). It is described as being in either the forehead or the right hands of all people that wish to continue to transact business, buy food, obtain health care and medicines, or pay

mortgages, utilities, and buy fuel. These terms, like most in Revelation, are symbolic. The forehead is the seat of learning, character, and intelligence, and to receive the mark of the beast there, is to truly believe that the Roman Catholic Church had the authority it claims, to change the time and laws of God (Daniel 7:25).

To receive the mark of the beast on the “right hand” refers to people who don’t agree with the beast, however, acquiesce because of fear of persecution or peer pressure from family, friends or co-workers, or threatened release of embarrassing or damaging information. These will lack faith that God, who created the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, is able to supply all our needs and forgive all our sins. A careful study of the earthly cost of discipleship is well worth our prayerful consideration as Jesus taught in Luke 9:57-62.

Those who stand firm in their Bible based convictions, a remnant who “escape” according to Isaiah 66:19, will receive God’s seal and will evangelize the nations.

“Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.” Revelation 7:2-3.

Notice God’s seal is only given in the foreheads of the saints. This indicates the use of our intelligence when we consider God’s creation week, His plan of salvation, the 100% veracity of the prophets, and the sacrifice of Christ’s own blood to pay the price of our sins...such amazing grace! It is faith in the Lord that will enable the saints to place earthly things in the perspective of spending eternity with our Creator and Saviour. God’s seal is our devoted worship according to His Law, the Ten Commandments (Revelation 14:7, 11-12), including all His statutes, precepts, and judgments as provided to Moses. God’s seal is also described in Ezekiel 9:4, where we learn that those receiving it have obtained the very character of God and perfection in Christ, while mourning those who have chosen to serve the world.

As noted in chapter 3, legislation attempting to govern or control man’s duty to God as He defined at creation, and in the first four commandments (Exodus 20:3-11), is an abomination. Jesus warns His people in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 what to watch for and do at this time. He comingled two important events; that of the literal destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), and His rising from (completing) judgment during the time of the end. As the siege of Jerusalem by Gaius Cestius Gallus during the Feast of Tabernacles in A.D. 66 was the sign to leave cities, Sunday legislation will be our sign to leave. Just as all Christians escaped the horrific events by leaving Jerusalem, His people will heed the warning and immediately are to leave the cities *as* Sunday legislation is proposed, in our immediate future. The “abomination of desolation” prediction had a literal, local fulfillment when Titus resumed the siege three and one half years later with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and will have a worldwide *literal* and *spiritual*

fulfillment when man's laws conflict with God's law. The United States is a "beast," by overturning God's law of marriage being between one man and one woman.

In summary, we will consistently carry forward the interpretive principles found in Revelation 13:11-17, by discerning the following meanings:

- The "earth beast" or "lamb like beast" represents the United States of America, coming under the influence of apostate Protestants
- The "image" is a *copy* of legislated Sunday sacredness, enacted through papal influence, and demanded by a "majority," anxious to give up religious freedom for supposed "peace and safety" (Ezekiel 7:25; 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:3)
- The "mark of the beast" is the acceptance of man-made laws and doctrines that conflict with God's law, in order to conduct commerce and business transactions

Chapter 5

Revelation 13:18 – Wisdom, Understanding, and Calculation

The word “wisdom” in Revelation 13:18 is directly linked to Revelation 17:9, indicating this call for *calculation* involves the “heads” of the dragon/beast described in Revelation 12, 13, and 17.

“Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.” Revelation 13:18.

This statement plays a critical role in understanding the complex language used in Revelation 17:8-11. Again, every word has significant meaning. A careful reading reveals the angel indicating that this number will be challenging to interpret, will take a precise mathematical calculation, and will be identified by those with “understanding.” Paul wrote to the faithful in the Ephesus church,

“...I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the *spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened*; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” Ephesians 1:15-18. (*emphasis supplied*).

The angel Gabriel was assigned to Daniel to make him *understand* the visions he was given (Daniel 8:16-17; 9:23, 25; 10:11-12, 14; 11:33; 12:10). Key to Daniel’s comprehension, was his prayerful desire to “understand” (Daniel 9:13). In particular, Daniel 12:10 says, “Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and *none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.*” Jesus called for understanding when reading Daniel saying, “Therefore when you see the *abomination of desolation*, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (*whoever reads, let him understand*).” Matthew 24:15 (Mark 13:14). The key to understanding is to *hear* Jesus (“...Hear Me, everyone, and *understand*,” Mark 7:14) by prayerfully reading His Word, the Bible. “And He opened their *understanding*, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.” Luke 24:45. “...may the Lord give you *understanding* in all things.” 2 Timothy 2:7.

Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, “...by *revelation He made known to me the mystery* (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, *you may understand* my knowledge in the *mystery* of Christ)...” Ephesians 3:3-4. “And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an *understanding*, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” 1 John 5:20.

To place the understanding of prophecy in the proper perspective, Paul also wrote,

“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and *understand* all *mysteries* and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.” 1 Corinthians 13:2, and, “...attaining to all riches of the full assurance of *understanding*, to the knowledge of the *mystery* of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*.” Colossians 2:2-3. (*Emphasis supplied*). Clearly, we need both understanding *and* love!

“Wisdom,” too, comes from God, according to scripture. “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5.

Paul wrote, “...we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God ordained before the ages for our glory.” 1 Corinthians 2:6-7. Psalm 111:10 says, “The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who *do* His commandments.”

This verse shows us that respect and devotion for the Lord involves keeping His Ten Commandments and is necessary in order to receive both *wisdom* and *understanding* of spiritual matters. The Old Testament contains a large body of information concerning wisdom, much of it associated with King Solomon. The book of Proverbs contains many references about wisdom and, since the purpose of this study is to point us to God’s Word, one additional quote will suffice: “The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One *is* understanding.” Proverbs 9:10.

The word “calculate” or “count” is translated from the Greek word, “*psēphizō*” which is used only here, and in Luke 14:28, in the context of counting the cost to build a tower before construction is started. In other words, the angel is telling John that a precise mathematical calculation will be necessary, to understand who this individual beast is. The angel continues by noting that this “beast” is “a man” and that his number is “666.” Additional clues of the identity of this man are provided in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and Revelation 17:8, 11. While idle speculation is not conducive to providing hope and building faith in God’s plan and the veracity of His Word, here, we are given specific information and told to perform a *calculation* and to *understand* its importance in end time events, based on context and placement in the book of Revelation. “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.” John 14:29. We are assured in Amos 3:7 that, “Surely the Lord God does *nothing*, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.” An amazing promise!

As we studied in chapter one, literal Babylon became a world power leading up to its conquest of Jerusalem and the southern tribes of Israel. The Bible first mentions Babylon in Genesis 10:10, when Nimrod, a descendent of Noah's cursed son, Ham, oversaw the building of four cities in Mesopotamia including Babel (http://www.bible-history.com/babylonia/BabyloniaHistory_of_Babylonia.htm) in about 2300 B.C. It is here, where God Himself destroyed the tower being built, that we come to understand this culture and its people were defiant, rejecting the true God. It is here apparent, that both *literal* Babylon and *spiritual* Babylon are Satan's counterfeit to *literal* and *spiritual* Jerusalem. One city represents people in rebellion against God, the other, those who have humbly recognized their total dependence on God. Daniel chapters 2 to 4 make it very clear that heaven's door is open to all, from the least to the greatest, including paupers and kings in all cultures, even in Babylon itself!

The Babylonian culture in Daniel's day (605 - 539 B.C.) was highly advanced. It used a sexagesimal numerical system, which has a base of 60. That is why we read in Daniel 3:1 that Nebuchadnezzar built the image sixty cubits high by six cubits wide. Though we use a base 10 mathematical system for most things, the base 60 system is still in use today, to measure time, angles, and geographic coordinates. When Nebuchadnezzar built the city of Babylon, he rebuilt the ruins of a ziggurat, a pyramid type structure named Etemenanki, dedicating it to the god Marduk (its symbol was a *snake-dragon!*), as a substitute for a "mountain," for the purpose of worship of their many gods (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etemenanki>). It is likely that these were the unfinished ruins of the Tower of Babel, referenced in Genesis 11.

Babylonian astronomers had carefully studied the heavens, dividing them into twelve "signs" of thirty degrees, each with thirty days. In this zodiac star calendar, each grouping of stars was assigned three deities or gods. Its pagan priests wore medallions, known as amulets, with a table displaying 36 numbers associated with each of these gods, as a protecting charm. These tables of numbers were arranged in a square (6 x 6) in such a way that when each row or column was added, the total was 111. By extension then, adding either the total of the rows or the columns, gives the sum of 666 (<http://hackya.com/us/babylonian-sun-seal-square/>). This identifier of *spiritual* Babylon was provided by the angel to be used in Revelation 17:10-11. This means that adding $1+2+3...34+35+36 = 666!$ (See appendix).

In summary, we will consistently apply the interpretive principles found in Revelation 13:18, by discerning the following meanings:

- The term "666" refers to a specific man who is in opposition to God and, therefore, aligned with Satan
- That the angel called for both *wisdom* and *understanding* in order to perform a "calculation," indicates that the formula will be complex in nature, and be "spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Chapter 6

Revelation 17:1-6 – The Great Harlot

As we open Revelation 17, the necessity of understanding the Scripture previously covered in this study becomes apparent. The intervening section of Revelation chapters 14 to 16, contains vital information, filling in many details about end time events and facts in relation to the righteous and the wicked. All who prayerfully read and consider these chapters will be richly blessed, as understanding them is imperative to gain a correct understanding of end time events, to share the everlasting gospel, and in personal preparation to meet our Lord.

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.” Revelation 17:1-2.

In Revelation 16, there are seven angels, each having a “bowl” filled with a plague. One of these angels, potentially the sixth angel that poured out a plague drying up the Euphrates River (spiritually symbolic for support being withdrawn from counterfeit religious systems), comes to expand and provide more details for John of the judgment of the harlot. Judgment can take the form of punishment, and this specific act is further explained in Revelation 18:6-8, which is outside this study.

From Revelation 12, we know that a woman represents a church or “bride” in the Bible, with Christ as the “Bridegroom.” In this case, however, the bride is a harlot. Regrettably, there are many examples of God’s people leaving righteousness and embracing idolatry. (e.g. Exodus 34:15-16; Judges 8:27; Jeremiah 3:6,8; Ezekiel 23:19; Nahum 3:4, etc.). Isaiah noted, “How the faithful city has become a harlot! It was full of justice; Righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers.” Isaiah 1:21. This passage shows that God’s true people are known as a “faithful city,” *spiritual* Jerusalem. Later in Revelation, we learn that the saints are the “New Jerusalem,” implying the completion of the intervening judgment process and the antithesis of Satan’s “city” of the wicked, Babylon.

Paul wrote, “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make *them* members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body *with her*? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.” But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.” 1 Corinthians 6:15-17.

The harlot, who is initially seen sitting on many waters, symbolic for “peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues” (Revelation 17:15; Jeremiah 51:13), is the Roman

Catholic Church system, literally controlling or influencing a large portion of the earth's population, while masquerading as *the* "Christian church." It is worthy again to recognize that, while this system is the harlot, there are many saints within this church and many other religions that Jesus will call out before it's too late (Revelation 18:4-5).

The subject of the judgment of God has become so unpopular in today's politically correct environment that one almost cannot find the subject addressed in the churches today. It is this topic that leads religious leaders to avoid the prophecies from the pulpit. The Bible is clear that God is just; that He will come as a sword and that many will not be judged worthy or desirous of everlasting life, according to His terms.

Revelation 17:2 is a continuation from Revelation 13:1-10, where we noted that the papal church committed "fornication" with the nations of Europe for 1,260 years, ending in 1798. The Bible is very clear and precise about this; "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." James 4:4. Our current world defines success by the acquisition of money and controlling power, coupled with relationships with like-minded people. Not surprisingly, this so-called success, nearly always leads to spiritual ruin.

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Matthew 19:23-24.

One might rightly be concerned about their relationship with the Lord, if they are successful by earthly definitions and are able to "enjoy" the fruits of their labors here and now!

Revelation 17:2 points out that the inhabitants of earth were made drunk with the wine of the harlot's fornication. The Bible provides ample evidence that we do well to literally completely shun alcoholic beverages (drunkenness was the first recorded sin after the flood; Genesis 9:20-21), however there is a much deeper spiritual connotation here.

"But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment." Isaiah 28:7.

It is the religious *leaders* implicated in leading the people astray! And now that we've identified *spiritual* Babylon as the papal system, Jeremiah 51:7 makes chilling sense: "Babylon was a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged."

Upon careful consideration of the doctrines, teachings, and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, many have no Biblical support. The reason: they were adopted from pagan traditions, postulated during the middle ages for nefarious purposes, or blatantly placed into effect by a church claiming it has authority that supersedes the Bible. During the time of the end, the Bible identifies *spiritual* Babylon as a religious power that will exert influence that will leverage or control all nations on earth!

“For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” Revelation 18:3.

While somewhat challenging to envision how every nation on earth will bow to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, we may be confident and thankful that God has provided such specificity in identifying these powers, and we are certain this will come to pass. The condition of the earth is provided to ensure we know what will come, and will likely lead to the acquiescence of the nations to curtail religious liberties in a desperate, mistaken bid, to garner God’s “favor.” This legislation, specifying Sunday sacredness, will be followed by “...a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.” Daniel 12:1b. God doesn’t want anyone to be deceived because Jesus died for all who accept His sacrifice!

After Revelation 17:2, there is a transition in John’s vision.

“So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” Revelation 17:3.

John was taken in vision to the wilderness, or desert. This same word is used twice in Revelation 12, describing a place where God preserved the saints. In this case, however, a woman is seen sitting on a scarlet (the color of sin; Isaiah 1:18) beast (Revelation 17:9 clarifies she was specifically seated on the beast’s seven heads). This word “wilderness” is also translated “desert,” indicating a marked transition of this beast with seven heads and ten horns, similar to the beast described in Revelation 13:1-10, as arising from the sea. What happened to the papal church that once controlled people, multitudes, nations, and tongues? As earlier discussed in chapter 3, on February 15, 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte outlawed the church for several years and on February 20, 1798, Pope Pius VI was taken prisoner. Abruptly, the papal church found itself without the support of nations, after enjoying 1,260 years of incestuous relationships with the countries of Europe. Suddenly, the Roman Catholic Church, the great harlot, found itself in the “wilderness,” where it was no longer able to wield influence within the civil governments of Europe to support its religious tenets through legislation, civil penalties, and outright persecution.

There is another important distinction of the Revelation 17 beast compared with the “sea beast” in Revelation 13. The description in Revelation 13:1, “...on his heads a blasphemous name,” is different. According to Revelation 17:3, the beast *itself* “...was full of *names* of blasphemy.” During the 1,260 years, from 538 to 1798, direct papal church persecution of the saints was enforced by many of the nations who, doing the bidding of the church, directly administered persecution. So it is likely the “names” of blasphemy (plural), now covering the Revelation 17 beast, include all the nations, along with those individuals responsible for committing blasphemy against God, by virtue of their role in persecuting God’s people. Indeed, Paul called himself a “blasphemer” by the act of persecuting God’s people before his conversion on the road to Damascus (1 Timothy 1:13). The scarlet beast of Revelation 17 may be seen as the nations that will soon again do the bidding of apostate religions, directed against God’s commandment keeping people.

The great harlot of Revelation 17:1, no longer able to control the masses, now is depicted as a woman in Revelation 17:3, seated on the *heads* of a scarlet beast, with a similar configuration as the beast in Revelation 13:1, as well as the dragon in Revelation 12. Each had seven heads and ten horns, indicating that Satan, himself, is the influencing power behind this beast made up of so-called “Christian” religions, enforced by the civil authority of the nations.

“The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication.” Revelation 17:4.

From John’s description we can see that some people, masquerading as true Christians, described in Revelation 12:1 as “clothed with the sun,” formed and continued a religious system that has become a “harlot.” It is no coincidence that the cardinals and officials of the papal church use purple and scarlet as official colors in their formal dress. A very similar description was penned by Daniel some 630 years earlier as he described the “king of the north,” “But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses, and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver with precious stones and pleasant things.” Daniel 11:38. Even a casual inspection of the cathedrals, of the solemnity assigned to church designated “saints,” and particularly of Mary, whom the church encourages its congregates to pray to, confirms that the Roman Catholic Church system is here referenced. Again, Jeremiah 51:7 comes to mind: “Babylon *was* a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that made all the earth drunk. The nations drank her wine; therefore the nations are deranged.” It is not a coincidence that there are *six* articles of dress attributed to this woman: purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones, pearls, and a golden cup!

The “golden cup” presents a false, external Christianity, however the “wine” inside reveals the corruption, the false doctrines, within. Jesus offered “new wine,” in Luke

5:37-38, to be stored in “new wineskins,” representing His people. Likewise, He warned the religious leaders of His day,

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.” Matthew 23:27-28

Belshazzar’s sin, recorded in Daniel 5, indicates he took God’s golden vessels and filled them with corrupting wine, a direct affront to the Lord. The mixing and acceptance of beliefs and practices not taught by the Bible is drinking this wine. Interestingly, Daniel 5:4 notes *six* “gods” that the people “praised” in the final party of Babylon: “gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.”

John is now drawn to a message written on the forehead of the woman sitting on the beast. It reads,

“MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATION OF THE EARTH.” Revelation 17:5.

In our study of the mark of the beast, described in Revelation 13:16-17 and 14:9-12, we noted the distinction of where the mark was received, as either in the forehead or the hand. In contrast, God’s seal would only be provided in the foreheads of the saints (Revelation 7:3; 14:9; Ezekiel 9:4). Our foreheads are symbolic as the seat of learning and true character (Ezekiel 3:4-9). Paul said, “...with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” Romans 7:25b.

The Greek word for “mystery” is used four times in Revelation. In Revelation 1:20, it’s defined within the verse. Of great interest, is its use in Revelation 10:7: “but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the *mystery* of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the *prophets*.” In order to determine what mystery is being referred to, a significant clue about timing is provided. For time and space purposes, this is briefly addressed as follows:

The seven angels with seven trumpets are introduced, and described, in Revelation 8, 9, and 11:15a. The last three trumpet soundings are referred to as the three “woes” to all the inhabitants of the earth (Revelation 8:13). As mentioned briefly in chapter 2, based on the interpretation of Daniel 11:25-43, the conclusion is that these “woes” refer to the three holy wars between apostate Christianity and Islam. The “Christian” forces include nations with a base of Christianity, and the Islamic forces historically included Arab Islam, Ottoman Islam, and the current war declared by radical Islam, coupled with Islamic based nations. This current war took on a worldwide scope with the radical Islamic (“King of the South,” Daniel 11:25-43) attacks on the United States, on September 11, 2001, fulfilling the role of the King of the South in Daniel 11:40a. The

United States responded by invading Iraq in March 2003, however there was not a “Christian” *religious* component until August 7, 2014, when Pope Francis called for the United Nations to protect Christians from radical Islam (<https://sites.google.com/site/catholicchurchesofthearea/home-page-1/canadian-conference-of-catholic-bishops-cccb-documents/pope-francis-august-2014-appeal-for-prayers-for-the-peoples-of-north-iraq>). This initiated the fulfillment of the Daniel 11:40b “whirlwind” response; the combination of “Christian” nations and the entity the world considers as the earth’s representative of Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church (combined as the King of the North). This prompts the logical question, what “mystery” did God “finish” (fulfill, complete, accomplish) *immediately before* 2001 and/or 2014? An important rule when searching for the symbolic meaning of a particular word in prophecy is to first look within the same book for clues before venturing to other *prophecies* in the Bible.

Could it be that the true meaning of the prophecy in Revelation 17 became understood? This study shows that, indeed, a few people who prayerfully devoted their attention to this prophecy came to a precise, accurate interpretation that has now become much more urgent, as will be shown.

The message on the woman’s forehead calls Babylon the *mother of harlots*, and later provides much more information to verify her identity.

“And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth. After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, “Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.” Revelation 17:18-18:3.

There can be no question that the symbolic language used referring to the woman as the great city, Babylon, the wine of fornication, the riches associated with a relationship with the papacy; all refer to the Roman Catholic Church system, with secondary application to apostate Protestant religions who follow similar, non-Biblical doctrines.

As a harlot herself, the Catholic church became the mother of harlots (Hosea 4:11-13, 18), the various apostate Protestant churches that, though adopting more truth in the Bible as they were formed initiating the Protestant reformation, ceased to continue to search for, and accept, the complete truths of the Bible. None are as egregious as the failure to adopt the only commandment that starts with the word “Remember.” The importance of honoring our Lord as the Creator cannot be overestimated, and it is emphasized throughout Scripture as the following references show:

“You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.” Deuteronomy 4:2. “Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.” Proverbs 30:6. “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” Matthew 24:35. “And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.” Luke 16:17.

Jesus, in the closing scenes of the Revelation visions to John said,

“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; 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.” Revelation 22:18-19.

As God is the Author of the Bible, each word is there for a reason, for the purpose of edifying the Creator. As our Creator, Jesus is the “Bridegroom” of the true church. He is emphatic about the importance of the law. Indeed, it is the basis for God’s Kingdom, and what defines our duty as His servants. Satan is intensely working to deceive the nations as well as the churches through a garb of apparent righteousness soon to be coupled by the force of law. First the great harlot lost her “daughters,” the reformers, then her “husband,” the nations, in 1798. The “daughters” were formally recovered on October 31, 2017 (<https://religionnews.com/2017/07/06/reformed-churches-endorse-catholic-lutheran-accord-on-key-reformation-dispute/>) so the recovery of the nations (the “husband” of the great harlot) *will soon follow*. This counterfeit “family” has been formed in opposition and rebellion against God.

By now, the mention of the abominations of the earth becomes clear. These are unbiblical doctrines, religious traditions and customs, intolerance for what is pure and holy, and the enforcement of man-made religion through derision, isolation, legislation, punishment, and persecution. God’s true people have always endured these treatments and the Bible tells us to expect these to increase dramatically, as Christ’s return is now imminent (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15-16; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20-21). In some sense, it’s easy to identify the good from the evil, by carefully watching which side people participate in. We pray for the transformative Spirit to move our hearts to love, to care for, and to have compassion for all people, as Jesus modeled during His ministry.

John makes one more observation in Revelation 17:6:

“I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.”

Apostate Christians claim to represent Christ, however, deny at least some of His Word. The papal church had just come out of 1,260 years of persecution of the saints, and John saw she was drunk with their blood. The Greek word “martyrs” can also be translated “witness,” and these continue to be a witness for the truth. In fact, the worldwide persecution of Christians, has been increasing exponentially during the past few years. We are in the spiritual war referenced by Revelation 12:17, “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Here, God’s people are precisely defined, so there will be no confusion for genuine seekers of the truth.

In summary, we consistently apply the interpretive principles, discerning the following meanings of Revelation 17:1-6:

- The “great harlot” represents the Roman Catholic Church, a religious system claiming to believe in God, however doing the work of Satan
- “Fornication” refers to illicit relationships between religious orders and the civil authorities of the nations (“husbands”)
- “Wine” represents false, non-Biblical doctrines
- An “abomination” is the corruption of Biblical truth with false doctrines
- “Babylon the Great, the Mother” is primarily a reference to the Roman Catholic Church. The name, “Babylon” appears six times in Revelation (14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2,10,21).
- “Harlots” refers to the apostate Protestant “daughters” of the great harlot that have adopted and practice non-biblical doctrines whom will rejoin their “mother” against those who keep all of God’s Word, literally

Chapter 7

Revelation 17:7-11 – Identification of the Beast

In Revelation 17:6, John expressed his wonder and was, evidently, perplexed by the vision of the harlot.

“But the angel said to me, “Why did you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.” Revelation 17:7.

Interestingly, the angel reacts to John, telling us this vision was interactive. This “plague” angel goes on to tell John the formula to decipher the “mystery.” God wanted us to know its true meaning, however this knowledge and understanding was to be delayed until just *before* the sounding of the seventh angel, according to Revelation 10:7. This fact underscores the crucial importance of the accurate interpretation of Daniel 11, in conjunction of the three “woes” of Revelation 8:13 to 9:21 and 11:14, 15a. The angel affirms what John was shown: a woman and the beast, described as having seven heads and ten horns.

The seven heads the woman is seated on (Revelation 17:9) are the leaders (popes) of the papal church. The angel addresses the characteristics of the horns later, in Revelation 17:12-17. Next, the angel reveals the key to understanding the “mystery.” The language used intentionally masked the ability to understand the formula until just *before* the sounding of the seventh trumpet/third “woe” (2001), and the identity of the “666” man until just *before* 2014. To describe what we are about to understand plainly, would have put the Bible at unnecessary risk during the middle or “dark” ages, and a potential source of discouragement to the generations that have fallen asleep looking for the Lord’s return.

“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition.” Revelation 17:8a.

The first part of this verse confirms that this scarlet beast (having names of blasphemy covering it, representing the clothing of religion with enforcement soon to be granted by nations) has three phases; “was,” “is not,” and, “will ascend out,” after which it will then go to perdition. Applying our study of Revelation 13:1-10 along with 17:1-5, we see that the sea beast exercised persecutory powers from 538-1798 directly, and mostly indirectly, through the various European nations’ legislative and policing powers; together responsible for martyring millions of God’s people. This 1,260-year period, prophesied by Daniel and John, is the “was” phase. The pure “woman” of Revelation 12, went into the “wilderness” of 1,260 years, and the “great harlot,” and “harlots,” persecuted God’s people during this long sojourn. The sea beast (the papal church described in Revelation 13:1-10) entered the 1,260 years in A.D. 538, already seeking to

enforce its doctrines on the people. This is represented by a blasphemous “name” on its heads. The scarlet beast of Revelation 17 represents the results *after* the 1,260 years ended in 1798; it being covered with blasphemous “names,” indicating the nations were coerced and compelled by the great harlot, “arrayed in purple and scarlet,” to enforce its religion on the people, through the use of demonic tactics, torture, coercion, and bribes.

“Is not” refers to the next phase that the scarlet beast and the woman entered beginning in 1798. In 1798, the woman transitioned from being seated on “many waters” to being seated on the beast’s seven heads. The “wilderness” or “desert” of its non-persecutory phase, is where the papacy remains as of this writing (December 2018). The “beast...*is not*,” shows the word, “beast,” was associated with *prior* persecutions by the papal church. Since 1798, the papal church continues to grow in size and influence. This is made clear in Revelation 17:9, where we see the woman seated on its “heads.” This transition demonstrates the progression of time. The Catholic Church has not been involved with religious persecution on a church-wide basis since 1798. However, this verse indicates that will change in the future, as the “beast” will ascend out of the bottomless pit, its “wilderness” or “desert” phase to once again become a persecuting “beast.” Soon thereafter, it will “go to perdition.” Perdition can also be translated “destroyed,” and there is confirming Biblical evidence that the papal church (symbolically represented as Babylon) will be destroyed by the “drying up” of its support structure, symbolized by the sixth plague referencing the drying of the Euphrates (Revelation 16:12; Daniel 7:11; 11:45).

The second part of Revelation 17:8 follows:

“And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.” Revelation 17:8b.

Now, those people who “dwell on” or *think on* earthly pursuits, are the ones to “marvel.” These will be astonished with the dramatic changes soon to follow. Regrettably, these are also now described as those whose names are not found in the Book of Life (addressed in chapter 3) that has been kept by God since creation.

Finally, a similar phrase about the beast is repeated. Repetition in the Bible is done for emphasis (see Genesis 41:32), and indicates a much deeper meaning is to be explored and that it is not a conditional prophecy; it *will* take place. A simple example of this was earlier studied in Revelation 8:13; “woe, woe, woe” related to the great holy wars between apostate Christianity and Islam. Revelation 17:8 holds a more complex repetition that takes on full meaning when considered with Revelation 17:10.

First, we examine Revelation 17:9:

“Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.”

As earlier noted, the woman who was seated on “many waters,” transitioning into the wilderness, is now seen sitting on the beasts’ seven heads. There is no “beast” while the papal church is in the “wilderness” of its non-persecutory phase, just the seven heads that lead the “woman.” There is absolute consistency in the interpretation of the beasts of Daniel and Revelation 12 and 13, in applying the understanding that the chronology of time starts at the *tail* of the beasts, progressing to the body, then the heads, and finally the horns. The angel calls for intelligence and wisdom in order to discern the meaning of the clues that follow, to achieve understanding. The leopard of Daniel 7:6, representing Greece, progressed from the body to the four heads. This detail was repeated and enlarged upon in Daniel 8:8, where Greece was described as a goat with a large horn that was broken (Alexander the Great), and replaced by four horns (the four generals who agreed to break up the kingdom in 301 B.C.). The word “wisdom” here is a direct link to the calculation called for in Revelation 13:18 to derive the number, “666” and identify the individual man that it applies to. This is the key that unlocks this vital prophetic riddle.

The angel in Revelation 17:9 equates the seven “heads” with seven “mountains.” This brings us to the crucial understanding of the Daniel 2 image dream, where we found that the “Stone” (representing Jesus; Daniel 2:35) was initially carved out of, then became a “Mountain” again that filled “the whole earth,” representing God’s Kingdom ruled by the Trinity or Godhead; literally the Triune God of the universe: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God’s universal kingdom will be established *spiritually*, when the judgment is finished (Daniel 12:1), and *literally* at the end of the 1,000 years of Revelation 20:4-15 back on this earth (Revelation 1:4-5).

A common error is made by interpreting terms in Revelation *literally*, unless context shows a clear reason to do so. Nearly all of Revelation is based on symbols, as defined elsewhere in scripture. Some attribute the “mountains” of Revelation 17:9 to the seven “hills” on which the city of Rome is located, drawing the conclusion that since Vatican City is located in Rome, it represents the Roman Catholic Church. This conclusion tends to mask the complex word structure of the passage. In addition, the Greek word used, *oros*, is translated “mountain” or “mount” sixty-two times in the King James Version. In Luke 3:5; 23:30, texts where “mountain” and “hill” are both used in the same text, the Greek word used for “hill” is “*bounos*.” In addition, the context of “mountains” in Revelation 17:9-10, *equates* the *symbolic* terms, “heads” and “kings,” to “mountains.”

Chapter 1 of this study identified a counterfeit “mountain” of gods, referenced by Jeremiah. Vitaly, this counterfeit “mountain” is identified as Babylon!

“And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all the evil they have done In Zion in your sight,” says the Lord. “Behold, I am against you, O

destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth,” says the Lord. “And I will stretch out My hand against you, *Roll you down from the rocks*, and make you a burnt mountain.” Jeremiah 51:24-25. (*Emphasis added*).

Here, God specifically identifies Babylon as a “destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth,” promising to make it a “burnt mountain.” As with many prophecies in the Bible, the initial fulfillment is *literal*, with an additional, *spiritual* fulfillment to follow.

It is not a coincidence that the name “Babylon” is used six times in the book of Revelation, as “six” represents Satan’s number, while “seven” represents God’s perfect number. Those who study Revelation will find at least twenty references or allusions to the number, “seven.” The first reference to Babylon is in the second angel’s message of Revelation 14:8. It is next seen in Revelation 16:19, where Babylon comes up in remembrance before God. We studied its identifying role in Revelation 17:5, and “Babylon” appears three additional times in chapter 18 (verses 2, 10, 21).

The angel gets even more specific in Revelation 17:10.

“There are also seven kings (“they are also seven kings” ESV). Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.”

The angel now equates the seven *heads* with seven *mountains*, and as seven *kings*. It is now that we find consistent application of the interpretative principle found in Daniel 7:17 reading: “Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth.” We remember these beasts of the earth represented the empires of Babylon, Medo/Persia, Greece, and Imperial Rome, covering a period of nearly 1,100 years. We may infer that the “four kings” represented the *lines* of kings, or leaders, of each of these kingdoms. The “heads” represented *kingdoms* AND *kings*. The angel is directing that the same principle be applied to *spiritual* Babylon, the Roman Catholic Church. Logically, we need to examine the leaders (popes) of the papal church during the “wilderness” phase starting in 1798, looking for clues as to how they fit into this prophecy. Before we do, the angel has one last critical clue:

“The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.” Revelation 17:11.

We remember to pray, asking for wisdom to understand Bible prophecy as either there is a 100% consistent fit and application of interpretive rules found in the Bible, or the interpretative theory must be abandoned.

The head or leaders of the Roman Catholic Church are the popes. The church lists 266 popes, starting with its claim that the apostle Peter was the first, and ending with the current pope, Francis (<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12272b.htm>). We learn that

men chosen to be pope select the name that they will be known by, in honor of a predecessor, or someone admired. In history, there have been imposter popes the papacy refers to as antipopes, so a pope is only formally recognized if he remains in good standing with the church, and only after his death. Of the 266 popes, there are 82 unique names that have been used; 46 names have been used by only one pope, leaving 36 names having been used by multiple popes throughout church history. The fact that 36 names have been used by two or more popes, qualifies them to fit the definition of counterfeit “mountains of gods,” just as God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit make up the genuine “Mountain” of Kings AND the kingdom of Daniel 2:35, 45. Since Revelation 17:9-10 refers to the time the harlot/woman is sitting on seven heads/mountains/kings (having moved from “many waters,” represented in Revelation 13 as the *body* of the sea beast), we are specifically looking at the “wilderness” period of 1798 to date. Of all the men who have been pope since 1798, only eight names have been used; Pius, Leo, Gregory, Benedict, John, Paul, John Paul, and Francis. Of these, *seven* names have been chosen by multiple men historically, while the eighth, Francis, is unique to Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the current Bishop of Rome.

It is now that we consistently apply the Babylonian sexagesimal mathematical system used in Daniel’s day, as described in chapter 5 of this study, coupled with the emphatic call of Revelation 13:18; “Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.” Using this information, the following interpretation is revealed with the value in () indicating the number of popes throughout history, taking each name (see appendix):

1. Pius (12): $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12 = \underline{78}$
2. Leo (13): $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12+13 = \underline{91}$
3. Gregory (16): $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12+13+14+15+16 = \underline{136}$
4. Benedict (14): $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12+13+14 = \underline{105}$
5. John (21): $1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9+10+11+12+13+14+15+16+17+18+19+20+21 = \underline{231}$
6. Paul (6): $1+2+3+4+5+6 = \underline{21}$
7. John Paul (2): $1+2 = \underline{3}$

Joseph Ratzinger, who took the name Benedict XVI, is not counted, as he is still living, though he plays a significant role, as we will soon come to understand. We note that the papacy skipped the name “Benedict X,” so Benedict XVI is the 15th pope using the name “Benedict.” The papacy designated the man claiming to be John XVI an antipope (A.D. 997-999) and the name “John XX” was skipped, so there are actually only 21 popes that used the name “John,” even though the last was designated John XXIII.

It is now a simple matter to add the totals up to determine who the “666” man is. $78+91+136+105+231+21+3 = 665$. We must be aware that the Catholic Church only counts *legitimate* popes after they die because of the history of popes being deposed as well as those being judged heretical and labeled “antipopes.” Before we jump to the conclusion that Francis will be both the eighth “king” *and* add a count of “1” yielding a

total of 666, we need to ensure scriptural consistency, as well as adding information Paul provides in his second letter to the Christian church in Thessalonica. The inconsistency of the name “Francis” is that it is unique; only being used by Jorge Mario Bergoglio when he was selected pope in March 2013. This fact *disqualifies* Francis from fitting the description of a “mountain” of *gods*. Just as important, though not yet counted, if Joseph Ratzinger (as Pope Benedict XVI, 2005-2013) were to die as the 15th pope using that name, the Babylonian count would be 665 + 15 (for Benedict) + 1 (for Francis) = 681. In addition, Pope Francis does not fit the clue the angel provided in Revelation 17:11, that “The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition,” because “Francis” is a new, unique name, not “*of the seven*.”

In Revelation 17:8, we read about the beast going to perdition. In verse 11, the beast is identified as an individual; “himself.” In addition, the “eighth” is “of the seven.” Pope Francis does not fulfill this verse, as he is not “of the seven” (¹Pius, ²Leo, ³Gregory, ⁴Benedict, ⁵John, ⁶Paul, ⁷John Paul). Providing more clues to this mystery, Paul wrote:

³Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? ⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. ⁹The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, ¹⁰and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. ¹¹And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, ¹²that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12.

Whether he was aware of it or not at the time, Paul is obviously prophesying here, using the terms “man of sin,” “son of perdition,” and “lawless one.” Just as Jesus mixed the warning of the destruction of Jerusalem that occurred in the spring of A.D. 70 with His future return in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, Paul provided the believers in Thessalonica encouragement *and* provided keys to understand the “mystery” referred to in Revelation 10:7 and 17:5, 7. In Revelation 17:11, the beast, who is “also himself the eighth” king, will have the following *six* attributes according to Paul:

1. be revealed,
2. be the son of perdition or destruction (Abaddon & Apollyon; Revelation 9:11),
3. be in opposition of God,

4. will claim to be God,
5. will be consumed by the breath of the Lord, and
6. will be destroyed with the brightness of His coming (Revelation 16:6).

The Lord placed this complex riddle in His Word for all people living during the time of the third “woe” holy war that achieved worldwide prominence in 2001. This war is increasing in intensity and ideological scope at an exponential pace. God influenced the men who became popes over the last 1,900 years in the selection of their names, orchestrating how, and when, this prophecy would be fulfilled, to just the right time. That time is nearly upon us. The riddle is solved and its meaning is revealed in advance of its fulfillment! The whole Revelation 17:8-11 passage reads:

“⁸The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. “⁹Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits. ¹⁰There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time. ¹¹The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.”

Revelation 17:8 repeats the phases of the beast twice, and verse 11 identifies the beast as an *individual man*, consistent with Revelation 13:18 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8. Revelation 17:10 adds the element that “five of the heads have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come” and when he does, it will be for a *short time*.

Some suggest that Revelation 17:10-11 are referencing ancient world kingdoms. There are various challenges with this theory, including that it doesn’t fit with the previous verse. This interpretation is inconsistent with the interpretive principles used in Daniel and it ignores a significant purpose of prophecy; to reveal the future from the time it was given.

The angel has transported John in vision to the time of the seven heads, 1798 to date. The fact that of all the popes in history, multiple popes have chosen precisely seven names since 1798 is stunning! More specifically, the angel indicated to John that five heads (mountains/kings) have fallen. Examining the names taken by the men who were popes from 1798 and forward, the last year each name was used is in () below:

1. Pius (1958)
2. Leo (1903)
3. Gregory (1846)
4. Benedict (1922) [Benedict XVI is not included as he has not died]
5. John (1963)

6. Paul (1978)
7. John Paul (2005)

This shows us that the angel transported John to the time of the reign of Pope Paul VI (1963-1978), indicated by the previous five heads being “fallen.” This process of the “heads” falling sequentially is consistent with the four heads of the Daniel 7 leopard (Alexander’s generals) addressed in chapter one of this study. The importance of understanding this interpretive principle is the usage of the first six *taken* names by popes since 1798 spanned many centuries (see Appendix). The one name that was only used by two popes, spanning a total of only 26 years, was “John Paul,” fulfilling the phrase in Revelation 17:10, “when he comes, he must continue a *short time*.” Pope John Paul I (Albino Luciani) died 33 days into his pontificate (under mysterious circumstances) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_John_Paul_I), followed by John Paul II (Cardinal Karol Wojtyla) who served from 1978 to 2005 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_John_Paul_II).

Pope Francis obviously is not one “of the seven,” and as earlier demonstrated, does not fit this interpretation, or does he? Remembering what Paul wrote,

“⁶And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.” 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7.

Could Pope Francis be the man referred to in these verses? It is Francis who is calling for peace, widely credited for his support of ecumenism with all “Christian” faiths. He initially became exceptionally unpopular with the conservative church leadership, starting in 2015 with his calls for accountability in the church’s sex scandals and financial dealings, including an external audit of the Institute for the Works of Religion (Vatican Bank). While very little substance has been realized, this direction is alluded to in Revelation 18:16, where the papal church is seen clothed with “fine linen,” described as “righteous acts” in Revelation 19:8. However, 2 Thessalonians 2:7 foretells that the man we know as Pope Francis will be forcibly removed from office. Based on this Bible prophecy, ***Pope Francis will ultimately be regarded as an antipope by the Roman Catholic Church.*** While we do not know when this will occur, Pope Francis has said that his tenure will be short, and late in 2015, referred to a possible resignation year of 2020. Again, this passage indicates that he will *not* voluntarily resign, nor will he die in office. He will be involuntarily deposed and be classified as an antipope, and therefore not be in the “count” of *legitimate* popes.

This world shocking change is likely to take place very soon. Pope Benedict XVI may reclaim his right to the Vatican throne at any time of his choosing. Though it is known that Benedict did not particularly care for being pope, coupled with alleged corruption leading to his “retirement,” he has made several comments about his concern for the church being in crisis and “on the verge of capsizing.” Soon after Pope Benedict returns,

potentially associated with the sanctioning of papal church religious persecution specifically tied to Sunday sacredness, Joseph Ratzinger will change his name from Benedict XVI to a new name, unique in history, reflecting his new authority, including persecutory powers. By changing his name, when he dies he will not be Benedict XVI, therefore the pope count will not be increased. The count remains at 665 until Joseph Ratzinger dies under a *new, unique* name, adding a count of “1”!

The rest of the prophecies in Revelation will follow in quick succession, concluding with Christ’s return, when ***the man we know as Joseph Ratzinger, will be killed by the brightness of His coming*** (2 Thessalonians 2:8; Isaiah 34:4). As one “of the seven,” he becomes the “eighth king,” the “666” man, of Revelation 13:18, and a “beast” himself, as he presides over the church, advising the kings of the earth in exercising persecutory power once again. **He will not die a natural death.** Joseph Ratzinger was born on April 16, 1927.

Further, as the coming “beast,” Pope Benedict XVI fulfills Revelation 17:11 by being “the beast that *was*” (referring to his former reign, 2005-2013), “and *is not*” (his current state of retirement), “is himself also *the eighth*” (upon his return to the papal throne using a new, unique name). The tables in the Appendix of this study provide irrefutable evidence pointing to this outcome. A careful reading of this passage indicates that the repeating of the phrase “was, and is not, and yet is” means it applies both to the Roman Catholic Church system *and* to its final pope as an *individual* man, the 666 man!

In summary, we consistently apply the interpretive principles, discerning the following meanings of Revelation 17:7-11:

- The “seven *heads*” are also “seven *mountains*” and “seven *kings*.” These represent *lines* of popes, using the same names, followed by a distinguishing Roman numeral, however corrected to reflect the actual number of popes.
- Pope Frances will be deposed and labeled an “antipope” by the Roman Catholic Church
- Pope Benedict will return as the Bishop of Rome, and soon after will take a new name, unique in the history of popes
- The man, Joseph Ratzinger, will not die a natural death; he will be killed by the brightness of Jesus’ return
- This interpretation, and the timing of its understanding, is the fulfillment of Revelation 10:7:

“but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, *when he is about to sound*, the *mystery* of God would be finished, as he declared to *His servants the prophets*.”

Special note to all readers of chapter 7:

This revelation is initially stunning, even shocking! Could it be that the life we are accustomed to is about to be forever disrupted? What about family, friends, co-

workers, neighbors...is anyone ready for this? Why haven't the major Christian religions, the theologians, the famous preachers been screaming this to the world? Would God really be that specific in identifying an individual? It's happened before! Consider Isaiah 44:28-45:13, a passage that identified Cyrus, as "...His anointed," to "...let My exiles go free." This revelation to Isaiah was made later in his ministry, likely between 701 and 681 B.C. Who was this "Cyrus" and when did he serve the Lord? Ezra 1:1-4 identifies Cyrus as king of Persia. He, himself, penned the words recorded in the Bible: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah." Ezra 1:2. Daniel 10:1-11:1 reveals the unseen battle between the Lord and the Adversary (prince of Persia, Satan) over King Cyrus. The shocking fact of this story? King Cyrus ruled from 559 to 530 B.C., at least one hundred twenty years *in the future* of Isaiah's prophecy! At least one nearly ninety year-old man, Daniel, knew of this. It was he who likely shared the prophecy with Cyrus.

More to the point of divine revelation, the Lord provided the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9 so that His people would know the year and even the season (fall of A.D. 27) that Jesus would begin His ministry on earth. This prophecy coupled with others, including the typical temple offerings, sacrifices and furnishings, pointed to His death precisely three and a half years later on the Passover in A.D. 31. The leaders understood the prophecy however didn't like nor accept the message or the Messenger.

The nations and the world religions are poised to largely repeat the experiences documented in the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. God's people will be mocked, derided, censured, rebuked, castigated, and threatened. Lies will be fabricated and their words will be used against them. They will be cast out of their churches.

Logically, our Redeemer wants us to know, with like precision, the events leading up to His second coming because He paid the ultimate price for our lives, wanting to save as many as would place their complete faith, hope, and trust in their Creator.

Friends, Jesus doesn't want us to be surprised. He wants us to be prepared and has promised to perform the work of sanctification, the transformation of our characters, for us, if we turn *everything* over to Him. We haven't a moment to lose. Time is of the essence; Jesus' return is now imminent! Pray that He will make us perfect in Him so that we can walk into Heaven as did Enoch and Elijah.

Chapter 8

Revelation 17:12-17 – The Harlot’s Daughters

The angel next addresses the meaning of the ten horns that were seen on the beast:

“The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.” Revelation 17:12.

These horns, being positioned on the beast (Revelation 17:3), reflect the source of their power (Revelation 12:3; 13:1); Satan. These verses may be viewed as providing enhanced detail of Revelation 13:11-17. There are four critical items to understand here.

First: these “ten” horns are located on a beast that is a religious power (having blasphemous names), therefore these *powers* must be *religious* themselves.

Second: the scarlet beast represents the civil enforcement of religious legislation to be called for by apostate Protestant Christian religions and demanded by earth’s citizenry in an erroneous effort to *appease* God, as society rapidly deteriorates and as disasters increase.

Third: the time in history is identified after which these “horns” receive a “kingdom” or legislative powers. We recall that the angel transported John in vision forward in time, as referenced in Revelation 17:10, specifically to a time during the reign of Pope Paul VI (1963-1978). This helps to avoid confusion in the identity of these apostate Protestant religious powers by indicating that, as of 1978, these “horns” did *not* possess a kingdom/power, *yet*. And, as of this writing, these horns have yet to receive *power*. They cannot receive power until the “beast” has been empowered with authority to persecute.

Fourth, the number “ten” is symbolic, consistent with the use and meaning of the number “ten” in Daniel 1:20 and 7:7, 20. These horns are *different* than those of the Daniel 7 beast representing Imperial Rome. Its “horns” were symbolic of the barbarian tribes (several dozen) that established themselves in the former territory of Western Rome, following Imperial Rome’s fall in A.D. 476. There are thousands of “Christian” religions in the world today.

Revelation 17:12 defines when these religious powers will receive authority; “...as kings *with* the beast.” From this we know that these horns are not exercising power as of this writing, as their power is derived from the beast, and the designation, “beast,” represents persecutory power initially to be exercised by the Roman Catholic Church, through collaboration with the nations of Europe. Under the cover of the “Paris

Agreement” the foundation for restriction of personal activity is progressing for the supposed “common good” of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This sequence power assumption leading to restriction of liberties is evident in Revelation 13:14-15, as covered in chapter 4 of this study. As we learned from our study in chapter 7, the religious nature of Sunday legislation will only occur *after* Pope Francis is deposed, and the man we know as Pope Benedict XVI returns, taking a new, unique name, never before used by any pope.

These symbolic “horns” are the *harlot daughters* of the mother harlot (Revelation 17:5). They represent the apostate Protestant Christian religions that do not follow all the light of God’s Word, specifically the fourth commandment seventh-day Sabbath, acknowledging and honoring our God as The Creator. As mentioned in chapter 4 of this study, a student of the Bible and of history, coupled with current events, can see a likely path for Sunday legislation as a partial response to terrorism by radical Islamists; a religion that holds Friday as its sacred day. Further reference on what the Bible foretells the *literal* and *spiritual* outcomes will be of this third “woe” holy war conflict, are found in Daniel 11:40-43. In addition, there is a foreboding, persistent connection being made between family values and the environment in connection with *Sunday* rest.

The understanding that apostate Protestant leaders will join with the United States government in sponsoring Sunday legislation, is discussed in chapter 4 of this study. This will likely take place concurrent with, or immediately following, the change of popes and the “beast” of *religious* persecution is initiated in Europe. The term of authority “for one hour” may be symbolic for a brief period just *before* Jesus completes the pre-advent judgment process referred to in Daniel 7:9-10; 12:1a; Revelation 11:1-2; and Ezekiel 9:3-10. Using the formula for *prophetic time* of one day equaling one year, “one hour” is fifteen days. Is it possible that apostate Protestant Christianity will be empowered to kill the saints for fifteen days before Jesus rises from judgment and receives the “kingdom” of saints? The power of these apostate Protestant churches is represented by the *brittle* clay of the ten toes of the image of Daniel 2:41-45 (see KJV and ESV). The dream of the Daniel 2 image is fascinating and highly informative, however it is outside the scope of this study.

We should anticipate Sunday legislation restricting retail business, with certain exceptions for professional sports and holidays, in the near future. Following that will be a demand that Sunday be set aside for worship. After the United States makes an image of (copies) the Sunday legislation enacted in Europe, there will be a realization that the papacy has had centuries of experience with religious enforcement and persecution, and the United States will provide authority that is consolidated, coordinated, and communicated at the papal church level.

“¹³These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them,

for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.” Revelation 17:13-14.

The saints, the “chosen” and “faithful,” look forward to the wonderful promise in verse 14. Daniel 7:11-12 may be interpreted to indicate that after support for the papal system is withdrawn (Daniel 11:45b; Revelation 16:12), these apostate Protestants, coupled with the enforcement powers of the United States, become “beasts” themselves, by directly persecuting God’s remnant people. As these things take place, Revelation 15:8 provides a veiled reference confirming that all people on earth will have made their choice of whom to worship. Jesus’ grace has been rejected by the wicked, so He stands up from judgment (Daniel 12:1a) and leaves the heavenly temple, no longer serving as Intercessor for humanity.

Then, the angel supplies a key clue to John that we have already identified;

“Then he said to me, ‘The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.’” Revelation 17:15.

The prophet Isaiah was provided a consistent understanding of the prophetic meaning of water;

“Woe to the multitude of many people who make a noise like the roar of the seas, and to the rushing of nations that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters!” (Isaiah 17:12), as was Jeremiah; “O you who dwell by many waters, abundant in treasures, your end has come...” Jeremiah 51:13.

After the close of judgment, God’s sealed people can no longer be persecuted by the wicked. The plagues of Revelation 16 start to fall and the fulfillment of prophecies concerning the wrath of God (Revelation 14:17-20), will become apparent. After the “kingdom” of the saints has been given to Jesus, as explained in Daniel 7:14, no harm or plagues will come to the saints (Daniel 12:1c). As *spiritual* Israel (Revelation 7:1-8), they will live through this period with all their needs supplied by the Lord, just like the *literal* children of Israel experienced while spending forty years in the Sinai desert, after their miraculous rescue out of Egypt and as Elijah the prophet was physically preserved. This will lead to the realization by the apostate Protestants that they have been deceived.

“And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.” Revelation 17:16.

It will be too late for the wicked to come into a relationship with Jesus, to surrender their lives to the Saviour, pleading for Him to transform their characters such that they are purified and made compatible with the principles of Heaven. They will take out their frustration and fury on the papal system, destroying it completely. This is a

reference to the sixth plague, the “drying” of the symbolic Euphrates, described in Revelation 16:12, 19; Jeremiah 50:3; and Daniel 7:11. Just as the Medes and Persians diverted the Euphrates River that flowed through the *literal* city of Babylon to conquer it, the people withdraw their allegiance from *spiritual* Babylon, resulting in its collapse.

Revelation 17:17 confirms the combining of persecutory powers with the earth beast of Revelation 13:11-17, making an image (copy) of the legislation, declaring Sunday sacred, and then turning the operation of this abomination over to the papacy, as referenced in verse 13.

“For God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled.”
Revelation 17:17.

This process is similar to God providing Pharaoh many opportunities to allow the Israelites to worship, the result being that Pharaoh’s heart became harder and more determined in his rebellion against God (Exodus chapters 5-12). The masses, reeling from anarchy, war, and disasters will fill the churches. The ministers will claim that God’s judgments may be turned aside if only the nations of earth return to God. The demand of the people will be to identify and punish those who don’t conform to the majority position of the papal day of worship. Apostate Christians and their leadership will demand that the powers of the United State’s legislative, judicial, and executive branches be marshaled in support of the scarlet beast/papacy (a process which will thereafter be adopted by all of the world’s governments). These forces will be in the common pursuit of eliminating all who don’t worship on Sunday, including Muslims who keep Friday, and those who keep the 7th day Sabbath commandment, and have refused to take the mark of the beast or his image (declaring Sunday sacredness), in order to buy and sell (Revelation 11:19; 13:14-17; 14:6-12).

When religious persecution in the form of restrictions on commerce begins, the *ability* to buy or sell *is a curse!*

In summary, we consistently apply the interpretive principles, discerning the following meanings of Revelation 17:12-17:

- The “ten horns” represent the thousands of apostate Protestant religions claiming to follow the true God, however practicing false doctrines. These “horns” are referred to as “beasts” in Daniel 7:12, meaning they will obtain, and exercise, persecutory powers.
- “Waters” represent a dense population of people

Chapter 9

Revelation 17:18-18:5 – Babylon the Great is Fallen

“And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.” Revelation 17:18.

The woman, first seen sitting on “many waters” (Revelation 17:1), then moving on to the seven heads (Revelation 17:9), will move back on to the “waters” of the whole earth (Revelation 17:15) when the papacy receives persecutory power again. This is *spiritual* Babylon, one part of Satan’s counterfeit trinity. This counterfeit trinity is identified in Revelation 16:13-14. It is comprised of the sea beast (Roman Catholic Church), the earth beast (false prophet of apostate Protestants empowered by the United States), and the dragon (Satan), manifested through impersonations of Christ, healing “miracles,” and communication with the “dead”/demons, known as “spiritualism.”

Why is the understanding of this prophecy being revealed at this time? Simply, because time is running out; all these events have begun, or are about to take place. More importantly, Jesus wants to save each and every one who would choose Him as Lord and Saviour. There are two things we must all do as individuals. First, repent of our sins, of dwelling or thinking on earthly matters, and to ask Christ to direct every aspect of our lives; to protect us spiritually, making us “heaven dwellers.”

“²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. ²⁶For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins.” Hebrews 10:24-26.

To repent is to acknowledge sin, and to return to the Lord with all our heart, and all our soul (2 Chronicles 6:37-39; Ezekiel 14:6; Matthew 3:2; Luke 24:47).

“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.” Acts 17:30-31.

The Bridegroom of Matthew 25:1-13 is returning from the wedding soon. Jesus pleads with each of us to prepare for the wedding supper by storing the oil of the Holy Spirit (including His commandments and the testimony of His prophets) in our lamps now. The earthly tabernacle and its furnishings, described in Exodus, were patterned after the heavenly Sanctuary. Each element pointed to Christ’s sacrifice *and* to His ongoing ministry on our behalf in the Sanctuary in Heaven (Hebrews 8:1-6). Each individual enters their relationship with Jesus by repenting of sin, accepting, and inviting Him into

our lives daily, represented by the Altar of Sacrifice. We then wash in the baptism (initially *literally* as the example provided by Jesus at the hand of John the Baptist, as a public acknowledgment of our new life in Christ) of the Spirit, represented by the Laver, constantly keeping a prayer in mind, represented by the Altar of Incense. We are to read God's Word daily (represented by the Table of Showbread), and share the light of the everlasting gospel of Jesus with the power of the Holy Spirit (righteousness by *His* faith); the Three Angels' Messages (represented by the seven-branched Lampstand). Finally, by always dwelling on the goodness and keeping of His law (protected by the Ark of His Covenant), we are blessed to dwell on heavenly things (Psalm 91:9). "But his delight *is* in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night." Psalm 1:2. Jesus was the fulfillment of the rituals of feasts and animal sacrifices of the Old Testament. When He was crucified, the veil separating the holy from the most holy place was divinely torn in two (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). Jesus instituted a new institution that replaced the Jewish system of the types of ceremonial offerings and sacrifices that pointed to Him. Here, we compared it to the articles of furniture in the sanctuary. Preparing spiritually is critical; making certain we have confessed all our sins. The Lord's Supper is practiced by first washing each others' feet, followed by eating the bread, and drinking the cup of grape juice (Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:14-20; John 13:1-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29). We are blessed whenever we do it (John 13:17). Further study of the symbols of the Lord's Supper serves as a wonderful blessing, however is beyond the scope of this study.

The second individual responsibility God's people have been given, is the task of spreading the everlasting gospel, in context of the Three Angels' messages of Revelation 14. The Fourth Angel of Revelation 14:15 (the same as the illuminating angel of Rev 18:1-3), is triggered by the understanding of the interpretation of the *mystery* of Revelation 17:8-11. God's remnant people will proclaim the Three Angels' messages (Revelation 14:8-13) with much greater power than during the "midnight cry" in 1844, when God's people mistook the start of the pre-advent judgment in Heaven to be Jesus' return, initially (Habakkuk 2:14).

¹After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. ²And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! ³For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury." Revelation 18:1-3.

This "loud voice," is a warning for all of God's people to leave the Laodicean church of *spiritual* Babylon, the counterfeit trinity (spiritualism, the papacy, and apostate Protestants/false prophet), symbolized by the abyss beast, the sea beast, and the earth beast). This false "church" is referred to as "Jews" of the "synagogue of Satan" in

Revelation 2:9; 3:9. This description is of those *claiming* to be Christians; believers of the true God, but not doers of all His commandments, statutes, precepts, and judgments.

Even at this time, in His mercy, Jesus will extend one last plea.

⁴“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. ⁵For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.” Revelation 18:4-5.

This indicates there are still a few people who haven't heard the gospel, that are receptive to the Holy Spirit. Just as Abraham's nephew Lot, and his family, were rushed out of Sodom by heavenly angels, there will be some that are saved just before judgment is finished. It is at this point, when Michael (Jesus: Daniel 10:13, 21; Jude 9; Revelation 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 4:16) stands up from judgment, and the earth is devastated by the seven last plagues (Daniel 12:1b; Revelation 16), a manifestation of God's wrath (Revelation 11:18a; 14:17-20).

Jesus warns us that,

³⁷But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Matthew 24:37-39.

The good news is that we have been forewarned. “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.” John 14:29. Jesus invites us to take on the attributes of the Philadelphian church described in Revelation 3:7-13.

In summary, we consistently apply the interpretive principles, discerning the following meanings of Revelation 17:18 – 18:5:

- The “woman” is synonymous with “the great city” and “Babylon,” primarily representing the Roman Catholic Church, with secondary application to apostate Protestant religions
- The other “angel” of Revelation 18:1-3 is the Fourth Angel referenced in Revelation 14:14-17
- The other “Voice” of Revelation 18:4-5 is Jesus, and is the Fifth “Angel” of Revelation 14:18-20

Chapter 10 The Critical Comprehension of the Three Angel's Messages

This study of the Revelation 17 prophecy is focused on what the Lord has recently revealed about the events occurring near the end of the world. Jesus' return is imminent! As noted in chapter 9 of this study, two critical actions on the part of the saints are:

1. To make sure we are right with Him, allowing Him to prepare us, fully transforming our characters to be perfect in Christ, and
2. To share the final, end time message and warning from God, with the "oil of grace;" the Three Angels' messages.

These messages are found in Revelation 14 and, though this study will not delve into the whole chapter, it is of vital importance to understand verses 6-13. They read:

⁶Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people— ⁷ saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

⁸ And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

⁹ Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

¹² Here is the patience of the saints; here *are* those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

¹³ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'"

"Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

Following is a brief analysis of each verse:

Revelation 14:6: This angel is seen flying directly overhead signifying the rapid spread of this message, the "everlasting gospel," to all the earth. Jesus predicted, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14 (Mark 13:10). We are told here that the

knowledge of Christ our Saviour will reach all 7.7 billion living people on earth, including both those who reject it (earth dwellers), and those who decide to accept Christ as their Redeemer. The scope of this communication is emphasized by the Revelation 18:1 *loud cry* message, discussed in chapter 9. This identification of the true God, will go out within a brief period of time, precipitated by the stunning understanding of the interpretation of the riddle of Revelation 17, and a spiritual conviction will be felt by all. All will be given the opportunity to make an *informed decision* on whom they will serve; whom they will worship.

Revelation 14:7: The first angel's message, heard with a loud voice, designating its critical importance for all, is to have reverence for God the Creator and give glory to Him, *alone*. This counsel embodies the first four commandments (Exodus 20:3-11). The "hour of His judgment" refers to Jesus' judgment ministry in Heaven, initiating the pre-advent judgment process at the end of the 2,300 day/year prophecy (1844), given in Daniel 8:14. By faith we accept this, based on all other Bible *prophetic time* prophecies in Daniel being completed accurately throughout history, including the seventy week prophecy of Daniel 9, ("*cut off*" of, or "*a part of*" the 2,300 day/year prophecy), foretelling Christ's first coming. The end of this judgment process is referenced in Daniel 7:13-14 and 12:1a, briefly covered earlier in this study. Importantly, this judgment activity was added to Jesus' ongoing intercessory role as our High Priest (Hebrews 8:1-6).

The fourth commandment contains all the elements of a Biblical seal; the Owner's name, title, and territory, prefaced with the emphatic word, "Remember."

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11.

Importantly, God both "blessed", and "hallowed" or "sanctified" the seventh day Sabbath. By blessing this memorial to the Creator, God designated the day as *holy* and *sacred*, to be connected with God. To "sanctify" it means that this 24 hour period, from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown each week, is set apart for a sacred purpose, to be a time free from sin, and to show reverence to God. All our thoughts, words, and actions are to be directed to strengthening our relationship with our Saviour during the Sabbath hours. It becomes apparent why Satan has attacked this day of worship, including creation itself, through the theory of evolution and a myriad of entertainments designed to take our attention away from the Lord. The Roman Catholic Church boldly claims that it was given the authority to change this weekly, holy, memorial of creation week, to Sunday. If so, why would God then change it back in Heaven? "And it shall

come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the Lord.” Isaiah 66:23. This was written near the end of Isaiah’s ministry in about 680 B.C. At the end of Revelation, Jesus Himself emphasizes that there will only be two groups when He returns saying,

“Blessed are those *who do* His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.” Revelation 22:14-15 (Emphasis added).

To summarize, Revelation makes three requests for those who would fully consecrate their lives to Jesus:

- Fear God: Having reverence and awe; fully surrendering to His will, including ceasing sin.
- Give glory to Him, alone: This is a daily commitment to honor Him by our thoughts, words, and actions, in recognition that we are not our own; we have been purchased (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31)!
- Worship Him, the Creator: The Lord God of the fourth commandment (Hebrews 1:10; 4:4; 11:3). Those who don’t worship God, by default, worship the beast.

Revelation 14:8: The second angel’s message is that Satan’s counterfeit spiritual city, Babylon, is fallen, is fallen. It is twice fallen via its historical *literal* fall in 539 B.C., along with its *spiritual* fall, via its false pretense of Christianity; practicing the “wine” of its own doctrines and traditions it defines as worship. Babylon’s “wrath” specifically refers to the force of conscience in religious matters, through threats and persecution. The sea beast/papacy exercised this power for 1,260 years, ending in 1798. While the “beast” of persecution ceased while the harlot woman of Revelation 17 sits on the *seven heads* (lines of popes) of the church, the beast is about to rise from the wilderness and, once again, force all the world to declare its memorial to the pagan sun gods, Sunday, as sacred. It will again commit an *abomination of desolation* by being clothed with geopolitical powers, in order to deceive the world by its false righteousness.

Revelation 14:9: The third angel’s message builds on Revelation 13, with a shout to get the attention of the whole earth. The message warns each individual, regardless of culture, tradition, national, or religious affiliation, to reject the beast and his image. The beast is the papal system, enforcing its doctrines via the nations, and the image, or copy, is apostate Christian leaders using the force of legislative and policing powers provided by the United States. The mark of the beast provides the ability to *continue* commerce, covered in chapter 4 of this study. Conversely, God’s people will need to rely fully on Him to provide them with water, food, shelter, health, and protection. This tells us that all our energies to prepare for this time are to be focused on our *spiritual* relationship with Jesus Christ, and sharing Him with others, not on physical safety or “survival” preparations. We are to continue to honor our Creator with our bodies,

including living according to Biblical guidance, including the ideal diet before sin (Genesis 1:29; 3:18).

Revelation 14:10: The decision to accept the mark of the beast, is coupled with God's wrath, taking the form of the seven plagues described in Revelation 16 (see Revelation 14:17-20). The end of Revelation 14:10 then jumps to events after Jesus comes, resurrecting all the saints who have ever lived and, together with the living saints, removing them all from the earth for 1,000 years. It is after the 1,000 years that God returns with all the saints to perform the executive judgment, after raising back to life all the wicked who ever have lived, who will then acknowledge Him. "For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God.'" Romans 14:11. These events are addressed in Revelation 20.

Revelation 14:11: The Bible provides a graphic description of the final outcome of the wicked. They are completely eradicated by the cleansing fire of God's presence when He fully reveals Himself to all. A prayerful study of the following texts provides a more complete understanding that this all-consuming fire from God continues *until there is nothing left to burn* (Isaiah 34:5, 9-10; 66:24; Daniel 2:35; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 18:9, 18; 19:3; 20:10; 21:1). After this, God will create a new earth, according to Revelation 21 and 22.

Revelation 14:12: The saints are defined by this verse as having patience, meaning that they will endure suffering, however, they will stay true to God's Ten Commandments *and* accept the faith of Jesus, our Redeemer. Vital to understand, it is *Jesus' faith, His righteousness*, defining His people. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" Ephesians 2:8. Praise the Lord! We are justified by His faith! By accepting this gift, we allow Jesus to sanctify our lives, transforming our characters to the point where we cease to chose to sin, achieving perfection in Jesus.

Revelation 14:13: This important verse should be emphasized during our time. This is one of the seven blessings in the book of Revelation (Revelation 1:3; 14:12-13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:6-7; 22:14-19). The Voice from Heaven is that of God the Father, confirmed by the Spirit. Here we understand the gravity of just how terrible the conditions on earth will be, just before Jesus returns. This blessing is pronounced on those who are laid to rest *before* this time of "Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:5-7). God, in His mercy, will allow many of His people to go to their temporary rest, in order to protect them from the terrible events about to fall on this dark earth. Everlasting preservation is infinitely better than life here on earth (1 Kings 14:13).

Of crucial importance is to understand that those who die, return to dust. There is no conscious state of the dead. The Bible is exceptionally clear on this truth, however Satan's first lie was to dispute this fact and he has been exceedingly successful in planting this deception in nearly every religion in the world today. It is this deception

from the dragon beast himself, coupled with the sea beast (papacy), and the earth beast (apostate Protestants empowered by the United States as the *false prophet*), that form a counterfeit trinity opposing “all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2:4. Understanding what God’s Word says about the dead, we prayerfully consider these texts: Job 14:12; Psalm 115:17; 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, 10; Daniel 12:2; John 11:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 6:9-10; 20:6. Just as in the days of King Saul (1 Samuel 28), Satan is impersonating familiar people, mixing private facts with spiritual error, that will lead the most astute to abandon God’s Word.

In summary, we discern the following meanings of Revelation 14:6-13:

- These messages are God’s final message to the world
- The Third Angel message incorporates the first two as well as our righteousness supplied by the faith *of* Jesus
- The “beast” is the Roman Catholic Church and, secondarily, apostate Protestants, empowered by the nations
- The “image” is a copy of the doctrine of Sunday sacredness to be adopted by apostate Protestants, legislated and enforced by the United States of America

Epilogue

Though no one but the Father knows the day or hour of Christ's return (Matthew 24:36; 25:13; Mark 13:32, 35), the preceding study indicates that God has revealed specific events, even providing information allowing those of us living in this last generation of sin to identify the "666" man of sin, who will die at Jesus' return. The world is about to experience a spiritual shock when the man we know as Pope Francis is forcibly deposed. He will not die in office, nor will he resign in good standing. The man we know as Pope Benedict (Joseph Ratzinger) will return to the papal throne, however he will NOT die a natural death. He will become the "666" man of sin, and be killed by the brightness of Christ's return. He was born on April 16, 1927. This compels God's people to give prayerful consideration of this study and the testimony of God's Word, in context of what is happening in the world today.

The Revelator records an admonishment by the angel, "Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10b. Likewise, the most important understanding for us is that it is our relationship with Christ providing the grace we need in the matter of salvation. Paul writes about this grace as follows:

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," "Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness," "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 3:23-24; 4:4-5; 6:23.

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul continues,

"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...For by grace you have been saved through faith, And that not of yourselves; It is the gift of God, Not of works, lest anyone should boast." Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9.

In his letter to his beloved coworker Titus, Paul wrote,

"But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:4-7.

Friends, the earth has at best a few years before its total destruction. There is no downside to prepare, now. This time is essential for God to do His good work on our characters, and for us to share the good news of Jesus' righteousness and His saving grace as well as the warning of the third angel with family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors.

Of the time in which we live, author Ellen White wrote:

“There is to be, at this period, a series of events which will reveal that God is Master of the situation. The truth will be proclaimed in clear, unmistakable language. As a people, we must prepare the way of the Lord, under the overruling guidance of the Holy Spirit. The gospel is to be given in its purity. The stream of living water is to deepen and widen in its course. In all fields, nigh and afar off, men will be called from the plow and from the more common commercial business vocations that largely occupy the mind, and will be educated in connection with men of experience. As they learn to labor effectively, they will proclaim the truth with power. Through most wonderful workings of divine providence, mountains of difficulties will be removed, and cast into the sea. The message that means so much to the dwellers upon the earth, will be heard and understood. Men will know what is truth. Onward, and still onward the work will advance, until the whole earth shall have been warned. And then shall the end come.” {RH July 5, 1906}

https://egwwritings.org/?ref=en_RH.July.5.1906.par.6¶=821.26897

Heavenly Father and LORD, great and awesome Creator of the universe, we your people have sinned and are all sinners in desperate need of your forgiveness, mercy, and saving grace. We repent and plead for Your righteousness. We humbly ask that You transform our characters in the short time remaining, to prepare us to receive Your Spirit so that we can faithfully represent You and to be with You, forever. Please reveal the true nature of evil to us and remove the sin and sinful desires from our lives so that we may be caring, compassionate, and loving to all. Please hear our continual prayers and act in our lives according to Your will, and may we be at peace as we trust in You, in all things. Provide us the opportunity to share the urgency of the gospel. Thank you for your amazing sacrifice. Amen.

Appendix A

#1 Term	#2 Term	#3 Term	#4 Term	#5 Term	#6 Term	#7 Term	#8 Term
Pius	Leo	Gregory	Benedict ^A	John ^B	Paul ^C	John Paul ^D	New Name ^E
I 140-155	I 440-461	I 590-604	I 575-579	I 523-526	I 757-767	I 1978	I ?-2nd Coming
II 1458-1464	II 682-683	II 715-731	II 684-685	II 533-535	II 1464-1471	II 1978-2005	II
III 1503	III 795-816	III 731-741	III 855-858	III 561-574	III 1534-1549	III	III
IV 1559-1565	IV 847-855	IV 827-844	IV 900-903	IV 640-642	IV 1555-1559	IV	IV
V 1566-1572	V 903	V 996-999	V 964	V 685-686	V 1605-1621	V	V
VI 1775-1799	VI 928	VI 1045-1046	VI 973-974	VI 701-705	VI 1963-1978	VI	VI
VII 1800-1823	VII 936-939	VII 1073-1085	VII 974-983	VII 705-707	VII	VII	VII
VIII 1829-1830	VIII 963-964	VIII 1187	VIII 1012-1024	VIII 872-882	VIII	VIII	VIII
IX 1846-1878	IX 1049-1054	IX 1227-1241	IX 1032-1048	IX 898-900	IX	IX	IX
X 1903-1914	X 1513-1521	X 1271-1276	XI 1303-1304	X 914-928	X	X	X
XI 1922-1939	XI 1605	XI 1370-1378	XII 1334-1342	XI 931-935	XI	XI	XI
XII 1939-1958	XII 1823-1829	XII 1406-1415	XIII 1724-1730	XII 955-963	XII	XII	XII
	XIII 1878-1903	XIII 1572-1585	XIV 1740-1758	XIII 965-972	XIII	XIII	XIII
		XIV 1590-1591	XV 1914-1922	XIV 983-984	XIV	XIV	XIV
		XV 1621-1623	XVI 2005-2013	XV 985-996	XV	XV	XV
		XVI 1831-1846		XVII 1003	XVII	XVII	XVII
				XVIII 1003-1009	XVIII	XVIII	XVIII
				XIX 1024-1032	XIX	XIX	XIX
				XXI 1276-1277	XXI	XXI	XXI
				XXII 1316-1334	XXII	XXII	XXII
				XXIII 1958-1963	XXIII	XXIII	XXIII
78	91	136	120	231	21	3	1
Totals	78	91	105	231	21	3	1
Grand Total:							666

^A Benedict IX was elected three times and served as pope three separate terms, is counted as one pope. The papacy skipped Benedict X, so the count is 15 individuals in the Benedict line.

^B Notice John XXIII. The papacy skipped John XVI and John XX thus, there are only 21 popes in the line using the name of John.

^C Paul line: the "one is" of Rev 17:10, since 'five have fallen'. This is the present tense from which John was shown this vision.

^D John Paul line: the one "not yet come" of Rev 17:10. He "must continue a short time". The John Paul line was in power 26 years, by far the shortest of all pope lines.

^E **In order for Pope Frances (3/13/2013 to date) not to add to the count¹, he will be deposed (2Thess 2:7). Benedict XVI (DOB 4/16/1927) will reclaim his throne ("is of the seven" Rev 17:11). Soon after, possibly coinciding with regaining the power to persecute those who worship the Creator according to the 4th commandment, he will change his name to a unique name, the '8th king', signaling the beast's return (Rev 17:8). He (Joseph Ratzinger) will die at Christ's second coming according to 2Thess 2:1-17; Rev 19:20.**

Mountain # ^A	Running Total ^A	Mountain Name	First Year	Completion Year					
1	1	Felix	269	530					
2	3	Pelagius	556	590					
3	6	Theodore	642	897					
4	10	Marinus	882	946					
5	15	Agapetus	535	955					
6	21	Sergius	687	1012					
7	28	Sylvester	314	1045					
8	36	Damasus	366	1048					
9	45	Stephen	254	1058					
10	55	Victor	189	1087					
11	66	Paschal	817	1118					
12	78	Gelasius	492	1119					
13	91	Anastasius	399	1154					
14	105	Lucius	253	1185					
15	120	Honorius	625	1287					
16	136	Celestine	422	1294					
17	153	Boniface	418	1303					
18	171	Eugene	655	1431					
19	190	Martin	649	1431					
20	210	Nicholas	858	1455					
21	231	Callistus	217	1458					
22	253	Adrian	772	1523					
23	276	Julius	337	1555					
24	300	Marcellus	308	1555					
25	325	Sixtus	115	1590					
26	351	Urban	222	1644					
27	378	Alexander	105	1691					
28	406	Innocent	401	1724					
29	435	Clement	88	1774					
<hr/>									
Non-persecutory phase of the papacy	30	1	465	Gregory	590	1846	"Five have fallen" Rev 17:10	Rev 17:3	Woman in wilderness
	31	2	496	Leo	440	1903			
	32	3	528	Benedict ^B	575	1922			
	33	4	561	Pius	140	1958			
	34	5	595	John	523	1963			
	35	6	630	Paul	757	1978		Rev 17:10	"one is" king
	36	7	666	John Paul	1978	2005		Rev 17:10	"short time" king
Persecution Phase	8	=	36	666	Unique Name ^B	?	2nd Coming	Rev 17:11	The '8th' is one of the '7'

6	32	3	34	35	1
7	11	27	28	8	30
19	14	16	15	23	24
18	20	22	21	17	13
25	29	10	9	26	12
36	5	33	4	2	31

^AThe pope 'counts' are added just as Babylon 'added' their 36 gods on amulets using their base 60 numerical system (1+2+3...+34+35+36=666).

For pictures of amulets with numbers 1-36 arrayed to add to 666 see: http://historical.benabraham.com/html/babylonian_solar_cult.html

^BAs of 2015, the Vatican lists 266 individual popes, with 82 papal names used (including Peter). Including Pope Francis, there are 46 names used only once and since not repeated, do not qualify as 'mountains of gods'. 36 pope names are used by multiple popes (mountains of gods), 29 retired before 2/15/1798, 7 after. Benedict XVI (2005-2013) is the '666 man' and will die under a different name, proving the line actually fell in 1922

Cardinal Electors

We may expect that Pope Francis will act in a way that will hasten his being deposed, based on actions he is likely to take very soon. Key to understanding when he will feel comfortable to codify doctrinal changes that he has alluded to ever since he was named the successor to Pope Benedict on March 13, 2013 is the body of Cardinals who elect the pope. Though there are 224 living Cardinals as of November 19, 2018 (<http://catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/scardc1.html>), only 125 seats are reserved to elect a new pope. A Cardinal Elector must be below the age of 80 years the day the Holy See becomes vacant in order to vote. As the men age out, resign, or die, Pope Francis has been naming replacements. This is of vital interest because of the schism that is continuing to develop within the Roman Catholic Church. Should doctrinal changes be made, Pope Francis is intent on maintaining the direction he sets. The only way to have assurance of that is for a majority of Cardinal Electors appointed while Francis is pope thereby extending his legacy.

If no Cardinals die or resign before their eightieth birthdays, the following vacancies are listed by year:

- 10 cardinals will turn 80 in 2019: 3 previously named by Francis, 5 named by Benedict, 2 named by John Paul II
- 4 cardinals turn 80 in 2020: 1 named by Francis, 3 named by Benedict
- 6 cardinals turn 80 in 2021: 2 named by Francis, 4 named by John Paul II

With the installation of four (4) more cardinals previously named by his predecessors, Pope Francis will reach a simple majority of 63 of the now current 125 Cardinal Elector seats. The four cardinals Francis needs to achieve a simple majority will age out by August 16, 2019. This date would move up if Cardinals died or resigned. Likely, Pope Francis will soon feel free to proceed with doctrinal changes already greatly concerning the conservative members. These actions will precipitate Emeritus Pope Benedict to reclaim the papal throne as the legitimate pope with seniority and to declare Pope Francis a heretic, an antipope. Below are links to articles covering this topic:

<http://catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/scardc1.html>

<https://abcnews.go.com/International/14-cardinals-appointed-vatican-pope-francis/story?id=56225521>

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/ny-news-pope-francis-names-new-cardinals-20180629-story.html>

<https://religionnews.com/2018/05/22/francis-cardinals-make-up-almost-half-of-electors-of-next-pope/>