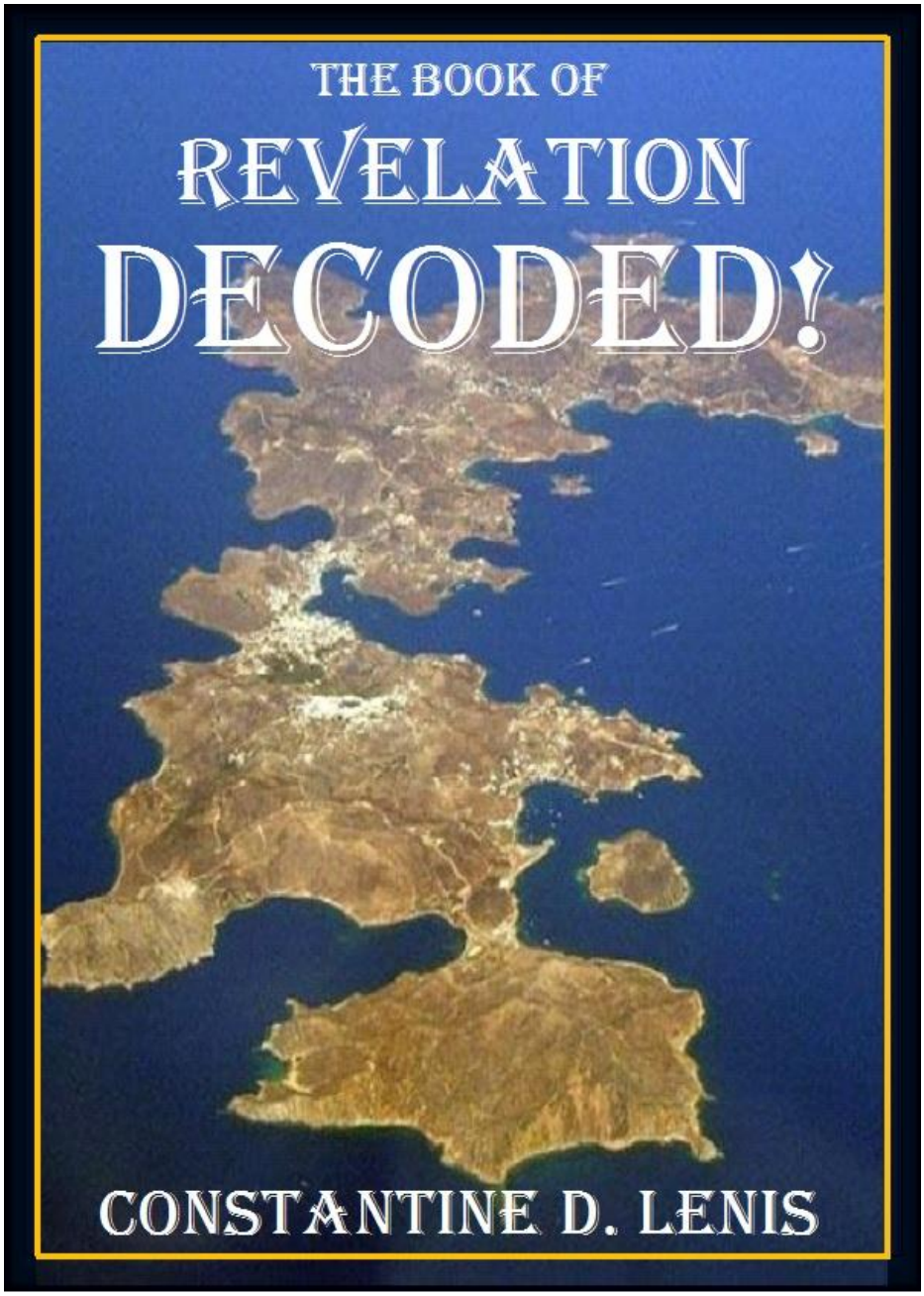
THE BOOK OF
REVELATION
DECODED!
CONSTANTINE D. LENIS

About the cover
The picture on the cover is of the island of Patmos where John received and wrote the book of Revelation.

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"… Because the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

(Revelation 19:10)

Dedication

FOR YOUR GLORY LORD!

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Prologue

In the gospel of Luke, chapter four and verse 41, we meet a strange case. Demons cried out and testified that **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.** And Jesus rebuked them and commanded them to be silent!

What is the reason Jesus did not allow them to give such a witness?
In the gospel of John, chapter five and verses 31-39, we hear the Lord Jesus saying:

"If I witness concerning Myself, My witness is not true; it is Another that witnesses concerning Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses concerning Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. But I do not receive witness from man, but I say these things that you may be saved ... for the works which the Father has given Me, that I should finish them, the works which I do, themselves, witness concerning Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father, the One sending Me, has Himself borne witness concerning Me …. You search the Scriptures, for you think in them you have everlasting life. And they are the ones witnessing concerning Me."

From the above verses, we observe that Jesus did not accept the witness of demons to testify **who He is**, neither did He accept the witness of men, because He said, ***"… I do***

not receive the witness from a man ….” However, we observe that He accepted the witness which comes from three sources only:

1. From **God,**

2. from **the works** that His Father gave Him to do, and

3. from **the Scriptures.**

Why did Jesus prefer the above three sources only?
Because there aren't any greater sources that could bear witness about who He is. Let us review these three sources:

First, in Mathew 3:17, we hear **the voice of God the Father** bearing witness to the fact that Jesus is His Son --- **a relationship that demands Godhood** (John 5:18).

S**econd**, His powerful and **supernatural works** which displayed qualities of being Almighty and All-knowing, gave the witness that He was God the Son in the flesh. Placing emphasis on the witness of His works, Jesus said to the unbelieving (in Him) Jews,

“… even if you do not believe in Me, believe in My works in order to know and to believe that the Father [is] ***in Me and I*** [am] ***in Him.”*** (John 10:38),

and to His Disciples He said,

“believe Me that I [Am] ***in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise, believe Me from the works themselves.”*** (John 14:11).

Third, through the prophecies given by the Old Testament prophets, **the Scriptures proved the fact that He was the Savior God** who became flesh to die on the cross, to be buried, and to be raised from the dead (Isaiah chapter 53) **to save from their sins all those who will recognize** w**ho He is, and believe in Him** (Matthew 1:21; John 3:16; 6:40; Isaiah 53:11 from the Greek text; **Romans 10:9,13**).

Why did Jesus place so much emphasis on the witness that reveals who He is?
Because knowing who He is and believing in Him is a matter of salvation! In John 8:24, Jesus said,

"… if you do not believe that I AM (Greek: **Ego Eimi**)**, *you will die in your sins."***

From the above words, we realize that one must know and believe in **the True Savior** in order to have true salvation because a false savior can only offer false salvation.

Commenting on the foregoing verse, in the article, **"Purpose and meaning of 'Ego Eimi' in the Gospel of John In Reference to the Deity of Christ"**, Mr. James White wrote:

"In closing, we might do well to look, then, with this understanding in mind, at Jesus' words at John 8:24: "unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins." **Jesus here gives us the content and object of saving faith** - faith, real faith is that which comes to the real Jesus. A faith that demands a change in Jesus before a commitment is made is not real faith at all. The Jews standing about Him during this conversation most assuredly would not have denied that He was a man - but that was not sufficient for faith. Some had just recently proclaimed Him as Messiah - but

that was not sufficient for faith. Some might hail Him as a prophet or a miracle worker, blessed by God - but that was not sufficient for faith. Some today say He was a great moral teacher and philosopher - but that is not sufficient for faith. Some call Him "a god" or a great angel - but that is not sufficient for faith. **No, Jesus Himself laid down the line - unless one believes Him for whom He says He is - the "ego eimi" - one will die in one's sins. There is no salvation in a false Christ. If we are to be united with Christ to have eternal life, then we must be united with the true Christ, not a false representation**. It is out of love that Christ uttered John 8:24. We would do well to heed His words."

Therefore, **it is necessary for one to trust the sources which give witness that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God --- a title which demands Godhood!** (John 3:16; 5: 18; 10:33; Matthew 26:63-66) If one will not ***"see*** (will not recognize) ***the Son"*** (John 6:40)**,** one cannot possess the required faith which will enable him/her to confess with his/her mouth that Jesus is the **"Lord"**, the **YAHWEH** of Romans 10:9,13-15 **whose name one must call upon to be saved!**

Can the book of Revelation help one *"see"* the Son?
Certainly! For example, in Revelation 1:17 and 18, we hear Jesus introducing Himself to John saying,

"… I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I became dead; and, behold, I am living forever and ever. Amen. And I have the keys to hell, and of death." (LITV)

With the above words, Jesus states the gospel which is comprised of the Person and the work of the Savior God.

With His statement, ***"I am the First and the Last"***, He declares that He is the YAHWEH of Isaiah 41:4 because it is impossible to have two Firsts and two Lasts! With His statement, ***"I became dead; and, behold, I am living forever and ever"***, He points to His death and resurrection, in other words, to His accomplished work for the salvation of all those who believe in Him (John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4). And, again, with His last statement, ***"I have the keys to hell, and of death"***, He declares that He is God in essence because this unique power and authority belongs to God only! (Psalms 68:20)

Truly, the book of Revelation is all about Jesus and His glory! And in chapter five it describes the exaltation, **the universal worship of the Lamb of God** not only because of who He is but also because of the work He accomplished through His death and resurrection. Let us read a few verses from that chapter:

"And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having harps, and golden bowls full of incenses, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy are You to receive the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and by Your blood purchased us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign over the earth. And I saw, and I heard a sound of many angels around the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders, and their number was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb having been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature

which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the One living forever and ever." (Revelation 5:8-14)

The book of Revelation does not present the salvific work Jesus accomplished with His death and resurrection only; it also reveals:

1. The work He will accomplish in the future,

2. His judgment upon those who have persecuted and killed His servants, especially upon His ancient enemies ***"Babylon the great"*** and her accomplice, ***"the Beast"***,

3. His judgment upon those who claim to know Him but, who **do not repent of their sins**, and

4. **the glorious future** that awaits all those who are part of His ***"Body"***! Halleluiah!

The above events are revealed through symbolic visions which God the Holy Spirit gave to the apostle John when he was in prison on the island of Patmos **because of his testimony about Jesus** (Revelation 1:9). The fact that the Lord the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17) played an active role in the writing of the book of Revelation, is manifest from the words which we read in Revelation 2:7,11,17,29 and 3:6,13,22. There it says,

"Let the one who has an ear hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

In fact, **the Holy Spirit was the Author of the book of Revelation**. How do we know this? Because the book of Revelation is full of prophecies and the apostle Peter said, ***"no prophecy was ever written by the will of man, but the holy men of God were moved to speak by the Holy Spirit."*** (2 Peter 1:21).

When we study the Bible, we observe that God the Holy Spirit used elements from our created environment, such as **"the Sea"** (Isaiah 57:20), **"the sand of the sea"** (Genesis 32:12), **"the waves of the sea"** (Jude 13), **"the salt of the earth"** (Matthew 5:13), **"the earth"** (Revelation 12:16), **"the mountains"** (Daniel 2:34,35; Isaiah 2:2,3; Revelation 6:16), **"the caves and the rocks of the mountains"** (Revelation 6:15), **"the trees"** (Daniel 4:10,22; Revelation 7:3), **"the stars"** (Revelation 1:20), and many more, in a symbolic way. During our study, we will deal with almost every one of the above symbolic terms or **codes** because our understanding of them will help us decode the book of Revelation.

As the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments were given by **the Same Author**, then, the symbolic terms or codes by which He spoke to His prophets throughout the millennia **must always have the same meaning!** For example, it is not possible for the symbolic terms **"tree"** and **"sea"** to symbolize one thing in the prophecies of the Old Testament, but to symbolize something different in the New! For this reason, it is logical to believe that **the symbolic codes of the book of Revelation can be explained by studying the Scriptures.**

Once we establish **the biblical meaning of the symbolic codes**, all we have to do is to apply that same meaning to the verses where the codes are found and, **oh … the miracle!** The message of the book of Revelation will emerge before our surprised eyes!

When we study the book of Revelation, we must remember that:

1. **It does not contradict the rest of the Scriptures!**

2. We must exercise **humility!**

3. If our understanding on a certain point contradicts a teaching of the rest of the writers of the Bible, **we ought to re-examine this point under the light of the God-inspired Scriptures**.

4. We should not present **our opinion** as biblical doctrine.

5. We must **fear God!** If we alter His message by presenting our opinion as biblical truth, **we will be judged** (James 3:1). For this reason, if we cannot explain a symbolic code **from the Scriptures**, it's better to leave it alone until God the Holy Spirit inspires us to understand it.

6. The study of the book of Revelation must be carried out with **a supreme sense of appreciation!** Remember, God the Father gave this Book to God the Son to show His servants the things which must soon take place (Revelation 1:1).

We thank You Jesus for placing Your Father's **"family-book"** in our hands! We thank You Father for making us part of your family (Ephesians 2:19)! We thank You Father because through this book you reveal your will, your character, and your plans for our future!

Finally, it has been said that the book of Revelation was written in the 90's AD. The time span it covers is very lengthy. In the first chapter, verse nineteen, the resurrected Lord Jesus said to John,

"Write the things you have seen (past tense) ***and the things that are*** (present tense) ***and the things that will come to pass*** (future tense) ***after these."***

As John had not yet received any of the visions which make up the book of Revelation, the words of the above verse (19) refer to:

a) ***"things"*** of the Christian faith which John knew that **had taken place in the past**, such as the coming of the promised ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15 and the persecution which Satan launched against the symbolic ***"Woman"*** who ***"gave birth"*** to that ***"Seed"*** and against the rest of her ***"seed"*** (chapter 12) --- a persecution which **John had seen and experienced**.

b) ***"things"*** which were going on **at the time he received the book of Revelation**, such as the spiritual condition of the churches in Asia Minor (chapters 2 and 3), and

c) ***"things"*** which will take place in the distant future, even 1000 years after the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as the events described in chapters 21 and 22.

Keeping the above in mind, let us proceed with our study.

Lord the Holy Spirit in the Name of Lord Jesus we invite You to guide us into all truth. Amen.

Unless otherwise stated, the scriptures sighted are from LITV.

AT - Author's Translation (from the Greek text).

Chapter One

Verse 1: ***"Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to show His slaves the*** [things] ***which must soon take place, and He signified by sending His angel to His slave John,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

In verse 1, we see that the writer, the apostle John, reveals the Authentic Mind that produced the book of Revelation: **God!** Humbly, John tells us that the book of Revelation is not his own invention and that it originates from God. The words, ***"to show His slaves the*** [things] ***which must soon take place"***, caused me to pray like this:

"Lord my God, I know that I am one of Your servants and one of Your sons because of my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12)***. For this reason, please open my mind to understand the mysteries of the book of Revelation*** (Daniel 2:28)***. Lord the Holy Spirit*** (2 Corinthians 3:17) ***who indwells me*** (John 14:17)***, please increase our fellowship*** (2 Corinthians 13:14) ***and guide me into all truth*** (John 16:13). ***Please help me understand the depth of the message which You have inspired in that book*** (2 Peter 1:21)***. I am asking this favor in the Name of my Lord Jesus Christ*** (John 16:24)***. Amen!"***

Those who do not know the True Jesus of the Bible, who is God over all and blessed forever (Romans 9:5; Greek text),

try to use the words of verse one to "prove", as they think, that Jesus is less than God. They say that, since **'God gave'** the Revelation to Jesus, then, certainly, Jesus is not God. Those who wish to degrade Jesus, forget the fact that when God the Word became flesh (John 1:1,14), **He lowered Himself for a short period of time** (Philippians 2:7-9; Hebrews 2:7), and that because of the work He accomplished through His death on the cross, His burial and His resurrection, He became **the only Mediator between God and men** (1 Timothy 2:5). Therefore, the revelation which God wished to give to His servants **had to be given through the only Mediator,** the resurrected and glorified man Jesus Christ.

The fact that the resurrected and glorified man Jesus Christ is also God, One of the True Godhead YHWH, is manifest when we compare the words of Revelation 1:1 with the words of Revelation 22:16 and 22:6. Let us make the comparison:

Although in Revelation 1:1 we read that it was **Jesus who sent His angel** and in Revelation 22:16 Jesus confirms this fact by saying, ***"I, Jesus, sent My angel …"***, when we read Revelation 22:6, we learn that **the One who sent His angel was *"the Lord God of the holy prophets"*!**

What connection did Jesus Christ have with the prophets of the Old Testament? Let us read the words of the apostle Peter from 1 Peter 1:10,11. There he wrote,

"about which, salvation, the prophets, those who prophesied about the grace that was to come to you, looked for and searched out, searching for when or what time [period] ***the Spirit of Christ that was in them was revealing*** [to

them]***, when*** [the Spirit] ***was witnessing beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after these."*****!!**

From the foregoing words, we realize that the Holy Spirit who moved the Old Testament prophets to write (2 Peter 1:21), was indeed **the Spirit of Christ**! Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is ***"the Lord God of the holy prophets"***, One of the True Godhead **YHWH**!

Verse 2: ***"who testified the word of God and the witness of Jesus Christ, and whatever he saw;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

Verse 2 refers to John, the writer of the book of Revelation, and it reveals the fact that he:

a) Preached the word of God,

b) gave witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, and

c) gave witness about things he had seen as an eyewitness.

The fact that John gave a clear witness as to **who Jesus is** and **about the work He accomplished on the cross**, is manifest from the following scriptures:

a) In **John 1:1**, he wrote that **the Word**, the pre-human Jesus, **was God**,

b) in **John 1:14**, he wrote that **the Word became flesh**, and

c) in **John 3:14-16**, he reported the words of Jesus who said to Nicodemus that He ought to be ***"lifted up"***, that is, to die on the cross, so that all those who will believe in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

Verse 3: ***"blessed is the reader, and those who hear the words of the prophecy and who keep the*** [things] ***that are written in it because the time is near."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

From verse 3, we understand that the book of Revelation also contains prophesies, revelations of future events and counsel of great spiritual value. Further, we realize that it is God's will for this book **to be read in the Christian churches**, with the promise that not only those who read it, but also the listeners and those who keep the things which are written in it will be blessed.

Verse 4: ***"[a]John to the seven churches which are in Asia; grace to you and peace from the One who is and who was and who is coming; [b]and from the seven spirits which are before His throne;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4[a]

"John to the seven churches which are in Asia; grace to you and peace from the One who is and who was and who is coming;"

As it is accustomed for a person to start his/her letter with greetings, so did John. When he wrote the above words to the churches in Asia, he started with a Greek-Hebrew greeting: The ***"grace to you"*** of the Greeks, and the ***"shalom"***, that is, ***"peace"*** of the Hebrews.

Also, in verse 4[a], John says that the greeting is sent to the churches "***from the One who is and who was and who is coming"***.

Who is *"the One who is and who was and who is coming"*?

The answer is, **God;** i.e., **ALL the fullness of the Triune Godhead!** The title, ***"the One who is and who was and who is coming"*** refers to the **Eternal Godhead** because only God is:

a) ***"The One who*** (always) ***is"*** = Greek **"ὢν"** [on] = (always) **Am;** (always) **exist** (including **the present time**); **ever existing**.

b) ***"The One who*** (always) ***was"*** = Greek **"ἦν"** [een] = (always) **was.** The One who **always existed in the past**, even before time began (John 1:1; Hebrews 1:2).

c) ***"The One who is*** (always) ***coming"*** **=** Greek **"ἐρχόμενος"** [erhomenos]. Although this title could refer to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Revelation 22:12,20), there is yet another thing to consider: Because the first part of His title, the Greek word **"ὢν"** [on = (always) **is**], refers to **all time**, (that is, **past**, **present** and **future)**, and because the second part of His title, **"ἦν"** [een = (always) **was**], is a word which specifically refers to **the unlimited past** (which is already included in the word **"ὢν"** [on = **always is**]), I conclude that the third part of

> His title, the word **"ἐρχόμενος"** [erho-menos = **is** (always) **coming**], must refer to the unlimited future**,** to signify that **He is the One who will always be present in all the future generations.** Therefore, **the three parts of His title reveal that He is the Eternal God**!

The above conclusion is also supported by Revelation 16:5. There, we read: ***"And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus."*** (1894 Scrivener/GNT-TR)

Explanation of verse 4[b]

"and from the seven spirits which are before His throne;"

Here, John says that the greetings are also sent to the churches ***"from the seven spirits which are before His throne"***.

Who are the seven spirits which stand before the throne of God?

Other exegetes of the book of Revelation are of the opinion that the number ***"seven"*** expresses perfection and that for this reason ***"the seven spirits which are before His throne"*** represent the Holy Spirit who is in full operation before the throne of God. However, the author of this book does not agree with the foregoing **opinion** because it is not supported by scripture. What I see from the Scriptures is that **the Holy Spirit is the Lord God** (2 Corinthians 3:17), and since He is One of the True Godhead YHWH, **He sits on the throne** --- He is not divided into seven personalities which stand **before the throne of God** and which send greetings to the churches. The Scriptures show that ***"the seven spir-***

its" are **seven angelic beings of great importance, of great office,** who are ***"first rulers"*** **or archangels in heaven**, and whom the Lord God has favored **to stand before Him**, in other words, **to stand before His throne!**

Does the Bible mention that the angels are "spirits"?
Yes, it does! In the letter to the Hebrews, chapter 1 and verse 7, we read about the angels the following:

"And as to the angels, He said, "Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire;""

Thus, ***"the seven spirits which are before the throne"*** of God, are **seven angelic beings!**

The last words of the foregoing verse present one more point which proves that ***"the seven spirits"*** which are before the throne of God are angelic beings. There, we read that God makes His angels, His ***"ministers"***, ***"flame of fire"***. And, in Revelation 4:5, we hear John describing the seven angels, ***"the seven spirits"*** which stand before the throne of God, as ***"seven lamps of fire"*****!** Let us read his words:

"… [b]and before the throne (there were) ***seven burning lamps of fire which are the seven spirits of God;"*** (AT)

The fact that the foregoing ***"seven spirits"*** or ***"seven lamps of fire"*** which stand before the throne of God are ***seven angelic beings***, is also proven by Revelation 8:2. There, John presents them as **"angels"**. He said,

"And I saw the seven angels who were standing before God, and seven trumpets were given to them."

Who are those angelic beings, those *"first rulers"* or archangels in heaven who stand before God? Do we know their names?
One could consider the following information:

The book of Daniel informs us that **Michael the archangel** is ***"one of the first rulers"*** in heaven (Daniel 10:13).

Another one of the first rulers ***"who stands before the throne of God"*** is **Gabriel!** Gabriel is the one who received the great privilege of announcing to the virgin Mary the good news about the coming of the Son of God into our world to save **His** people from their sins (Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:21).

How do we know that Gabriel is one of those who stand before the throne of God?
From his own words! When he spoke to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, he said: ***"… I am Gabriel who stands before God …"*** (Luke 1:19).

A POINT OF INTEREST
The names of the other five ***"of the first rulers"*** are not mentioned in today's Bible. However, Jude, in verses 14 and 15, presents a prophecy from the book of the prophet Enoch (Enoch 1:9). Let us read the words of Jude and the words of Enoch:

Jude 14,15 (ASV):
"And to these also Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord came with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their works of ungodliness

which they have ungodly wrought, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Enoch 1:9:
"And behold! He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones To execute judgment upon all, And to destroy all the ungodly: And to convict all flesh of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed, And of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

If the Holy Spirit moved Jude to quote from the book of Enoch and therefore some of Enoch's writings became part of today's written word of God, I have no reason not to, at least, consider the names of the seven heavenly rulers as they are listed in that book, especially since the names ***"Michael"*** and ***"Gabriel"*** are included in that list. Here are the names as they appear in the book of Enoch: 1. **Uriel.** 2. **Raphael.** 3. **Raguel.** 4. **Michael.** 5. **Sarakiel.** 6. **Gabriel.** 7. **Ramiel.** (Book of Enoch 20:1-7)

Therefore, when God and Christ sent their greetings to the churches, the seven heavenly rulers (Archangels) who stand before the throne of God took the opportunity to do the same. After all, those who are in Christ ***"… are no longer strangers and tenants, but … are fellow citizens of the saints and of the family of God"*** (Ephesians 2:19)**!** Even the writer of the letter to the Hebrews said that the Christians ***"… have drawn near Mount Zion, even the city of the living God, to a heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, and to a gathering, an assembly of the first-born ones having been enrolled in Heaven; and to God the Judge of all, and to spirits of just ones who have been per-***

fected; and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant …." (Hebrews 12:22-24)!

I am so greatly honored to be part of such a great "family" and to know that I have been ***"enrolled in Heaven"***, in other words, that my name has been written in the book of life (John 1:12; Philippians 4:3)! Thank you, Lord Jesus!

Verse 5: ***"[a]and from Jesus Christ, who is the Faithful Witness, [b]the Firstborn from the dead, [c]and the Ruler of the kings of the earth; [d]to the One who loved us, and washed away our sins with His blood,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"the Faithful Witness"

Why did John call Jesus, *"the Faithful Witness"*?
Jesus came into the world to **witness to the truth** (John 18:37). This is the reason He called Himself ***"the Faithful and True Witness"*** (Revelation 3:14).

Explanation of verse 5[b]
"the Firstborn from the dead"

Why did John call Jesus, *"the Firstborn from the dead"*?
Because the man Jesus is **the First One** who was raised up from the dead with His glorified body. In 1 Corinthians 15:20, the apostle Paul said that ***"… Christ was raised from the dead; He became the Firstfruit of those who have fallen asleep."*** And in his letter to Colossians, chapter 1 and verse 18, he said that Jesus is ***"the Firstborn from the dead, so that He will become pre-eminent in all things."***

From the Bible, we see that the position of a **"firstborn"** was an exalted position, a position of special honor and privileges. In the book of Psalms, we hear God saying about David:

"And I will make him My firstborn; higher than the kings of the earth" (Psalms 89:27).

Please remember that David was **the last** son of Jesse not the first (1 Samuel 16:11-13).

So then, the apostle John said that Jesus is ***"the Firstborn from the dead"*** to reveal **the high position which Jesus holds among the resurrected saints**.

Explanation of verse 5c

"the Ruler of the kings of the earth"

Why did John call Jesus, *"the Ruler of the kings of the earth"*? Do the unbelieving (in Him) **Pagan kings of the entire world recognize Jesus as their Ruler? The obvious answer is "NO!" Then, who are *"the kings of the earth"*?**

To understand who ***"the kings of the earth"*** are, we must explain what the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to in biblical prophecy.

When we study the book of Revelation, we observe that **the word *"earth"* is not always topical**, in other words, it does not always refer to a place (i.e., to the planet Earth); we observe that it also has another, **a symbolic meaning**. This fact becomes clear in Revelation chapter twelve where we meet both the literal, the topical meaning of the word ***"earth"*** and the symbolic. In verses 8 and 9 we meet the

literal, the topical meaning of the word ***"earth"***, in other words, we see the dragon being cast down from Heaven to the planet Earth because there was no **"place"** found for him in heaven, and in verse 16 we see the symbolic ***"earth"*** **opening its mouth to swallow the river which the dragon threw out of his mouth!** Thus, let us search the scriptures to identify the symbolic term ***"earth"***:

As the symbolic term ***"sea"*** refers to the unbelieving and **wicked mankind** (Isaiah 57:20; Luke 21:25; Matthew 4: 18; 13:47; Jude 1:13), the ***"earth"*** symbolizes exactly the opposite.

In the Old Testament, the symbolic term ***"earth"*** applied to Israel only because of their faith in the True God while all other nations were Pagan (Psalms 66:1; 1 Chronicles 16:23, 24,31; Jeremiah 22:1,2,29). We will examine these verses in the following paragraphs. Today however, because the Christians from the nations have also come to believe in the True God of the Bible, they are included in the symbolic ***"earth"***. For this reason, I conclude that in the New Testament the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community"** (Romans 11:16,17; 4: 16; 10:12; Galatians 3:28,29)**.**

Now, let us examine the verses we mentioned in the above paragraph; these verses support the conclusion that the symbolic term ***"earth"*** does not refer to the planet earth but **to people who know or who, at least, claim to know and worship the True God of the Bible**:

In Psalms 66:1,2 we read, ***"… Make*** (HOT: ***ye*** [plural]) ***a joyful noise unto God, all the earth: Sing*** (LXX: ***ye*** [plural]) ***out the honor of His name; give glory to His praise."***

From the words ***"Make*** (all of) ***you"*** and ***"Sing*** (all of) ***you"*** (in plural), it is clear that the ***"earth"*** which receives the command to make **a joyful noise** and **to sing out** the honor of His name **are the people who know Him because Pagans and Atheists will never do such thing!**

In 1 Chronicles 16:23,24,31 we read,

"Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth; Show forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, His marvellous works among all the peoples ... Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth."

From the foregoing verses, we realize that ***"the earth"*** **which is commanded to sing** (in plural)**, to show forth** (in plural) **and to declare** (in plural) **to the nations God's salvation and glory and to say** (in plural) **to them that Jehovah reigns, are His people --- those who know Him --- not the planet earth!**

In Jeremiah 22:1,2,29 we read,

"So says Jehovah, Go down to the house of the king of Judah and speak this Word there, and say, Hear the Word of Jehovah, O king of Judah who sits on the throne of David, you and your servants, and your people who enter in by these gates … O earth, earth, earth! Hear the Word of Jehovah!"

From the above words, it is easily understood that the symbolic ***"earth"*** which must ***"Hear the Word of Jehovah"*** was not the planet earth but the following specific entities:

a) The King of Judah,

b) his servants, and

c) his people.

Being Israelites, all of them knew the True God of the Bible! For this reason, in verse 29, where the prophet refers to all **three entities**, he repeats the word ***"earth"*** **three times** and says, ***"O earth, earth, earth! Hear the Word of Jehovah!"***

Another verse which attracts my attention, as far as the ***"earth"*** is concerned, is Revelation 14:6. There, we observe that the writer has made a distinction between ***"those dwelling on the earth"*** and those who are in ***"every nation and tribe and tongue and people"***. Let us read his words carefully:

"And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people;" (ASV)

If the ***"earth"*** of the above verse were the literal Earth, that is, the planet Earth, it wouldn't be necessary for the writer to make **a distinction** between the two groups of people, that is, between:

a) *"them that dwell on the earth"* and

b) ***"every nation and tribe and tongue and people"***,

because both groups are dwellers of the literal planet Earth!

When we study the 13th chapter of Revelation, in verse 1 we see a ***"beast"*** coming out of the ***"sea"***, while in verse 11 we see a ***"beast"*** coming out of the ***"earth"***! Those who have studied the book of Daniel know that the ***"beasts"*** which came out of the ***"Great Sea"*** pictured ***"kingdoms"*** (Daniel 7:2,3,17,19,23). Thus, as the word ***"beasts"*** is a symbolic term, then, the words ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"*** where the beasts came out of, are also symbolic!

The foregoing understanding of the symbolic terms ***"sea"*** and ***"earth"*** helps us understand Revelation 10:1,2. There, we read:

"And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth;" (ASV)

When we apply to the above verses the understanding we now have on the symbolic terms ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, we realize the following: Since the strong angel placed one foot on the ***"earth"*** and the other foot on the ***"sea"***, the things he is about to say will affect **the entire human race**, that is, those who believe in the True God of the Bible and those who don't!

Likewise, in Revelation 7:2,3, we observe that both symbolic elements, ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, appear within the same sentence. Let us read these verses:

"And I saw another angel coming up from the rising of the sun, having a seal of the living God. And he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to them to harm the earth and the sea, saying, Do not harm the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads."

From the above verses, we learn that there is **a sealing** that takes place. God seals His servants before His angels harm the ***"earth"*** and the ***"sea".*** This event signifies that there is still time **for those who are part of the symbolic *"earth"*, that is, the Judeo-Christian community** but who have not yet accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Savior and **for those who are still part of the unbelieving** (in Jesus) ***"sea"* of mankind**,

a) to believe in the True Jesus of the Bible who is God over all and blessed forever (John 1:1,14; Romans 9:5; John 3:16; 8:24), and the Creator of the heavens and of the earth (Hebrews 1:8,10),

b) to confess with their mouth that Jesus is the **"Lord"**, the **YHWH** of Romans 10:13, **whose Name they must call upon** (i.e., they must pray to) **in order to be saved** (Romans 10:9,13,14),

c) to believe in their hearts that God raised Him **bodily** from the dead, that His body did not see corruption (Acts 2:27,31; Romans 10:9; Psalms 16:10; Hosea 6:2), and

d) to repent from their previous ignorance and unbelief (Acts 2:38; 17:30; Luke 24:47).

Those who fulfill the above requirements **are sealed** with the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30).

The understanding of the symbolic terms ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"*** is necessary for the understanding of the message which God wishes to give us through the book of Revelation. **If we ignore the symbolic meaning of these terms, we will fall into interpretations which do not express biblical truth.** For instance, in chapter 21 and verse 1, we read:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; because the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more."

If we ignore the symbolic meaning of the words ***"heaven"*** (we will deal with this symbol shortly), ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, we will come to the wrong conclusion that God will destroy today's heaven, even the place where He Personally dwells, the whole universe, all of His creation including the planet Earth, and that He will create a new heaven, new galaxies and a new earth in which ***"the sea is no more."***!!! If the real, the literal sea will be no more, then, neither the fish nor any other kinds of life which God created on the planet earth from the beginning and for which He said, ***"it was good"*** (Genesis 1:10,20-22), will be no more.

The foregoing conclusion does not stand according to the Scriptures because in the book of Acts we read about ***"restoration"*** of all things (3:21) --- not about destruction and recreation! The words ***"and the sea is no more"*** refer to

the destruction of the ungodly men (2 Peter 3:7). The Scriptures show that when the ungodly ***"heaven"***, that is Satan and his angels, **departs or separates** from the holy ***"heaven"*** (Revelation 6:14), a fact which according to Revelation 12:7-12 and Matthew 24:29 took place after the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple in the year 70 AD, and when the wicked ***"earth"*** and the works in it will be ***"burned up"*** (2 Peter 3:10), the words of the apostle Peter,

"… according to His promise, we look for "new heavens and a new earth," in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13),

will be fulfilled.

Surely, at that time the symbolic ***"sea",*** in other words, **the unrighteous mankind**, will not exist!

Now that we have fully understood what the symbolic term ***"earth"*** means, let us proceed to identify ***"the kings of the earth".***

In **Revelation 16:14** John mentions **two kinds** of ***"kings"***:

a) The ***"kings of the earth"*** and

b) (the kings) ***"of the whole world".***

Let's read that verse:

"For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

We all understand who the kings ***"of the whole world"*** are. Therefore, the term ***"kings of the earth"*** refers to another group of people. Who are they?

As the term ***"earth"*** symbolizes **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community"**, the term ***"kings of the earth"*** refers to two groups of people within that community **only**:

a) **The leaders of that community** (whether they are regenerate or unregenerate), and

b) **all the born-again individuals.**

The reason I apply the title ***"the kings of the earth"*** to the **born-again individuals** is based on the following verses:

Revelation 1:6
"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever …»

Revelation 5:10
"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

Revelation 20:6
"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

From the above scriptures, we learn that Jesus has made **all those who believe in Him** (Jews and Gentiles), ***"kings"*** and that they will reign with him **on the earth** for a thou-

sand years. Because they **recognize His rulership** over them, He is known as ***"the Ruler of the kings of the earth"*** (Revelation 1:5) and as the ***"King of kings"*** (Revelation 17:14).

As far as the kings ***"of the whole world"*** are concerned, it is easily understood that Jesus **is not** their Ruler because **they do not recognize Him as their God neither do they recognize His rulership!** However, the title ***"King of kings"*** could also mean that Jesus **has authority** over all of them because in Matthew 28:18 the resurrected and glorified man Jesus said, ***"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."***

Although Jesus is ***"the Ruler of the kings of the earth"*** (Revelation 1:5), **a number of the rulers of the *"earth"* have rejected Him as their King** (John 19:15) and they do not honor Him as one honors the Father (John 5:23). Instead, some of ***"the rulers of this age … crucified the Lord of glory"*** (1 Corinthians 2:8; Greek text) and they preferred to be ruled over by the symbolic ***"woman"*** who is known as ***"the great city"*** and as ***"Babylon the Great"***. This idea is found in Revelation 17:18. There it says,

"And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (KJV)

The above unregenerate ***"kings of the earth"*** remind me of people such as those who are mentioned in Matthew 7:22, 23. There, we read:

"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name we cast out demons, and in Your name we did many powerful works?

And then I will confess to them that 'I never knew you; depart from Me you workers of iniquity!" (Greek text)

"I never knew you" means, **"I never had an intimate relationship with you"** (Meditate on Matthew 1:25)!

As these people **do not have a close personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ**, they only have **"religion"**. By accepting the rulership of the symbolic ***"woman"*** which is known as ***"Babylon the Great"*** or the rulership of one of her harlot daughters (Revelation 17:5) instead of the rulership of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are committing **spiritual fornication with those religious entities**. Let us read the following three verses which speak about their fornication:

Revelation 17:2
"With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

Revelation 18:9
"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning …."

(From the above words, ***"And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication … with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her"***, we realize that only part of the kings of the earth will commit fornication with her --- not all!)

Revelation 18:3
"For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

The fact that they commit spiritual fornication proves that:

a) They never were part of the ***"pure virgin"*** (2 Corinthians 11:2),

b) they never were part of the ***"Lamb's wife"*** (Revelation 19:7),

c) they never had an intimate personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, a relationship like the one that exists between a husband and his wife!

For this reason, He will say to them, ***"I never 'knew' you"*****!** (Matthew 7:22,23; compare with Matthew 1:18,19,**25**)

Truly, I am amazed about the fact that one day, in addition to committing spiritual fornication, the fore mentioned ***"kings of the earth"*** will join the kings ***"of the whole world"*** to actually fight against Jesus (Acts 9:4,5; Matthew 25:40,45; Revelation 13:7)! How sad! Let us read Revelation 16:14 again:

"Because they are spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the war of that great day of the Almighty God."

The end of those unregenerate ***"kings of the earth"*** will be the same as that of the ***"sons of the kingdom"*** of Matthew 8:12. There it says,

"but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of the teeth."

Explanation of verse 5[d]

"to the One who loved us, and washed away our sins with His blood"

What do the above words refer to?

With the above words, John reveals the character and the goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ. The words, ***"to the One who loved us"***, refer to the great love that the Triune God displayed for mankind (John 3:16). Also, they refer to the fact that Jesus proved His great love for us by sacrificing His life on the cross as a payment for the sins of all those who ***"see"*** Him, that is, for the sins **of all those who recognize who He is and who believe in Him** (John 6:40; 8:24).

The last words of **verse 5[d]**, ***"and washed away our sins with His blood"***, refer directly to the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. The angel Gabriel, who spoke to Joseph about the birth of Jesus, said to him, ***"… and you will call His name Jesus; because He will save His people from their sins."*** (Matthew 1:21; also, please read Hebrews 9:14, Revelation 7:14 and Colossians 1:20.)

Verse 6: ***"[a]and who made us kings, and priests to His God and Father; [b]to Him be the glory and the power to the ages of the ages. Amen."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]

"and who made us kings, and priests to His God and Father;"

From the above verse, and from 1 Peter 2:4,5,9, Revelation 5:10 and 20:6, we learn that Jesus makes all those who believe and follow Him **kings** and **priests**. As kings, **they will be ruling forever** (Revelation 22:5). As priests, **they will be worshipping God and Christ**.

The priests of the True God **YHWH** worship or serve only Him. **They are forbidden to be worshipers of angels or of other gods** (Exodus 20:4,5)**.** But when we read Revelation 20:6, we see that those who have part in the first resurrection, **will be priests of God and of Christ.** Let us read this verse:

"Blessed and holy is the one having part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ …."

From the above, we must keep in mind the following important point: If Jesus were not Truly God, equal to the Father and One of the True Godhead **YHWH**, **YHWH** Himself would not have allowed His priests to worship Him.

Please note

The last part of verse 6[a] mentions the fact that Jesus has a God and a Father. Those who do not believe that Jesus is God in essence, grab these words and say that since Jesus has a God and a Father, He is not God! For this reason, let us consider the following:

When we talk about Jesus, we must remember to make a distinction between **GOD THE WORD** (John 1:1), and "**THE MAN** Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

One of the big mistakes made by those who do not believe that Jesus is God in essence, is the fact that they use the words which **JESUS SPOKE AS A MAN,** and they degrade Him by claiming that He is a lesser god in power, age and knowledge than the Father. They say that only the Father is the True God. Because of this claim, they are forced to present Jesus as one of the many gods, **a god of a third kind**, so to speak, because they do not have a word to describe a god who is **neither true nor false**. To support their doctrine, they quote words which **the man Jesus** (not the pre-human "Word") said about Himself, such as:

"... My Father is greater than I." (John 14:28).

"I ... go to My Father and your Father, and my God, and your God." (John 20:17).

By saying the above, they want to prove that Jesus is not the Father and that the Father is superior to the Son. However, we Christians do not believe that Jesus is the Father. Jesus is the Son. Although there is a distinction between the Persons of the Godhead, i.e., between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, when it comes to their nature, **they are All of the same uncreated substanc**e --- the substance of God!

When we talk about the uncreated God, the created angels, and the created humans, we must keep in mind that **they all have their own different types of essence and forms:**

1) The uncreated God has His uncreated essence and form which **NONE** of the created beings can posses.

2) The created angels have their own created essence and form, which is **LOWER** than the essence and form of God.

3) The created humans have their own created essence and form which is even **LOWER** than the essence and form of the angels. In Hebrews 2:7, we read about the essence of men:

"You made him (man/human: verse 6) **a little less than the angels**; You crowned him with glory and honor; and "You set him over the works of Your hands." (Check Genesis 2:15,19)

WHAT WAS THE ESSENCE OF THE WORD BEFORE HE BECAME FLESH?

When we read John 1:1, we observe that it contains three clauses. Clause (a) answers to the question **WHEN?** It reveals that the Word was **IN THE BEGINNING**. Clause (b) answers to the question **WHERE?** It reveals that the Word was **WITH GOD**. Clause (c) answers to the question **WHAT WAS THE WORD?** --- not **WHO WAS THE WORD!** It says that the Word was God. In other words, it reveals that the Word was not a human, nor an angel, but God. Therefore, it emphatically shows that the essence of the prehuman Jesus (the Word) was **THE ESSENCE OR SUBSTANCE OF GOD.** The writer of the letter to the Hebrews expressed this truth in a brilliant way. Let us read Hebrews 1:3:

"who (the Son) ***being the effulgence of His*** (God's) ***glory and <u>the exact expression of His</u>*** (God's) ***<u>substance</u>, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,"*** (EMTV)

WHAT WAS THE FORM OF THE WORD?

In Philippians 2:6, the apostle Paul explained that **the Word ALWAYS EXISTED IN THE FORM OF GOD**. Let us read Philippians 2:5-11:

"For let this mind be in you which also was in Christ Jesus, who (the prehuman Jesus) ***subsisting IN THE FORM OF GOD, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but emptied Himself, TAKING THE FORM OF A SLAVE*** (the form of humans)***, having become in the likeness*** (form) ***of man, and being found in fashion as a man, HE HUMBLED HIMSELF, having become obedient until death, even the death of a cross. Therefore, also God highly exalted Him*** (the man Jesus) ***and gave Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those of Heaven, and those on earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."***

From the above verses, we realize that when God the Word emptied Himself of His Godly glory in order to die for the sins of men, He did not take upon Him the essence and form of angels but **He skipped it** (Hebrews 2:9,16), and He took upon Him **AN ESSENCE AND A FORM WHICH IS LOWER THAN THEIRS**: He took upon Him the essence and the form of men (John 1:14; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:16). This fact proves, at once, that the doctrine which proclaims

that the prehuman Jesus was the created angel Michael, is a false doctrine!

Also from the above verses, we learn that when the Word became flesh, **"HE HUMBLED HIMSELF"** (Philippians 2:8). These words tell us that He did not walk around boasting, saying "I Am God, I Am God"! If He were to do this, the Pharisees would have said to Him repeatedly, "You witnessed concerning Yourself; Your witness is not true" (John 8:13). But it was God the Father who testified that Jesus was **His Son**, **A TITLE THAT DEMANDS DEITY** (Matthew 3:17; John 5:18). And this was the very reason He was killed for blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66).

When **God the Word** became flesh, He **did not** come to the earth to live as God, but **as a man**. **It was God's purpose,** not Satan's, to test **the man Jesus**. It was the Holy Spirit who led **the man Jesus** --- not the Word --- to the desert to be tested by Satan (Matthew 4:1).

As a man, He became hungry and the essence of God, which is in Him (John 14:10,11), could have easily turned the stones into bread so He could eat; but He did not do that because He had to suffer the pains of hunger **as a man trusting God**.

As a man, He subjected Himself to the Law of Moses.

As a man --- not as God, He **died** on the cross.

As a man, He was buried.

As a man, He was raised and glorified.

As a man, He became the mediator between God and men, and as the mediator, He sits at the right hand of the Father until all things are made new.

As a man He entrusted **EVERYTHING into the hands of His Heavenly Father**, even His own Spirit at the time of His death on the cross (Luke 23:46). **And Hebrews 2:16-18 reveals the reason He did so.** Let us read these verses carefully because they contain the answer as to why **the man Jesus** has a God and a Father:

"For indeed He does not take hold (Greek Vambas: the nature/essence) ***of angels, but He does take hold of the seed of Abraham. Therefore, HE WAS OBLIGATED TO BECOME LIKE HIS BROTHERS IN ALL RESPECTS, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, in order that He might make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that which He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted."***

According to the above verses, as it was necessary for Him to become **exactly the same as His brothers -- in every way ---** then, it was right for Him to say the words,

"... My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28),

"I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God." (John 20:17).

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"to Him be the glory and the power to the ages of the ages. Amen."

All the born-again believers should praise the Lord Jesus with the above words! (Revelation 5:12,13)

Verse 7: ***"[a]Look, He is coming with the clouds, [b]and every eye will see Him, [c] even those who pierced Him; [d] and they will mourn upon Him all the tribes of the earth; yes, amen."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7[a]
"Look, He is coming with the clouds"

Who is the One who will come with the clouds?
Matthew 24:23-30 gives the answer: The resurrected and glorified man Jesus Christ who called Himself ***"the Son of man"*****!** Let us read verse 30:

"Then, the sign of the Son of man will appear in heaven; and then, all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory."

The title ***"Son of man"***, is also found in the prophecy of Daniel 7:13,14. There it says:

"I saw in the night vision, and look, like the Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and came near the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him in before Him. And the authority, and the glory, and the kingdom, was given to Him that all peoples, nations, and languages should worship (Hebrew "pel-akh" = 'worship') ***Him; His authority is an everlasting authority, which will not pass away, and His kingdom, is one that will not be destroyed."***

From the above prophecy, we learn that all the peoples, the nations and the languages **will worship *"the Son of man"***. This fact help us realize that ***"the Son of man"*** of Daniel 7:13,14, **is not a created being but God** (the Son)! As, according to John 3:16, He is God's **only begotten Son**, not God's only 'created' Son, **He is God by nature and worthy to receive worship**!

Explanation of verse 7[b]

"and every eye will see Him"

History tells us that in the early 1900s there was a group of false prophets who claimed that Jesus had returned invisibly and that He had appointed them over all His belongings! **They proclaimed that only the elect ones of their religious organization "saw" Him with their mind's eye!** What was **t**he result? They misled millions of people, and they exercised authority over them! If these people had paid attention to the above words of the book of Revelation, if they had realized that when ***"the Son of man"*** returns ***"every eye"*** will see Him, even the eyes of His enemies who ***"pierced Him"***, they wouldn't have followed those ***"liars"*** (Revelation 2:2; Greek text: ***"ψευδεῖς"***)!

Explanation of verse 7[c]

"even those who pierced Him;"

Whom did they pierce? In other words, whose hands and feet they pierced with nails and whose side they pierced with a spear?
The One they ***"pierced"*** was **the Lord Jesus Christ** (John 19:34). Thus, was fulfilled the prophecy in Zechariah 12:10, in which **God YHWH said about Himself**,

"… they shall look unto me whom they have pierced;" (Zechariah 12:10; ASV)

Even from this case we realize that Jesus was not a mere man, but the **YHWH** of Zechariah 12:10!

Explanation of verse 7[d]

"and they will mourn upon Him all the tribes of the earth; amen"

Why would all the tribes of the earth *"mourn"*, *"grieve"*, and *"wail"* upon Him? (Zechariah 12:10; Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7)

All the tribes of the *"earth"* (especially of the land of Israel: Zechariah 12:11-14; Greek Septuagint), **will mourn** when they will see Jesus in the sky, coming with the clouds and with His great glory, **because at that time they will realize who He is!** Until then, many will continue to mock Him, curse Him, and say hard things against Him (Jude 14, 15)! However, when they see Him with their own eyes, what will they say with their mouths? They will just **cry** and **wail! For the first time, they will realize that He is the Savior God** (Isaiah 59:15-20; 60:16; 2 Peter 1:1; Titus 2:13,14), **and they will be ashamed!** If they had realized that He was the Savior God the Son, **the Arm** of **YHWH** of Isaiah chapter 53 who became a man (verse 3), to die on the cross (verse 8; Greek Septuagint: ***"αίρεται από της γης η ζωή αυτού": His life was lifted up from the earth***), in order to save them from their sins (verses 4,5,10; Matthew 1:21; John 3:14), **they would not have crucified the Lord of glory!** (1 Corinthians 2:7,8)

Also, all those who call Him ***"Lord"***, but who are guilty of:

a) **lawlessness and apostasy** because with stubbornness and arrogance insist on preaching ***"another gospel"*** (Galatians 1:9), a so-called ***"gospel"*** that **proclaims salvation apart from the required faith which leads one to confess with his/her mouth that Jesus is the "LORD", in other words, that He is the YHWH of Romans 10:9,13 whose Name one must call upon in order to be saved,** and

b) preaching ***"another Jesus"*** (2 Corinthians 11:4) **who is not the First** (Revelation 1:11), that is, **the One who existed before all time and before all creation and who brought all things into existence for Himself** (John 1:1,3; Hebrews 1:2; Colossians 1:16,17),

will **mourn** when He will send them to the outer darkness or to the eternal fire. There, they will experience an eternity of fear and terror, **because they will share it with Satan and his angels** (Matthew 8:12; 25:30,**41**). Only those who believe, follow, and **honor Jesus exactly the same as they honor the Father** (John 5:23) **will not mourn** when they will see Him coming with the clouds. **They will shout for joy! Hallelujah!**

Verse 8: ***"[a]I Am the Alpha and the Omega,*** (the) ***beginning and*** (the) ***end, says the Lord, [b]the One who is and who was and who is coming, [c]the Almighty."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]

"I Am the Alpha and the Omega, (the) ***beginning and*** (the) ***end, says the Lord,"***

Here, the Lord God says that He is ***"the Alpha and the Omega,*** (the) ***beginning and*** (the) ***end"***. In Isaiah 41:4, we read:

"Who has planned and done it, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I Jehovah am the first and the last; I am He."

And in Isaiah 44:6 it says,

"So says Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts: I am the First, and I am the Last; and there is no God except Me."

Titles such as ***"the Alpha and the Omega", "the Beginning and the End"*** and ***"the First and the Last"*** **are unique because it is impossible to have two.**

Is Jesus *"the Alpha and the Omega", "the Beginning and the End"* and *"the First and the Last"?*
Yes, He is! Jesus claims these **unique and exclusive titles, which necessitate Deity, for Himself!** In Revelation 1:17 He said, ***"I am the First and the Last"*** and in Revelation 22:12-16 He said, ***"…[13]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last … [16]I Jesus …."*** Therefore, Jesus is One of the True Godhead **YHWH!**

Explanation of verse 8[b]
"the One who is and who was and who is coming"

Who is *"the One who is and who was and who is coming"*?
The answer is the same as in verse 4: **The Lord! God! All the fullness of the Triune Godhead, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, has the right to say that He is the One who is, the One who was and the One who is coming,** in other words, that He is **the One who lives throughout all eternity --- the ever-existing God!**

Explanation of verse 8c

"the Almighty."

In this part of verse eight, the Lord God, ***"the One who is and who was and who is coming"***, says that He is **"Almighty"**.

There are some groups which call themselves "Christians", but who do not believe that Jesus is God by nature and for this reason **they preach that He is not Almighty**. Can the Greek language help one determine whether Jesus is Almighty or not? Yes, it can!

The Greek word for **"Almighty"** is **"Παντοκράτωρ"** (Pantokrator). **"Pantokrator"** is a composite word; it is comprised from the words **"πάντα"** ("pada") which means **"all things"** and the verb **"κρατώ"** (krato) which means **"I hold"**. Therefore, the Greek word **"Pantokrator"** literally means: **"The One who holds all things"**.

Is Jesus Almighty? Is He Pantokrator? In other words, does He have the power to hold all things?
Absolutely! In Hebrews 1:3, we read about Him:

"who, always being the brightness of (God's) ***glory and the exact representation of His essence, and*** (always being) ***the One who holds all things with the word of His power, after He made purification for our sins through Himself, He sat at the right*** (hand) ***of the Greatness on high;"***

The above verse endorses the fact that **Jesus is Pantokrator/Almighty** because **He holds all things**, the entire universe, ***"with the word of His power"***! Praise His Name!

IS JESUS THE ALMIGHTY GOD?

When I use Isaiah 9:6 to prove that the Bible calls Jesus God and Almighty, the opposers immediately say that this verse calls Jesus **"mighty God" --- not "Almighty God"!** Therefore, they say, Jesus is not Jehovah, because only Jehovah (they mean the Father) is Almighty. They ignore the fact that the Bible calls Jehovah God "Mighty" in many places. Let us read the following verses:

Jeremiah 32:18

"… The great, THE MIGHTY GOD, Jehovah of Hosts, is His name."

Zephaniah 3:17

"Jehovah your God is MIGHTY in your midst; …."

Deuteronomy 7:21

"… for Jehovah your God is among you, a MIGHTY and fearful God."

Deuteronomy 10:17

"For Jehovah your God, He is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords; the great, THE MIGHTY, the fearful God who does not lift up faces, nor take a bribe."

Nehemiah 9:32

"And now our God, the great, THE MIGHTY …"

(Also, please read Job 36:5; Psalms 132:2; Isaiah 10:21.)

Do the above prophets belittle their God **YHWH** because they call Him "Mighty"? Of course not! Now let us read a few verses which clearly indicate that **Jesus is both Jehovah and Almighty:**

In Psalms 68:18, we read,

"You have gone up on high; You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men; yea, to dwell among the rebellious, O Jehovah God."

From the above verse we hear that the One who went up on high, was **Jehovah God!** Correct? Now, in Ephesians 4:8-10, we hear apostle Paul saying that the One who went up on high, is **Jesus Christ!** Let us read these verses:

"Because of this, He says, "Having gone up on high, He led captivity captive," and gave "gifts to men." **But that He went up, what is it except that He also first came down into the lower parts of the earth? He that came down is the same who also went up above all the heavens**, that He might fill all things."!!!

According to John 1:18, no one has ever seen God. Correct? Who then was the **ALMIGHTY GOD JEHOVAH** who appeared to Abraham in Genesis 17:1? Who was this **GOD JEHOVAH (YHWH)** who, according to Genesis 18:1-8 appeared to Abraham and they ate together?

The answer to the above questions is found in John 8:56-58. From these verses we learn that the **ALMIGHTY GOD JEHOVAH** who appeared to Abraham was **JESUS**!

Who was this YHWH of Hosts seen by Isaiah? (Isaiah 6:1-10) According to John 12:37-41, **the Jehovah of Hosts seen by Isaiah was Jesus!**

Who was the Jehovah who followed the Israelites in the desert? (Exodus 17:5,6) According to 1 Corinthians 10:4, **the Jehovah who followed the Israelites in the desert was Jesus!**

In Isaiah 48:16, we hear **God Jehovah (YHWH) saying**,

"Come near to Me; hear this: I have not spoken in secret from the beginning. From its being, I was there; and now **THE LORD JEHOVAH, AND HIS SPIRIT, HAS SENT ME.**"

Also, in Zechariah 2:8-11 we read:

"For so **SAYS JEHOVAH OF HOSTS: HE HAS SENT ME** after glory, to the nations who plundered you; for he who touches you touches the pupil of His eye. For, behold, I will shake My hand over them, and they shall be a prize for their servants. And you shall know that **JEHOVAH HAS SENT ME**. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion. For, lo, I come; and I will dwell among you, says Jehovah. And many nations shall be joined to Jehovah in that day, and

they shall be My people. And I will dwell among you; **AND YOU SHALL KNOW THAT JEHOVAH OF HOSTS HAS SENT ME** to you."

What??? Who is this **"Jehovah"** who says that Jehovah has sent Him? We know from the Scriptures that **GOD SENT His Son**, the **Word** who became flesh (John 1:1,14; 3:16,17) and we know Him as the man **JESUS** (1 Timothy 2:5).

From all the above, we realize that Jesus is both Jehovah (YHWH) and ALMIGHTY!

Verse 9: ***"I, your brother John, and the one who shares with you in your sorrow and in the kingdom and the patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island which is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

In this verse, John, the spiritual brother of all those who have the testimony of Jesus Christ, tells us that he received the Revelation while he was on the Greek island of Patmos. He was there (as a prisoner) because he preached the word of God and because he gave testimony about who Jesus Christ is. The fact that John gave testimony of who Jesus is, can be verified from the opening words of his gospel where he stated that the Word, the pre-human Jesus, was God by nature, in other words, that His essence was exactly the same as the essence of God the Father (John 1:1; Hebrews 1:3)!

Verse 10: ***"On the Lord's day, I came to be in spirit and I heard a loud voice behind me which sounded like a trumpet,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10

Here, John informs us that ***"on the Lord's day"*** he had a spiritual experience. This verse does not tell us that John was transported into the distant future, that is, in the time of the end, which one could call "the day of the Lord"; there is no scripture to support such theory. If that were the case, John would have seen things which were to take place at the end times only. On the contrary, in **verse 19**, the Lord Jesus said to John the following:

"Write the things you have seen (past tense) ***and the things that are*** (present tense) ***and the things that will come to pass*** (future tense) ***after these."***

As John had not yet received any of the visions which make up the book of Revelation, the words of the above verse refer to:

a) ***"things"*** of the Christian faith which John knew that **had taken place in the past**, such as the coming of the promised ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15 and the persecution which Satan launched against the symbolic ***"Woman"*** who gave birth to that ***"Seed"*** and against the rest of her ***"seed"*** (chapter 12) --- a persecution which **John had seen and experienced**.

b) ***"things"*** which were going on **at the time he received the book of Revelation**, such as the spiritual condition of the churches in Asia Minor (chapters 2 and 3), and

c) ***"things"*** which were to take place in the distant future, even 1000 years after the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as the events described in chapters 21 and 22.

Therefore, the expression ***"on the Lord's day"*** refers only **to the day of the week** in which John received the book of Revelation.

Did John receive the revelation on a Saturday, the seventh day of the week or on a Sunday, the first day of the week? What does the expression *"on the Lord's day"* reveal?

Before we answer the above questions, we must remember that in the Greek text, the expression ***"the Lord's day"*** appears as ***"Κυριακή ημέρα"*** (Kyriakee eemera); ***"Κυριακή ημέρα"*** refers **to the day of the week which is dedicated to the Lord** (from "Κύριος" [Kyrios = Lord]).

In the Old Testament, we do not find the expression *"the Lord's day"* in reference to the Sabbath, i.e., to the seventh day of the week. But, in the New Testament, we see that the Christian believers of the first century viewed **the first day of the week**, i.e., **the day the Lord Jesus rose from the dead** (Mark 16:9), as a fitting day for them **to come together** (John 20:19), **to remember Him** through the breaking of the bread (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:24) and **to collect money for the poor as each of them prospered** (1 Corinthians 16:2).

From the above evidence, we realize that the first century Christians had already made it a custom **to dedicate the first day of the week** for doing the things of the Lord and for this reason, eventually, they came to the point of nam-

ing it (in Greek) **"Κυριακή"** (Kyriakee: **The Lord's day**), a name which has remained in the Greek language to this day. Therefore, in the present verse, the expression ***"the Lord's day"*** reveals that **John received the Revelation on a Sunday.**

The decision of the first Christians to come together on the first day of the week **does not constitute a God-ordained law** which requires Christian believers to keep that day as the Jews kept the Sabbath. In Colossians 2:14-16, the apostle Paul said that Jesus took such laws out of the way. Let us read his words:

"[14]***blotting out the handwriting in the ordinances against us, which was contrary to us, even He has taken it out of the midst, nailing it to the cross;*** [15]***having stripped the rulers and the authorities, He made a show of them in public, triumphing over them in it.*** [16]***Then do not let anyone judge you in eating, or in drinking, or in part of a feast, or of a new moon, or of sabbaths,"***

The above principle also applies to those who keep the Sabbath. Those who try to impose such **a law** upon Christians, **try to undo the complete work the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross**! With twisted words, they try to resurrect **a law of slavery** and to place it on the shoulders of those who should be children of ***"the free woman"*** (Galatians 4:31)! And they will give an account to Jesus for their unscriptural attempt (Hebrews 4:13).

Verse 11: ***"saying, I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last; and, Whatever you see, write in a book, and send to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to***

Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

When John came into a holy ecstasy, he heard behind him a loud voice. According to Textus Receptus, the One who spoke to John introduced Himself as ***"the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last"*** (see explanation of verse 8[a]). The Same also told him to write a book in which he should record all the things he sees, and that he must send it to the seven churches which were in the above-mentioned cities in Asia.

Verses 12 and 13: ***"***[12] ***And I turned to see the voice which spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,*** [13] ***and in the midst of the seven lampstands I saw One like a Son of man, who was dressed with a long robe, and who, near the breasts, wore a golden belt."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 12 and 13

In verses 12 and 13, John wrote that when he turned to see the One who spoke to him, he saw seven golden lampstands and that amid the lampstands he saw One who looked like a Son of man, who was dressed in a long robe and who, between His chest and His waistline, wore a golden belt.

What does the golden belt symbolize?

The golden belt symbolizes the pure **truth** which has been tested by fire (Ephesians 6:14; Revelation 3:18). Also, the belt of the Messiah symbolizes **righteousness** and **faithfulness** (Isaiah 11:5).

What do the *"seven lampstands"* symbolize?
The second part of Revelation 1:20 tells us that the seven lampstands are a picture of the seven churches. There, we read: ***"***[20b]***and the seven lampstands which you saw, are the seven churches."*** We read the names of these churches in verse 11.

As the lampstands hold the candles which radiate the light, likewise the Christian churches consist of born-again persons who have and radiate the light of the One who indwells them, of the One who said, ***"I Am the light of the world"*****!** (John 8:12) And the fact that Revelation 1:20 calls the churches ***"golden"***, reveals how precious the Christian churches are in the eyes of the Lord God!

Who is the One who spoke to John?
The One who spoke to John was the resurrected and glorified Godman (John 1:1,14) Jesus Christ. In verses 17[b] and 18[a], we hear Him introducing Himself saying, ***"***[17b]***I am the first and the last, and the Living One,*** [18a] ***and I became dead; and look I Am alive to the ages of the ages; amen;"***

Why was He among the *"seven lampstands"*?
To show us that He who is **the Head** (Ephesians 1:22), is also **the Overseer of the churches** and that He walks among them (Revelation 2:1) because He cares about their spiritual condition and about their **cleanliness** (Malachi 3:2, 3). This matter will be proven when we examine chapters two and three.

Verses 14-16: ***"***[14]***His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes like flame of fire;*** [15]***and His feet like brass that had been fired in a fiery furnace; and His voice like the voice of many waters.*** [16a]***And***

in His right hand He had seven stars [b]***and a sharp double edged sword was coming out of His mouth;*** [c]***and His face shone like the sun shines in its strength.”*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 14-16

Starting with verse 13 and expanding to verses 14-16, John described the One who spoke to him, i.e., the resurrected and glorified Son of man. He wrote:

1) **His robe** was long to the feet,

2) **He was wearing a golden belt**,

3) **His hair** was as white as snow,

4) **His eyes** were like flames of fire,

5) **His feet** were shining like copper that had been heated in a fiery furnace,

6) **His voice** sounded like the sound of many waters,

7) in His right hand, He was holding **seven stars,**

8) **a sharp double-edged sword** was coming out of His mouth,

9) **His face** was shining like the sun that shines in its strength.

Except for numbers **7** and **8**, the foregoing appearance of the Son of man **is identical** to the one Daniel saw. Let us read Daniel’s description:

"I lifted my eyes, and I saw, and look a Man dressed in linen and around His loins He was wearing a belt from pure gold of the Uphaz; also, His body was like beryllium, and His face had the appearance of lightning, and His eyes were like lamps of fire, and His arms and His feet looked like shining copper, and the sound of His words was like the sound of many people." (Daniel 10:5,6).

Truly, the similarity of the foregoing visions (John's and Daniel's), is amazing! Now, let us examine the above descriptions. The first two were examined in the explanation of verses 12 and 13.

Description #3: ***"***[14]***His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow"***.
The above description reminds me of Daniel's vision about the ***"Ancient of Days"***, as it is described in his book, chapter 7 and verse 9. Let us read it:

"I was looking until thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat, whose clothing was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like clean wool; …."

Who is the *"Ancient of Days"*?
The correct answer is: **The True Godhead YHWH --- the Creator** (Psalms 90:2 and Hebrews 1:2,8-12)**!** Therefore, the appearance of the Lord Jesus, in Revelation 1:14, assures us once more that Jesus is One of the Godhead **YHWH** and therefore, **the Ancient of Days the Son** who became flesh to ***"save His people from their sins"*** (Matthew 1:21)!

Referring to **the likeness of the Son with the Father**, the apostle Paul said that the Son, who became the man Jesus, is ***"the image of the invisible God"*** (Colossians 1:15; 2 Co-

rinthians 4:4) and Jesus said that **whoever has seen Him has seen the Father** (John 14:8-11).

Another thing which proves that God the Son is the Ancient of Days, is the fact that Jesus is ***"the One who is coming"*** (Revelation 22:12). This is a very interesting point because according to Daniel 7:22, **the One who will come is the Ancient of Days!** There, it says,

"until the Ancient of Days came, and the judgment was given to the saints of the Most High …."

In the above verse, who is the Most High?
I am sure that all will agree that **the Most High** is ***"the Ancient of Days"*****!** In the same chapter of Daniel, verse 27, we read:

"And the kingdom, and the authority, and the greatness of the kingdoms which are under the heaven, will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all the governments will worship and obey Him." (Daniel 7:27).

In the above verse, who is the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and whom all the governments will worship and obey?
According to Daniel 7:13,14**,** the correct answer is: **The "Son of man"!** Let us read these verses:

"[13]***I saw in the vision of the night, and look, like Son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven, and He came near the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him in before Him.*** [14]***And the authority, and the glory, and the kingdom, were given to Him*** (to the Son of man) ***in order to be wor-***

shipped by all the peoples, the nations, and the languages; His authority is an everlasting authority, which will not pass away, and His kingdom that which will not be corrupted (destroyed)**."** (Daniel 7:13,14).

Therefore, Jesus, the One who is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 14:10,11) **is the Ancient of Days and the Most High God whom, one day, not only all the angels** (Hebrews 1:6) **but also all the humans will worship and obey** (Daniel 7:14)**. Let His Name be glorified!**

Description #4:
"and His eyes like flame of fire"

Why did the Lord Jesus appear with eyes which are like flames of fire?
This appearance of the Lord Jesus with eyes that looked like flames of fire, reminds us of the words of Isaiah 66:15, 16 and 18. There, we read that the Lord will come with fire, that He will rebuke men with flames of fire and that He will judge men with fire and with His sword because He knows their works and their thoughts. Let us read these verses:

"For, behold, Jehovah will come with fire … to return … His rebuke in flames of fire. For by fire and by His sword Jehovah will execute judgment with all flesh; ... For I know their works and their thoughts;" (Isaiah 66:15,16, 18)

Therefore, the flames of fire by which the Lord will rebuke the churches for their faults are in His eyes, because no one can hide from His sight (Hebrews 4:13) and because He knows all their works and the thoughts of their hearts (Hebrews 4:12).

Description #5:
"and His feet like brass that had been fired in a fiery furnace"

Why did the Son of man appear in such manner? Why is He walking amongst the seven churches (Revelation 2:1) **with feet of copper that were glowing hot as if they had been heated in a fiery furnace?**
When we'll examine Revelation chapters two and three, we'll realize that the things the resurrected Jesus says to the churches reveal a greater purpose. **His purpose is to examine, to judge, to praise, to rebuke and to purify the churches from their spiritual and fleshly imperfections**.

The apostle Paul agrees with the above statement, because, in Ephesians 5:25-27, he said that one day **Jesus will place His Church before Him and that He will make her holy and without blemish.** Let us read Paul's words:

"[25]***… Christ loved the Church, and He gave Himself for her,*** [26] ***in order to make her holy, sanctifying her with the washing of the water in word;*** [27] ***in order to present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having a spot, or wrinkle, or something like these, but to be holy and without blemish."*** (From the Greek text)

The above words, ***"sanctifying her … in word"*** (Greek text), reveal something wonderful and comforting: As the Church is His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10), **Jesus will make her holy** and without blemish ***"in word"***! In other words, He will say to her, **"Be holy!"** and **"she"** will be holy! Thank you, Lord Jesus, because You do not require from me, the believer, to cleanse myself and to become ho-

ly through works! I thank You for Your love and mercy (Titus 3:5; Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12; 10:17)!

The cleansing of the Church can be likened with the cleansing of the gold and of the silver from their impurities which takes place in a fiery furnace. The prophet Malachi has pointed to such a similarity, and it will be a good idea to read his words. However, before we read, and in order to understand his words better, we must keep in mind that those who make up the Church of the Lord Jesus are **priests** of God (Revelation 1:6), and that the priests in Israel were **the sons of Levi**. Now, let us proceed to read the words of Malachi:

"[2]But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand in His presence? Because He is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. [3]And He will sit like one who refines and purifies the silver; and He will purify the sons of Levi, and He will strain them like the gold and the silver …." (Malachi 3:2,3).

From the above words, therefore, we see that this special appearance of the Lord Jesus amongst the seven churches **with feet of copper that were glowing hot as if they had been heated in a fiery furnace**, reveals the cleansing work which He is doing in their midst, ***"because He is like a refiner's fire"*** (Malachi 3:2), and because He, who is the All-knowing God, knows **all their works** (Revelation 2:2,13, 19,23; Isaiah 66:18; Hebrews 4:12,13).

Description #6:
"and His voice like the voice of many waters."

What does the expression *"and His voice like the voice of many waters"* mean? Is it possible that the voice of the Lord was thunderous like the sound of a great waterfall?

Of course, not! In the book of Revelation, the word ***"waters"*** has a symbolic meaning and it means **"crowds, people"**. **"Many waters"** means **"many peoples"**. The above reasoning is supported by Revelation 17:15. There, the angel said to John, ***"… the waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, and crowds, and nations, and languages."*** Therefore, the voice of the Lord which John heard was like **the voice of many people, the voice of a crowd!**

The fact that the voice of the Almighty sounds like **the voice of a crowd or like the voice of an army**, is also supported by Ezekiel 1:24 and Daniel 10:6. Let us read the descriptions of those two prophets of God:

"And when they were going, I was able to hear the sound of their wings, like the sound of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, and the voice of an army;" (Ezekiel 1:24).

"And His body was like beryl, and His face like lightning, and His eyes like lamps of fire, and His arms and feet like polished bronze, and the sound of His words like the sound of a crowd." (Daniel 10:6).

From the above we observe that even from the characteristic sound of His voice Jesus proves that He is Deity, because, His is the voice of the Almighty God the Son, the voice which even the dead will hear, will recognize it, and

will obey it when He will command them to come out of the tombs (John 5:25-29)!

Description #7:
"And in His right hand He had seven stars"

What do the *"stars"* symbolize?
There are two symbolisms:

First, the ***"stars"*** symbolize heavenly angelic beings, and,

Second, they symbolize men who God uses as **"angels"**, in other words, as His **"messengers"** (Genesis 37:9,10; Daniel 12:3)! This explanation is supported by Revelation 1:20. There it says,

"the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden lampstands. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches ...."

In the above verse, the expression ***"the angels of the seven churches"*** refers to the **"overseers"** of the seven churches. I am sure that the Lord Jesus would not have directed the words, ***"Then remember how you received and heard, and keep, and repent. If, then, you do not watch, I will come upon you like a thief and you will not at all know what hour I come upon you"*** (Revelation 3:3), to an angelic being!

The fact that **the overseer** of a church could receive the title **"angel"** or **"messenger"** can be supported by Malachi 2:7. There, we read:

"Because the lips of the priest will guard knowledge, and they will exact law out of his mouth; because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts."

And the fact that the symbolic term ***"stars"*** can also refer to angelic beings, can be proven from Revelation 12:4,7,9. There, we read:

"[4]***and his tail*** *(of the dragon, of Satan)* ***drew the one third of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the earth …*** [7]***Michael and his angels made war against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels made war …*** [9]***And the great dragon, the ancient serpent, the one who is called Devil, and Satan, the one who misleads all the inhabitant, was cast to the earth; and his angels were cast to the earth with him."***

From the above verses, we observe that the symbolic ***"stars"*** of verse 4, which Satan cast to the earth, are **the angelic beings** of verse 9.

The above conclusion helps us understand Matthew 24:29. There it says,

"And immediately after the affliction of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

During our study on the book of Revelation, we will meet the symbolic term ***"star"*** again.

For more information on the symbolic term ***"stars"*** please read the explanation of Revelation 12:1[c].

Description #8:
"and a sharp double edged sword was coming out of His mouth;"

What does this appearance reveal?
This appearance reveals who the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who walks amongst the seven Churches, is. Let us consider the following:

From John 1:1,14, we learn that the One who became flesh and became known to us as the man Jesus, was the pre-eternal and only begotten Son of God whose name was **"the Word"**. Because the Word was God's **only begotten** Son (not God's "only created son" as He is described by those who do not know Him), it is understood that **the Word was God by nature**, in other words, His essence (John 1:1) and His form (Philippians 2:6-11), was the essence and the form of God.

After He accomplished His salvific work as a man through His death, burial and resurrection, the glorified man Jesus returned to heaven and sat at the right hand of God (Hebrews 1:3).

In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation, verses 11-16, we see the resurrected Jesus judging and making war in righteousness. Verse 13 tells us that His Name is ***"THE WORD OF GOD"***, and verse 15 tells us that **out of His mouth comes a sharp sword by which He will smite the nations**.

As Jesus is the Word of God, what does the sword which comes out of His mouth symbolize?

The **"sword"** symbolizes **the word of judgment which He will pronounce against the nations**. He, who is the Word of God, will judge them and will smite them with His words which will cut through their very souls like a sharp, double-edged sword. Who is the unbeliever who will be able to escape such judgment? Even believers will stand **before Him,** before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account for their actions **(**Hebrews 4:12,13; Romans 14:10-12).

Description #9:
"and His face shone like the sun shines in its strength."

Oh, what glory! This bright appearance of the Lord Jesus reminds us of the transfiguration of the Lord as it is described by Matthew:

"And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His clothing became white as the light." (Matthew 17:2)

The above verse also helps us realize that the ***"strong angel"*** of Revelation 10:1 whose **face was like the sun**, is the Lord Jesus Christ, the ***"Sun of righteousness"*** (Malachi 4:2). In Revelation 10:1 we read,

"And I saw another strong angel coming down out of the heaven, having been clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow on the head; and his face as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire."

"But" one might say, "the Scriptures show that **the Lord Jesus Christ is *"God over all and blessed forever"*** (Romans 9:5; Greek text). How can we say that He is the

"strong angel" of Revelation 10:1? Did the prehuman Jesus have the essence of the created angels?"

The answer is No! The prehuman Jesus did not have the substance of the created angels! According to Hebrews 1:3 and John 1:1, **His essence was the exact essence of God!** The word "angel" in both Greek and Hebrew means "messenger", and it points to the fact that He, **YHWH of Hosts the Son**, **was "SENT" by YHWH of Hosts the Father** (Zechariah 2:8,9,11; Isaiah 48:12,16; Luke 4:18).

Now, let us further examine **Description #9:**

What does the fact that His face was bright like the sun signify?
The fact that His face was bright like the sun reveals **His Godly glory!**

What does the *"Sun"* represent?
Let us examine the Scriptures:

In Psalms 84:11 we read: ***"For the LORD God is a sun and shield:"*** and

in Isaiah 60:20 it says: ***"Thy sun shall no more go down*** ... ***for the LORD shall be thine everlasting light*** ...."

From the above verses, we observe that the term ***"sun"*** symbolizes **the LORD God and the shining splendor of His glory!**

As the **LORD** God of the Bible is Triune, Father, Son, Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Psalms 33:6; Isaiah 48:12,16), the words of the above verses apply to all

the Persons of the Godhead. For this reason, when the Holy Spirit moved the prophet Malachi to declare the coming of the Messiah who would come for all those who fear God, He referred to Him as ***"the Sun of righteousness"***. He said,

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings;" (Malachi 4:2)

Who is the "righteousness" to all those who believe in Him?
The apostle Paul informs us that **Jesus is the righteousness** for all those who believe in Him (Romans 10:4).

Thus, now that we have understood that the term ***"sun"*** can also refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is easier to appreciate the words of Psalms 19:4-6. Let us read these verses and at the same time, if you wish, consider the scripture references which I have inserted after every sentence as they contain similar thoughts:

"Their line (Greek "φθόγγος": utterance) ***is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*** (Romans 10:18). ***In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun*** (John 14:23; Revelation 3:20)***, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber*** (2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7)***, And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course*** (Revelation 6:2)***. His going forth is from the end of the heavens, And his circuit unto the ends of it*** (Acts 7:49; Micah 5:2)***; And there is nothing hid from the heat thereof*** (Hebrews 4:13; Revelation 2:18)***."***

Again, now that we have realized that the term ***"sun"*** can also refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is easier to relate to

the statement Jesus made in Matthew 13:43 about those who will be declared ***"righteous".*** There, He said,

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father …."

Can you image the height of the glory which the righteous will receive when God will make them **shine like the sun** because it was His will for them ***"to be conformed to the image of his Son"?*** (Romans 8:29)

Finally, as the ***"sun"*** represents the Triune God and His shining (sun like) glory, the words of Revelation 19:17, ***"And I saw an angel standing in the sun",*** do not mean that this angel stood literally on the actual Sun, neither do they mean that he stood literally on the actual Person of God. The fact that John saw this angel ***"standing in the sun"*** means that **this angel had received his authority to speak from God!**

Verses 17 and 18: ***"***[17]***And when I saw Him, I fell towards His feet like dead; and He placed His right hand upon me, saying to me, Fear not; I am the First and the Last,*** [18]***and the Living One, and I became dead; and look, I am living to the ages of the ages; amen; and I have the keys of Hades and of death."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 17 and 18

John fainted when he saw the resurrected Christ; and the Lord touched him to strengthen him. The prophets Daniel and Ezekiel had similar experiences (Daniel 8:17, 18,27; 10:9-11; Ezekiel 1:28-2:1,2).

Then, the Lord introduced Himself to John reminding him of the gospel of salvation which is comprised of **the Person and the work of the Savior**. In other words, Jesus said to John that:

1. He is ***"the First and the Last"***, a title which **demands Deity** because there is only One who can be the First and only One who can be the Last (Isaiah 41:4; 44:6),

2. He is ***"the Living One"***, that is, **the One who lives to the ages because He is God by nature and the Life** (Hebrews 1:8-12; John 1:1; 14:6; 1 John 1:2),

3. He is the One who became dead and rose again because, since He is God by nature and the eternal Life, **it was impossible for death to hold Him** (Acts 2: 24; Romans 6:9), and

4. He is the One who has ***"the keys of Hades and of death"***, a power which belongs to God only (Psalms 68:20)!

Jesus, my Lord and my God (John 20:28), let Your Name be glorified!

Verse 19: ***"Write the things you have seen, and the things that are, and the things that will come to pass after these;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19

Referring to the above words, in the explanation of verse 10, I wrote the following (blue ink):

"Write the things you have seen (past tense) ***and the things that are*** (present tense) ***and the things that will come to pass*** (future tense) ***after these."***

As John had not yet received any of the visions which make up the book of Revelation, the words of the above verse (19) refer to:

a) ***"things"*** of the Christian faith which John knew that **had taken place in the past**, such as the coming of the promised ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15 and the persecution which Satan launched against the symbolic ***"Woman"*** who gave birth to that ***"Seed"*** and against the rest of her ***"seed"*** (chapter 12) --- a persecution which **John had seen and experienced**.

b) ***"things"*** which were going on **at the time he received the book of Revelation**, such as the spiritual condition of the churches in Asia Minor (chapters 2 and 3), and

c) ***"things"*** which were to take place in the distant future, even 1000 years after the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as the events described in chapters 21 and 22.

Verse 20: ***"The mystery of the seven stars, which you saw on My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands, which you saw, are seven churches."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20

About the ***"seven stars"*** read explanation of verses 14-16, **Description #7**; and about the symbolic term ***"lampstand"***, read explanation of verses 12 and 13 under subtitle, **"What do the '*seven lampstands'* symbolize?"**

Chapter Two

Verse 1: ***"[a]To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, [b]These things says the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, [c]the One who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]

"To the angel of the church of Ephesus write"

In this verse, the Lord Jesus commands the apostle John to write a letter to the church of Ephesus.

In the first chapter of this book, we saw that the title ***"the angel of the church"*** refers to **the overseer of the church** and that this conclusion, is supported by Malachi 2:7 (read explanation of Revelation 1:14-16**, Description #7**). The fact that the letter is directed **to the overseer of the church** does not mean that it is written for him only; simply, it is sent to the one who **represents the church,** but its message concerns **the entire church**.

Explanation of verse 1[b]

"These things says the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand"

We also learned (from the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, **Description #7**), that another term which refers to the ***"angels"*** of the churches, that is, to the **overseers** of the churches, is the term ***"stars"*** (Revelation 1:20; also read

Daniel 12:3). Therefore, the above words of verse 1[b], **reveal that Jesus holds the overseers,** the ***"stars"*** of the Christian churches, in His right hand**;** that means they are in His favor (Matthew 25:33), under His protection (John 10:28), and that He exalts them in a special place of honor **because they do His will.** As He sat at **the right hand** of the power when He fulfilled the will of His Father, likewise Jesus holds in **His right hand** those who believe in Him and do His will (Matthew 26:64; Acts 2:34,35).

Explanation of verse 1[c]

"the One who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands"

In the last words of verse one, the Lord Jesus introduces Himself as ***"the One who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands".*** These words prepare the reader to hear what Jesus has to say to the ***"golden lampstand"*** of Ephesus. This Church is precious and holy in His eyes, and it **holds and reflects His bright light**. **He will praise them** for their faith, and, at the same time, **He will admonish them** so they can further purify themselves from their imperfections, so they can gleam as pure gold (Revelation 22:11). After all, this is the reason He walks amongst the seven churches with feet which are shining like copper as if they had been heated in a fiery furnace (Revelation 2:2). His purpose is clear: Jesus examines, judges, praises and **cleanses the churches** from their spiritual and fleshly imperfections, as one **refines or purifies the gold and the silver from their impurities** (Malachi 3:3; Ephesians 5:25-27).

Verses 2: ***"[a]I know your works and your labor and your patience, and that you cannot tolerate the evil ones, [b]and***

you put those who claim to be apostles to the test and they are not, and you found them to be false;" (AT)

Explanation of verses 2[a]

"I know your works and your labor and your patience, and that you cannot tolerate the evil ones"

What beautiful praise for the Ephesian church! The Omniscient (All-knowing) Jesus said to her, ***"I know your works and your labor and your patience, and that you cannot tolerate the evil ones".*** The fact that Jesus is Omniscient, that He knows all things, is proven by the following scriptures: John 16:30; 2:24; Luke 9:47; Mark 2:8; Revelation 2:18-23.

Explanation of verse 2[b]

"and you put those who claim to be apostles to the test and they are not, and you found them to be false;"

The above words reveal a very significant action that this church had taken. It was an action which the Lord approved and He praised them for doing so. He said, ***"and you put to the test those who claim to be apostles and they are not, and you found them to be false;"***

The **apostles** are one of the gifts that God placed in His Church. Other gifts are the **prophets**, the **teachers**, the **evangelists**, and the **shepherds** (Ephesians 4:8,11; 1 Corinthians 12:28). From the foregoing words of the Lord Jesus, we realize that some "Christians" had presented themselves to the church of Ephesus as **apostles**, but the Ephesians **tried them and found them to be false**.

Those who make up the true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ today **must do the same** because we have been surrounded by false apostles, false prophets, false teachers, false evangelists, false shepherds, and false brothers who are preaching ***"another Jesus"*** (2 Corinthians 11:4) and/or ***"another gospel"*** (Galatians 1:9). These people preach that **one can be born-again and receive salvation without believing, and for this reason, without being able to confess that Jesus is the "Lord", the YHWH of Romans 10: 9,13!**

The faithful followers of the True Jesus of the Bible who, according to 2 Peter 1:1 is **our God and Savior**, must follow the example of the Ephesians. They must examine under the light of the Bible all those who are among them and who present themselves as one of the "gifts" that God has placed in His Church. And **if they find them false**, **remove them from among them, and above all, not follow them**. If the true believers act in this manner, they will rejoice greatly the day the Lord Jesus will say to them, "Congratulations faithful servants, because ***'you cannot tolerate the evil ones'"*****!**

Verse 3: ***"and you have patience, and you have labored for my name and you have not become tired."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

In the above verse, we observe a repetition of the words **"patience"** and **"labor"** which we met in verse 2. These words of the Lord unmistakably reveal that the Christian faith is not as easy as some people think.

Today's Christians can experience persecution not only from unbelievers, **but also from those who claim to be**

believers. When they become members of a religious institution where the word of God is butchered, the true gospel of salvation preached by Jesus and the apostles (Romans 10:8,9,13) is not preached, Jesus is not praised as God, His words are ignored, the holiness is put aside, **and they remain silent** in order to have peace and to enjoy fellowship, they will never understand what the words ***"labor"*** and ***"patience"*** really mean.

However, if they stand for biblical truth, if they preach freedom from **"religious captivity"**, the kind of freedom Jesus brings to all those who follow Him (Luke 4:18,19; Galatians 2:4,5; John 19:30), **they will experience persecution**. They will be accused of being:

- **Apostates, heretics and rebels.**

- **Self-centered who wish to exalt themselves and who, perhaps, desire to become leaders of a new "dark cult".**

- **People like Korah who revolted against Moses** (Numbers 16:1,2).

- **Church haters** (By "church", they refer to their manmade religious institution),

- **Presumptuous! That they judge the church of God** (they mean their religion) **to which, as they say, they owe the very salvation of their souls** (instead to Jesus! What a blasphemy!)

The true followers of the Lord Jesus who **labor** and lift the Name of the Lord Jesus with **patience** and who defend His true gospel will not grow weary; neither **will they fall away from His faith.** They know that this persecution will deprive them from fellowshipping. However, they know they are not alone; they know that the Father and the Son dwell in them through the Holy Spirit; and they wait faithfully for the day in which their Lord Jesus will say to them, "Congratulations faithful servants, because, '***you have labored for my name and you have not grown weary.***"

Verse 4: ***"However, I have something against you, because you have left your first love."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

Immediately after the **praise** of verses 2 and 3, the words of the Lord turn into **reproof**. The Lord has something against the church of Ephesus. His words, ***"because you have left your first love"***, show that the Lord is not totally happy with them.

Who is *"the first love"* of a Christian?

The Lord Jesus Christ!

How is it possible for Christians to *"leave"* their *"first love"*?

By forgetting their first, the genuine, the unselfish and warm love which they had for the Lord Jesus Christ when they first met Him. By forgetting the love which moved them to think about the Lord Jesus Christ twenty-four hours a day! **If they did not keep an interactive personal relationship with Him** and they became "religious" persons who simply go to church because it is Sunday, and, after church, they forget Christ and the Christian walk that

brings glory to Him until next Sunday, these persons have left their ***"first love"*!**

Especially in today's pluralistic and inclusivistic world, a Christian can leave his/her ***"first love"*** by accepting and preaching the heretical and unscriptural so-called "gospel" that I mentioned earlier. That "gospel" states that one can be saved without believing, and therefore, without being able to confess with his/her mouth that Jesus Christ is the ***"Lord"***, the **YHWH** of Romans 10:9,13. Those who preach such "gospel", **do not show any love** and respect for the Person and the work of the Savior God who shed His blood on the cross for the sins of all those who believe in Him (John 3:16). The preaching of such "gospel" constitutes an insult and a slap in the face of the God who bought His Church with His own blood (Acts 20:28)!

Verse 5: ***"[a]Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works; [b]or else, I am coming to you quickly, and I will move your lampstand from its place, if you will not repent."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"Therefore, remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works;"

Which are *"the first works"* that Christians must do?
The ***"first works"*** that Christians must do are the works which reveal that they love God, their fellow man, and their spiritual brothers. These are the works which **show** that they are obeying the commandment of Jesus regarding love (John 13:34) and which, commandment, John repeated in 2 John 1:5. Such works are:

- **Hospitality** (Acts16:15; Romans 12:13; 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:10; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9);
- **brotherly love** (Romans 12:10);
- **the provision for the needs of the faithful** (Romans 12:13);
- **the feeding of the poor, even of their hungry enemies** (Galatians 2:10; Romans 12:20);
- **to visit the widows and the orphans in their sorrow** (James 1:27);
- **to bless those who persecute them** (Romans 12: 14);
- **not to return evil for evil** (Romans 12:17);
- **to make peace with all people** (Hebrews 12:14);
- **to preach the true gospel of salvation** (Romans 10:9,13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4);
- **to teach the truth of the word of God** (Matthew 28:20);
- **to defend the faith which, once for all** (time)**, was given to the saints** (Jude 3); and
- **to honor the Son exactly the same as they honor the Father** – **nothing less** (John 5:23)!

When they first come to Jesus, they begin to enjoy a personal relationship with Him. They allow God's Holy Spirit who indwells them, to express His fruit in their lives (Galatians 5:22-25). When they do ***"the first works"*** **in harmony with** ***"the fruit of the Spirit"***, they give a great witness that their ***"first love"*** is still blooming. Unfortunately, however, if they will join a religious institution which does not encourage them to have a personal and interactive relationship with the Lord Jesus, their ***"first love"*****, will wilt away**. Little by little, they will forget **the importance of fulfilling His commandments and the importance of doing** ***"the first works"***! **Those two are inseparable!** The expansion of the real estate and monetary wealth of their religious institution will become more important than doing ***"the first works"*****!** For this reason, the admonition that the Lord Jesus gives to those who have left their ***"first love"*** is, ***"remember from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works".***

Is it possible that the above words of the Lord Jesus imply that one must do good works to be saved?
The answer is, "**NO!**" Men cannot be saved by doing good works (Ephesians 2:8,9). The apostle Paul said that men will be saved **by the grace of God if they will fulfill the following requirements**:

a) If they truly believe that Jesus Christ is the "LORD", in other words, the YHWH of Romans 10: 9,13 --- an action that demands information (Romans 10:14).

b) If they believe with their hearts that God raised from the dead the very same body of Jesus, the body

which was nailed to the cross and was buried (Romans 10:9; John 2:19; Acts 2:27), and

c) If they indeed pray to Jesus and ask Him to save them (Romans 10:13,14), **because He is our great God and Savior** (Titus 2:13).

From the above requirements, which God has placed, we realize that one's salvation does not depend on whether one is a good person or because one does good works. The apostle Paul said, ***"For by grace you have been saved, through faith … not of works …"*** (Ephesians 2:8,9). Simply, the good works **follow** salvation because God has prepared them for those who have already been saved so that they can ***"walk in them"*** (Ephesians 2:10).

Explanation of verse 5[b]

"or else, I am coming to you quickly, and I will move your lampstand from its place, if you will not repent."

What did Jesus mean with the above words? Since the symbolic term *"lampstand"* means *"church"* (Revelation 1:20)**, is it possible that He meant that all those who comprised the church of Ephesus would lose their salvation if they don't repent and do *"the first works"*?**
Of course, not! Jesus did not say, "I will **destroy** your lampstand", but He said, "I will **move** your lampstand from its place"!

According to the apostle Paul, all Christians will appear before the Lord to receive their **wages** or their **rewards according to their works which they did while they were in the flesh.** Let us read Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 5:10. There, he wrote:

"Because we all must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, in order to receive, each one according to the things he did through the body, whether good or bad."

The rewards are over and above the gift of the basic salvation which all those who believe in the True God Jesus (1 John 5:20; John 1:1; 11:25) **receive** (John 3:16; 6: 40)**.** Other verses which refer to the fact that Christians will receive rewards or wages according to their works are Ephesians 6:6-8; Romans 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:8; Revelation 22:12.

In the gospel of Luke, chapter 19 and verses 12-24, we read about a parable which shows that different servants receive different rewards and that the rewards are proportionate to their work. In that parable, the first servant received authority over **ten** cities; the second received authority over **five** cities; and the third, the evil and slothful servant whose words showed that **he had no love** for his lord and who **did not work for Him at all**, not only did not receive any rewards, but he also lost what it had been given to him.

From the previous example, we understand that those who, according to their ability (Matthew 25:15), **work more** for the Lord, **those who do not forget their first love but continue to be warm for the Lord and for this reason they continue to do the first works which God has prepared for them** (Ephesians 2:10), **are in a more favorable position before the Lord. They are "closer" to the throne of God --- so to speak** (Matthew 20:20-23)**.** If a church comes to the point of neglecting to do the **first and foremost works** which God has entrusted to all His servants, they will prove that **they have forgotten the One who was their *"first"* and foremost love**. If they will ignore the fact

that they have fallen into this condition and if they do not repent, **they will lose this "better" or "favorable" position** they had before God. It would be as **if the Lord *"moved"* their lampstand from its place, as if He placed it a little further away from His throne!**

Verse 6: ***"However, you have this, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

Who were the Nicolaitans?

Because the Nicolaitans are mentioned in this chapter only, we do not have any information about them. However, it has been said (through irresponsible tradition), that in Antioch there was a school of Gnostics and that **Nicolaos** was its founder. The Gnostics preached a form of religious philosophy, and they tried to turn Christianity into a philosophical system. Also, it has been said that **it was because of Nicolaos, the founder of the above school, that this group of people became known as "Nicolaitans"**. And it is possible that some former Gnostics joined the church of Ephesus while they held on to the teachings and practices of the Nicolaitans.

What were their *"works"* that both the Lord Jesus and the Christians of the church of Ephesus hated?

Tradition says that the philosophy of the Nicolaitans was that a man can taste sin, live in sin and even enjoy it to fully understand it because sin cannot touch the spirit of men. **No wonder Jesus said that He hates their works!** [The previous two paragraphs echo the writings of Mr. S. Haralampakis from his book, "ΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΩΣ ΤΟΥ ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ" (Explanation of the Revelation of John, page 36.)]

To have a better view of what the works of the Nicolaitans might have been and why Jesus was against them, I would like to examine and to compare the works of two other groups mentioned in this chapter:

In verse 14, the Lord Jesus spoke against those who had the teaching of Balaam who taught Balak to place a stumbling-block before the sons of Israel, that is, **to eat food sacrificed to idols and to fornicate** (Numbers 25:1-3). Likewise, in verse 20, Jesus spoke against Jezebel who proclaimed to be a prophetess and who misled Christians into **eating food sacrificed to idols and to fornicate**.

From the fifteenth chapter of Acts and verses 28 and 29, we learn that God the Holy Spirit and the apostles commanded the Gentiles who came to Christ to abstain from the following **four necessary things**:

1) **To abstain from eating things sacrificed to the idols** (i.e., foods which Pagans offered as a sacrifice to their false gods).

2) **To abstain from eating and drinking blood.** (The blood transfusion does not constitute eating or drinking of blood. The blood in the arteries does not become food for the body. The blood in the arteries serves like "serving plates", so to speak, **which carry the food and the oxygen to the cells of the body**. I am so deeply sorry for those who have mixed up these two concepts and **have offered their lives and/or the lives of their children as blood sacrifices in the name of the religious institution they have trusted!** It's so sad!)

3) **To abstain from eating strangled animals** (i.e., animals which have been killed through strangulation or have been knocked out with a blow to the head so that the blood would remain in the body; Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 3:17; 17:14; 19:26; Deuteronomy 12:23).

4) **To abstain from fornication**.

From the above study, we realize that Jesus was against those who held the teaching of Balaam and of Jezebel, because they were in direct opposition with the will of God.

Now, if we'll pay attention to verses 14 and 15, we'll see that **immediately after** the comments Jesus made against those who held the teachings of Balaam (who encouraged His servants to eat things sacrificed to idols and to fornicate), He mentioned the Nicolaitans and said, ***"Likewise, you also have those who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans, which I hate."*** From the word ***"Likewise"*** it is obvious, at least to me, that the Nicolaitans were guilty of **similar** works!

Verse 7: ***"[a]Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; [b]To the conqueror, I will give to him to eat from the tree of life, which is at the centre of the paradise of God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7[a]

"Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches;

From the above words, we realize **the complete unity of the Triune Godhead**. Although it is Jesus who speaks to the church of Ephesus, suddenly, we hear Him saying,

"The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches;"

If the Spirit of God were not a Person, He would not be able to speak!

Another thing we observe is the fact that although the words of the Lord are directed to the ***"angel"***, that is, to the overseer of the church, His advice is, ***"Whoever has an ear, let him hear"*****!** Thus, the Lord's advice is for all the members of the church, and, naturally, **for all the believers today!**

Explanation of verse 7[b]

"To the conqueror, I will give to him to eat from the tree of life, which is at the center of the paradise of God."

Who is the conqueror?
The apostle John answered the above question with simple words. He said,

"Because whatever has been born of God, conquers the world, and this is the victory which conquered the world, our faith. Who is the conqueror of the world, except the one believing that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5).

What did Jesus mean when He said, *"To the conqueror, I will give to him to eat from the tree of life"*?
As the ***"conqueror"*** is the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, the words, ***"I will give to him to eat from the tree of life, which is at the center of the paradise of God",*** repeat **the promise of the gospel of salvation** which Jesus preached in John 3:16. There it says that whosoever

believes in **God's only-begotten** (not created) **Son, has everlasting life.** And the fact that He refers to ***"the tree of life which is at the center of paradise"***, reminds us of Genesis 2:9 and 3:22. Thus, ***"the tree of life"***, simply, represents Jesus who is **the Eternal Life** and who will give everlasting life to all those who believe in Him. And let us not forget **that He has the power** to give eternal life to those who believe in Him because, according to 1 John 5: 20, **He is the True God and the Eternal Life**.

The apostle John agrees with the above witness because he wrote, ***"The one who has the Son, has life; the one who does not have the Son of God, does not have life"*** (1 John 5:12).

Please note: The reader should always remember that the biblical title **"Son of God"**, necessitates **Deity** (John 5:18) and that this was the very reason they crucified Jesus for blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66). Thus, the biblical gospel of salvation **demands that one believes that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God** to receive everlasting life (John 3:16). This title reveals that Jesus **is God by nature,** that His substance is exactly the same as His Father's (Hebrews 1:3; John 1:1), that He is the only Son of God's essence. **This faith is prerequisite to receiving everlasting life** or, in other words, to be able ***"to eat from the tree of life"*****!**

Verse 8: ***"And to the angel of the church of Smyrna write, These things says the First and the Last, who became dead and lived;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8

In this verse, Jesus introduces Himself as ***"the First and the Last, who became dead and lived"*** **---** exactly the same

words by which He introduced Himself to John in chapter 1, verses 17 and 18.

Verse 9: ***"[a]I know your works and the sorrow and the poverty; but you are rich; [b]and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but*** (they are) ***a synagogue of Satan."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9[a]

"I know your works and the sorrow and the poverty; but you are rich;"

Here, Jesus proves, once again, that He is the Omniscient God who knows every Christian's works and situation (John 2:24). He who is the Living Word of God, knows everyone's works (Hebrews 4:13), and, for this reason, He will give to each one according to ***"the things he has done through the body, according to the things he did, whether good or bad."*** (2 Corinthians 5:10)

He knows that although they are going through ***"sorrow and poverty"***, **they are spiritually rich --- a condition that should be desired by every true Christian!** What was the cause of their ***"sorrow and poverty"***? The second part of this verse reveals that **this was the result of persecution from the local Jewish synagogue**. Let us examine verse 9[b] carefully:

Explanation of verse 9[b]

"and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews, and they are not, but (they are) ***a synagogue of Satan."***

Why did Jesus say that these Jews were not Jews? Why did He call their synagogue *"a synagogue of Satan"*?

Let us hear the Lord's opinion on this matter from John 8: 33-45. There, we read:

"They answered Him, We are Abraham's seed, and we have been in slavery to no one, never! How do You say, You will become free? Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Everyone practicing sin is a slave of sin. But the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains to the age. Therefore, if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. I know that you are Abraham's seed, but you seek to kill Me, because My Word is not given room in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father. And you therefore do what you have seen with your father. They answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the truth to you, which I heard alongside of God. Abraham did not do this. You do the works of your father. They said to Him, We were not born of fornication; we have one father, God. Then Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I went forth and have come from God. For I have not come from Myself, but that One sent Me. Why do you not know My speech? It is because you are not able to hear My Word. You are of the Devil as father, and the lusts of your father you desire to do. That one was a murderer from the beginning, and he has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own, because he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me."

From the above words, we realize that although the unbelieving in Him Jews were direct descendants of Abraham,

He did not view them as *"Abraham's seed"* because their motives, faith and actions did not reflect those of Abraham! While Abraham rejoiced when he saw Jesus **(YHWH)**, in one of His pre-human appearances (Genesis 17:1; 18:1; John 8:56-58), **they wanted to kill Him!** Consequently, He told them that **their father is the Devil, because they wanted to do his lusts!** It was for this reason that He called their synagogue ***"a synagogue of Satan"*!** And in Revelation 3:9, we hear Him saying,

"Look, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who say about themselves that they are Jews, and they are not, but they are lying, look, I will make them come and bow down before your feet, and they will know that I have loved you." (Revelation 3:9).

The Jews had a lot of religious pride because they had kept the faith of the True God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob (Exodus 6:3), while the rest of the nations worshipped those who were not gods by nature (Galatians 4:8). And since they did not accept Jesus as their Messiah, they brought **persecution** (Acts 9:1,2), **fear** (John 7:13; 9:22; 19 :38; 20:19)**, sorrow and death** (Acts 7:59) to those who believed in Him, loved Him, followed Him and worshipped Him by calling on His Name (1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 7:59; Romans 10:9,13,14). **"To call upon"** means **"to pray to"**, and prayer is worship.

Religious persecution has many forms. One of them is the refusal of employment to the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ and/or the boycotting of their businesses. This type of persecution, which is an expression of hate --- **not of love** --- brings ***"sorrow and poverty"***. Because the Christian faith is not a religion but a relationship with the Lord

Jesus Christ (because He is the Head of His faithful servants and they are His Body), the Lord Jesus considers the persecution against them as a persecution against Him (Acts 9:4).

Verses 10: ***"[a]Do not be afraid at all of the things you are about to suffer; look, the Devil will put some of you in jail, in order to be tried [b]and you will have sorrow for ten days. [c]Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10[a]

"[a]Do not be afraid at all of the things you are about to suffer; look, the Devil will put some of you in jail, in order to be tried;"

The above words of the Lord Jesus are simple, easy to understand, and express the biblical truth that ***"all those who wish to live godly in Christ Jesus, will be persecuted."*** (2 Timothy 3:12). In John 15:20, the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, ***"… If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also;"***

Explanation of verse 10[b]

[b]and you will have sorrow for ten days.

Persecution brings sorrow and sorrow tests a person's faith. Satan can bring a great persecution and sorrow against those who follow the Lord Jesus; not a sorrow that lasts for a short period only, let's say one or two days on a scale of 1-10, but he can also bring sorrow of a great duration: ***"for ten days"*** --- so to speak!

Explanation of verse 10c

"Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Jesus' advice to those who undergo persecution is, ***"Be faithful to death"***, that is, don't let your faith be shaken during a lengthy persecution even if it costs you your life. And His promise to them is, ***"I will give you the crown of life."***

Let the apostle Paul be an example to the faithful; although he suffered a continuous persecution, he remained in the faith of Jesus. In his 2nd letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11 and verses 23-33, he describes the things he suffered. He referred to labors, to stripes, to prisons, to deaths, to floggings, to stoning, to shipwrecks, to travels, to dangers in rivers, to dangers from robbers, to dangers from his race, to dangers from the nations, to dangers in the cities, to dangers in the desert, to dangers in the sea, to dangers from false brothers, in labor, in hardship, in sleeplessness, in hunger, in thirst, in fastings, in cold, and in nakedness. Although he suffered so much, **Paul kept the faith of Christ!** In his second letter to Timothy, the aged apostle wrote, ***"I have fought the good fight, I finished the course, I kept the faith; what is in store for me is the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will give me in that day; and not only to me, but to all those who desire His appearing."*** (2 Timothy 4:7,8).

In the previous three paragraphs, we met the expressions,

a) ***"the crown of life"*** (Revelation 2:10), and

b) ***"the crown of righteousness"*** (2 Timothy 4:8) and in 1 Peter 5:4 we meet

c) ***"the crown of glory".***

What do the above *"crowns"* symbolize?
The ***"crowns"*** symbolize the ***"rewards"*** which the Lord Jesus will give to His faithful followers when they stand before His throne to receive each one according to the works they did while they were in the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The words of the Lord Jesus, ***"Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life"***, **do not refer to the basic gift of everlasting life** which God gives to all those who believe in His only begotten Son (John 3:16; Ephesians 2: 8). In other words, the ***"crown of life"*** **is not the** ***"everlasting life"*** we receive the moment we believe in the True Jesus of the Bible, but one of the ***"rewards"*** which we will receive when we will ***"appear before the judgment seat of Christ"*****, if** our faith in Him was not shaken during our earthly life because of persecution or tribulation. As James said,

"Blessed is the man who endures temptation; because having been tested, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him." (James 1: 12)

One day, those who will receive the crowns will place them before the throne of God and, full of appreciation and love for Him, they will honor Him saying,

"Lord, You are worthy to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because You created all things, and through Your will they exist and were created." (Revelation 4:4,10,11)

What a wonderful act of humility!

Verse 11: ***"[a]Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. [b]The one who conquers will not be injured from the second death."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11[a]

"Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

As we learned from the explanation of verse 7[a], the above words of the Lord Jesus confirm that His words are also the words of the Holy Spirit (John 16:14,15). This fact reveals **the perfect unity that exists between the Persons of the True Godhead! And let us keep in mind that since the Spirit speaks, He truly is a Person!**

We also realized that the expression, ***"Whoever has an ear, let him hear"***, confirms again that His words are not directed to the overseer of the church in Smyrna only, but **to all the believers who are willing to listen**. The truly born-again Christians do not sleep spiritually but they remain alert and expect to hear the council of the Holy Spirit because, as the Lord Jesus promised, **He** (the Spirit) **will guide them into all truth** (John 14:26).

The fact that the Holy Spirit **talks** and gives council to the believers today is a great proof that the Lord Jesus has kept His promise (John 14:16,17). **Truly, the Holy Spirit has**

come to remain with the believers and to dwell in them (Acts 1:4,5; 2:1-4,38,39). The fact that the words of the Holy Spirit are indeed the words of the Lord Jesus, presents the truthfulness of John 16:13-15. There, continuing to speak about the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said:

"[13]***but when He comes, the Spirit of truth, He will guide you into all truth; because He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will announce the coming things to you.*** [14]***He will glorify Me, because He will receive from what is Mine, and He will announce to you.*** [15]***Whatever*** (things) ***the Father has are Mine; for this reason I said that He will receive from what is Mine, and He will announce to you."***

The above sentence, ***"Whatever*** (things) ***the Father has are Mine"*** proves, one more time, **the equality** that exists between the Persons of the True Triune Godhead.

Explanation of verse 11[b]

"the one who conquers will not be injured from the second death."

Who is the one who conquers?
The one who ***"conquers"*** is **the one who believes that Jesus is the only begotten** (not the only created) **Son of God** (1 John 5:4,5; John 3:16).

Which is the first and which is *"the second death"*?
In the letter to the Hebrews, chapter 9 and verse 27 we read that, ***"… it is decided for men to die once, after this there is judgment;"***

From the above words, we understand that it was God's decision for all men to die once. **This is the first death,** and no one can escape it because we have inherited it through the sin of our ancestors, Adam and Eve. The only ones who will not experience the first death are the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus who will still be alive when He returns to receive His Church (2 Thessalonians 2:1). On that day, the saints who have died will be raised from the dead (this resurrection is called ***"the first resurrection"***: Revelation 20:6), and **at the same time** (Greek ***"ἅμα"*** = at the same time [1 Thessalonians 4:16,17]), **the living saints will be changed, so that all together, as one body**, will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54). However, when we read from the book of Revelation, we learn that there is also another death which the Lord calls ***"second"***. Let us examine two scriptures which refer to the ***"second death"***:

1) ***"Blessed and holy is the one who participates in the first resurrection; the second death does not have authority over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will rule with Him for a thousand years."*** (Revelation 20:6)

2) ***"But the cowards and the unbelievers and the filthy and the murderers and the fornicators and the witches and the idolaters, and all the liars, will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; this is the second death."*** (Revelation 21:8)

From the above scriptures, we learn that ***"the second death"*** **is the lake which is burning with fire and brimstone!** Those who believe in the Lord Jesus and who are

called ***"blessed"*** (happy) and ***"holy"*** (because their sins have been washed away by the blood of the Lamb), **do not risk be cast into the lake of fire**. They will be happy to be ***"priests of God and of Christ"***; this means that they will be worshiping God **and Christ** because according to John 20:28, Jesus is both ***"Lord"*** and ***"God"***, and for this reason, He deserves to be worshipped!

Verse 12: ***"And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, These things says the One who has the sharp double-edged sword;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12

To the church of Pergamos, the Lord Jesus introduces Himself as the One who has the sharp double-edged sword.

What does the double-edged sword symbolize?

In the letter to the Hebrews, we read:

"[12]***Because the Word of God is living and active, and sharper than any double-edged sword, and piercing to the point of dividing the soul and the spirit, and joints and marrow, and He is able to judge the thoughts and the intentions of the heart.*** [13]***And no creature is invisible before Him, but, in His eyes, all*** (creatures) ***are naked and with their four limbs spread open, to whom we have to give an account."*** (Chapter 4:12,13).

Often, I hear people saying that the subject of the above verses, that is, ***"the Word of God"*** is the Bible. However, let us examine the above words carefully, to decipher whether the subject of the above verses is an object or a **Person**.

The previous verses reveal that:

1) The Word of God **is living**.

2) **Is working**.

3) **Has the power to divide between the soul and spirit.**

4) Has the power **to read the thoughts and the intentions of the heart**.

5) No creature is invisible before Him, that is, **no one can hide from His eyes**.

6) All the creatures are naked and with their four limbs wide open (Greek ***"τετραχηλισμένα"*** – tetrahelismena) **before His eyes**.

7) **He is the One to whom we must give an account for our actions.**

Which of the above descriptions can possibly refer to an object? Which scriptures can support such a theory? **All the above descriptions refer to a Person – to God!** Let us allow the Scriptures to support this teaching:

1) ***"… the Word of God is living and active"*** (compare with John 5:17; 1:1-3,14; Revelation 1:18; 19:13; 1 John 1:1,2).

2) Has the power to read ***"the thoughts and the intentions"*** of the hearts of men (compare with Revelation 2:18,23 and Luke 9:47).

3) ***"… no creature is invisible before Him"***, that is, no one can hide from Him (Jeremiah 23:24; John 1:49).

4) ***"… to whom we have to give an account"***; that means that all of us will give an account for our actions to Him. (Please note that in Romans 14:12, the apostle Paul says that ***"… each one of us will give account about himself to God"*** --- not to a book!)

Who is the One who is known as "the Word of God"?
In the beginning of the gospel of John, we read:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God … And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw His glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:1,14).

From the above verses, we learn that **"Word"** is the name of the only begotten and Eternal Son of God who was God by nature and who became a man. When He became flesh, He became known as **"Jesus"**, which means **"YHWH the Savior"** (Matthew 1:21).

In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation, we observe that He judges and makes war with righteousness and that His names are **"FAITHFUL", "TRUE", "THE WORD OF GOD", "KING OF KINGS"** and **"THE LORD OF LORDS"** (Verses 11-16).

We have already learned, from 2 Corinthians 5:10, that ***"we all must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, in or-***

der to receive, each one according to the things he did through the body". Therefore, **"the Word"** of Hebrews 4:12 and 13, to whom we must give an account for our actions, **is no one else but the Lord Jesus Christ**. And Revelation 19:15 tells us that Jesus will smite the nations with a ***"sharp sword"*** which comes out of His mouth.

Jesus is the second Person of the Triune Godhead (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). **He is literally the Living and Active Word of God, the Almighty *"Said"* of Genesis 1:3 by whom God created ALL things** (John1:1; Psalms 33:6; Hebrews 1:8-12). For this reason, we can easily realize that **what comes out of His mouth is the spoken word of God, i.e., *"the sharp sword"*, by which He will smite the nations! Therefore, it is exclusively His right to introduce Himself to the church of Pergamos as *"the One who has the sharp double-edged sword"***.

Verse 13: ***"I know your works, and where you dwell, where the throne of Satan is; and you hold my name, and you have not rejected My faith, even in the days in which Antipas*** (lived)***, My faithful witness, who was murdered amongst you, where Satan dwells."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13

Because Jesus said that Satan had placed his throne in Pergamos and that he dwelt there, I can imagine how dark life must have been in that city and how hard life must have been for its Christian citizens! Especially since Antipas, the faithful witness for Jesus was killed there, I can imagine the intensity of the tribulation and of the persecution they must have endured! This is the reason the Lord Jesus commended them and said, ***"I know your works, and where you dwell … and you have not rejected My faith"***.

Verses 14,15: ***"***[14]***However, I have something against you, because you have some ones there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to place a stumbling-block before the sons of Israel, in order to eat things sacrificed to the idols and to fornicate.*** [15]***Likewise you also have some ones who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans which I hate."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 14-15

In verses 14-15, we meet the same situations we met in verse 6.

Verse 16: ***"Repent or else, I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war with them with the sword of my mouth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16

In verse 16, the Lord Jesus encourages the church of Pergamos **to repent** of the fact that they tolerate among them those who encouraged the believers to eat things sacrificed to idols and to fornicate. If the church does not change her position on this matter, Jesus will come quickly and He will make war against the guilty ones with the sword of His mouth, that is, with the word of God; and I am sure that they will not be able to stand before Him. Truly, the purpose of the One who walks amongst the seven churches with feet which look like shiny brass that had been fired in a fiery furnace (Revelation 2:2), is clear: He wants **to cleanse the church of Pergamos** from her spiritual and fleshly imperfections. This way she will be part of His Church which **will not have any spot or wrinkle** (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Today's churches, which claim to be Christian and yet they take sins (such as fornication, adultery, sodomy, and others) lightly, must take the above advice of the Lord Jesus seriously and must repent. Otherwise, when He comes, He will make war against them with the sword that comes out of His mouth!

Verse 17: ***"[a]Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; [b]To the conqueror, I will give him to eat from the hidden manna, [c]and I will give him a white pebble*** (ballot)***, and on the ballot a new name has been written, which no one knows except the one who receives*** (it)***."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17[a]

"Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches;"

Please read the explanation of verse 7[a]

Explanation of verse 17[b]

"To the conqueror, I will give him to eat from the hidden manna,"

What does the *"manna"* symbolize and why did Jesus call it *"hidden"*?

"Manna" was the bread which God gave to Israelites to eat when they were in the desert (Exodus 16:4).

In the gospel of John, we hear Jesus saying to the Israelites of His day: ***"your fathers ate the manna in the desert, as it is written, "Bread from heaven He gave them to eat;"*** (John 6:31). And using a symbolic language He said to

them, ***"… I am the bread which comes down from heaven;"*** (Verse 41).

And again, in John 6:47,48,50 and 51 He said,

"[47]***Truly, truly I say to you, The one believing in Me has everlasting life.*** [48]***I am the bread of life …*** [50]***This is the bread that comes down from heaven, in order for one to eat from this*** (bread) ***so that he will not die.*** [51]***I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If one eats from this bread, he will live forever. And the bread which I will give him, is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."***

Therefore, **the meaning of the *"manna"*** was previously ***"hidden"*** because it symbolized the body of Christ, which Jesus gave for the life of those who will believe in Him. And since the ***"conqueror"*** is the one who believes that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God (1 John 5:4,5; John 3:16), the message of the words of Jesus in verse 17[b], ***"To the conqueror, I will give him to eat from the hidden manna"***, is that **Jesus will give everlasting life to all those who will believe in Him!** With the above statement, Jesus reminds them one more time the gospel of salvation!

Explanation of verse 17[c]

"and I will give him a white pebble (ballot)***, and on the ballot a new name has been written, which no one knows except the one who receives*** (it)***."***

What do the above words of the Lord Jesus mean?
In ancient Greece, the **"ballot"** was a pebble on which the voters wrote their decision. The ballot was also used during

trials, in the courts, where the judges wrote on it their judgment whether one was guilty or innocent.

In his letter to the Roman Christians, the apostle Paul wrote that ***"… as sin entered into the world through one man and death through sin, and thus death passed on to all men, because they all sinned."*** (Romans 5:12). And in his first letter to Corinthians, chapter 15, and verse 22, Paul wrote that ***"in Adam they all die"***.

From the above, we realize that **before the divine court, all men are guilty of sin and for this reason, they all die** (Hebrews 9:27). However, God **YHWH**, in His great love for humanity, provided us with a way to escape this sad situation: He sent to our planet His only begotten Son, to be born as a man, in order to sacrifice His body and to shed His blood on the cross for the sins of the world (1 John 2:2). **Nevertheless, God placed a condition: Only the sins of those who believe that Jesus is indeed His only begotten** (not only created) **Son** (John 3:16), **and therefore He is at once God in essence and equal to the Father** (John 5:18), **will be forgiven** (John 8:24)**!** Those who believe and worship Jesus (Revelation 5:8-13; John 5:23; Romans 10:13) **are no longer guilty of sin; they are not under condemnation** (Romans 8:1)**!** For this reason, Jesus, the Great Judge (John 5:22), gives them ***"a white ballot"***, because the white color symbolizes their blamelessness (Revelation 3:4). And on this ballot, there is a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives it.

Verse 18: ***"[a]And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, These things says the Son of God, [b]the One Who has His eyes like flame of fire, and His feet like brass that had been fired in a fiery furnace;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 18[a]

"And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, These things says the Son of God,"

Why did Jesus introduce Himself as "the Son of God"? Because **He is** the Eternal Son of God! Why did I call Him "Eternal"? Because the Bible clearly shows that the Son of God **is eternal!** In John 3:17 and Romans 8:3, we read that **God sent His Son** to save the world. So, it is easily understood that **the Son must have been there before He was sent!** Also, here it is good to mention that the title **"Son of God"** is a title that demands Deity and, at once, it presents Jesus as God in essence and equal to the Father (John 5:18). After all, this was the very reason they killed Him for blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66).

Explanation of verse 18[b]

"the One who has His eyes like flame of fire, and His feet like brass that had been fired in a fiery furnace;"

The above points have been explained under **descriptions #4** and **#5** in the explanation of chapter 1, verses 14-16.

Verse 19: ***"I know your works, and the love, and the ministry, and the faith, and your patience, and your works, and that the last are more than the first."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19

The above words of the Lord Jesus **are real praise for the church in Thyatira**.

Verse 20: **"*But I have a few things against you, because you allow the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a proph-***

etess, to teach and to mislead My servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols." (AT)

Explanation of verse 20

In this verse, the Lord Jesus rebukes them because they have allowed Jezebel to mislead His servants into committing fornication and eating things sacrificed to idols. Please read the explanation of verses 6, 14-16.

Verses 21-23: ***"[21]And I gave her time to repent from her fornications, and she did not repent. [22]Look, I will make her bedridden, and*** (I will put) ***those committing adultery with her in a great tribulation, if they will not repent from their works. [23]And I will kill her children with death. And all the churches will know that I am the One who searches kidneys and hearts; and I will give to each one according to your works."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 21-23

In the book of Acts, chapter 10 and verse 34, the apostle Peter said that **God is not a respecter of persons**. And in 2 Peter, chapter 3 and verse 9, he said that **God does not wish any to perish but all to come to repentance.** Therefore, the above words of Jesus regarding Jezebel are directed to all Christians who are guilty of similar sins. But, too bad, although **the Lord Jesus gave her time to repent, Jezebel did not repent** from her sins. For this reason, Jesus will:

1. **Throw her sick in bed,**

2. **will bring great affliction to those who commit adultery with her,** and

3. He will kill her children with death!

Truly, the Lord Jesus, the Righteous Judge, will give to each of us according to our works!

The above **Godly discipline** is also mentioned by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the church in Corinth. There, Paul addresses the Christians who partake from the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper consists of:

a) The eating of the **unleavened bread** (Exodus 12:15), **which symbolizes the "unleavened" body of the Lord Jesus, which was not produced by "fleshly yeasts"**, so to speak, but by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18), and

b) The drinking of the **fermented** (spirit) **wine,** which symbolizes the unleavened blood of the Lord Jesus, because all the impurities of the grape juice, **the yeasts**, were burned up during the fermentation process, they were separated, and they became sediment at the bottom of the barrel.

Therefore, the unleavened bread, and the fermented wine, are **unleavened**, in other words, **they are free of yeast**, as they should be, to symbolize the **unleavened body and blood of the Lord Jesus!** As He is 'unleavened', because He did not have a human father, so are His faithful followers, who make up His Body! In 1 Corinthians 5:7,8, the apostle Paul called them **'unleavened'!** Let us read his words:

"Then purge out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened. For also Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. So let us keep the feast,

not with old leaven, nor with leaven of malice and of evil, but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (LITV)
In other words, the apostle Paul told them that before they partake of the Lord's supper, they should examine themselves. He told them that ***"… the one who eats and drinks unworthily will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord."*** (1 Corinthians 11:27).

What does it mean that the believers must examine themselves, before they participate in the Lord's supper, so that they will not *"eat and drink unworthily"*?
It means that the born-again believers who eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord must show respect for these emblems, and to **discern** the body and the blood of the Lord. They must understand that when they come together to participate in the Lord's supper, they do not come to a "feast" where people **eat, and drink and get drunk** (verse 21). They must realize that the wine symbolizes the new covenant which the Lord Jesus established in His blood (Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:25), of which they became sharers. When they drink the wine, they proclaim that they have entered this new covenant! They must remember that Christ gave everything He had, His body and His blood, for their sins to be forgiven! Therefore, they must **discern** that His Body must avoid sinning! If they do sin, however, they must repent, and the blood of the Lord Jesus will cleanse them (1 John 1:7). When they participate, **they must remember** (1 Corinthians 11:25,26) **the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus who brought forgiveness of sins and everlasting life**.

However, there are those who, although they go to church, they have not confessed with their mouth yet that Jesus is the ***"Lord"*** (YHWH) of Romans 10:9,13, neither have they

believed that God raised Him **bodily** from the dead (Romans 10:9; Acts 2:27), nor have they prayed to Jesus yet to ask Him to be their personal God and Savior (Romans 10:13,14). For this reason, they have not yet become members of His body. They have not become born again! If they partake, not only **they do not discern** the Body of the Lord, but also, they participate ***"unworthily"***, and they become ***"guilty"*** of the body and the of blood of the Lord, because it was their sins that nailed Him to the cross! Nevertheless, they continue to ignore Him, as others did in the past (John 12:42,43)! Thus, the apostle concluded with the following words:

"But, let the man examine himself, and then let him eat from the bread, and let him drink from the cup. Because, the one eating and drinking unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. It is for this reason that there are many weak and sick among you and many sleep (die)***. Because, if we would discern ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord, in order not to be condemned*** (along) ***with the world."*** (1 Corinthians 11: 20-32).

Verses 24,25: ***"***[24]***But I say to you and to the rest in Thyatira, all those who do not have this teaching, and who, as they say, have not come to know the deep things of Satan, I will not place another burden upon you,*** [25]***except, hold on to what you have until I come."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 24 and 25

In verses 24 and 25, the Lord Jesus directs His words to ***"all those who do not have this teaching"***. In other words, He directs His words to all those who have not accepted

Jezebel's teaching, and who, as they say, ***"have not come to know the deep things of Satan",*** that they have not experienced the subtle ways by which Satan can mislead the servants of the Lord Jesus in order to lure them into sin. He told them that He will not give them another burden, He will not place upon them more weight. However, He advises them to keep what they have, i.e., the things He mentioned in verse 19, ***"the love … the ministry … the faith …*** (their) ***patience … and*** (their) ***works",*** until He comes.

Verses 26,27: ***"***[26]***And the one who conquers, and the one who keeps My works to the end, I will give to him authority over the nations; and he will "shepherd them with an iron rod;*** [27]***they will break into pieces like clay vessels;" as I also have received from My Father;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 26 and 27

In the end, the Lord Jesus speaks again to those who ***"conquer"***, that is, to those who believe that Jesus is **the only-begotten** (not created) **Son of God** (read explanation of verse 7[b]) and who do His works (read explanation of verse 5[a]), and He promises them great glory: **He will give them the authority to shepherd the nations with an iron rod, as He also received from His Father!!! What great glory! Praise You Jesus!!**

Verse 28: ***"and I will give to him the morning star."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 28

In this verse, the Lord Jesus promises to those who believe in Him, in other words, to those who ***"conquer"***, that He will give them ***"the morning star"***.

Who is this "Morning Star"?
In Revelation 22:16, the Lord Jesus said, ***"I, Jesus … am … the bright and morning star."*** (Also, read Numbers 24: 17 and 2 Peter 1:19).

What did Jesus mean when He said that He will *"give"* the bright and morning star to those who conquer?
Since the Morning Star is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the promise to ***"give"*** them the bright and Morning Star means one thing only: **He will indwell** all those who ***"conquer"***, that is, all those who believe that He is the only begotten Son of God and therefore God in essence (Revelation 3:20)! **What great glory! What a great splendor to have inside you the Morning Star, the One who is God over all and blessed forever** (Romans 9:5)**!!!** Thank You, Lord Jesus, for this great honor!

Verse 29: ***"The one who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 29
Please read the explanation of verse 7[a].

Chapter Three

Verse 1: ***"[a]And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, [b]These things says the One who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars; [c]I know your works, that you have the name*** (only) ***that you live, and*** (yet) ***you are dead."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]
"And to the angel of the church in Sardis write,"

In chapter 1, in the explanation of verses 14-16, under **description #7**, we learned that the symbolic term ***"angels of the churches"*** refers to **the overseers of the Christian churches**. Therefore, when we read the above words, we must think as if it says, ***"And to the overseer of the church in Sardis write".***

Explanation of verse 1[b]
"These things says the One who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars;"

In chapter 1, under the explanation of verse 4[b], we learned that ***"the seven spirits of God"*** are **the seven heavenly Rulers or Archangels** who stand before the throne of God. And, as we have already learned, ***"the seven stars"*** are **the seven overseers of the seven Christian churches**. Therefore, it is easy to realize that the Lord's claim that He is ***"the One who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven***

stars" in His right hand (Revelation 1:20), proves the truthfulness of His words as they are recorded in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 28 and verse 18. There, we hear Him saying, ***"… All authority was given to Me in heaven and on earth."***

Explanation of verse 1c

"I know your works, that you have the name (only) ***that you live, and*** (yet) ***you are dead."***

The words ***"I know your works"***, state the fact that Jesus is the Omniscient God the Son, who knows the works of every man (John 2:24; 16:30; 21:27; Hebrews 4:12,13; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Jeremiah 17:10; Revelation 2:18).

The piercing words, ***"you have the name*** (only) ***that you live, and*** (yet) ***you are dead"***, are very serious. It is obvious that the ***"works"*** of the overseer in the church and/or in the community were very good and impressive and, for this reason, everyone thought highly of him. Apparently, he had a good name, and everyone thought that he was a vibrant and **alive** in the faith Christian. However, the Omniscient Lord Jesus told him that he is ***"dead"***!

Do the words *"you are dead"* mean that this overseer was not saved?
The answer is **"No!"** If he were not saved, he would not be one of the ***"seven stars"*** which Jesus held in His right hand (Revelation 1:16,20).

Do the words *"you are dead"* mean that perhaps this overseer had lost his salvation?
The answer is **"No!"** If he had lost his salvation, the Lord's advice to him, ***"Remember, therefore, how you have re-***

ceived and heard, and guard (or keep) ***with respect the things which have been entrusted onto you and <u>repent</u>"***, would be meaningless (verse 3).

So, then, how should the statement *"you are dead"* be understood? What was this overseer's fault? Is there anything that can bring premature death to a Christian?
Yes, there is! In 1 Corinthians chapter 11:27-30, the apostle Paul said that the Christians who partake from the communion ***"in an unworthy manner"***, in other words, those who commit sins and do not repent before God, **do not recognize the fact that the *"body"* of Christ is pure and for this reason, they get sick and many of them die!** Let us read his words:

"Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks from the cup in an unworthy manner will be held responsible for the Lord's body and blood. A person must examine himself and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. For the one who eats and drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That's why so many of you are weak and sick and a considerable number are dying." (ISV)

Also, in Revelation 2:20-23, we read that Jesus is against all those who involve themselves with sexual immorality and He told them that He will make them sick and that He will strike Jezebel's children with death. Let us read His words:

"But I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and who teaches and leads my servants to practice immorality and to eat food

sacrificed to idols. I gave her time to repent, but she refused to repent of her immorality. Look! I am going to throw her into a sickbed. Those who commit adultery with her will also have great suffering, unless they repent of her works. I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts. I will reward each of you as your works deserve." (ISV)

From the above we realize that in the church of Sardis there were many who were involved with sexual immorality (verse 4) and for this reason, as we will read in verse 2, they were ***"going to die"*****!**

Another point we will observe in verse 2, is the fact that the overseer was not ***"alert"*** to assess that situation and to warn them of the consequences; people in his church were about to die and he did not take the time to ***"strengthen"*** them spiritually; he did not help them understand the importance of repentance! Therefore, **his works as an overseer were not complete before God!** Let us read verse 2:

Verse 2: ***"Be alert, and strengthen the rest which are going to die; because I did not find your works complete before God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

From verses 1^{c}, 2 and from verses 3 and 4 which we will read next, we observe that Jesus held the overseer responsible for the continuation of the sexual immorality which was found in the church of Sardis (verse 4) and He told him to ***"strengthen the rest"*** of the members of the church which are going to die --- or else, His anger would fall upon him at a time in which he would not expect (verse 3); because

of his apathy, if he would not repent, **a premature death would be imminent** (verse 3: ***"you are dead"***)**!**

Now, let us study verse 3 carefully to find out what else the overseer was guilty of that caused Jesus to anger.

Verses 3: ***"Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard, and defend these things, and repent; but if you will not become alert I will come against you like a thief and you will not*** (even) ***know at what time I will come against you."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

What do the words *"how you have received and heard"* refer to?

The above words refer **to the gospel!** In 1 Corinthians 15: 1-4, the apostle Paul used a similar expression regarding the gospel which both he and the Corinthian Christians had ***"received"***. Let us read his words:

"But, brothers, I reveal to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by which you also are being kept safe, if you hold fast the Word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you in the first place what I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures,"

From the words, ***"Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard, and defend these things*** (Greek ***"τήρει"*** [teeree]**:** Guard or keep with respect the things which have been entrusted onto you) ***and repent"***, we understand that

the overseer had forsaken one more of his prime responsibilities.

What is the prime responsibility of a born-again overseer?
The apostle Paul wrote:

"[28]***Take care of yourselves and of all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you to be overseers, in order to shepherd the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*** [29]***Because I know this: After my departure, burdensome wolves will come in*** (to be) ***among you, not sparing the flock;*** [30]***and out of your own selves will rise men who speak distorted things, in order to draw the disciples after them.*** [31]***For this reason, be alert, remembering that for three years, night and day,*** (and) ***with tears, I did not cease warning in advance each one of you."*** (Acts 20:28-31).

From the above words of the apostle Paul, we learn that the greatest responsibility of an overseer is ***"to shepherd"***, in other words, **to feed** (to give spiritual food) **and to spare** (in other words, **to take care of and to protect**) the Church of God.

From what must an overseer protect the Church of God?
As Paul wrote in the above verses, **an overseer must protect the church from people who, although they are among those who make up the church, *"speak distorted things"*!**

What is the most important subject which the overseers must protect from those who *"speak distorted things"* so that it will not be changed?
The answer is, **"the gospel!"** In Galatians 1:6-9, the apostle Paul wrote:

"I wonder that you are so quickly turning back from the One having called you by the grace of Christ to another gospel, which is not another; only there are some troubling you, even determined to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel out of Heaven, should preach a gospel to you beside the gospel we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, and now I say again, If anyone preaches a gospel beside what you received, let him be accursed."

From the above words, we realize that **those who pervert the true gospel of Christ, are cursed by God!** (Also, read 2 Peter 2:1)

What is the most important subject which not only the overseers but also all those who make up the true Christian Church have an obligation to defend?
The answer is, **"The gospel!"** The apostle Paul was ***"set for the defense of the gospel"***. In Philippians 1:7,17, Paul wrote:

"as it is righteous for me to think this of you all because you have me in your heart, both in my bonds and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you are all sharers of the grace with me ... But these others out of love, knowing that I am set for defense of the gospel."

All the born-again Christians who have the capability to defend the gospel of Christ, have an obligation to do so because **it is the power of God to salvation to all those who will believe!** (Romans 1:16)

Apparently, the overseer of the church in Sardis had not taken the foregoing responsibility seriously! He must have watered down the message of the gospel and/or he did not defend it! What a serious offence! For this reason, the Lord Jesus said to Him, ***"Remember, therefore, how you have received and heard, and defend these things***, ***and repent*** (Greek text: ***'μετανόησον'*** = change your way of thinking)***"***. If the overseer would not start to defend the true apostolic gospel, he would experience the Lord's anger.

At this point I believe that I must present to the Reader **the unadulterated apostolic gospel** which every born-again Christian has an obligation to know, to keep, to cherish and, if he/she is capable, **to defend and to preach** for the salvation of men.

What does the true gospel contain?
The true biblical gospel contains:

a) **The Person of the Savior God**, that is, explaining who Jesus is (Matthew 16:15,16; John 1:1,14; Romans 9:5; Titus 2:13),

b) **His work**, that is, explaining the work He did for the salvation of those who will believe in Him, in other words, His death, burial and resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), and

c) **what must one do to be saved** (Romans 10:8,9,13, 14).

Where can we find the apostolic gospel?
In Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 10 and verses 1-15.

LET US EXAMINE ROMANS 10:1-15

In verse 1, the apostle Paul says that his heart's desire and prayer to God **for the Israelites is that they may be saved.** He wrote:

"Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God on behalf of Israel is for (their) ***salvation."***

Based on the above words, let us consider the following:

Did the Israelites believe in the True God **YHWH**? The answer is, **"Of course they did!"** However, in the above verse, the apostle said that **they were not saved**! His prayer to God about them was that **they may be saved**. Therefore, the question that follows is: Since they believed in the True God **YHWH**, how is it possible that they were not saved? What were they lacking?

In verse 2, Paul testifies about them that they are zealous for God; but **their zeal is not according to knowledge**. From these words of Paul, we realize that their problem was lack of **"knowledge"**.

Thus, let us consider again: Did the Israelites know their God **YHWH?** The answer is, **"Absolutely"!** Did they know God's law? **Of course, they did!** Better than anyone else! And they were trying to keep it faithfully, believing that by doing so they would be declared righteous and that they

would earn eternal life (Matthew 19:16-19). Then, **what was the knowledge they were lacking?**

In verse 3, Paul says that **they did not know the righteousness that comes from God,** that they sought to establish their own and that for this reason **they did not subject themselves to God's righteousness**.

Who is God's righteousness that a person must subject himself to? What does Paul say in verse 4?

In verse 4, the apostle Paul preaches that Christ is the end of the law and that **He, Jesus, is the righteousness to all those who believe**. But now, the question is: Is Jesus the righteousness to all those who believe in YHWH the Father or to all those who believe in **Jesus** who is YHWH the Son? If Jesus is the righteousness to all those who believe in YHWH the Father, then, how come the Israelites were not saved? What is **the only name** by which we can be saved? Is it the name **"YHWH"** or is it the name **"Jesus"**? (Acts 4:10,12)

In verses 5-8, Paul describes what Moses wrote about the righteousness that comes from keeping the law and compares it with the righteousness that comes **by faith** (in Christ)**.** At the end of verse 8, he wrote: ***"that is the word of faith which we preach:"*** In other words, the apostle Paul said, **'here is the gospel which we the apostles preach:'**

In verse 9, he presents to us the gospel of salvation which the apostles of the Lord Jesus preached. He said:

"*[9]*that if you shall acknowledge [ομολογήσης (omo-lo-yee-sis: Agree with me or confess)]**,** ***with your mouth,*** (that)

Jesus (is the) ***Lord*** (accusative case – Κύριον Ιησούν)***, and if you shall believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;"***

In the above verse, the accusative case found in the first of the two conditions for salvation, i.e., ***"if you shall acknowledge*** (agree with me or confess), ***with your mouth,*** (that) ***Jesus*** (is the) ***Lord,"*** demands that the person acknowledges that Jesus is the **"LORD"** (the substitute for **"YHWH"**) whose name one must pray to in order to be saved (verse 13).

The accusative case ***"(τον) Κύριον Ιησούν"*** [(the) Lord Jesus], brings the word ***"Κύριον"*** (Kyrion --- Lord) to its maximum extension. Jesus is not presented here simply as "a lord" or as "a master". As there are many lords and masters, it wouldn't be difficult for an Israelite to say with his/her mouth that Jesus is "a lord" because He has followers or servants. Even today's false prophets and false teachers have no problem calling Jesus "lord" with the idea that "lord" means "master". How, then, did the apostles and the early Christians understand and use the word **"Lord"** in connection with Jesus? Let us examine the testimony of Irenaeus.

Irenaeus lived from 130-200 A.D. He was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of the apostle John and lived from 65-155/6 A.D. Irenaeus became the Bishop of Lyons. His writings were against heresies. About the name **"Lord"**, he wrote the following:

"The name of God or Lord is given only to Him who is called God and Lord of all; who said to Moses: 'My name is I AM. And you shall say to the Israelites, HE WHO IS

has sent me to you.' The name of God or Lord is given also to His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord … And the Son says to Moses: 'I have come down to rescue this people.' For it is the Son who descended and ascended for the salvation of men. Thus, through the Son who is in the Father, and has the Father in Himself, HE WHO IS has been revealed." (Against Heresies, III, vi:2).

From the above teaching of Irenaeus, we understand that the name **"Lord",** when it refers to the One who is God and the Lord of all, **is an explicit title for Deity and it stands for "YHWH"**! The apostles used it freely in naming God's only begotten Son because they had believed that **Jesus is the "Lord of all"** (Acts 10:36).

When the Hebrews found it necessary to translate the Old Testament from the old Hebrew language into the Greek language **(for the benefit of the Israelites who spoke Greek)**, they decided (for valid and serious reasons), to replace the Hebrew name of God, the Tetragrammaton **"YHWH"**, with the Greek word **"Κύριος"** (Lord). Thus, in that translation, which became known as the "Septuagint", the God of the Hebrews became known as **"Κύριος"** (Kyrios - **"Lord"**). When the Hebrews of the first century were talking about the **"Lord"**, they were referring to their God **YHWH**. Consequently, the name **"Lord"** (Kyrios) became synonymous with the name **"YHWH".**

The New Testament writers continued to use the name **"Κύριος"** (Lord) in their writings and, as I said above, they used it freely in naming God's only begotten Son. They named Him **"Lord Jesus"** (Acts 8:16), **"Lord Christ"** (Colossians 3:24) and **"The Lord Jesus Christ"** (Acts 11: 17).

An important point to remember here is that even the Pagans were using the word "Κύριος" (Kyrios-Lord) before the names of their gods and before the names of their emperors whom they worshipped as gods (for instance, Lord Serapes, Lord Nero, etc.). For this reason, **the early Christians preferred to die rather than to say, "Lord Caesar"**!

From the previous information, we come to the conclusion that **when Paul said a person must confess/acknowledge that Jesus is the Lord to be saved, he meant that a person must acknowledge or confess that Jesus is God in essence in order to be saved.**

When one confesses that Jesus is God by nature (Galatians 4:8), one **does not** express the belief that Jesus is YHWH the Father because Jesus is **YHWH the Son,** that He is **the only begotten Son** of YHWH the Father (John 3:16). What one expresses is the belief that **the nature or substance of the pre-human Jesus was the same as the substance of His Father** because the substance of every son is the same as the substance of his father. In other words, as the substance of one who is born of a human is 100% human, and as the form of one who is born of a human is 100% human, the same is true of **the only begotten Son of God!** He was always 100% God (John 1:1), and He always existed in the form of God (Philippians 2:6,7). If the pre-human Jesus was a created son of God, like humans or angels, it would have been impossible for Him to be ***"in the form of God"*** (Philippians 2:6). Hebrews 1:3 is very clear **about the substance of the prehuman Jesus**. Let us read this verse:

"who (Jesus) being the effulgence of His (God's) glory and **the exact expression of His** (God's) **substance**, and up-

holding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," (EMTV)

It is impossible for created beings like angels or humans to have the glorious and **uncreated substance of God**. But, according to the above verse, **the substance of the prehuman Jesus was exactly the same as God's**! And there are only Three Persons in the entire universe who share the uncreated substance that we call "God": The Father, the Son, and **the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father** (John 15:26).

The fact that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God demands equality to the Father (John 5:18,23; Philippians 2:6), something that the leaders of Israel of His time could not possibly accept and for this reason they condemned Him to death for blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66).

Now, back to our study of Romans chapter 10.

In verse 10, we hear Paul saying that **when one believes with his heart, the result is that God declares him righteous**, and **when one confesses with the mouth, the result is that he receives salvation**. **Thus, until one believes with his/her heart that Jesus is YHWH** (the "Lord" of verses 9 and 13) **and confesses that faith with his/her mouth, that person is not saved! That person is "dead"** (John 8:24; Matthew 8:22)**!**

In verse 11, Paul continues to refer to Jesus and brings to the attention of those Israelites who were seeking their own righteousness by keeping the Law of Moses, that the Scrip-

tures say, ***"The one who believes in Him will by no means be ashamed."*** (Isaiah 28:16; Brenton and Septuagint).

In verse 12, Paul says to those Israelites that **there is no difference between a Jew and a Greek because the same Lord is over all** and He is rich to all who call upon Him (to all those who pray to Him).

In the above verse, therefore, we see that Paul actually says that the Lord of the Jews, YHWH, and the Lord that the Greeks had believed through his preaching, Jesus, is one and the same Lord, who is the Lord of all (Acts 10:36) **and who is rich to all who pray to Him!**

These words of Paul go hand in hand with his words in Romans 9:5, where he says that **Jesus *"is God over all and blessed forever"*** (Greek text).

In verse 13, the apostle Paul presents **the requirement for salvation which God has placed,** as the prophet Joel reveals them. Although in the original Hebrew text the prophet Joel presented this requirement as,

"whosoever shall call on the name of YHWH (Yahweh), ***shall be saved"*** (Joel 2:32),

the apostle Paul, applying the above words of Joel to Jesus, copies them from the Greek translation, the Septuagint, and he presents them as:

"whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved."

Therefore, Paul's preaching is loud and clear:

One must believe that Jesus is the YHWH (Yahweh) **of verse 13 whose name one must call upon** (one must pray to)**, in order to be saved!**

However, in **verses 14** and **15**, Paul asks in wonder:

"How, then, can they (the Israelites and the Greeks --- verses 1,12,13), ***call on*** (pray to*) the One in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in* (Jesus) ***the One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear*** (of who Jesus is) ***without someone preaching? And how can they preach if they are not sent? As it has been written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who are evangelizing the good things*** (the gospel)**!"**

Based on the above questions of Paul, we must consider the following:

1) Had the Israelites heard about Yahweh? **Of course, they had!**

2) Did the Israelites believe in Yahweh as their God? **Of course, they did!**

3) Did the Israelites call upon the name of Yahweh? In other words, did they pray to Him? **Of course, they did!**

4) In Paul's days, would God have found it necessary to send preachers to the Israelites to preach to them about who Yahweh is? **Of course, not!**

Beyond any doubt then, in verses 14 and 15, Paul's Subject, *"the One"*, is not Yahweh the Father, but Yahweh

the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the "Lord" (YHWH) of verses 9 and 13!

From the previous study of the first 15 verses of the tenth chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, we realize that ***"the word of faith"***, in other words, the gospel which the apostles preached, was not preached to already saved individuals, but to those Israelites who worshiped YHWH, who had zeal for God, but, **who had not recognized Jesus as God Yahweh the Son in the flesh and had not believed that God Yahweh the Father had raised Him from the dead and who, because of this unbelief, were not saved** (verse 1). Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for one **to hear about who Jesus is, so he/she can confess with faith that He is the "Lord", in other words, the Yahweh of Romans 10:13 whose Name one must call upon** (whom one must pray to --- Acts 7:59; 9:14; 1 Corinthians 1:2), **in order to be saved! This is the pure apostolic gospel!**

From the above study, we see that **the overseer should change the way he was shepherding the church of God**. He should become ***"alert".*** He should make sure that he will not allow anybody --- even an angel from heaven --- to preach in the church ***"another"***, a twisted, a cursed gospel, which will cost the lives of those who preach it and of those who believe it (Acts 20:28-31; Galatians 1:8,9; 2 Peter 2:1). Truly, if the overseer would not wake up from the lethargy of apathy and hypocrisy, the Lord Jesus would come against him at a time that he would not expect (Revelation 3:3)!

Verse 4: ***"Also, you have a few names in Sardis which have not stained their cloths and they will walk with Me in white, because they are worthy."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

Although the spiritual condition of the church in Sardis was poor and the overseer did not put any effort to build up their faith, the Lord Jesus said that there were a few persons who walked their Christian walk in a worthy manner. Praise God!

Verse 5: ***"The conqueror, he will be dressed up with white cloths; and I will not remove his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

Here, we meet again those who **conquer**, in other words, **those who believe that Jesus is the only begotten** --- not created --- **Son of God** (1 John 5:4,5; John 3:16). To them, Jesus gave three promises:

a) They will wear ***"white cloths"***. This expression symbolizes the fact that since the time they believed in the Lord Jesus and began to walk in His light, His blood cleansed them from all their sins (1 John 1:7). It is as if they washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white (Revelation 7:14).

b) The Lord Jesus **will not remove their names from the book of life**. The book of life contains the names of all those who will enjoy everlasting life (Revelation 20:12,15). Other scriptures which refer to the book of life are Exodus 32:32; Psalms 69:28; Daniel 12:1; **Ephesians 1:4**; **Philippians 4:3**; Revelation 17:8; 13:8; 21:27; 22:19.

c) The Lord Jesus **will confess their names before His Father and before His angels** --- a promise He had also given in the past (Matthew 10:32).

Verse 6: ***"The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

As we have learned before (in the explanation of Revelation 2:7[a]), the above words of the Lord Jesus confirm that His words are also the words of the Holy Spirit. This fact reveals **the perfect unity that exists between the Persons of the True Godhead, and that since the Spirit speaks, He is a Person!**

Verse 7: ***"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, These things says the Holy One, the True One, the One who has the key of David; the One who opens, and no one closes; and closes and no one opens;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

The Lord Jesus introduces Himself to the church of Philadelphia as ***"the Holy One, the True One, the One who has the key of David".*** With such titles, He shows them, one more time, who He is. Let us analyze these titles:

a) *"The Holy One"*

There is only One in the whole universe who is **the Holy One! God!** Jesus did not introduce Himself as "a holy one", but as **"the Holy One"** with the article **"the"** in front of the word **"Holy"!** None of the created beings can be Holy like God! In the Old Testament, we read, ***"There is none holy as Jehovah; For there is none besides thee, Neither is there any rock like our God."*** (1 Samuel 2:2; ASV) Yes,

the resurrected and glorified man Jesus who sends the letters to the seven churches in Asia Minor, is none else but **the Holy God of Israel who came to Zion as a man to become her Savior and her Redeemer** (Isaiah 60:14,16; 59:15-20; 53:1-5; Matthew 1:21; John 1:1,14).

b) *"The True One"*
Only God is the True One! In the Old Testament, we read, ***"But Jehovah is the true God; he is the living God, and an everlasting King:"*** (Jeremiah 10:10 ASV; also read 1 Thessalonians 1:9 and Revelation 6:10). And the apostle John, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, wrote, *"**He is the true God and the eternal life."*** (1 John 5:20)!

c) *"The One who has the key of David; the One who opens, and no one closes; and closes and no one opens;"*
These words remind us that the biblical prophecies are being fulfilled on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of these prophecies is found in Isaiah 22:20-22. There, we read about the One who would come **to receive authority from God to become Father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.** Also, according to this prophecy, **God would place upon His shoulder the key** (of the kingdom authority) **of the house of David so that when He opens no one is able to close and when He closes, no one is able to open.** Let us read this prophecy:

"[20]***And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah:*** [21]***And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah.*** [22]***And the key of the house of David***

will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." (KJV)

The above words of verse 22, ***"And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder"***, refer **to the kingdom authority of David** which would be inherited by the One who would come to become **Father** to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah!

The fact that **God would place this authority upon His shoulder**, reminds us of the prophecy which is recorded in the book of Isaiah, chapter 9 and verses 6,7. There we read,

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government (authority) ***shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."*** (KJV; author's parenthesis)

From the above prophecies, we realize that the **"Child"** which was to come to inherit and to sit upon the throne of David, **ought to be a descendant of king David** (Matthew 1:6,16)**!**

Therefore, as the previous prophecies about **the authority** (government) **of the "Child"** are being fulfilled on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18), we can easily understand the reason the resurrected and glorified man Jesus introduced Himself to the church of Philadelphia as

"The One who has the key of David; the One who opens, and no one closes; and closes and no one opens."

Verse 8: ***"[a]I know your works; [b]look, I have placed before you an open door, and no one can close it; because you have a little strength and you have kept My word, and you have not denied My name."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]
About the words, ***"I know your works"***, read explanation under verse 1[c].

Explanation of verse 8[b]
"I have placed before you an open door, and no one can close it because you have a little strength and you have kept My word, and you have not denied My name."

What does the *'open door'* symbolize?
The apostle Paul has spoken about this ***"door"*** repeatedly. Let us read his words:

1 Corinthians 16:9
"Because a great and active door has been opened to me, and there are many adversaries."

2 Corinthians 2:12
"When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, and a door was opened to me in the Lord …"

Colossians 4:3
"praying at the same time also for us, so that God will open for us a door for the word, so we can preach the mystery of Christ, for which I am also bound;"

From all the above words of Paul, we realize that **the *"door"* symbolizes the opportunity** which the Lord places before one to preach the gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16). The gospel of Christ contains ***"the mystery of Christ"***, in other words, who the True Christ of the Bible is and the work He accomplished for the salvation of all those who believe in Him (Romans 10:8,9). Thus, when the Lord Jesus said to the church of Philadelphia,

"I have placed before you an open door, and no one can close it; because you have a little strength and you have kept My word, and you have not denied My name",

He meant that although the number of believers in this church was small, because they remained faithful and they did not deny His Name, **He placed before them the opportunity to preach His gospel and no one would have the power to stop them.** What a great blessing it is to be sent to the ministry by the Lord Himself, even if there are many opposers (1 Corinthians 16:9)! How happy they should be (Romans 10:14,15)!

When God opens a ***"door"*** for preaching the gospel of salvation, at the same time, He opens a ***"door of faith"*** before those who are about to be saved (Acts 14:27)! **And those who hear the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God** (2 Corinthians 4:4), **if they respond and enter the door of this faith, they will be saved** (Romans 10:9; Hebrews 1:14; Acts 16:31). Praise God for His work!

Verse 9: ***"look, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan who call themselves Jews, and they are not, but they are lying, look, I will make them come and bow down be-***

fore your feet, and they will come to know that I have loved you." (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

In the above verse, we hear the Lord Jesus talking again about those who ***"call themselves Jews, and they are not, but they are lying"*** (read the explanation of Revelation 2:9). However, this time, the Lord Jesus says that He will make them ***come to bow down before the feet*** of those who comprise the church of Philadelphia and that they will come to know that He has loved that church. What glory!

Verse 10: ***"Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the hour of temptation which will come upon the whole inhabitant*** (earth)***, to test those who dwell upon the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10

Here, the Lord Jesus says to those who comprise the church of Philadelphia that because they have kept the word of His patience, He will protect them from the hour of temptation, in other words, **from the persecution which will come to test those who dwell on *"the earth"* ---** not the ***"sea"*** of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind, because such a test would be meaningless! (About the symbolic term ***"earth"***, read explanation of Chapter One, under verse 5[c].)

Verse 11: ***"[a]Look, I am coming quickly; [b]hold fast that which you have, [c]so that no one will receive your crown."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11[a]

"Look, I am coming quickly".

In Revelation 22:17 we hear the Holy Spirit and the Bride saying to Jesus, ***"Come!"***, and whoever hears says to Jesus, ***"Come!"*** And in Revelation 22:20 Jesus repeats His promise and says, ***"Yes, I Am coming quickly"***. And I, Constantine Lenis, out of my heart, repeat the words, ***"Yes, come Lord Jesus"*** (Revelation 22:20)**!**

Explanation of verse 11[b]

"hold fast that which you have,"

What did the church of Philadelphia "have" which she ought to keep?
Because her ***"works"*** were good (verse 8), because **she had kept the word of Jesus** and because **she had not denied His name**, **she had the following blessings**:

a) **An open door for preaching the gospel** (verse 8)**,**

b) **the love of the Lord** (verse 9)**,**

c) **His protection** (verse 10)**, and**

d) **the promise of a superior honor by making those who claimed to be Jews and they were not to come and bow down before their feet** (verse 9)**.**

Explanation of verse 11[c]

"so that no one will receive your crown."

By continuing her excellent Christian walk, the church in Philadelphia would continue to ***"keep"*** the above blessings and, in addition, the day all the believers will stand before the Lord Jesus to receive ***"crowns"*** or ***"rewards"***, she

would receive the ***"crown of glory"*** (1 Peter 5:4)**!** However, if the church were to fall from the **superior position** she had before the Lord, her ***"crown of glory"*** would be given to another! This action is like the ***"moving of the lampstand"*** of the church of Ephesus (Revelation 2:5).

About the ***"crowns"***, please read the explanation of Revelation 2:10[c].

Verse 12: ***"[a]The one who conquers, [b]I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, [c]and he will never come out of it again. [d]And I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, of the New Jerusalem, which is coming down from heaven from My God, and My new name."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12[a]
"The one who conquers"

Please read the explanation of verse Revelation 2:11[b].

Explanation of verse 12[b]
"I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God"

Please meditate on Galatians 2:9. There it says,

"and knowing the grace given to me, James and Cephas and John, those seeming to be pillars, gave right hands of fellowship to Barnabas and to me, that we go to the nations, but they to the circumcision;"

Explanation of verse 12[c]
"and he will never come out of it again."

The above statement tells us that the believer, who will be honored by God to be a ***"pillar"*** in the Temple of God, will keep this high position of honor forever. What a blessing!

Explanation of verse 12[d]

"And I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, of the New Jerusalem, which is coming down from heaven from My God, and My new name."

The promise of the Lord Jesus to write His new Name and the Name of God on their foreheads (Revelation 22:4), reveals **the height of the honor which He will give to those who belong to Him --- to His servants** (1 Corinthians 2: 9)!

The fact that the Lord Jesus will also write on their foreheads the name of ***"the New Jerusalem"***, denotes that they will be the eternal citizens of this glorified **"Metropolis"** of God which, as Paul said, ***"is the Mother of us all"*** (Galatians 4:26; also, please read Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 21:2,10).

For more information on this subject, whether the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** is the name of a literal city or whether it is one of the names which refer to the Church of the born-again, please read the explanation of Revelation 20:9[a] and 21:2,3 and 9,10.

Verse 13: ***"Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13

Please read the explanation of Revelation 2:7[a].

Verse 14: ***"And to the angel of the church of Laodicea write, These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Author of the creation of God;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14

In this verse, the Lord Jesus introduces Himself to the church of Laodicea as:

a) ***"The Amen"***,

b) ***"The Faithful and True Witness"***, and

c) ***"The Author of the creation of God"*****!**

Let us examine these titles:

a) ***"The Amen"*** means ***"The True One"***. Please read the explanation of verse 7 above, paragraph b), under the title ***"The True One"***.

b) ***"The Faithful and True Witness"***. Why did Jesus introduce Himself as ***"The Faithful and True Witness"***? Because Jesus came into the world to witness to the truth (John 18:37), and His testimony is faithful and true. Revelation 22:6 assures us that the words of the Lord Jesus, who is **the God of the holy prophets** and **the One who sent His angel to the churches** (Revelation 1:1; 22:6,16), **are faithful and true**. After all, from Revelation 19:11, we learn that He Himself is called ***"Faithful and True"*****!**

c) ***"The Author of the creation of God".***

Why did Jesus introduce Himself with the above title?
Before I answer this question, we must consider the following:

If you read Revelation 3:14 from your favorite English translation and you notice that instead of the word ***"Author"*** the translators have used the word ***"beginning"***, do not be confused! Please allow me to explain:

The book of Revelation was first written in Greek. In Revelation 3:14[d], the Greek text appears as:

η	***αρχή***	***της***	***κτίσεως***	***του***	***Θεού***
the	Author	of the	creation	of	God

The second Greek word above, ***"αρχή"*** (ar-hee), has more than one meaning:

1. When it refers **to the place or to the time** of the starting of an event, it means **"beginning"**.

2. When it refers **to a person**, it means **"Author"**, **"Authority"**, **"Leader"**, **"Government"**, **"Power"**, **"Cause"**, **"First Cause"** and **"Fountain"**. For example, in Luke 20:20 we read:

"… so as to deliver Him (Jesus) ***to the power*** (***"αρχή"*** [ar-hee]) ***and to the authority of the governor."***

In the above verse, the word ***"αρχή"*** (ar-hee) means ***"power"***. In this sentence, the word **"beginning"** would not have made any sense!

In Revelation 3:14, the word ***"αρχή"*** (ar-hee) refers to the Person ***"Amen"***, in other words, to the Lord Jesus. Therefore, as it does not refer to **time or place** but to **a person,** it means **"Power", "Leader", "Author", "Government", "First Cause",** and **"Source"!** The Bible translations such as the KJV which, in Revelation 3:14, have translated the Greek word ***"αρχή"*** (ar-hee) as ***"beginning"*** instead of ***"Author"*** or ***"Power"*** or ***"The First Cause"***, have done so in error.

Those who read from such versions and teach that the words, ***"These things saith the Amen … the beginning of the creation of God"*** mean that the ***"Amen"***, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the first creature which God created, **are making a terrible mistake.** In their ignorance, they lower the uncreated God the Word who became flesh (John 1:1, 14) and they present Him as a created being.

If the apostle John, the writer of the book of Revelation, would have wanted to say that Jesus, the ***"Amen"***, is the first creature which God created, he would have used the Greek word **"απαρχή"** (apar-hee) --- not the word ***"αρχή"*** (ar-hee)**!**

The Greek word **"απαρχή"** (apar-hee) means: **"The first and the best out of a group of people or things".** In the English Bible translations, the word **"απαρχή"** (apar-hee) has been translated as **"Firstfruit"**. In this case, if John would wish to express the thought that Jesus was the first creature that God created, he would have written that the ***"Amen"*** is:

"η	***απαρχή***	***της***	***κτίσεως***	***του***	***Θεού"***
the	firstfruit	of the	creation	of	God

but such is not the case!

About the word **"απαρχή/Firstfruit"**, please read the following verses: 1 Corinthians 15:20,23; 16:15; James 1:18; Romans 8:23; Revelation 14:4.

From the above study, we realize that Revelation 3:14 does not say that Jesus is the first created being which God created. On the contrary, it says that the Lord Jesus is **the First Cause, the Author or the Power which brought all God's creation into being** (Colossians 1:16; John 1:3,10; Hebrews 1:8,10)**!** In other words, Revelation 3:14 reveals that **Jesus, the *"Amen"*, is the Creator God!**

Verses 15 and 16: "[15]***I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish you were cold or hot;*** [16]***for this reason, because you are warm, and you are neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 15 and 16

In these verses, the Lord Jesus speaks to the overseer of the church in Laodicea in a very austere way. Because He is the All-Knowing God, He knows his works (please read the first paragraph of the explanation of verse 1[c]) and, for this reason, He tells him that he is disgusting! He tells him that because he is lukewarm and not hot or cold, **He will vomit him out of His mouth!** Who is the true Christian who would like to hear the Lord Jesus speaking to him/her in such way? What a shame!!! Really, the words of Jesus cut to the marrow (Hebrews 4:12,13).

Verses 17-19: ***"***[17]***Because you are saying that 'I am rich', and 'I became wealthy', and 'I don't have need of anything', and you do not know that you are the wretched***

and pitiful, and poor, and blind, and naked; [18]***I advise you to buy from Me gold which has been tested by fire in order to become rich, and white clothes in order to be dressed, and not to reveal the shame of your nakedness; and anoint your eyes with ointment, so that you will be able to see.*** [19]***As many as I love, I rebuke and train; therefore, become zealous and repent."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 17-19

In the above verses, the Lord Jesus tells them that the reason they are lukewarm is because they think that they have become spiritually rich, that they know everything, and that they don't have need of anything. Having such an arrogant attitude, such an ego, **why should they be hot and zealous for the truth?**

How does a Christian church show that is lukewarm today?

Let us consider the following possibilities. How about if a church:

a. Is not ***"zealous"*** enough to **defend the gospel?** (Philippians 1:17)

b. Preaches the perverted gospel that **one does not have to believe that Jesus is God to be saved?** (Romans 10:9,13,14; John 3:16; 6: 40; 8:24)

c. Brings the fellowship **under the curse of the Old Testament Law** by teaching them to keep at least one of its laws such as **the law of tithing** (instead of free will offerings) or **the law of keeping the seventh day of the week?** (Galatians 3:10)

d. Is not zealous into seeking and defending holiness? (Hebrews 12:14; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:24; 1 Thessalonians 4:4,7)

e. Tolerates and even blesses the sin of **idolatry, fornication, adultery and sodomy?** (Galatians 5:19,20; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 10:14; 15:5; Revelation 2:22; Colossians 3:5; 1 Peter 4:3; Romans 1:26, 27; Acts 15:20)

f. Does not preach **repentance from the above dead works?** (Hebrews 6:1)

g. Does not encourage the fellowship to become **vessels to honor, having been sanctified and made useful to the Master?** (2 Timothy 2:21)

h. Decides to be silent on all the above in order to assure the flow of income and to protect (as they think) the unity within its ranks and among other denominations **substituting, therefore, truth for fellowship?**

Really, there is no end to being lukewarm! For this reason Jesus said, ***"and you do not know that you are the wretched and pitiful, and poor, and blind, and naked; I advise you to buy from Me gold which has been tested by fire***, ***in order to become rich*** (spiritually: Isaiah 55:1,2) ***and*** (buy from Me) ***white clothes in order to be dressed and not to reveal the shame of your nakedness;*** (in other words, wash your sins away, have your clothes washed by the blood of the Lamb --- Revelation 7:14) ***and anoint your eyes with ointment, so that you will be able to see*** (your present pitiful condition and how you will walk with me from now on).***"***

Verse 20: ***"[a]Look, I stand at the door and knock; if someone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come into him, [b]and I will dine with him and he with Me."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20[a]

"Look, I stand at the door and knock; if someone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come into him"

From the above words of the Lord Jesus, we see that there were persons in the church, who, although they fellowshipped there, **they were not born-again. They were not saved yet, because they had not invited the Lord Jesus Christ to come into their hearts**. How could they be born again since the One who is the Life (John 14:6) did not dwell in them? This is the reason the Lord Jesus said, ***"Look, I stand at the door and knock; if someone hears My voice, and opens the door, I will come into him, and I will dine with him and he with Me."***

In the past, the Lord Jesus had promised again that He and the Father would come to **dwell inside those who love Him and keep His word** (John 14:23).

If we look around us, we will observe that the sad situation which existed in the church of Laodicea in the first century **also exists in many churches today!** Millions of people who fill up the halls of the different "Christian" religious institutions fanatically proclaim that they are 'faithful Christians'. However, **are they born again?** Have they invited the Lord Jesus Christ, who, like the Father, is Omnipresent (John 14:23), to indwell them? **If this unity between God and man will not take place, how is it possible for this person to be a new creation?** (2 Corinthians 5:17) **The "old man", the man who does not have Christ**

dwelling in Him, is being corrupted daily (Ephesians 4:22; Romans 8:9-11).

Have ***you*** invited the True Jesus of the Bible**, who is the only Despot God and Lord** (Jude 4; Greek text), to come into your heart? If not, would you like to invite Him now? If yes, pray to Him (Romans 10:9,13,14). **It is a matter of salvation!**

Explanation of verse 20[b]
"***I will dine with him and he with Me"***

The above words show that when the Lord Jesus indwells a person, there is **a personal and interactive fellowship between them, and they *"dine"* together with unpolluted spiritual food.** What a blessing! Thank You, Jesus!

Verses 21 ***"[a]To the conqueror, [b]I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I conquered, and I sat with My Father on His throne."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 21[a]
"To the conqueror"

Please read the explanation of Revelation 2:11[b].

Explanation of verse 21[b]
"I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I conquered, and I sat with My Father on His throne."

What a great and precious promise! (2 Peter 1:4)

Verse 22: ***"Whoever has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 22

Please read the explanation of verse 6.

Chapter Four

Verse 1: ***"After these things I saw, and look a door was opened in Heaven; and the first voice, which I heard as a trumpet speaking with me, said, Come up here, and I will show you the things which must take place after these things*** (in the future)***."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

In this verse, John tells us that he saw an open door in heaven and that the Lord Jesus, who spoke with him in the beginning with a voice which sounded like a trumpet (Revelation 1:10,17,18), invited him to go up there to show him future events (Revelation 1:19; 22:6).

Also, in the above verse, we encounter a new symbol: **The "door".**

Who is the "Door"?

In John 10:7 Jesus said, ***"I am the Door"*** and in John 14:6 He said, ***"I Am the Way … no one comes to the Father except through Me."***

From the above statements, it is clear that no one can go into heaven without first coming to the One who is **the "Door"** and **the "Way"!**

Verse 2: ***"And immediately I became in the spirit. And look, there was a throne in heaven and*** (there was One) ***sitting on the throne."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

As soon as John received the invitation, he became in spirit (i.e., in a state of holy ecstasy under the power of the Holy Spirit). Being in that state, like the prophets or the seers (1 Samuel 9:9), he was able to go into heaven (in the spirit) in order to see and to hear the heavenly world (Revelation 1:10; 21:10; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4; Ezekiel 8:3).

When John entered heaven, he saw a throne and One sitting on it. John did not enter just any place in heaven; he entered **the heavenly temple, the very throne room of God**.

The fact that the temple in heaven and the throne room of God are one and the same can be proven by Revelation 16:17. There it says, ***"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl onto the air, and a great voice came from the throne from the temple of heaven, saying, It is done!"***

Who is the One who sits on the throne?
In Revelation 5:13, we read:

"And every creature which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever."

From the words, ***"To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb",*** we realize that the One who sits on the throne is God (the Father).

Verse 3: ***"And the seated One looked like a jasper stone, and a sardius stone; and a rainbow was around the throne, in appearance like an emerald."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

In this verse, John describes **the colorful brightness of the glory of the Lord God and of His throne**. Compare his words with the words of Ezekiel 1:26-**28**.

Verse 4: ***"And around the Throne*** (were) ***twenty-four thrones; and I saw the twenty-four elders sitting on the thrones, dressed in white garments; and on their heads*** (they had) ***golden crowns."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

Who are the 24 elders? Are they human or angelic beings?

The answer is found in Revelation 5:8,9. There we read:

"[8]And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having harps, and golden bowls full of incenses, which are the prayers of the saints. [9]And they (the twenty-four elders) ***sing a new song, saying, Worthy are You to receive the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and by Your blood purchased us to God out of*** **every tribe** ***and tongue and people and nation."***

From the words, ***"by Your blood*** (You) ***purchased us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation"***, we realize that **the 24 elders are believers in Christ who have been bought from the earth!**

Why do they have crowns on their heads and why do they sit on thrones?

Because Jesus makes those who believe in Him kings who, one day, will sit on thrones to do judging. This statement is supported by the following verses:

Revelation 1:6: ***"and made us kings and priests to God, even His Father."***

Revelation 20:4: ***"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them … And they … reigned with Christ a thousand years."***

Daniel 7:18: ***"But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever."***

Daniel 7:22: ***"until the Ancient of Days came. And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."***

1 Corinthians 6:2: ***"Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?"***

Do we know who the 24 elders are?
Although we do not know the names of the 12 elders who were purchased out of every ***"tongue and people and nation"***, we do know the names of the other 12 elders who were purchased **out of Israel**, in other words, we know the names of the 12 apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew 19:27, 28 we read about them the following:

"Then answering, Peter said to Him, Look, we left everything (behind) ***and followed You. What then shall be there for us? And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, <u>You who have followed Me</u>, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you, also, <u>will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel</u>."***
(Also, please read Luke 22:30.)

Did the apostles call themselves *"elders"*?
Of course, they did! Let us check out the following verses:

2 John 1:1:
"The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not I only, but also all those who have known the truth"

3 John 1:1:
"The elder to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth."

1 Peter 5:1:
"I, a fellow elder, exhort the elders among you, I being also witness of the sufferings of Christ, and being sharer of the glory about to be revealed:"

Why are the 24 elders dressed *"in white garments"*?
Because in Revelation 3:5, the Lord Jesus said, ***"The one who conquers, he will be clothed in white garments"***. (Also, please check Revelation 6:11 and 7:9,14.)

Who is the one who conquers?
In 1 John 5:5, John wrote, ***"Who is the one who conquers the world, except he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?***

What does it mean to believe that *"Jesus is the Son of God"*?
It means to know from the Scriptures and to believe that Jesus is **the only begotten --- not the only created --- Son of God** (John 3:16). The title ***"Son of God"*** **necessitates Deity** (John 5:18). Therefore, the one who believes that Jesus is God's only begotten Son must, at once, believe that Jesus is **God by nature** (John 1:1,14)**! This faith over-**

comes the world (1 John 5:5) **and generates in the believer everlasting life** (John 20:31). Those of the world who do not believe that Jesus is the Son of the True God will be convicted for sin (John 16:8,9) and **they will die in their sins** (John 8:24).

Verse 5: ***"[a]and out of the throne proceed lightnings and thunders and voices; [b]and before the throne*** (there were) ***seven burning lamps of fire which are the seven spirits of God;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"and out of the throne proceed lightnings and thunders and voices"

What do the ***"lightnings and thunders and voices"***, which come out of the throne, refer to? **They refer to the speaking of the Almighty who sits on the throne!** Let us examine a few verses:

John 12:28,29:
"Father, glorify Your name. And a voice came out of heaven: I have glorified (it) ***and I will glorify*** (it) ***again. And the crowd which stood there and heard said that it was a thunder …."***

From the above verse, we see that although God the Father spoke to the man Jesus Christ, **His voice was perceived by others as a thunder!** This fact helps us realize that when God speaks to His own people, they fully understand His word while others perceive it as a supernatural noise! In Exodus 19:16 and 20:18, we observe a similar situation: While God was speaking to Moses, the people of Israel heard thunders and saw lightnings. Let us read these verses:

Exodus 19:16:
"And on the third day, it being morning, it happened: There were thunders and lightnings, and a heavy cloud on the mountain, and the sound of a ram's horn, very strong! And all the people in the camp trembled.

Exodus 20:18
"And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the sound of the ram's horn, and the smoking mountain. And the people looked, and they trembled, and they stood from a distance."

Also, the Psalmist associates **the thunder with the voice of God**. In Psalms 18:13,14, he wrote:

"Jehovah also thundered in the heavens; and the Highest gave forth His voice, hailstones and coals of fire. Yea, He sent out His arrows and scattered them; and He shot out lightnings and confounded them."

Although we have already seen (from John 12:28,29 and Psalms 18:13,14) that the ***"thunder"*** refers to the ***"voice"*** (singular) of God, in Revelation 4:5[a], 8:5 and 16:18 we notice that the word ***"voice"*** appears in the plural form, i.e., ***"voices"*****!** Let us read these verses:

Revelation 4:5[a]:
"[a]and out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders;"

Revelation 8:5:
"And the angel has taken the censer, and has filled it from the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and

voices and thunders and lightnings and earthquakes occurred."

Revelation 16:18:
"And voices and thunders and lightnings occurred …!"

Is it possible that the voice of the Almighty sounds like many voices?
Yes, it does! Please read my comments in the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under the subtitle **Description #6**.

Explanation of verse 5[b]
"and before the throne (there were) ***seven burning lamps of fire which are the seven spirits of God;"***

Who are the seven spirits which stand before God?
Please read explanation of Revelation 1:4[b].

Verse 6: ***"[a]and before the throne*** (there was) ***a sea made from glass*** (which) ***looked like crystal.*** [b]***And in the midst of the throne and around the throne*** (there were) ***four living creatures*** (which were) ***full of eyes in front and in back."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]
"[a]and before the throne (there was) ***a sea made from glass*** (which) ***looked like crystal."***

What does the *"sea"* which was made from glass and looked like crystal refer to?
In the first temple, there was a basin which was made from bronze. This basin contained a huge amount of water, and for this reason it was known as ***"the sea"***! The priests ought to use that water to wash their hands and feet **before**

they entered the tabernacle. If they would approach the presence of God without having been washed, **they would die!**

Let us read the following scriptures:

Exodus 30:17-21
"And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, And you shall make a bronze laver for washing, and its base bronze. And you shall put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar; and you shall put water there. And Aaron and his sons shall wash from it, their hands and their feet; as they go into the tabernacle of the congregation they shall wash with water, and shall not die; or as they draw near to the altar to minister, to burn a fire offering to Jehovah. And they shall wash their hands and their feet, and shall not die. And it shall be a never ending statute to them, to him and to his seed for their generations."

Exodus 38:8
"And he made the laver bronze, and its base bronze, from the mirrors of the serving women, those assembling, who served at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."

1 Kings 7:23-25
"And he made a casted sea of ten cubits from brim to brim; it was round all about. And its height was five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits went around it all about. And gourds were below its brim all around, going around it, ten by the cubit, circling the sea all around; the gourds were cast in two rows when it was cast. It stood on twelve oxen: three facing the north, and three facing the west, and three facing the south, and three facing the east. And

the sea was above on them; and all their hinder parts were inward."

1 Kings 7:39,44
"And he put the five bases on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house. And he put the sea on the right side of the house, eastward, across from the south … and one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;"

From the foregoing verses, we realize that **no one could come before the presence of the Holy God without first being washed --- cleansed**. As I said earlier, those who would try to serve Him without first being washed would die!

How can one approach the throne of God today? What cleanses us from our sins?
The apostle John wrote, ***"… the blood of … Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin"*** (1 John 1:7) and the writer of the letter to the Hebrews said, ***"Therefore, brothers, having confidence for the entering of the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, which He consecrated for us, a new and living way through the veil; that is, His flesh;"*** (Hebrews 10:19,20).

Those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible, who is the ***"mighty God"*** of Isaiah 9:6, have ***"… washed their robes and whitened them in the blood of the Lamb. Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His sanctuary…."*** (Revelation 7:14, 15)

Unlike the bronze basin of the first temple and the water it contained, the flesh of the body of Jesus and the blood it

contained had the ultimate and unique power in the whole cosmos to cleanse people from their sins because they were superior, supernatural, holy and pure. This **supernatural and holy purity** was symbolized by the more refined and glorious ***"sea of glass"*** which was bright like crystal and which, unlike the earthly ***"sea of bronze"***, was made without human hands! (Hebrews 10:5; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:24,25)

This symbolic ***"sea of glass"*** is also mentioned in Revelation 15:2. There we read:

"And I saw a sea like glass having been mixed with fire, and those conquering the beast and its image and the number of its name standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God."

From the above verse, we realize that only those who **stand on their faith in the True Jesus of the Bible**, who is God the Word who became flesh (John 1:1,14) and have been cleansed **by His holy blood and by His fire** (Mathew 3:11; Malachi 3:2,3) can stand **before the Holy God** to praise Him!

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"And in the midst of the throne and around the throne (there were) ***four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back."***

What are these living creatures?

Before we answer this question, we need to read verses 7 and 8 where John presents more details of their appearance.

Verses 7,8: ***"[7]And the first living creature was like a lion; and the second living creature like a young bull; and the third living creature had the face of a man; and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. [8]And the four living creatures had six wings each; and all around*** (the wings) ***and inside*** (and under their wings) ***they were full of eyes*** (like the rest of their bodies: verse 6)***. And they have no rest day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the*** (One who) ***was, and the*** (One who) ***is, and the*** (One who) ***is coming."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 7 and 8

From all the above descriptions, we conclude that the four living creatures are heavenly angelic beings: **They are Seraphs!**

How do we know that they were Seraphs and not Cherubs?

They were Seraphs because **they had six wings each** (verse 8). The prophet Isaiah, who also saw the same creatures, agrees with our conclusion (Isaiah 6:1-3). On the other hand, when the prophet Ezekiel saw cherubs he described them as having **four wings each**. (Please read Ezekiel 1:6 and 10:20)

Here are two more characteristics of the appearance of the four living creatures:

1. Their bodies and their wings were full of eyes (verses 6 and 8), and

2. They all had different faces: The first living creature looked like ***"a lion"***, the second like ***"a young***

> ***bull"***, the third had the face of ***"a man"***, and the fourth living creature was like an ***"eagle"***.

Is this how seraphs really look like?
Since the faces of the four living creatures are **all different**, the answer is **"No!"** After all, in Hebrews 1:7, we read that God makes ***"his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire"*** --- not different earthly looking animals! Therefore, since their faces **do not refer to their real angelic nature,** what do they declare?

The different forms of the four living creatures glorify Jesus and declare the everlasting gospel
From Revelation 19:10 we learn that **the spirit of the prophecy is the testimony about Jesus** and in Colossians 1:16, Paul says that Jesus created all things, the visible **and the invisible** (even the seraphs and the cherubs), **for Himself** --- **for His glory, for His pleasure!** Therefore, whatever we read from the book of Revelation, every action and every description, bares testimony about Jesus --- of who He is (Revelation 1:8; 22:13,16), and of the work He has done for the redemption of the human race (Revelation 1:5,17)! Likewise, the forms of the four living creatures, as they are described in verse 7,

1. **glorify Jesus** and,

2. like the angel of Revelation 14:6,7, **declare the everlasting gospel!**

How do the different forms of the four living creatures declare the everlasting gospel?
The different forms of the four living creatures give the eternal testimony of **who Jesus is and of the work He did**

for the redemption of those who believe in Him. Let us consider the following:

1. The fact that their bodies are full of eyes, signifies that **Jesus**, whom they worship and praise (Revelation 5:8-14), **is the All Seeing, the Omniscient God**. According to Hebrews 4:12 and 13 He is **the living and active Word of God** (John 1:1) before whom no creature can hide ***"but all things are naked and open to His eyes, to whom we must give an account."*** (EMTV)

Also, as the ***"eyes"*** are a symbol of **wisdom** and **knowledge** (Genesis 3:5,7; Proverbs 15:3; Jeremiah 5:21; Ephesians 1:17,18), the very fact that their bodies are full of eyes declares that **in Jesus *"are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge"*** (Colossians 2:3). Praise You Lord Jesus!

2. The fact that the first living creature looked like ***"a lion"***, bares testimony that **Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies** regarding the coming of the Messiah, of the King who would come **out of the tribe of Judah**. Let us pay attention to the following verses:

Genesis 49:9,10
"Judah is a lion's whelp. My son, you have risen up from the prey; … The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawmaker from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and the obedience of the peoples to him."

Hebrews 7:14
"For it is clear that our Lord has risen out of Judah …"

Revelation 5:5
"And one of the elders said to me, Do not weep. Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, conquered …"

Thank You, Jesus!

3. The fact that the second living creature looked like ***"a young bull"***, signifies that Jesus offered His own blood for the sins of those who will believe in Him. **This action fulfilled the law of sacrificing bulls outside the camp as sin offerings** (Exodus 29:14,36; Hebrews 13:11-13; 10:4-10)

4. The fact that the third living creature had the face of ***"a man"***, proclaims the everlasting truth that **God the Word** (John 1:1), the Creator of all things (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:8,10), who always existed in the form of God (Philippians 2:5-8), **became a man** (John 1:14) in order to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21)!!!

5. The fourth living creature looked like ***"a flying eagle"***. The fact that it appeared as ***"flying"***, reminds us of **God's ability to deliver people from their captivity**. In Exodus 19:4 YHWH said, ***"You have seen what I did to Egypt; and I bore you on wings of eagles and brought you to Myself."***

The eagle flies swiftly and has powerful vision which enables it to see a great distance and exercise judgment; thus, the face of an eagle shows us that God is a God of revelation vision, a God of understanding and insight who gives **wisdom** to His servants. In Proverbs 2:6, we read,

"For YHWH gives wisdom; and from His face come knowledge and understanding."

Wisdom and understanding **free the believers in Christ from the shackles of religion!** And when the Word became a man, He accomplished just that!!! **He proclaimed freedom to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, and He brought them to Himself** (Luke 4:18; Matthew 23:37).

May the Name of the Lord Jesus be glorified!! Let us all praise the Lord Jesus for who He is and for the complete work He did for us on the cross. Let us join the Seraphs who are before the throne and say, ***"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, the*** (One who) ***was, and the*** (One who) ***is, and the*** (One who) ***is coming."***

The Seraphs are not the only heavenly hosts who proclaim the everlasting gospel through their appearance. The Cherubs of Ezekiel 1:10 and 10:20 appeared with the same faces. Let us read these verses:

"As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle." (Ezekiel 1:10)

"This is the living creature which I saw … and I knew that they were cherubs." (Ezekiel 10:20)

Verse 9: ***"[a]And when the living creatures will give glory and honor and thanks to the One sitting on the throne, [b]to the One living to the ages of the ages,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9[a]

Who is the One who sits on the throne?

The One who sits on the throne is **the Triune God**: Father, Son, Holy Spirit! The throne does not belong to the Father only as some people claim. In Revelation 22:3 we read that **the throne belongs to God and to the Lamb**. Let us read this verse:

"And every curse will be no more. And the throne (not thrones) ***of God and of the Lamb will be in it; …."***

Explanation of verse 9[b]

"to the One living to the ages of the ages,"

Who is the One who lives to the ages of the ages?

The One who lives to the ages of the ages is **the Triune God:** The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit! In Revelation 1:17,18 we hear Jesus saying about Himself:

"… I am the First and the Last, and the Living One; and I became dead; and, behold, I am living forever and ever. Amen. And I have the keys to Hades and of death."

About the ***"eternal Spirit"***, please read Hebrews 9:14.

Verse 10: ***"[a]the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne; [b]and they will worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages, [c]and will throw their crowns before the throne, saying,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10[a]

"the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne;"

Who is the One who sits on the throne?
Please read explanation of verse 9[a].

Explanation of verse 10[b]
"and they will worship the One who lives to the ages of the ages,"

Who is the One who lives to the ages of the ages?
Please read the explanation of verse 9[b].

Explanation of verse 10[c]
"and will throw their crowns before the throne, saying,"

What do the *"crowns"* symbolize?
Please read explanation of verse Revelation 2:10[c].

Does Jesus receive worship?
Yes, He does! In Revelation 5:8 we observe that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders worship ***"the Lamb"***. Let us read this verse:

"And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb …."

Verse 11: ***"[a]You are worthy Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, [b]because You created all things, and through Your will they came into existence and they were created."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11[a]
"You are worthy our Lord and God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power,"

Who is *"our Lord and God"* who receives the glory, the honor and the power?
The answer is, **the Triune God:** Father, Son, Holy Spirit!

Should Jesus receive the glory and the honor and the power?
Yes, because **He is God's only begotten** --- not only created --- **Son** (John 3:16). This means that **Jesus is the only Son of God's essence and for this reason, He is God by nature!** Thus, like the Father, He is worthy of receiving **the glory** and **the honor** and **the power**. As we have seen before, our conclusion is supported by Revelation 5:12 and 13. There, we read:

"[12]saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb which has been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. [13]And every creature which is in heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things which are on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying: To the One sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the power forever and ever."

Explanation of verse 11[b]

"because You created all things, and through Your will they exist and they were created."

Who created all things? Who is the Creator God?
The correct answer is, **the Triune God:** The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

Can we prove that Jesus is the Creator God?
Yes, we can:

1. Genesis chapter one tells us that God **spoke** everything into existence. God ***"said"*** and everything came to be! Therefore, **God created all things by His Word**.

2. From the gospel of John, chapter one, we learn that **the Word created all things** (verses 3,10), that the Word became flesh (verse 14) and that we know Him as Jesus, the Son of God (verses 34,37).

3. From Hebrews 1:8,10 we realize that Jesus is ***"the Son"*** (verse 8) whose hands created the heavens and the earth (verse 10).

4. In Colossians 1:16 we read about Jesus, ***"Because all things were created in Him, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones, whether lordships, whether rulers, whether authorities; all things have been created by Him and for Him."***

The last words of verse 11, ***"[b]because You created all things, and through Your will they exist and were created"***, are also directed to the Lord Jesus Christ! Praise His Name!

From Job 33:4 we learn that the Holy Spirit is also the Creator God.

Chapter Five

Verse 1: ***"And I saw in the right hand of the One sitting on the throne a book*** (a scroll) ***which had been written on the inside and on the back, and which had been sealed with seven seals."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

In the above verse, John saw a book (a scroll) which was sealed with seven seals; and from verse 4 we realized that he had a great desire to be able to read it or to hear what was written in it.

Verses 2-4: ***"[2]And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a great voice: Who is worthy to open the book, and to loosen its seals? [3]And no one in heaven was able to open the book or to see it, neither on the earth, nor underneath the earth. [4]And I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open the book nor to see it."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 2-4

The above verses are straight forward: No one in heaven, on earth or under the earth (Philippians 2:10) was able to open the book or to **"see"** it because it was securely sealed with seven seals (verse 1). John's words ***"no one was found worthy … to see it"*** do not mean that the book was invisible. We should not forget that in verse one John told us that **he saw the book!** Therefore, his words mean that no creature in heaven, on earth, or under the earth was worthy to open the book and **to read it in order to learn and to**

understand the things which were written in it. As no one was able to open the book, John's desire to learn what was written in it, caused him to weep.

Verse 5: ***"[a]And one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, [b]the Root of David, has conquered in order to open the scroll and its seven seals."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"And one of the elders said to me, 'Do not weep. Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah"

Who is *"the Lion of the tribe of Judah"*?
In Genesis 49:9,10, we read:

"[9]Judah is a lion's whelp. My son, you have risen up from the prey; he stoops, he crouches like a lion; and like a lioness, who can rouse him? [10]The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the lawmaker from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and the obedience of the peoples to him." (LITV)

In verse 10 above, the name ***"Shiloh"*** means "tranquil", "serene", "calm"; it is an epithet of **the Messiah,** and it refers to **the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Prince of Peace** (Isaiah 9:6).

Explanation of verse 5[b]
"the Root of David, has conquered in order to open the scroll, and its seven seals.'"

Who is *"the Root of David"*?
In Revelation 22:16, we hear the Lord Jesus Christ saying,

"I, Jesus … Am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star."

Verse 6: ***"[a]And I saw, and look, in the middle of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, there was a Lamb, standing as it had been slain, [b]having seven horns [c]and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, which have been sent out into all the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]

"[a]And I saw, and look, in the middle of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the middle of the elders, there was a Lamb, standing as it had been slain"

The main Subject in this verse is **the Lamb**. This Lamb stands in the center of the heavenly temple, in other words, in the center of the throne room of God and it looks as it had been slain.

Who is the Lamb?

According to John 1:29,36, Isaiah 53:7 and 1 Peter 1:19, the Lamb is the Lord Jesus Christ who shed His precious blood for the sins of the world. Let us read these verses:

John 1:29,36:

"[29]On the morrow, John sees Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold! The Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world … [36]And looking at Jesus walking, he said, Behold, the Lamb of God!"

Isaiah 53:7:

"He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, but He did not open His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter;

and as a ewe before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."

1 Peter 1:19:
"but with precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish …."

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"having seven horns"

What do the *"horns"* symbolize?
The term ***"horns"*** symbolizes **kings** --- persons of power, of authority. Our conclusion is supported by the following scriptures:

Daniel 7:24:
"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise:" (KJV)

Revelation 17:12:
"And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast."

Daniel 8:3-8,20-22.
"[3]Then I lifted up my eyes and looked. And behold! A ram was standing before the canal, having two horns. And the two horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. [4]I saw the ram pushing westward and northward and southward, so that no beasts could stand before him, and none could deliver out of his hand. But he did according to his will and became great. [5]And I was considering. And behold! A male of the goats came from the west, over the face of all the earth and did

not touch the ground. And the he goat had an outstanding horn between his eyes. [6]***And he came to the ram with two horns which I had seen standing before the canal. And he ran to it in the fury of his power.*** [7]***And I saw him touched beside the ram. And he was moved with anger against him. And he struck the ram and shattered his two horns. And there was no power in the ram to stand before him. But he threw him down to the ground and trampled him. And no one could deliver the ram from his hand.*** [8]***Then the he-goat became very great. And when he was mighty, the great horn was shattered. And in its place came up four outstanding ones toward the four winds of the heavens …*** [20]***The ram which you saw with two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.*** [21]***And the shaggy goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king*** (Alexander the Great)***.*** [22]***And as for that which was shattered, and four stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation*** (after Alexander's death his empire was divided into four parts, and they were given to his four generals) ***but not in its power."*** (LITV)

Explanation of verse 6[c]

"and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, which have been sent out into all the earth."

Who are the *"seven eyes" of God*?

The above words are very clear: **The *"seven eyes … are the seven spirits of God, which have been sent out into all the earth."***

Who are *"the seven spirits of God"*?

For a full understanding on ***"the seven spirits"***, read explanation of Revelation 1:4[b]. However, let us review the fol-

lowing five scriptures and let us reason with them because they will help us further identify the ***"seven eyes"*** of God:

1. Revelation 1:4
"… and from the seven spirits which are before His throne".

2. Revelation 8:2
"And I saw the seven angels who were standing before God …."

3. Revelation 5:6^{c}
"and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, which have been sent out into all the earth."

4. Revelation 4:5
"… and before the throne (there were) ***seven burning lamps of fire which are the seven spirits of God".***

5. Hebrews 1:7
"… (God) ***makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire."***

From the above five verses, we realize that the ***"seven eyes"***, the ***"seven spirits"***, the ***"seven burning lamps of fire"*** and the ***"seven angels"*** are one and the same!

The fact that these **seven ministerial angels** stand before the throne of God denotes that **they are beings of great importance, of great power and authority. Indeed, they are heavenly rulers, and we know them as archangels** (i.e., leaders of angels).

Do we know any of the heavenly rulers or archangels?
Yes, we do! One of them is Michael. Daniel tells us that Michael is ***"one of the first rulers"*** (Daniel 10:13) and a ***"great ruler"*** (Daniel 12:1), Jude tells us that he is an ***"archangel"*** (leader of angels; Jude 1:9) and Revelation 12:7-9 tells us that **Michael and his angels** made war against Satan and his angels in heaven, that he conquered them and that he cast them down to the planet earth.

Another one of the first rulers ***"who stands before the throne of God"*** is **Gabriel!**

How do we know that Gabriel is one of the seven who *"stand before the throne of God"*?
From his own words! As I mentioned before, when he spoke to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, he said: ***"… I am Gabriel who stands before God …."*** (Luke 1:19).

Does God send the Archangels to the planet earth?
Yes, He does! For instance, in Daniel 10:13 we see Michael coming down to Persia to help another angel, and in Luke 1:26,27 we read that **God sent Gabriel** to the virgin Mary to announce to her the coming of the Son of God into our world!

From all the above, we realize that the ***"seven eyes"*** of God which have been sent out into all the earth **are the seven Archangels of hosts who stand before His throne** (Also read Zechariah 4:2,10.)

Why was it necessary to do the previous study on the *"seven horns"* and on the *"seven eyes"* of God?
Because now we can understand the reason the Lamb has ***"seven horns"*** and ***"seven eyes"***! The fact that the ***"seven***

horns" represent **all** the earthly authorities (kings: Revelation 17:10) and the ***"seven eyes"*** represent the leaders of **all** the heavenly hosts (Archangels: Revelation 12:7), proves that **the words of the resurrected Lord Jesus in Matthew 28:18 are true!** There, He said to His disciples:

"… All authority in Heaven and on earth was given to Me."

Paul agrees with our conclusion because, in Philippians 2:10,11, he wrote:

"… at the name of Jesus 'every knee will bow' of those who are in heaven, and of those who are on earth, and of those who are under the earth, and 'every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

All the above help us see the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 where it says that ***"the government"***, in other words, all authority, will be ***"upon His shoulder"*****!**

Praise You Jesus! The universal authority in heaven, on earth and under the earth, is Yours O King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16)!!

Verses 7,8: ***"***[7]***And He came and took*** (the scroll) ***out of the right*** (hand) ***of the One who was sitting on the throne.*** [8]***And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one having harps, and golden bowls full of incenses, which are the prayers of the saints."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 7 and 8

When the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, took the book out of the hand of God, **the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb** --- a classic form of worship which belongs only to God; and **unlike the angel of Revelation 22:8,9, the Lamb accepted it**.

Should Jesus be worshipped?

Let us consider the following points:

1. If Jesus were a created being, in other words, part of the creation, the answer is: **NO!** The worship of his person would constitute **creature worship!** God is and always was against those who ***"… worshipped and served the created thing rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever"*** (Romans 1:25 --- from the Greek text).

2. If Jesus were **"another god"** (with small "g" as those who do not know Him proclaim), "lesser" than the Father, and outside the uncreated Godhead **YHWH**, the answer is: "**NO!**" If Jesus is not God in essence and One of the Godhead **YHWH**, then, the worship of His person, as **"another god"**, would constitute an act of disobedience to the Commandments God **YHWH** gave to Moses: ***"You shall not have any other gods beside Me. You shall not make a graven image for yourself, of any likeness which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow to them, and you shall not serve them; for I am YHWH your God, a jealous God …"*** (Exodus 20:3-5).

"To bow" means: to bend the head or body in respect or recognition; **to express religious respect**.

"To worship" means **"to serve"**. (The verb for "worship" in Greek is "λατρεύω" (latrevo), from the noun "λάτρις" (latris), which means "a hired menial"). Check Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Greek Dictionary, page 44, and word number 3000.

When one **"bows"** before a person or thing **in religious devotion**, he expresses **religious worship** and respect toward that person or thing. When one **"worships"** a person or thing, it means that **"he serves"** that person or thing --- that he is a **"servant"** of that person or thing.

From the above information, we realize that God **YHWH** does not allow His people to ***"bend the knee"*** or to ***"bow out of religious devotion"***, to ***"worship"***, or ***"to serve"***, any other "god" except Him alone; He is a jealous God and **He exacts this exclusive devotion**.

Note: Since I am dealing with the subject of worship, I must also explain that **prayer** is worship. Anyone who prays to a created being is guilty of creature worship!

Do the Scriptures show that the Lord Jesus Christ is worthy to be worshipped or served?
Let us consider the following scriptures:

1. When Daniel the prophet had a vision regarding ***"the Son of man"***, Jesus in the flesh, he wrote: ***"... And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of the heavens. And He came to the An-***

cient of Days. And they brought Him near before Him. And dominion was given to Him, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should worship (Strong's word #H6399) ***Him."*** (Daniel 7:13,14)

From the above verses, we see that while God had forbidden the worship of others, this passage clearly states that all peoples, nations and languages, **will worship or serve Jesus!**

2. Although in Isaiah 45:22,23, God says: ***"Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear"***, in the letter to Philippians, chapter 2:10,11, Paul says: ***"at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those of Heaven, and those of earth, and those under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,*** ("Lord"=**YHWH**: Romans 10:9,12-14) ***to the glory of God the Father."***

In other words, while in the Old Testament, God says that ***"there is no other God beside Me",*** and He swears by Himself that **every knee will bow to Him**, in the New Testament we read that **every knee will bow to Jesus**!

3. In the letter to the Hebrews, we read **about Jesus**:

"And let all the angels of God worship (Grk "προ-

σκυνώ" [proskeeno]) ***Him."*** (Hebrews 1:6)

PLEASE NOTE
The Greek word for ***"worship"*** (προσκυνώ) found in the above verse is the same word for ***"worship"*** found in Revelation 22:9. There we hear the angel saying to John: ***"… Look, stop! I am your fellow-slave, and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this Book. Worship*** **(προσκυνώ)** ***God."***

4. In Matthew 14:33, we read that the disciples of Jesus who were ***"... with Him in the boat, fell before Him and worshipped Him."*** If Jesus were not Truly God and God by nature, equal to the Father and One of the True Godhead YHWH, then, YHWH the Father would not have allowed others to worship him.

5. From Romans 1:1 we learn that **the apostle Paul was a worshipper** (a servant or slave) **of Jesus Christ!**

6. From James 1:1 we learn that **James was a worshipper** (a servant or slave) **of God and of Christ!**

7. From 2 Peter 1:1 we learn that **the apostle Peter was a worshipper** (a servant or slave) **of the Lord Jesus Christ!**

8. From Jude 1:1 we learn that **Jude was a worshipper** (a servant or slave) **of the Lord Jesus Christ!**

9. From Acts 7:59 we learn **that Stephen prayed to**

Jesus! As prayer is worship, we realize that **Steven worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ!**

10. From 1 Corinthians 1:2 we learn that **all the first Christians worshipped Jesus because they were praying to Him!** Let us read that verse:

    "to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, those having been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called-out saints, with all those calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both theirs and ours:" (LITV; "to call upon" means "to pray to".)

11. **The priests of the True God YHWH worship or serve only Him. They are forbidden to be priests of angels or of other gods.** However, when we read Revelation 20:6, we see that those who will take part in the first resurrection **will be priests of God and of Christ**. Therefore, since God **YHWH** allows His priests to **also be priests of Christ**, since **YHWH** allows His priests **to worship Jesus**, then, beyond any doubt, Jesus, **the only begotten** --- not the only created --- **Son of God is God by nature and worthy to receive worship!**

The disciples of the disciples of the Lord Jesus believed that Jesus is God, and God's Son, and **they were happy to worship Him**. Let us examine the writings of Polycarp and Justin.

Polycarp

Polycarp lived from 65 to 155/6 A.D. He became a Christian at an early age, and later a disciple of the apostle John.

He was appointed, by John, to the position of Bishop over the church in Asia. The following words are taken from a letter written to the churches about his death:

"And Polycarp answered: ***Eighty-six years have I served Him, and He has never done me any harm. How could I blaspheme my King and my Savior?"*** (Chapter 9; from the Greek text).

He also said, ***"… Him we worship because He is the Son of God."*** (Martyrdom of Polycarp, Chapter 17, Verse 12; from the Greek text)

Justin

Justin lived from 95 to 165 A.D. He was a Gentile and became a Christian in his mature years. He became one of the greatest defenders of the Christian faith. He died as a martyr.

In Justin's writings, Jesus is repeatedly called God and said to be the object of worship. Speaking about those who are Christians by name only, Justin, in his "Dialogue with Trypho" said that they are **"*atheists, impious, unrighteous, and sinful, and confessors of Jesus in name only, instead of worshipers of Him.*"** (Chapter 35)

In the above book, he also wrote regarding Christ that ***"He deserves to be worshipped as God and as Christ."***

In his "Apology", ii, page 51c, he wrote: ***"Him ... the word of God together with God we worship and love."*** (From the Greek text)

Therefore, we see that the first Christians had acknowledged that Jesus is One of the true Godhead **YHWH**, and they worshipped Him even if it would lead to their death. Beyond any doubt then, the Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of the Living God, is God in essence and **deserves to be worshipped.**

Is it important for one to understand the above conclusion?
Absolutely! Recognizing the fact that Jesus is God in essence and praying to Him (calling on His Name), is a matter of eternal life or eternal condemnation (Romans 10:1, 9,13,14; John 8:24; 6:40; 3:16; Romans 8:1). Those who have been misled on this subject by the so-called "Christian" religious institutions they have trusted, **must pray to God the Father to reveal His TRUE Son to them so they can pray to Him and be saved** (Galatians 1:16; John 6:44; Romans 10:14).

Now, let us go back to the explanation of verses 7 and 8
At the end of verse 8 we read that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders had ***"harps, and golden bowls full of incenses, which are the prayers of the saints."*** The fact that they had harps reveals that they were about to sing a hymn to the Lamb. We will read the words of their song in verses 9 and 10.

What about the *"golden bowls"* which are *"full of incenses"?*
As John explained, the ***"incenses"*** represent ***"the prayers of the saints"***. As the sweet smell of incense goes up towards heaven, so are the prayers of the saints! The fact that the incenses are kept in ***"golden bowls"***, signifies that **the prayers of the saints are very precious before God, and**

none is wasted!

Verses 9,10: ***"[9]And they sing a new song, saying, You are worthy to receive the book*** (scroll)***, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and You bought us to God with Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, [10]and You made them kings and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 9 and 10

To understand the above verses completely, we must keep in mind that those who sing to the Lamb are two different groups:

1) The four living creatures, and

2) the twenty-four elders.

The words, ***"You were slain, and You bought us to God with Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation"***, could not have possibly been sung by the four living creatures because they are not earthly but heavenly. **They are Seraphs!** (Read explanation of chapter 4, verses 6[b],7 and 8.) Therefore, the first part of the song must have been sung by the twenty-four elders only because **they are earthly beings** (read the explanation of chapter 4, verse 4).

The second part of the song,

"and You made them kings and priests to our God; and they will reign on the earth",

must have been sung by the four living creatures only because the promise to rule with Christ and to become priests

of God and of Christ was given to humans who believed and followed the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6; 20:6).

A point worth mentioning
By falling before the Lamb and by singing a hymn to Him, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders declared the eternal gospel which presents the Person and the work of the Savior. When they fell before the Lamb, they declared that He is God! With their song, they declared His work! **I Praise You Jesus for who You Are and for what You have done for me! Hallelujah!**

Verses 11-14: ***"***[11]***And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels around the throne, and of the living creatures, and of the elders, and their number was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,*** [12]***saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb which was slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.*** [13]***And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and underneath the earth, and on the sea, and all the things in them, I heard saying: To the One who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the power forever and ever.*** [14]***And the four living creatures were saying, Amen. And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the One who lives forever and ever."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 11-14
Words cannot express the height of the glory which the Lamb of God has received! **His is the glory of God!** (John 17:5; 1:1) It is hard for me to imagine the glory of the sound which is going to be heard **when God and the Lamb receive the universal worship and praise!!!** At the

same time, with a great voice, ***"every creature which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them"*** will praise the One who sits on the throne and the Lamb saying:

"To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever."

My desire is to unite my voice with the voice of the four living creatures and say ***"Amen!"***, and to join the twenty-four elders as they fall to worship the One who lives forever and ever – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit! (Psalms 90:1,2; Revelation 1:18; Hebrews 9:14)

Chapter six

Verse 1: ***"And when the Lamb opened one of the seals I saw and I heard one of the four living creatures saying, with a voice which sounded like a thunder, Come and see!*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

When the Lamb opened the first seal, one of the four living creatures invited John to go near it to see.

Verse 2: ***"[2a]And I saw, and look, a white horse. [b]And the One sitting on it had a bow. [c]And a crown was given to Him, [d]and He came out conquering, and to conquer."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2[a]

"And I saw, and look, a white horse."

What does the *"white horse"* indicate?

"White" stands for righteousness, purity and blamelessness. Therefore, the white horse indicates that its Rider ***"wars in righteousness"*** (Revelation 19:11,14).

Explanation of verse 2[b]

"And the One sitting on it had a bow."

Who is this Mighty Rider of the white horse who holds a bow?

In Psalms 45:1-7 we read about a Rider who holds arrows

and his name is ***"Beloved"***. Let us read these verses:

"[1]… a Song of the Beloved. My heart is overflowing with a good matter. I am speaking of my works to the King; my tongue is the pen of a rapid writer. [2]You are the fairest of the sons of man; grace has poured into Your lips; on this account God has blessed You forever. [3]Gird Your sword on Your thigh, Mighty One; with Your glory and Your majesty. [4]And ride prosperously in Your majesty, on the matter of truth and meekness and right, and Your right hand shall teach You fearful things. [5]Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; peoples fall under You. [6]Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; the scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness. [7]You love righteousness and hate wickedness; on account of this God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your fellows."

In the above verses, Who is the *"Beloved"*?
When we read Matthew 3:17, 12:18 and 17:5, we realize that the ***"Beloved"*** is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. Let us read these verses:

Matthew 3:17
"And behold! A voice out of the heaven saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have been delighting."

Matthew 12:18
"Behold, My Child whom I chose, My Beloved, in whom My soul has delighted! I will put My Spirit on Him, and He will declare judgment to the nations."

Matthew 17:5
"While he was yet speaking, behold, a radiant cloud overshadowed them. And, behold, a voice out of the cloud saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have been delighting; hear Him."

Another point which proves that the ***"Beloved"*** is the Lord Jesus Christ, are the words of Psalms 45:6,7. Let us read them again:

"[6]Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; the scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness. [7]You love righteousness and hate wickedness; on account of this God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your fellows."

How do we know that the above words (which were written for the *"Beloved"*) were written for the Son of God?
Hebrews 1:8,9, confirms it. There we read:

"[8]but as to the Son (it says), "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom; [9]You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness beside Your fellows.""

From the above verses, therefore, we see again that the Rider of the white horse is the ***"Son"***, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God by nature (John 1:1,14) and whose throne is ***"forever and ever"*****!**

From the explanation of verse 2[c] that follows, we will gather more proofs that the Rider of the ***"white horse"*** is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Explanation of verse 2[c]

"And a crown was given to him"

What does this fact show?

That Jesus is the One who fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah 6:11-13. There, it says:

"[11]***And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set on the head of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest.*** [12]***And speak to him, saying, So says Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Behold! The Man whose name is THE BRANCH! And He shall spring up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of Jehovah.*** [13]***Even He shall build the temple of Jehovah; and He shall bear the majesty, and shall sit and rule on His throne. And He shall be a priest on His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between the two of them."***

The presence of a ***"crown"*** on His head reveals His kingdom authority. Here, I present two more scriptures which refer to the ***"crown"*** or ***"crowns"*** He has on His head. Let us read them:

Revelation 14:14

"And I saw; and behold, a white cloud and on the cloud One sitting like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle."

Revelation 19:11-16
"[11]***And I saw Heaven being opened. And, behold! A white horse, and He sitting on it having been called Faithful and True. And He judges and wars in righteousness.*** [12]***And His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head many diadems*** (many crowns)***, having a name that had been written, which no one knows except Himself;*** [13]***and having been clothed in a garment which had been dipped in blood. And His name is called The Word of God.*** [14]***And the armies in Heaven followed Him on white horses, being dressed in fine linen, white and pure.*** [15]***And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations. And He will shepherd them with an iron rod. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of God Almighty.*** [16]***And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name having been written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."***

Thus, the above verses confirm the fact that the Rider of the ***"white horse"*** is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Explanation of verse 2[d]

"and He came out conquering, and to conquer."

The above verse says that Jesus went out conquering His enemies and that He has the power to conquer completely.

When did Jesus come out conquering?
He came out conquering in the first century. Let us support this conclusion with the following two verses:

John 16:33
"I have said these things to you, in order to have peace in Me; in the world you will have persecution. But, have

courage! I have conquered the world." (Author's translation; also read Revelation 3:21 and 4:5.)

Colossians 2:15
"having stripped the rulers and the authorities, He made a show of them in public, triumphing over them in it.

When will Jesus conquer completely?
The answer lies in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. There, we read:

"[24]Then will be the end, when He hands over the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He abolishes every ruler and every authority and power. [25]For He must reign till He puts all His enemies under His feet. [26]The last enemy that will be abolished is death. [27]For "He has subjected all things under His feet." But when He says that "all things have been subjected," it is evident that this is except for Him who subjected all things to Him. [28]Now when all things are made subject to Him, then also the Son Himself will be subjected to Him who subjected all things to Him, in order that God may be all in all." (EMTV)

From the above words, we also realize that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Psalms 110:1-6. There it says:

"[1]A Psalm of David. A declaration of Jehovah to my Lord: Sit at My right hand, until I place Your enemies as Your footstool. [2]Jehovah shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion to rule in the midst of Your enemies. [3]Your people shall have willingness in the day of Your might; in the majesties of holiness; from the womb of the dawn, to You is the dew of Your youth. [4]Jehovah has sworn and will not repent: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. [5]The Lord at Your

right hand shatters kings in the day of His anger. [6]***He shall judge among the nations; He shall fill with dead bodies; He shall shatter heads over much land."***

Verse 3: ***"And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come and see."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

Verse 3 is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Verse 4: ***"And another horse went out, red, and to the one sitting on it was given to take the peace from the earth in order to slay one another, and a great sword was given to him."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

The above verse contains four points that need to be explained:

1. The color of the second horse was ***"red"***.
2. Its rider received the authority ***"to take away the peace from the earth"***.
3. ***"A great sword was given to him"***.
4. The people of the ***"earth"*** would ***"slay one another"***.

What does the *"red"* color of the second horse signify?

The ***"red"*** color denotes that this is a horse of war and of bloodshed. This is the reason the second point above tells us that its rider was given authority ***"to take away the peace from the earth"***.

Why was given to him *"a great sword"*?
The words ***"great sword"*** help us realize that this is not a small event which will take place in a small geographic area, among a few people or for a short period of time only, but quite the opposite!

Was the riding of the *"red horse"* supposed to take place in the distant future?
The answer is **"No!"** The riding of the ***"red horse"*** (like the rest of the horses of this chapter) began when the Lord Jesus began His ministry in the first century A.D. and the people of the symbolic ***"earth"***, will continue to experience its horrific effects until His second coming!

How can we prove that the riding of the *"red horse"* began in the first century?
In Matthew 10:34-36, the Lord Jesus said,

"[34]***"Do not think that I came to bring peace on*** (the) ***earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword!*** [35]***For I came to turn 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*** [36]***A person's enemies will be members of his own family.'"*** (ISV; also, please read verse 21)

Therefore, the riding of the second horse started at the same time with the riding of the first horse when the Lord Jesus went out conquering His enemies and it continues to this day!

Is it possible that the *"earth"* (from which the peace will be taken) **is referring to the symbolic *"earth"*, in other words, to the Judeo-Christian community?**

Absolutely! It certainly **does not** refer to the symbolic ***"sea"*** of the wicked and of the unbelieving in Him mankind because, in Isaiah 57:20,21, we read:

"[20]But the wicked are like the driven sea, which cannot be quiet, and its waves cast up mire and dirt. [21]There is no peace to the wicked, says my God."

After all, the words, ***"it was given to take the peace from the earth in order to slay one another"*** cannot possibly refer to Pagan nations. It would be unreasonable to say that the Pagan nations would ***"slay one another"*** because some people believed and followed the Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand, history has recorded the bloody religious wars, the burnings at the stake, the murders and other gory atrocities which have taken place between those who, at least, claimed to believe in the true God of the Bible! Little did they know that they were fulfilling biblical prophecy! The riding of the horses of chapter six foretells the sad spiritual condition which the symbolic ***"earth"*** would fall into.

Verse 5: ***"And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature saying, Come! And I saw, and look a black horse, and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

Traditionally, the black color refers to mourning and sad times. Therefore, it is to be expected that the riding of the ***"black horse"*** will bring in bad times to the dwellers of the symbolic ***"earth"***.

Another thing we observe in verse 5 is the fact that the rider of the ***"black horse"*** holds a ***"balance"*** in his hand. Bal-

ance is a weighing scale. I wonder what kind of lean times would come over the symbolic ***"earth"***.

Verse 6: ***"[a]And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, 'A choenix of wheat for a denarius, and three choenixes of barley for a denarius; [b]and do not harm the oil and the wine.'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]

"And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, 'A choenix of wheat for a denarius, and three choenixes of barley for a denarius;"

To relate to the above words, we must know the modern equivalent weight of a ***"choenix"*** and the purchase power of a ***"denarius"***:

A ***"choenix"*** (Greek 'χοῖνιξ': a dry measure for grain) is, approximately, equivalent to one quart. **"It was a soldier's daily ration;** (Georg Autenrieth)

A ***"denarius"***, in the first century, was a normal pay for a day's work in the field. We can see that from Matthew 20:2. There, we read:

"And agreeing with the workers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard."

Wow! **Just imagine:** A person would have to work hard for an entire day to obtain a piece of wheat bread! This reality would generate **hunger!**

From the above information, we realize that in addition to the removal of the peace and in addition to the bloodshed which would take place among the dwellers of the symbolic ***"earth"***, the Lord God would also send upon them a terrible **famine!**

What kind of *"famine"* is prophesied here?
When we read the Bible, we realize that it was not unusual to experience a literal famine in different parts of the world (Genesis 12:10; 26:1; 41:30,54; Acts 11:28). What kind of ***"famine"***, then, would the riding of the black horse bring to the symbolic ***"earth"*** which would be different than those? In Amos 8:11 we read:

"Look, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will send a famine into the earth (Hebrew: בארץ [eh´ rets] = earth)***, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the word of the Lord."*** (Author's translation from the Greek LXX)

From the above verse, we realize that the symbolic ***"earth"*** would go through a period of a spiritual ***"famine"***; the dwellers of the ***"earth"*** would go through a period in which the word of God would be **scarce!**

Did the symbolic *"earth"* experience such a *"famine"*?
Oh … Yes! And it still does today! For many centuries, the symbolic ***"earth"*** was thrown into a dark age! One of the reasons for this unacceptable condition was the fact that religious men who were hungry for power, money and glory rose up into positions of authority and who, intentionally, kept the masses of the symbolic ***"earth"*** in ignorance **in order to exploit them!** Some of those unregenerate religious leaders even killed and burned at the stake those who

were caught reading the word of God or who dared to disagree with their false doctrines! In fact, they burned them at the stake with their Bibles hanging from their necks!!! And it is needless to say that in their quest to exterminate all opposition, they killed many saints who had the testimony of Jesus and who defended the gospel of grace! We will read about these saints in verse 9.

Jude, Paul, and Peter foretold the coming of such unregenerate shepherds and announced their judgment. Let us read their words:

Jude
"[12]***These are they who are hidden rocks in your love-feasts when they feast with you, shepherds that without fear feed themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn leaves without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;*** [13]***Wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the blackness of darkness hath been reserved forever."*** (Jude 1:12,13; ASV)

Paul
"[29]***For I know this, that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;*** [30]***and out of you yourselves will rise up men speaking perverted things, in order to draw away the disciples after themselves."*** (Acts 20:29,30)

Peter
"[1]***But there were false prophets among the people, as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly put forward wrong teachings for your destruction, even turning away from the Lord who gave himself for them;***

whose destruction will come quickly, and they themselves will be the cause of it. [2]***And a great number will go with them in their evil ways, through whom the true way will have a bad name.*** [3]***And in their desire for profit they will come to you with words of deceit, like traders doing business in souls: whose punishment has been ready for a long time and their destruction is watching for them."*** (2 Peter 2:1-3; BBE; also, read 2 Corinthians 2:17)

History tells us that with the coming of those ***"grievous wolves"*** and ***"false teachers"***, the people of the symbolic ***"earth"***, especially those of the Christian community, not only fell into spiritual ***"famine"***, but also, they were led to practice idolatry, creature worship, sorcery, fornication, murders and other sinful practices which should not even exist among those who claim to know and to worship the Son of God (Revelation 9:21). And this is an additional reason that many of them would die! (1 Corinthians 11:27-30; Revelation 2:20-23)

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"and do not harm the oil and the wine."

During the spiritual ***"famine"*** there is hope: Although the spiritual ***"food"*** would be scarce, there would be no shortage of ***"the oil and the wine"***! Thank You, Father!

What does the *"oil"* represent?
Let us read the following verses:

Exodus 29:7
"Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him."

Exodus 40:9
"And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle, and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy."

From the above verses, we realize that in the Old Testament time, **the oil was used to anoint persons and articles**. However, in the New Testament times, although the believers in Christ continue to use oil to anoint the sick in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ (James 5:14), **they themselves are anointed by the Holy Spirit who indwells them**. Let us read the following verses to verify that the Holy Spirit is our anointing:

John 14:16,17,26
"[16]***And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*** [17]***Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you … ***[26]***But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*** (KJV)

1 John 2:27
"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (KJV)

Therefore, the ***"oil"*** is a symbol of the ***"Holy Spirit"***.

What does the expression *"oil and wine"* symbolize?
In Luke 10:34 we read,

"And coming near, he bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. And putting him on his own animal, he brought him to an inn and cared for him."

Pouring oil and wine on wounds **comforts and heals**! And this is exactly what the believer in the True Jesus of the Bible experiences when he/she receives the Holy Spirit: **Comfort and healing!**

Although the unregenerate masses of those who make up the symbolic ***"earth"*** experience a spiritual ***"famine"***, the born-again believers in the True Jesus of the Bible who is God in essence (John 1:1), are fed and happy because they are filled with the Holy Spirit. Does it matter if others try to ridicule them by saying that ***"They are full of sweet wine"***? (Acts 2:13)

No one can prevent a believer from receiving the ***"Oil and the Wine"*** (the Holy Spirit)**!** No one can buy that ***"anointing"*****!!** The ***"balance"*** in the hand of the rider of the ***"black horse"*** has no effect on the truly born-again children of God because the Lord Jesus said that ***"… God does not give the Spirit by measure"*****!!!** (John 3:34) Thank You Father!

Verse 7: ***"And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, Come and see."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7
Verse 7 is simple. It does not need an explanation.

Verse 8: ***"[a]And I saw, and look, a pale-green horse, and the name of the one sitting on it was Death; and Hades followed after him. [b]And authority was given to them over the fourth of the earth to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]

"And I saw, and look, a pale-green horse, and the name of the one sitting on it was Death; and Hades followed after him."

The ***"pale-green"*** color is the color of death. This is the reason the name of the rider of this horse was ***"Death"*** and the name of the one following him was ***"Hades"***.

What is the difference between *"Death"* and *"Hades"*?
Please consider the following points:

a) ***"Death"*** refers to **the condition** of the dead.

b) ***"Hades"*** (Greek ᾅδης) **is the place where the souls of the dead men go.**

Do men have a soul which can separate from the body?
Yes, they do! Let us read 1 Kings 17:21,22:

"[21]And he (Elijah) ***stretched himself on the child three times, and called to Jehovah and said, O Jehovah my God, I pray, let the soul*** (Hebrew: נפשׁ nephesh) ***of this boy return to him. [22]And Jehovah listened to the voice of Elijah, and the soul*** (Hebrew: נפשׁ nephesh) ***of the boy returned to him, and he lived."***

How do we know that the souls go to *"Hades"*?
Referring to the soul of Jesus, Acts 2:27 says, ***"because You will not leave My soul in Hades,"*** and, referring to the body it says, ***"nor will You give Your Holy One to see corruption."*** Please consider that only the body can see corruption --- not the soul! And in Acts 2:31 we read about **both the soul and the flesh**. There it says,

"foreseeing, he spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, "that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption."

The Greek word *"Hades"* refers to the same place as the Hebrew word *"Sheol"*. *"Hades"* or *"Sheol"* is a place deeper than the grave where the body lies.

Let us meditate on the following scriptures:

Deuteronomy 32:22
"For a fire breaks out in my anger—burning to the deepest part of Sheol, consuming the earth and its produce and igniting the foundations of the mountains."

Psalms 86:13
"For great is your gracious love to me; you've delivered me from the depths of Sheol."

Amos 9:2
"And if they dig through into Sheol, from there My hand will take them. And if they go up to the heavens, from there I will bring them down."

An interesting point: *"Hades"* has *"gates"*.
In Matthew 16:18 the Lord Jesus said that ***"the gates of Hades"*** will not prevail over His church! And, in Isaiah 38:10 it says, ***"I said in the cessation of my days, I shall go to the gates of Sheol; I am called to account for the rest of my years."***

Explanation of verse 8[b]

"And authority was given to them over the fourth of the earth to kill with sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth."

From the above words, we learn that ***"Death"*** and ***"Hades"*** received authority from God to kill the one fourth of the symbolic ***"earth"*** with ***"sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth."*** It is obvious that God is against the unregenerate symbolic ***"earth"*** because of their sinful practices (please read the last paragraph of the explanation of verse 6[a] above), and He brings ***"four of His evil judgments"*** upon them.

Why did I call the *"sword"*, the *"famine"*, the *"wild beast"* and the *"death"* (through sickness) God's "evil judgments"?
Because this is how God Himself called these evils! In Ezekiel 14:21, we read:

"For so says the Lord Jehovah, How much more when the four of My evil judgments: sword, and famine, and evil beast, and plague I send on Jerusalem, to cut off from it man and beast!"

An interesting point
Although in the above verse we meet the expression ***"evil beast"***, in Revelation 6:8[b] above, we meet the expression ***"wild beasts of the earth."***

Is it possible that these *"wild beasts"* are symbolic?
Yes, it is possible! Let us consider the following:

What does the symbolic term *"wild beast"* represent in biblical prophecy?
In Daniel 7:1-7, we read:

"In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns." (KJV)

In Daniel 7:17,18, Daniel was told that ***"These four great beasts are four kingdoms …."***

Therefore, the symbolic term ***"beast"*** refers to an earthly kingdom --- to an earthly **authority**, whether it is political or **religious**.

The reason I say that the symbolic term ***"beast"*** also represents **a religious authority**, is the fact that in Revelation 13:11-14 we read about a ***"beast"*** (a religious authority) which comes out of the symbolic ***"earth"*** (out of the Judeo-Christian community; please read explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]). That religious ***"beast"*** has ***"two horns"*** which look like the horns of a lamb. The ***"two horns"*** refer to two leaders (Revelation 17:12) who will proclaim that they are believers in "christ" and who, will mislead **the unregenerate masses** of the symbolic ***"earth"*** because it will be **impossible** for them to deceive the ***"elect"*** of Matthew 24:24. The reason it will be impossible for them to deceive the elect is because they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (John 14:17) who guides them into all truth (John 16:13). Let us read about that **religious** ***"beast"*** from Revelation 13:11-14. There it says:

"[11]***And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. And it had two horns like a lamb, but spoke like a dragon.*** [12]***And it executes all the authority of the first beast before it. And it causes that the earth and those dwelling in it should worship the first beast, of which was healed its deadly wound.*** [13]***And it does great signs, that it even causes fire to come down out of the heaven onto the earth before men.*** [14]***And it deceives those dwelling on the earth, because of the signs which were given to it to do before the beast, saying to those dwelling on the earth to make***

an image to the beast who has the wound of the sword, and lived."

Thus, the words of verse 8^b, which proclaim that the people of the ***"earth"*** will also be killed ***"by the wild beasts of the earth"***, reveal that many of those who dwell the symbolic ***"earth"*** (the Judeo-Christian community), would be killed by the religious authorities or **religious institutions** of the symbolic ***"earth"*****!!!**

Has this event taken place over the last 2000 years?
Oh yes! Many times! All the Reader has to remember is the Crusades, the Inquisition, the persecution of the Jews in Europe, the murders, the atrocities, the exiles, the confiscation of private properties and the burnings at the stake of those who dared to disagree with the views of the unregenerate John Calvin (Matthew 7:16-18), the wars between the Catholics and the Greek Orthodox for the supremacy over the Christian churches, the bloodshed that took place in Byzantium between the Iconoclasts (those who rejected images and objected to icon worship) and the defenders of icon worship (who were known as iconodules) and the killing of many thousands of Protestants by the Catholics in the night of Saint Bartholomew in France. And today, we are witnessing the mental abuse and the loss of love between family members and friends through the disfellowshipping, disassociation and excommunication of all those who disagree with the unscriptural views of the "heads" of the different so-called "Christian" cults. These are a few instances only; you can add to the list all other cases which may come to your mind.

Therefore, the words of verse 8^b, which proclaim that the people of the ***"earth"*** will also be killed ***"by the wild beasts***

of the earth", are being fulfilled; and it will continue to be fulfilled until the Lord Jesus returns to destroy **the *"wild beast"*** of the end times, which will persecute and even kill His saints --- those whose sins have been forgiven because they believed in Him (Revelation 11:7,8; 13:7,15; Daniel 7:21; John 8:24).

Verse 9: ***"And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God, and for the witness which they had."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

What a sight! John saw under the altar the souls of those who had placed their lives on the altar as a sacrifice for their faith in the God Jesus Christ, for the word of God and for the witness they had!

Is it common for truly born-again Christians to suffer persecution and loss of life for the word of God and for the word of their testimony?

Yes, it is! Jesus said to those who followed Him,

"Remember the Word which I said to you, A slave is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted Me, they also will persecute you…." (John 15:20)

And the apostle Paul said,

"And, indeed, all desiring to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." (2 Timothy 3:12)

Here are three cases which refer to such persecution and hardship:

1. The apostle John was on the island of Patmos as a prisoner because of the word of God and because of the testimony of Jesus. Let us read his words: ***"I, even your brother John, and co-sharer in the affliction, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, came to be in the island being called Patmos because of the Word of God, and because of the witness of Jesus Christ."*** (Revelation 1:9)

2. Paul said to Timothy: ***"Then do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, His prisoner. But suffer hardship with the gospel, according to the power of God,"*** (2 Timothy 1:8)

3. In Revelation 12:17, we read that Satan makes war with those who have the testimony of Jesus. There it says: ***"And the dragon was enraged over the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, those keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ."***

What is the testimony of Jesus, or, more accurately, the testimony about Jesus?

The testimony about Jesus is to believe in your heart and to confess with your mouth that Jesus is the ***"Lord"*** (God), the **YHWH** of Romans 10:9,13, whose name (Jesus) one must call upon in order to be saved, that He died for our sins according to the scriptures, that He was buried, and that God raised Him from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures. This is the biblical gospel of salvation! (1 Corinthians 15:3,4) As John said, this ***"testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"*** (Revelation 19:10).

Why does Satan make war with those who have the testimony of Jesus?
Because Satan does not wish anyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth because he knows that those who ***"see"*** (recognize) the Son and believe in Him will receive everlasting life (John 6:40). For this reason, on one hand, he blinds the thoughts of the unbelieving so that ***"the brightness of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, will not dawn on them"*** (2 Corinthians 4:4), and, on the other hand, he tries to stop those who know Jesus from giving their testimony about who Jesus is to others by making war with them.

Will they who lose their lives for their testimony about Jesus be blessed by God?
Yes, greatly! Let us read Revelation 20:4:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them, and the souls of the ones having been beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the Word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast nor its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

Yes, and amen! Thank you, Lord Jesus!

Verse 10: ***"[a]And they cried with a great voice, saying, 'Until when, holy and true Despot, [b]do You not judge and take vengeance for our blood, from those dwelling on the earth?'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10[a]

"And they cried with a great voice, saying, 'Until when, holy and true Despot,"

In the above verse, we meet (from the Greek text) the word ***"Despot"***. A **"despot"** is a person who rules with absolute, uncontrollable power and whose subjects, all of them, are his slaves.

Does the New Testament call Jesus *"Despot"*?
Yes, it does! Let us review the following verses:

2 Peter 2:1
"But false prophets were also among the people, as also false teachers will be among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, and denying the Master (Greek text: **"Despot"**) ***who has bought them*** (compare with Revelation 5:9)***, bringing swift destruction on themselves."***

Jude 1:4
"For there are certain men crept in privily, even they who were of old written of beforehand unto this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying our only Master (Greek text: **"Despot"**) ***and Lord, Jesus Christ."*** (ASV)

Explanation of verse 10[b]

"do You not judge and take vengeance for our blood, from those dwelling on the earth?'"

In God's time, He will judge and He will avenge the blood of His servants from those who dwell on the symbolic ***"earth"***, especially out of the hand of His old enemy Baby-

lon, the great harlot, who killed His prophets and His saints! Let us pay attention to the following scriptures:

Revelation 17:6
"And I saw the woman (Babylon the great) ***drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder."***

Revelation 18:24
"And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth."

Revelation 19:2
"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He judged the great harlot who defiled the earth with her fornication. And He avenged the blood of His slaves out of her hand."

Verse 11: ***"And a white robe was given to each one of them and it was said to them to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and of their brothers, those who are going to be killed like them, will be complete."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11
In Revelation 7:9,13,14, we read the following:

"[9]After these things I saw, and behold, a great crowd which no one was able to number them, out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues, standing in front of the throne, and before the Lamb, having been clothed with white robes, and in their hands palm branches ... [13]And one of the elders answered, saying to me,

These, the ones having been clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where did they come? [14]***And I said to him, Sir, you know. And he said to me, These are those coming out of the great tribulation; and they washed their robes and whitened them in the blood of the Lamb."***

From the above words, we realize that the reason the souls which were under the altar were given ***"a white robe"*** was to show that they had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; in other words, that **their sins had been washed away**.

Why were they told to rest a little longer? Why did they not receive the promises right away?
Because God has appointed a time in which all the sleeping saints and all the living saints together, **at the same time** and as one group, will meet the Lord in the air so they will always be with the Lord. Let us read 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. There, Paul says:

"[16]***Because the Lord Himself shall come down from Heaven with a commanding shout of an archangel's voice, and with God's trumpet. And the dead in Christ will rise again first.*** [17]***Then we who remain alive will be caught up together with them in the clouds to a meeting with the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord."***

Please note that in verse 17 above, in front of the words ***"together with them",*** the Greek text contains the word "ἅμα" (ama) which means ***"at the same time".*** Thus, Paul said, ***"at the same time together with them …."*** This truth refutes the false doctrine which proclaims that the saints

meet the Lord in the air **at different dates**. (Also, please read 1 Corinthians 15:23 and Hebrews 11:36-40).

From all the above, we conclude that none of the believers will inherit the promises earlier than the rest. The faith and the works of all those who have died in the Lord since the beginning of the Christian era will not be forgotten. As it is written about them, ***"… Blessed are the dead, the ones dying in the Lord from now. Yes, says the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors, and their works follow with them."*** (Revelation 14:13)

Verse 12: ***"[a]And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and look, a great earthquake took place. [b]And the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair; and the whole moon became like blood"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12[a]

"And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and look, a great earthquake took place."

What kind of an *"earthquake"* or "shaking" is the above verse speaking about? Are there more scriptures that speak about this event?

Yes, there are! Let us read Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24,25 and Luke 21:25,26:

Matthew 24:29

"And immediately after the affliction of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Mark 13:24,25
"[24]***But in those days, after that affliction, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light;*** [25]***and the stars of the heaven will be falling, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken."***

Luke 21:25,26
"[25]***And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars. And on the earth will be anxiety of nations with bewilderment, roaring of sea and of surf,*** [26]***men fainting from fear, and expectation of the things coming on the earth. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken."***

All the above scriptures present the words of the Lord Jesus Christ who prophesied that ***"the powers of the heavens will be shaken."***

What do the words, *"a great earthquake took place"* refer to?
The words, ***"a great earthquake took place"*** and ***"the powers of the heavens will be shaken"*** refer to the same event! They refer to a **"shaking"** which took place in heaven due to a war! Let's pay attention to Revelation 12:4,7-9 to learn more about this war:

"[4]***and his tail*** (the dragon) ***drew the third part of the stars of the heaven, and he throws them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman being about to bear, so that when she bears he might devour her child ...*** [7]***And war occurred in Heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels made war,*** [8]***but they did not have strength, nor yet was place found for them in Heaven.*** [9]***And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent being called devil, and, Sa-***

tan; he deceiving the whole habitable world was cast out onto the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

What does the darkening of the *"sun"* and the fact that the *"moon"* became blood symbolize? Are there other scriptures which refer to these events?
Yes, there are! First, let us read Joel 2:31 and then, let us have a closer look at Matthew 24:29, Mark 13:24,25 and Luke 21:25,26:

Joel 2:31
"The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of Jehovah."

Matthew 24:29
"And immediately after the affliction of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Mark 13:24,25
"[24]But in those days, after that affliction, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light; [25]and the stars of the heaven will be falling, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken."

Luke 21:25,26
"[25]And there will be signs in the sun and moon and stars. And on the earth will be anxiety of nations with bewilderment, roaring of sea and of surf, [26]men fainting from fear, and expectation of the things coming on the earth. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Before I explain about the ***"sun"*** and the ***"moon"***, I would like to bring to your attention that the above verses speak about one more event: Along with the shaking of the powers in heaven, **the *"stars"* would fall!**

What does the falling of the *"stars"* refer to?
Common sense tells us that if the literal stars (plural) like our sun fall on the earth, it will mean the total annihilation of our planet. However, thank God, this is not the case! As we have learned from chapter one, the word ***"stars"*** is a symbolic term and **it refers to angels**. Let us read Revelation 12:4,7-9 again to verify this truth:

"[4]and his tail drew the third part of the stars of the heaven, and he throws them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman being about to bear, so that when she bears he might devour her child ... [7]And war occurred in Heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels made war, [8]but they did not have strength, nor yet was place found for them in Heaven. [9]And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent being called devil, and, Satan; he deceiving the whole habitable world was cast out onto the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

The above verses helped us understand who the ***"stars"*** that fell to the earth are. (For more information on the symbolic term ***"stars"***, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under **Description #7**)

Before we proceed to explain about the ***"sun"*** and the ***"moon"***, it is necessary to know the approximate timing of the war which took place in heaven and of the falling of the ***"stars"*** to the earth.

As you noticed from reading Matthew 24:29 and Mark 13: 24,25, Jesus prophesied that the darkening of the ***"sun"*** and of the ***"moon"***, the falling of the ***"stars"*** and the shaking of the powers in heaven will take place ***"after the affliction of those days".***

Which *"affliction"* did Jesus refer to?
When we read Mark 13:1-4 and Matthew 24:1-2, we realize that Jesus was referring to the destruction of Jerusalem and of its temple which, as He prophesied, would take place **before their generation was over** (Matthew 24:34); and indeed, this prophesied destruction took place in the year 70 AD. Therefore, it must have been sometime **after those *"days of vengeance"*** of Luke 21:22 that the ***"sun"*** and the ***"moon"*** were darkened.

Now that we have this knowledge, let us continue with our explanation of Revelation 6:12 regarding the ***"sun"*** and the ***"moon"***:

Explanation of verse 12[b]
"And the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair; and the whole moon became like blood"

What do the *"sun"* and the *"moon"* symbolize?
In Genesis 1:15, referring to the sun and to the moon, God said, ***"And let them be for luminaries in the expanse of the heavens, to give light on the earth. And it was so."***

In Isaiah 60:19 and 20, we read:

"[19]***The sun shall not still be your light by day, or the brightness of the moon give you light; but Jehovah shall be for everlasting light to you, and your God for your***

beauty. [20]***Your sun shall not go in any more, and your moon shall not be removed; for Jehovah will become your everlasting light; and the days of your mourning shall end."***

In Revelation 21:23, it says,

"And the city had no need of the sun, nor of the moon, that they might shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it, even its lamp is the Lamb."

From the above scriptures, we realize that there is a spiritual or a symbolic connection between the sun and the moon and the Lord God! **As the sun and the moon were made by God *"to give light on the earth"*, so does God enlighten His people spiritually!**

(For more information on the symbolism of the ***"Sun"***, read explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, **Description #9**, under the subtitle **"What does the '*Sun*' represent?"**)

What does the expression *"the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair"* mean?
To explain the above symbolism, we must understand what kind of material this ***"sackcloth made of hair"*** is:

"Sackcloth made of hair" is a course, woven fabric, very similar to burlap or gunny cloth, the material used to make potato sacks. Although this material is made from jute fibers and other vegetable fibers, in some countries they use the hairs of goats and from the Bible we learn that it is also made from hairs of a camel, like the clothing of John the Baptist. In Matthew 3:4 we read:

"And John himself had his clothing from hairs of a camel, and a belt of leather about his loin. And his food was locusts and wild honey."

If the sun were to be covered with this dense material, what would happen to its light?
The light of the sun would be blocked tremendously! However, some thin rays of light would still come through the little holes in the sackcloth! What a great hope! Although the time would come when the spiritual enlightenment and direction from God would be dimmed down to black, there would still be a few rays of enlightenment throughout the centuries of the Christian era which God would send to His beloved children (John 16:13-15)! Thank You, Lord Jesus! Thank You, Father! Thank You, Holy Spirit!

What does the expression *"and the (whole) moon became like blood"* signify? (Some manuscripts do not contain the word ***"whole"***)

The moon becomes red when there is pollution in the atmosphere! Since the symbolic ***"stars"***, the angels who serve **the ruler of the authority of the air**, fell on the earth, there is a tremendous amount of spiritual pollution in the air which misleads the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2) through ***"another gospel"***. In Galatians 1:6-9, the apostle Paul warned us about those who would pollute or ***"pervert"*** the gospel of grace. Let us read his words:

"[6]I wonder that you are so quickly turning back from the One having called you by the grace of Christ to another gospel, [7]which is not another; only there are some troubling you, even determined to pervert the gospel of Christ.

[8]***But even if we, or an angel out of Heaven, should preach a gospel to you beside the gospel we preached to you, let him be accursed.*** [9]***As we have said before, and now I say again, If anyone preaches a gospel beside what you received, let him be accursed."***

The fallen ***"stars"*** have influenced religious leaders to pervert the gospel of grace in many ways. Here, I will mention just four perversions of the gospel of our salvation:

The most recent perversion of the gospel proclaims that one does not have to believe that Jesus is God to be saved. This so-called 'gospel' attacks the very foundation of the true biblical gospel as it is stated in John 3:16 and Romans 10:9,13-14 and ignores John 8:24 and 6:40.

Another perversion of the gospel is the one which proclaims health and prosperity and points to the promises of blessings of Deuteronomy chapter 28 which were based on whether one kept the Mosaic Law and teaches those who accept it 'mind over matter' principles. This so-called 'gospel' appeals to those who are young, healthy and prosperous and looks down upon those who are sick and poor by belittling their 'week' faith. This perversion of the gospel ignores 1 Timothy 6:1-8; Matthew 8:20; 2 Corinthians 11: 23-30; 12:5,7-10; 1 Timothy 5:23; Acts 9:36,37; Romans 15:26; 2 Timothy 4:20 and Philippians 2:25-30.

Another perversion of the gospel is the one that says that **"God will bless you more"** if you keep parts of the Law of the First Covenant such as keeping the Sabbath. In addition, they present the keeping of the Sabbath as a prerequisite for receiving salvation!

Another perversion of the gospel is the one which instills fear in the believers by saying that God will curse them if they do not tithe and they use Malachi 3:8-10 which had been written for those who were under the Law of Moses. These people forget that the gospel of grace does not come with any curses attached for those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible.

Today there are many different perverted versions of the true biblical gospel! Too many to be listed and to be explained here! The symbolic ***"stars"*** that fell on the planet earth not only have "polluted" the atmosphere so that those who dwell on the symbolic ***"earth"*** will not be able to see the clear light of the ***"moon"***, they have also influenced religious leaders to preach such things to us **in order to place us under a curse!** The apostle Paul made it clear that if one keeps only **part** of the Mosaic Law, **he/she is cursed --- not blessed!** In Galatians 3:10 he wrote,

"For as many as are out of works of Law, these are under a curse. For it has been written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things having been written in the book of the Law, to do them.""

Those who are led (by the religious institutions of their choice) to keep part of the laws of the Old Testament religion, are in religious captivity and they do not enjoy the freedom which Jesus brought to the captives (Luke 4:18, 19)! **Such persons commit spiritual *"fornication"* with the *"great harlot"*, that wicked religious entity which is known as *"Babylon the great"*** (Revelation 17:1,2,5)**,** the one who was responsible for the shed blood of the prophets and of the saints and of all those who have been slain on

the earth (Revelation 18:24; Matthew 23:29-37)! God's command to such persons is:

"Come out of her, my people, so that you may have no part in her sins and in her punishments." (Revelation 18: 4; BBE)

How can they *"come out of her"*?
When the believers in Christ keep **even one** of the commandments of the Old Testament religion, they are **"in her"! They are 'playing' with her!** When they come to the full understanding of the gospel of grace and freedom and reverse the above practice, they **"come out of her"** and they praise Jesus for the work He accomplished on the cross (Colossians 2:14)! It is as simple as that! If you are in her, will you obey His command?

Verse 13: ***"and the stars of heaven fell to the earth as a fig tree drops its unripe figs when it is shaken by a great wind,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13
Verse 13 speaks of the falling of the symbolic ***"stars"***, in other words, of the angels who followed Satan, as I explained in verse 12, and it likens this event to a fig tree which drops its unripe figs when a mighty wind shakes it. These words help us understand that the Holy Spirit played an active role in this event. The reason I say this is because in Acts 2:2, the ***"mighty wind"*** is associated with the presence of the Holy Spirit. There it says,

"Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting." (CEV; also, please read Isaiah 34:4)

Verse 14: ***"[a]and the heaven was separated like a book which is rolled up, [b]and every mountain and island was moved from their places."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14[a]

"[a]and the heaven was separated like a book which is rolled up,"

The above verse speaks of a ***"separation"*****!**

How can *"heaven"* be separated from *"heaven"*? What does the term *"heaven"* symbolize?
In Isaiah 1:2, we read in part:

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken".

In the above verse, who are the ***"heavens"*** that must hear the word of the Lord? Is it the actual galaxies? And who is the ***"earth"*** that must do the same? Is it the actual planet earth?

In Isaiah 49:13 it says,

"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; …"

Again, who are the ***"heavens"*** that must sing? Is it the actual galaxies? And who is the ***"earth"*** that must be joyful? Is it the actual planet earth?

The obvious answer is **"No!"** It is not the actual galaxies or the actual planet earth that must hear the word of the Lord and must sing and be joyful. These words are directed to persons: **To the angels of God in heaven and to those**

who claim to know Him and believe in Him on the planet earth.

Who makes up *"the heaven"* which was *"separated"*?
From Revelation 12:7-12 we learn that those who were removed or ***"cast out"*** were Satan and his angels. Let us read these verses again:

"[7]And war occurred in Heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels made war, [8]but they did not have strength, nor yet was place found for them in Heaven. [9]And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent being called devil, and, Satan; he deceiving the whole habitable world was cast out onto the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. [10]And I heard a great voice saying in Heaven, Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers is thrown down, the one accusing them before our God day and night. [11]And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the Word of their testimony. And they did not love their soul even until death. [12]Because of this, be glad, the heavens and those tabernacling in them. Woe to the ones dwelling on the earth, and in the sea, because the devil came down to you having great anger, knowing that he has a little time!"

It was this ***"heaven"*** which, according to Revelation 20:11, ***"fled away"*** from the face of God. Let us read this verse:

"And I saw a Great White Throne, and the One sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and a place was not found for them."

Without the presence of the **unrighteous** ***"heaven"*** in heaven and without the presence of the **unrighteous** ***"sea"*** of mankind on the planet earth**,** there is going to be ***"a new heaven"*** and ***"a new earth"*** in which ***"righteousness dwells"***. This is what the apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 3:10-13. Let us read his words:

"[10]But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with rushing sound, and having burned the elements will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be burned up. [11]Then all these being about to be dissolved, of what sort ought you to be in holy behavior and godliness, [12]looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God, through which the heavens having been set afire will be dissolved; and burning, the elements will melt? [13]But according to His promise, we look for "new heavens and a new earth," in which righteousness dwells."

Decoding the symbols ***"heaven"*****,** ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"*****,** helps us understand Revelation 21:1 where it says,

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and the sea is no more."

To sum up

From all the above verses, we conclude that the ***"heaven"*** which ***"was separated like a book which is rolled up"*** (a scroll), was those who comprised **the unrighteous heaven**, in other words, **Satan and his angels!** They were separated from the **righteous** heaven, in other words, from God and His angels, when they were **"cast out onto the earth"**.

This is the reason John heard the great voice in heaven saying:

"… Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers is thrown down, the one accusing them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:10)

Halleluiah!

Explanation of verse 14[b]

"and every mountain and island was moved from their places."

What do the terms *"mountain"* and *"island"* symbolize?
Let us consider the following:

"Mountain"
The symbolic term ***"mountain"*** pictures a kingdom or a government, **whether it is political or religious.** Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream. In that dream, he saw a ***"stone"*** which struck an image and broke it into pieces (Daniel 2:34). Then, that ***"stone"*** became ***"a great mountain"*** and it filled the whole earth (Daniel 2:35). Let us read the words of Daniel as he explained the dream to the king:

«[31] You, O king, were seeing. And, behold, a certain great image! That great image stood before you with a brilliant brightness, and its form was dreadful. [34] You continued until a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. [35] Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the

gold were together broken to pieces, and they became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors. And the wind carried them away so that no place was found for them. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.» (Daniel 2:31,34,35)

And in verse 44, Daniel explained that this ***"great mountain"*** symbolized **God's kingdom**. He said,

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Daniel 2:44)

The symbolic term ***"mountain"*** was also used by the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah 2:2, he wrote:

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;" (ASV)

Using the above symbolic language, the prophet Isaiah simply said that in the last days, **the kingdom** of Jehovah will be exalted above all other kingdoms, whether these kingdoms are big like **mountains** or smaller like **hills**.

"Island"

As the symbolic term ***"earth"*** symbolizes **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible, the Judeo-Christian community"** (please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]) and as the ***"islands"*** are not part of the symbolic ***"sea"***, it is logical to conclude that the term

"islands" refers **to pockets of believers wherever they may be found around the globe.** For instance, Jewish synagogues were found not only in Israel, but also in Pagan nations (Acts 6:9; 13:14; 17:1).

Based on the above understanding, we realize that whatever applies to the symbolic term ***"earth"*** must also apply to the symbolic term ***"islands"***. For example, in the case of ancient Israel, the words of Psalms 97:1 could apply to both the whole nation of Israel (the symbolic ***"earth"*** of that time), and to all the Jewish synagogues (pockets of believers or the symbolic ***"islands"***) wherever they may have been located in the world**.** There, we read:

"Jehovah reigns! Let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of islands be glad."

As Jehovah was the God of Israel only, it would only be fair to say that the unbelieving in Him Pagan nations (the ***"sea"***) would not ***"rejoice"*** neither would they be ***"glad"*** if one had told them that ***"Jehovah reigns"*****!**

Now that we have a better understanding of the symbolic terms ***"mountains"*** and ***"islands"***, we can appreciate how badly the symbolic ***"earth"*** with its ***"mountains"*** and ***"islands"*** must have been ***"shaken"*** when their enemies, Satan and his angels, were cast down to the planet earth because **there was no place found for them in heaven** (Revelation 12:8).

Verses 15-17: **"**[15]***And the kings of the earth and the great ones, and the rich men, and the commanders, and the mighty ones, and every slave, and every freeman hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains***

[16]***and they are saying to the mountains and to the rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of the One who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb*** [17]***because the great day of His wrath has come and who is able to stand?"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 15-17

In the above verses, we met two more symbolic terms: The ***"caves"*** and the ***"rocks of the mountains"***. As the term ***"mountains"*** is symbolic, so are the terms ***"caves of the mountains"*** and ***"the rocks of the mountains"***.

What do the *"caves"* symbolize?

From the Bible, we learn that from ancient times, caves were used as **hiding places**. Moved **by fear**, people ran to caves to avoid being annihilated or devoured (Judges 6:2; 1 Samuel 13:6).

When the prophet Isaiah prophesied about the ***"day of Jehovah"***, he explained that people **will hide in caves because of the fear of the Lord**. He wrote:

"And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." (Isaiah 2:19; KJV).

What are the *"caves of the earth"* where those who do not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ run to in hopes to escape *"the great day of His wrath"*?

We have already established (in the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]) that the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to **the Judeo-Christian community**, and that the symbolic term

"mountains" pictures political or **religious kingdoms** (please read the explanation of verse 14[b] above). Therefore, as the Judeo-Christian religions exercise authority or control over their subjects, they too have become ***"mountains"***. For this reason, ***"the caves of the earth"*** (Isaiah 2:19; HOT) or ***"the caves of the mountains"*** (Revelation 6:15,16), refer to the **'hiding places'** where, those who dwell the symbolic ***"earth"***, regardless of their social status, run to **in order to be protected from the wrath of God and of the Lamb:** These places are the synagogues and the churches of the Judeo-Christian community!

Instead of looking up to God, instead of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and having a personal relationship with Him, the masses of the symbolic ***"earth"*** look up to their manmade religious organizations **for salvation!** Truly, they have been brought to the point of believing that if they remain outside these ***"caves"***, God will consider them to be wicked, and that He will destroy them. **What a sad spiritual condition and religious slavery!**

What do the *"rocks of the mountains"* symbolize?
Some might say that there is nothing symbolic about the ***"rocks"*** mentioned here. They might think that the people will ask the actual rocks to fall on them and crush them, because they would prefer to be killed by the rocks rather than by God. But John did not write anything to this effect. He clearly stated the reason these people ask the ***"rocks"*** to fall on them: **It was for the purpose of hiding them from God and from the wrath of Jesus --- not to kill them!** Therefore, what do the ***"rocks of the mountains"*** symbolize? Why would people seek refuge or cover under them?

The term ***"rock"*** is a symbol of the True God of the Bible or even of false gods whether these so-called gods are spirit-beings, objects, or **humans in exalted positions** such as emperors of the past. Let us read a few scriptures that refer to God and Christ as the ***"rock"***. In 1 Corinthians 10:4, we read that Christ is the Rock:

"… for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." (KJV)

The Psalmist says about God,

"Jehovah is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; He is my God, my Rock; I seek refuge in Him;" (Psalms 18:2 LITV; also, read Deuteronomy 32:4; 1 Samuel 2:2; 2 Samuel 22:32; Psalms 18:31).

About the false gods, Deuteronomy 32:37 asks,

"… Where are their gods, the rock in which they sought refuge?"

As men of authority are like ***"gods"*** to others, as Moses was a ***"god"*** to Pharaoh (Exodus 7:1), the terminology ***"rocks of the mountains"*** refers to **religious leaders** of the different religious institutions of the ***"earth"***, upon whom people look for **protection and cover from the wrath of God**.

Now that we have realized what the ***"earth"***, the ***"mountains"***, the ***"caves"*** and the ***"rocks of the mountains"*** symbolize, we can see clearer the pitiful condition into which the people of the ***"earth"*** have fallen! And we see the truthfulness of it all around us! We see how those who do not

develop a personal relationship with God and Christ hope that their religious institutions, which exercise kingly authority over them (the ***"mountains"***), their churches (the ***"caves of the mountains"***), and their religious leaders, even their priests or pastors who pose as their covering (the ***"rocks"*** of their religious mountains), **will protect them from the wrath of the true God**! **What a false hope!!**

Men of God, the time has arrived for all of us **to begin developing a personal relationship with Jesus our Creator** (John 1:3,10; Hebrews 1:8,10). **He is our covering** (Psalms 91:1-4**;** compare with Hosea 10:8 and Luke 23:28-30). **Pray to Him** (1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 10:13,14; Acts 7:59). **You cannot have a relationship with anyone you refuse to talk to**! **It is time for us to trust Him as the Rock of our Salvation!** The name of a symbolic ***"mountain"*** or of a symbolic ***"cave"*** or of a human ***"rock"*** does not have the power to save us because,

"... there is salvation in no other One, for neither is there any other name under Heaven having been given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

And this name is **"Jesus"**, which means: **"YHWH the Savior"**.

Please remember that Jesus is the One who shed His blood on the cross for us. **No religious organization and none of the religious leaders ever died on the cross on our behalf in order to save us from our sins and to give us eternal life!** We do not belong to any of the religious institutions but to Jesus alone because He has **bought us** with His blood (Revelation 5:9). We thank You Lord Jesus!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, rejoice! **We, who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ** (who, according to Isaiah chapter 53; 59:16-20; 60:16 and Matthew 1:21 is the Redeemer of Israel who became flesh in order to die for the sins of His people), **have not received a spirit of fear but a spirit of adoption by which we cry, Abba! Father!** (Romans 8:15) We are not ***"sons of disobedience"*****!** For this reason, we don't have to run to a manmade religious institution or to mortal men to protect us from the wrath of the Lamb! We love Him because He first loved us (1 John 4: 19). When ***"the great day of His wrath" "comes on the sons of disobedience"*** (Ephesians 5:6) we will meet Him in the air so we can always be with ***"our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ"*** (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Titus 2:13)! Praise His Name!

Chapter Seven

Verse 1-3: ***"[1]After these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, so that no wind will blow on the earth, neither on the sea, nor on any tree. [2]And I saw another angel coming up from the rising of the sun, having a seal of the living God. And he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom (authority) was given to harm the earth and the sea, [3]saying, Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 1-3

The above verses inform us that a very important action must take place **before** God's judgments fall upon the wicked and Godless mankind: **The *"sealing"* of the servants of our God on their foreheads** (verse 3) **so that the *"winds"* will not harm them!** Let us have a closer look at the above verses:

What do *"the four corners of the earth"* refer to?

They refer to all four geographic directions of the planet earth (topical), that is, East, West, North and South. This expression means that **the action of the four angels will affect all the people on the planet!** (The ***"four corners"*** are also mentioned in Revelation 20:8 and Ezekiel 7:2.)

What do *"the four winds"* refer to?

They refer to four sets of spiritual forces, in other words, to

the angelic armies or hosts which will bring God's judgments upon those **who are not *"sealed"***!

How can we tell that these are not the natural, the literal winds of the earth?
Because the literal winds of the earth **do not have the intelligence** to decipher between those who are not sealed and those who are **in order not to harm them!** Only intelligent beings have this capability!

What kinds of angelic beings are *"the four angels"* who hold *"the four winds"*?
They are **four archangels** (leaders of angels) who ***"hold"*** in their hands, in other words, who **have authority over** the spiritual forces which will carry out God's judgments. The fact that the expression ***"hold"*** refers to **"power"** or **"authority"**, is supported by Revelation 1:16 and Hebrews 1:3. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 1:16
"and having in His right hand seven stars; and a sharp, two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth, and His face shining as the sun in its power."

Hebrews 1:3
"who being the shining splendor of His glory, and the express image of His essence, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, having made purification of our sins through Himself, He sat down on the right of the Majesty on high,"

Another place where we read about ***"four angels"*** who have been ***"bound"*** or **appointed** to carry out God's judgments, is Revelation 9:14 and 15. There, it says,

"[14]***saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Release the four angels, those having been bound at the great river Euphrates.*** [15]***And the four angels were released, those having been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men."***

Does the Bible give us an example of an archangel who led his angels to carry out God's judgments?
Yes, of course! In Revelation chapter 12, we read about the archangel Michael who led his angels to make war against the dragon and his angels (Revelation 12:7)!

What does the command, "*Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads"*, really mean?
To understand the above command, we must know what the symbolic terms ***"earth"***, ***"sea"*** and ***"trees"*** mean. Let us study these terms:

The *"earth"*
In the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c], I fully explained that the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; the Judeo-Christian community"**.

The *"sea"*
What does the term *"sea"* symbolize?
The prophet Isaiah wrote:

"But the wicked are like the driven sea, which cannot be quiet, and its waves cast up mire and dirt." (Isaiah 57:20)

From the above verse, we realize that **the *"sea"* is a symbol of the "world", of the wicked and of the unbelieving**

in Jesus mankind! Revelation 21:1 says that one day this symbolic ***"sea"*** will cease to exist. Let us read this verse:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea no longer is."

Now that we know the symbolism of the ***"four winds"*** and of the ***"sea"***, we can understand Daniel 7:2. There, it says,

"Daniel spoke and said, In my vision by night I was looking. And, behold, the four winds of the heavens were stirring up the Great Sea."

Other verses which support our conclusion that the ***"sea"*** pictures **the unbelieving** (in Jesus) **world**, are:

Matthew 4:18,19
"[18]***And walking beside the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon being called Peter and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.*** [19]***And He says to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men."***

Matthew 13:47
"Again, the kingdom of Heaven is compared to a drag net thrown into the sea …"

Decoding the symbols ***"sea"*** and ***"earth"***, helps us understand the following three verses:

Revelation 10:2
"And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth".

Revelation 13:1
"And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea …."

Revelation 13:11
"And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like unto a lamb".

Although the ***"sea"*** is a symbol of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind which someday will cease to exist (Revelation 21:1), **God's mercy and long suffering is extended to them today!** God sends His preachers to preach His true gospel to them so they can hear that Jesus is the ***"LORD"***, in other words, that He is the YHWH of Romans 10:13 whose Name they must call upon to be saved (Romans 10:9,13-15). If they will accept this message, the gospel of our salvation, and if they ask Jesus to save them, He will**!**

To go one step further with our understanding on the symbolic term ***"sea"***, let us read Jude 1:12,13:

"[12]***These are sunken rocks in your love feasts, feasting together with you, feeding themselves without fear, waterless clouds being carried about by winds, fruitless autumn trees, having died twice, having been plucked up by the roots;*** [13]***wild waves of the sea foaming up their shames, wandering stars for whom blackness of darkness has been kept to the age."***

In the above verses, we meet the symbolic term, ***"waves of the sea"***.

What does a *"wave"* of the *"sea"* symbolize?
Since the ***"sea"*** is a picture of the wicked and unbelieving in Jesus mankind, it is only logical to conclude that each ***"wave of the sea"*** is a symbol of **a wicked and unbelieving** (in Jesus) **individual**. This realization helps us better understand Luke 21:25. There it says,

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;"

Now that we have come to realize what the term ***"sea"*** symbolizes, it is much easier for us to understand the words of Revelation 7:2,3. Let us read these verses again:

"And I saw another angel … having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt … the sea, Saying, Hurt not … the sea … till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads."

The *"trees"*
In Revelation 7:3, we meet another symbolic term: The ***"trees"***. The command given to the four angels was,

"*Do not harm the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, until we seal the slaves of our God on their foreheads."*

What do the *"trees"* symbolize?
In Isaiah 61:3, we read:

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they

might be called <u>trees of righteousness</u>, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."

From the above verse, we realize that the symbolic term ***"trees"*** refers to **people** (whether they are believers in Jesus or not) as do the symbolic terms ***"sheep"*** and ***"goats"*** of Matthew 25:32, the ***"wheat"*** and the ***"weeds"*** of Matthew 13:24-30, the ***"fish"*** of Matthew 13:47-49 and ***"the grass of the earth"*** and ***"every green thing"*** of Revelation 9:4 where it says,

"And it was said to them that they should not harm the grass of the earth, nor every green thing, nor every tree, except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads."

(For more information about the symbolic terms **"Grass of the earth"** and **"every green thing"**, please read the explanation of Revelation 9:4.)

The above conclusion is supported by the following verses:

Daniel 4:20-22
"The tree which you saw … It is you, O king".

Matthew 3:10
"And even now the axe is put to the root of the trees; every tree then which does not give good fruit is cut down, and put into the fire."

Jude 1:12
"These men are … wasted trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots".

Contrary to the above ***"wasted trees without fruit"***, in Jeremiah 17:7,8, we read about those who are ***"trees"*** which **yield fruit.** Let us read these words:

"[7]Blessed is the man who trusts in Jehovah, and Jehovah is his refuge. [8]For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters. It sends out its roots by the stream, and it will not fear when the heat comes; but its foliage will be green; and it is not anxious in the year of drought, nor will it cease from yielding fruit."

Knowing the meaning of the symbolic terms ***"trees"***, ***"sea"*** and ***"earth"***, helps us understand scriptures like Psalms 96: 9-12. There, we read:

"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: … Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: …." (KJV)

From all the above, we realize that the Lord God wishes to give a chance to the symbolic ***"earth"***, to the symbolic ***"sea"*** and to all the ***"trees"*** (every individual), in order for them to hear the gospel which contains the Person and the work of the Savior, and to believe in it in order to be ***"sealed"***! Praise His Name for His patience and grace!

The ***"sealing"*** on the foreheads of those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible before the execution of God's judgements upon the symbolic ***"earth"***, ***"sea"***, ***"trees"***, ***"grass of the earth"*** and ***"every green thing"*** (please read

the explanation of Revelation 9:4), reminds us of a similar ***"sealing"*** which is recorded in Ezekiel chapter 9. Let us read this chapter:

"[1]***And He cried in my ears with a loud voice, saying, Let the overseers of the city draw near, even each with his destroying weapon in his hand.*** [2]***And, behold, six men were coming from the way of the Upper Gate, which faces north. And each had his shattering weapon in his hand. And one man among them was clothed in linen, and an ink horn of a scribe at his loins. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar.*** [3]***And the glory of the God of Israel had gone on, from on the cherub where it was on it, to the threshold of the house. And He called to the man clothed in linen with the ink horn of a scribe at his loins.*** [4]***And Jehovah said to him, Pass through in the midst of the city, in the midst of Jerusalem, and mark a mark on the foreheads of the men who are groaning and are mourning over all the abominations that are done in her midst.*** [5]***And He said to those in my hearing, Pass over in the city after him and strike. Do not let your eye spare, and do not have pity.*** [6]***Slay the aged men, the young man, and the virgin, even children, and women, all to destruction. But to every man who has the mark on him, do not come near. And begin from My sanctuary. And they began with the aged men who were before the house.*** [7]***And He said to them, Defile the house and fill the courts with the dying. Go forth! And they went out and killed in the city.*** [8]***And it happened as they struck, and I remained, even I. Then I fell on my face and I cried out and said, Ah, Lord Jehovah! Will You destroy all the remnant of Israel in Your pouring out of Your fury on Jerusalem?*** [9]***And He said to me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and of Judah is very great, and the land is filled with***

blood, and the city is full of perversity. For they say, Jehovah has forsaken the land; and, Jehovah does not see. [10]***And even I, My eye does not spare, and I will not have pity. I will put their way on their head.*** [11]***And, behold, the man clothed with linen, with the ink horn at his loins, reported the matter, saying, I have done as You commanded me."***

What is the *"seal"* that those who believe in the True Christ receive?
In Ephesians 4:30, it says,

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

Therefore, **the *"seal"* of God is the Holy Spirit who indwells the born-again believers** (John 14:17). Those who do not have the ***"seal"*** of God on their foreheads (Revelation 9:4), are not born-again --- they are not saved!

What must they do to be saved and to be *"sealed"*?
Although we have dealt with this subject before, it can never be overemphasized since the salvation of men is at stake! In order to be saved and consequently ***"sealed"***, they must fulfill God's requirements for salvation as they are outlined in Romans 10:9,10,13 and 14. From these verses we realize that when they hear the gospel (which contains the Person and the work of the Savior), they must:

Believe and confess with their own mouth that Jesus is the *"Lord"*, i.e., the YHWH of Romans 10:13 to whom they must pray to be saved, and that Jesus was raised bodily from the dead (verse 9; Act 2:27)**.**

The above faith and free-will confession of this faith (not the mechanical, "Repeat after me" confession), **will bring them to the point of praying to Jesus, asking Him to save them** (verse 13). At that very moment, He will save them ***"by grace"*** (Ephesians 2:8) and, consequently, **at that very moment, they will be *"sealed"* with His Holy Spirit!** Therefore, believing that Jesus is God by nature and that He rose **bodily** from the dead **precedes salvation**; in other words, **this faith is a prerequisite to being *"sealed"* with the Holy Spirit**. The apostle Paul agrees with our conclusion because, in Ephesians 1:13, he wrote:

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (KJV)

Those who are ***"sealed"*** make up the ***"body"*** of the Lord Jesus Christ which is ***"the Church"***. This statement is supported by the words of Paul in Colossians 1:24. There, he wrote:

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:"

All those who attend the meetings of the different Christian denominations are not the Church of Jesus Christ **unless they believe in their heart that Jesus is the Son of the Living God, a title which, according to John 5:18, demands Deity**.

In Matthew 16:15-17, when the Lord Jesus asked His disciples ***"… who do you say that I am?"*** (v.15), Peter an-

swered and said, ***"You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God"*** (v.16). And Jesus said to him,

"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Verses 17,18; KJV)

Some have misunderstood the above words of the Lord Jesus and say that the ***"rock"*** on which He builds His Church was Simon, because Jesus called him ***"Peter"*** when he confessed, with solid faith, that Jesus is ***"… the Christ, the Son of the Living God"***. However, when we read the above verses carefully, we see that the main subject **was not** the fact that Jesus called him ***"Peter"*** (a Greek Name which means "rock"), but, **the God-inspired revelation which Simon received about the fact that Jesus is *"the Son of the Living God"*!** After all, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, i.e., the temple of God, is not being built upon the apostle Peter alone because Peter, by himself, is not the foundation of the temple of God. The foundation, on which the Church of the born-again and sealed believers is being built, consists of the Christian apostles (plural) and prophets (Ephesians 4:11); and its Cornerstone is Christ Himself. The words of Ephesians 2:19-22, support our conclusion. There, Paul wrote:

"[19]***So, then, you are no longer strangers and tenants, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and of the family of God,*** [20]***being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone,***

[21]***in whom all the building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*** [2]***in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."***

From the above, therefore, we see that the words of Jesus, ***"upon this rock I will build my church"***, refer to Peter's confession who declared with faith that Jesus is ***"the Son of God"*****!**

WHAT DOES THE TITLE *"SON OF GOD"* REVEAL?
In John 5:17,18, we read:

"But Jesus answered them, My Father works until now and I work. For this reason, therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because not only He was breaking the Sabbath, but also <u>He was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God</u>." (AT; also, read John 10: 27-39).

From the above, we learn that **the title "Son of God" is an explicit title for Deity!** Therefore, to believe that Jesus is the Son of God is to believe that He is equal to God, One of the True Godhead **YHWH**!

The enemies of the Lord Jesus knew that the title **"Son of God" necessitates Deity**. This is the reason they wanted to kill Him. **In fact, this was the very reason that the high priest and the council condemned Him to death for blasphemy** (Matthew 26:63-65; Mark 14:61-64; Luke 22: 70,71). His enemies understood very well that the title ***"the Son of God"*** **explicitly reveals that Jesus is God by nature, because they were bright enough to know that the essence of every son is the same as the essence of his father!**

Thus, to believe in God's ***"only-begotten Son"*** (not in the only son who was created by God) is to believe **that He is at once God by nature --- that His essence is the essence of God**. According to the gospel of salvation which our Savior preached in John 3:16, **this belief is a requirement for and a prerequisite to receiving salvation and eternal life**.

The above truth is unshakable! Those who believe that Jesus, God's **only begotten** (Greek: monogene) **Son**, is a created being and not God in essence, **are misinformed and not saved!**

Therefore, Peter's confession of faith, that Jesus is the Son of the Living God, is the solid foundation on which Jesus builds His Church! Those who do not believe in their heart that Jesus is God in essence (John 1:1), and for this reason they cannot make the same confession (Romans 10:9,13,14), are not His Church, neither are they sealed!

The sealed Church of Jesus Christ does not consist of Jewish believers only, but also from people of **all nations** who have the same confession. Acts 10:47 supports our conclusion. There, it says,

"These Gentiles have been given the Holy Spirit, just as we have! I am certain that no one would dare stop us from baptizing them."

The fact that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ consists of Jewish and Gentile believers is verified by the remaining verses of Revelation chapter 7. In verses 4-8 we read about 144,000 people who have been sealed ***"out of every tribe of the sons of Israel"*** and in verses 9-17 we read about a

"great crowd" which is saved ***"out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues"*****!** First, let us read verses 4-8:

Verses 4-8: ***"[4]And I heard the number of the sealed: 144,000 were sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel: [5]Out of the tribe of Judah, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Gad, 12,000 sealed. [6]Out of the tribe of Asher, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Manasseh, 12,000 sealed. [7]Out of the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Levi, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Issachar, 12,000 sealed. [8]Out of the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Benjamin, 12,000 sealed."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 4-8

Do the above verses say that only 144,000 people will be saved out of the fore mentioned tribes of Israel?

The answer is a resounding **"No!"** If that were the case, then, the gospel of salvation which Jesus preached in John 3:16 would not be accurate! There, we read:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (KJV)

The above statement, ***"whosoever believes in Him"***, tells us that **all, everyone** who will believe in Jesus, even if they are millions of Israelites, will be saved and sealed!

Then, why did verses 4-8 mention a specific number?
The specific number shows that this is **a special group** among all those who will be saved and consequently sealed throughout the Christian era out of the literal fore mentioned tribes of Israel! This special group is ***"firstfruit"*** to God and to Christ from among the people of Israel. The word ***"firstfruit"*** refers to **the first and best** of the fruits of the land that were offered to God (Exodus 23:11). This conclusion is supported by Revelation 14:4. Let us read this verse:

"These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may go. These were redeemed from among men as a firstfruit to God and to the Lamb."

This special group of Jewish believers will be elevated by God into the highest position in His kingdom. They will receive great authority and they, together with Jesus, will make up the core, the central part of God's kingdom!

How do we know that some believers will be elevated, by God, to higher positions of authority than others?
Let us read a few scriptures:

Matthew 11:11
"Truly I say to you, There has not arisen among those born of a woman any greater than John the Baptist. But the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is."

Luke 19:16-19
"[16]***And the first came, saying, Lord, your mina has gained ten minas.*** [17]***And he said to him, Well done, good slave! Because you were faithful in a least thing, have authority***

over ten cities. [18]***And the second came, saying, Lord, your mina has made five minas.*** [19]***And he said to this one also, And you be over five cities.***

2 Corinthians 5:10
"For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to what he did, whether good or bad."

How can we tell that the 144,000 believers will, together with Jesus, make up the core, the central authority of God's kingdom?
To give a complete answer to the above question, I must present to you one more symbolic term: The ***"mountain".***

What does a *"mountain"* symbolize?
A ***"mountain"*** pictures a **"kingdom"** or **"government"**, whether it is political or religious. This explanation is supported by the following:

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream. In that dream, he saw a stone which struck an image and broke it into pieces. Then, that stone became ***"a great mountain"*** and filled the whole earth. The prophet Daniel explained the dream to the king saying:

"You O king were seeing … until a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them into pieces … and the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:31-35).

Daniel explained that **this *"great mountain"* symbolized God's kingdom**. He said,
"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Daniel 2:44).

Another place that mentions the symbolic term ***"mountains"***, is Revelation 17:9,10. There, the angel explained to John that ***"mountains"*** refer to ***"kings"*** --- to world empires which will rule on the planet before the coming of the kingdom of God. Let us read these verses:

"This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while." (ESV)

A third place where we meet the symbolic term ***"mountain"*** is Isaiah 2:2. There, the prophet said,

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it."

According to the foregoing understanding of the symbolic term ***"mountain"***, the prophet simply said that in the last days, **the kingdom of the house of Jehovah will be exalted above all other kingdoms, whether these kingdoms are big** (like mountains) **or smaller** (like hills).

Please keep the above information in mind because, in a few moments, we will combine it with the words of three ***"witnesses"***. Those ***"witnesses"*** are three scriptures which bear testimony to the fact that,

- **The rod** of Christ's strength (His rulership)**,**
- **His law** and
- **His word**

will go forth **out of Zion**. Let us pay attention to their testimony:

Psalms 110:2
"Jehovah shall send <u>the rod of Your strength out of Zion</u> to rule in the midst of Your enemies."

Isaiah 2:3
"And many people shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mount of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. <u>For out of Zion the Law will go forth</u>, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

Micah 4:2
"And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For <u>the Law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem</u>."

Now that we know that the term ***"mountain"*** refers to a ***"kingdom"*** and as we have learned that **the rod of Christ's strength, His law and His word will go forth out of Zion**, it is easy to understand Revelation 14:1. There it says,

"And I saw, and look, the Lamb standing on mount Zion and with Him 144,000, having His Name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads."

As **we do not see all the believers *"standing on mount Zion"*** with Christ but the 144,000 only, we realize that the foregoing symbolism denotes that **Jesus and the 144,000 Jewish believers who are *"the Firstfruit to God and to the Lamb"*, will make up the core, the central authority of God's kingdom**!

Does this mean that only the 144,000 will reign with Christ?
The answer is **"No!"** In Revelation 5:9,10 we read,

"[9]And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy are You to receive the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and by Your blood purchased us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, [10]and made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign over the earth."

Thank You, Lord Jesus!

Now, let us examine Revelation 7:9-17 where we meet another group of believers in Christ who are known as ***"the great crowd"***:

Verses 9-17: ***"[9α]After these things I saw, and look, a great crowd which no one was able to number, out of every nation, and tribes and peoples and languages, [b]standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, [c]dressed in white robes, and*** (holding) ***palm branches in their hands. [10]And shouting with a loud voice, they were saying, Salvation***

(belongs) ***to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.*** [11]***And all the angels stood around the throne and*** (around) ***the elders and the four living creatures. And they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God,*** [12]***saying, Amen. The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength*** (belong) ***to our God forever and ever. Amen.*** [13]***And one of the elders responded, saying to me, These, the ones who are dressed with the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?*** [14]***And I said to him, My lord*** (Sir)***, you know. And he said to me, They are those who are coming out of the great tribulation; and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*** [15]***For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and worship Him day and night in His temple. And the One who sits on the throne will set His tent on them.*** [16]***And they will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, nor will the sun fall upon them, nor any burning heat.*** [17a]***Because the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them,*** [b]***and will lead them to springs of waters of life;*** [c]***and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9[a]

"[a]***After these things I saw, and look, a great crowd which no one was able to number, out of every nation, and tribes and peoples and languages,"***

The above verse supports our conclusion that the special group of 144,000 are a ***"firstfruit"*** to God and to Christ from among the Israelites. The fact that the ***"great crowd"*** also comes out of every ***"tribe"***, reveals that the 144,000 are not the only ones to be saved out of the ***"tribes"*** of Israel!

Explanation of verse 9[b]

"[b]standing before the throne, and before the Lamb,"

Contrary to the belief of some who proclaim that the ***"great crowd"*** will not spend eternity in heaven but on earth, the above statement makes it clear that the ***"great crowd"*** will be in heaven. This truth is supported by the fact that they stand ***"before the throne*** (of God) ***and before the Lamb"***, as do the angels, the elders and the four living creatures (verse 11)!

Explanation of verse 9[c]

"[c]dressed in white robes, and (holding) ***palm branches in their hands."***

What do the *"white robes"* symbolize?
Revelation 7:14 gives us the answer. There it says,

"They are those who are coming out of the great tribulation; and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Therefore, the fact that they are dressed in ***"white robes"*** signifies that their sins have been wiped clean because they have believed in the True Jesus of the Bible. The opposite is true for those who do not believe in Him. In John 8:24, Jesus declared:

"Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins."

Now that we know that the ***"white robes"*** reveal purity, we can understand Revelation 3:4 which says,

"You also have a few names in Sardis which did not defile their robes, and they shall walk with Me in white because they are worthy." (LITV)

Explanation of verse 10

"And shouting with a loud voice, they were saying, Salvation (belongs) ***to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."***

Who is the Savior?

In Isaiah 43:11we hear God **YHWH** saying:

"I, I am YHWH; and there is no Savior besides Me."

In chapter 45 of the same book, and verse 15, we read:

"Truly, You are a God who hides Himself, O God of Israel, the Savior."

And, in verse 21 of the same chapter, we hear God saying again,

"… there is no God other than Me; a just God and a Savior; there is none except Me."

In Hosea 13:4, the True God repeats:

"I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for there is no savior beside me."

From the above verses, we realize that **the True God of Israel is the only Savior**. However, while in the Old Testament we hear God **YHWH** saying: ***"... there is no Savior***

besides Me", in the New Testament we read the following truths:

1. The apostle Paul said to the Philippian Christians that, ***"... our citizenship is in Heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord, Jesus Christ."*** (Philippians 3:20).

2. In 2 Peter 3:18, the apostle Peter wrote, ***"But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity …."***

3. In 2 Peter 1:1 the apostle Peter talks to us about ***"the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ"*** (Greek Text), and again,

4. In Titus 2:13,14, the apostle Paul wrote that we are ***"looking for the blessed hope and appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself on our behalf ..."*** (Greek text)!

Thus, we realize that those who make up the ***"great crowd"*** believe that Jesus is God by nature and One of the True Godhead **YHWH**, and, for this reason, they shout out loud, **"*Salvation*** (belongs) ***to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."***

Explanation of verses 11-13

"[11]***And all the angels stood around the throne and*** (a-round) ***the elders and the four living creatures. And they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God,*** [12]***saying, Amen. The blessing and the glory and the wis-***

dom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength (belong) ***to our God forever and ever. Amen.*** [13]***And one of the elders responded, saying to me, These, the ones who are dressed with the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from?"***

The above verses are very simple, and they do not need an explanation. However, in verses 11 and 12 we observe that the angels, the 24 elders and the four living creatures worship God saying,

"The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanksgiving and the honor and the power and the strength (belong) ***to our God forever and ever."***

Therefore, here we must ask the following question:

Does the Lamb receive the same honor and worship?
The answer is, **"Absolutely!"** In John 5:23, Jesus said,

"so that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. The one not honoring the Son does not honor the Father who has sent Him."

The expression, ***"even as they honor the Father"***, means **'exactly the same as they honor the Father'** --- nothing less!

As I have mentioned repeatedly, the True Lamb of God is God's **only begotten** not God's only created Son and for this reason, **He is God in essence and deserves to be worshipped!** This statement is supported by Revelation 5:13 **where we see all the creatures in the entire universe**

worshipping the Son exactly the same as they worshipped the Father. Let us read this verse:

"And every creature which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever."

Since **You** are one of these creatures who are on the earth, have you joined your voice with the voices of those who worship the Lamb? If you have not worshipped Jesus until this moment, would you like to pray to Him now? In other words, would you like to call on His Name right now and ask Him to save you? (Romans 10:1,9,13,14; 1 Corinthians 1:2). Prayer is worship and your salvation depends upon it!

Explanation of verse 14

"And I said to him, My lord (Sir)***, you know. And he said to me, They are those who are coming out of the great tribulation; and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."***

In the above verse, when we pay close attention to the verb ***"coming"*** (Greek: ερχόμενοι [er-ho-me-nee]), we realize that the verb is in a continuous tense. For this reason, the ***"great crowd"*** will not come out of the ***"great tribulation"*** which the ***"beast"*** will launch against the truly born-again Christians of the last days only (Revelation 13:7; 17:6,11; 6:9; Daniel 7:21), but, will come out of the great tribulation which Satan has launched against the believers throughout the Christian era (Revelation 12:17; Acts 14: 22). After all, it is not the ***"great crowd"*** of the last days only who have ***"washed their robes and made them white in the blood of***

the Lamb", but all the truly born-again people out of all nations and tribes who make up the Church of the sealed ones!

Explanation of verse 15

"For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and worship Him day and night in His temple. And the One who sits on the throne will set His tent on them."

The above verse is so mysterious! Please allow me to explain:

From Revelation 16:17 we learn that **the throne room of God is His temple**, where God dwells in heaven. Let us read this verse:

"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a great voice came from the throne from the temple of Heaven, saying, It has happened!"

From Revelation 21:22 we observe that **the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple** of the holy Jerusalem. Let us read that verse:

"And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb".

From 2 Corinthians 6:16, we realize that **the believers in Jesus on earth are the temple of God and that He dwells in them**. Let us read this verse:

"And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are a temple of the living God, even as God

said, "I will" dwell in them and "walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."” (LITV)

From Revelation 7:15 we see that **God, who sits on the throne, will spread His tabernacle** (His temple: Exodus 40:21,22) **over them**. Let us read that verse again:

“Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His sanctuary. And He sitting on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them.”

All the above verses reveal a kind **of unity** that is hard to conceive:

1. **They are His temple** before they go to heaven.

2. **They are in His temple** when they are in heaven.

3. **God and the Lamb are the temple** of the New Jerusalem. And,

4. **God spreads His tent** (His temple) **over them**.

All the above verses remind me the words of Jesus from John 17:21-23. There, the Lord spoke of a glorious **unity**. He said to His Father:

“[21]that all may be one, as You are in Me, Father, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. [22]And I have given them the glory which You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are One: [23]I in them, and You in Me, that they may be

perfected in one; and that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them, even as You loved Me."

I thank You Lord Jesus **for the glory** You have given to all those who believe in You and love You! **That glory is the reality that You are in them as the Father is in You. Thank You for this glorious unity!** This unity with God will perfect them and make them be one as You and the Father are One! And I thank You Father for loving those who believe in Your only begotten Son **as much as You love Him!** Thank You for this honor and glory!

Truly, when I consider the foregoing thoughts, I appreciate more the words of Paul from 1 Corinthians 2:9. There, he wrote:

"according as it has been written, "Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard," nor has it risen up into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those that love Him."

Explanation of verse 16[a]
"[a]And they will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore"

Is the above *"hunger"* and *"thirst"* literal?
No, of course not! Please read the following scriptures:

Amos 8:11
"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine into the land, not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but rather a famine for hearing the Words of Jehovah."

Matthew 5:6
"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness! For they shall be filled."

John 4:13,14
"[13]Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone drinking of this water will thirst again; [14]but whoever may drink of the water which I will give him will not thirst, never! But the water which I will give to him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up into everlasting life."

John 6:35
"Jesus said to them, I am the Bread of life; the one coming to Me will not at all hunger, and the one believing into Me will not thirst, never!"

From the above scriptures, we learn that those who come to Jesus will never hunger or thirst for spiritual truths again --- **never!**

Explanation of verse 16[b]
"[b]nor will the sun fall upon them,"

To understand the above section, first we must understand whom does the ***"sun"*** represent, and second, what does to ***"fall upon them"*** mean.

Whom does the *"Sun"* represent?
Please read the entire **Description #9** in the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16. There, we learned that the ***"Sun"*** is a picture of God.

What does to *"fall upon"* mean?
Let us read the following verses:

2 Samuel 1:15
"And David called to one of the young men, and said, Draw near and fall on him. And he struck him, and he died."

Exodus 5:3
"And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword."

From the above verses, we realize that to ***"fall upon"*** someone means to ***"strike"*** that person. Therefore, the words, ***"nor will the sun fall upon them"*** mean that God will never ***"fall upon"*** the ***"great crowd"*** who stand before His throne and worship Him!

Explanation of verse 16c

"nor any burning heat".

What does the expression *"any burning heat"* refer to?
Let us meditate on the following scriptures:

2 Chronicles 28:11
"and now, hear me, and send back the captives whom ye have taken captive of your brethren, for the heat of the anger of Jehovah is upon you."

Exodus 22:24
"And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."

Ezekiel 38:19
"And in My jealousy, in the fire of My wrath, I have spoken. Surely, in that day there shall be a great quaking in the land of Israel."

Deuteronomy 6:15
"for Jehovah your God is a jealous God in your midst, lest the anger of Jehovah your God burn against you, and He destroy you from off the face of the earth."

Deuteronomy 29:24
"And all the nations shall say, Why has Jehovah done this to this land? For what is the heat of this great anger?"

From the above, we realize that the expression ***"burning heat"*** refers **to the intensity of the anger** of God.

How does Jehovah express His anger?
Let us pay attention to the following verses:

Numbers 11:33
"The flesh was yet between their teeth, it was not yet cut off, and the anger of Jehovah glowed among the people. And Jehovah struck among the people with a very great plague."

Ezekiel 38:22
"And I will judge him with a plague and with blood, and an overflowing shower, and hailstones. I will rain fire and brimstone on him, and on his bands, and on the many peoples who are with him."

Revelation 16:9
"And men were burned with great heat (***"heat"*** refers to ***"plagues"***: Pay attention to the next sentence)**.** ***And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent to give Him glory."***

From the above verses, we observe that ***"plague"***, ***"blood"***, ***"overflowing showers"***, ***"hailstones"***, etc., constitute the ***"burning heat"*** of God's anger! And no burning heat of God's anger will ever fall upon the ***"great crowd"*** of the born-again believers who stand before His throne --- **never!**

Explanation of verse 17[a]

"[a]Because the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them,"

The above sentence reminds us of the fact that Jesus, ***"the Lamb of God"*** (John 1:36), is ***"the Good Shepherd"***. In John 10:11,14, Jesus said,

"[11]I am the Good Shepherd! The Good Shepherd lays down His life on behalf of the sheep … [14]I am the Good Shepherd, and I know those that are Mine, and I am known by the ones that are Mine."

Explanation of verse 17[b]

"[b]and will lead them to springs of waters of life;"

To identify the ***"springs"*** of waters of life, first we must understand the ***"waters of life"***.

Please note: The Greek word **"υδάτων"** (ee-that-on), plural for ***"waters"***, refers to a large volume of water --- not to

many different types of water. Therefore, the following question is valid:

What does the *"water of life"* symbolize?
In John 4:10-14 we read:

"Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who is the One saying to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked Him, and He would give you living water. The woman said to Him, Sir, You have no vessel, and the well is deep. From where then do You have living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and he and his sons and his livestock drank out of it? Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone drinking of this water will thirst again; but whoever may drink of the water which I will give him will not thirst, never! But the water which I will give to him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up into everlasting life."

In John 7:38,39, Jesus said:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." (KJV)

From the above verses, we learn that the symbolic term ***"living water"*** refers to **the Holy Spirit!** This realization helps us understand Revelation 22:1. There it says,

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, bright as crystal, coming forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

What do the *"fountains"* of water of life symbolize?
In Psalms 36:7-9 we read about God the following:

"O God … with You is the fountain of life …."

Is Jesus a *"fountain of life"*?
In John 1:4, the apostle John wrote about the pre-human Jesus, the Word who became flesh, the following:

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men;"

In John 5:26 we hear the man Jesus saying:

"For even as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave also to the Son to have life in Himself."

In John 11:25 Jesus said,

"… I am … the Life. The one believing into Me, though he die, he shall live."

From the above verses, we conclude that as the Father is one of the **fountains of life**, so is His only begotten Son!

Is the Holy Spirit a *"fountain of life"*?
When we read John 4:10-14 earlier, in verse 14, we heard Jesus saying, ***"whoever may drink of the water which I will give him will not thirst, never! But the water which I will give to him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up into everlasting life."***

Again, in John 7:38,39, Jesus said, ***"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit,***

which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

From the above verses, we conclude that the Holy Spirit is also a ***"fountain of life"*****!** This fact reveals that **the True Godhead of the Bible, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit** (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14) **are the fountains of water of life!**

Therefore, the words of Revelation 7:17[b], ***"and*** (the Lamb) ***will lead them to springs of waters of life"***, reveal that Jesus is the only One who can lead us to the True God who gives everlasting life to all those who believe and follow His only begotten Son!

The above conclusion goes hand in hand with the words of the Lord Jesus, who said,

"I am the Way … no one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6)

Explanation of verse 17[c]
"[c]and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Which prophecy do the above fulfill?
In Isaiah 25:8 we read:

"He will swallow up death in victory! And the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from all faces. And He shall reprove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for Jehovah has spoken."

And, in Revelation 21:4 it says:

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. And death shall be no longer, nor mourning, nor outcry, nor will there be pain any more; for the first things passed away."

Let all the sealed ones rejoice and let them give glory to God --- their Father (John 1:12,13)!

Chapter Eight

Verse 1: ***"And when He opened the seventh seal, silence took place in Heaven for about half an hour."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

The opening of the ***"seven seals"*** began in chapter 6. There, we observed that the opening of the seals presented different judgments which God would send against the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** and gave us an insight of the sad spiritual condition in which those who proclaimed to know the True God of the Bible would fall (verses 15-17).

However, in chapter 7, we observed that two groups of believers **would not** be affected from the judgments of God. These groups were:

a) The 144,000 believers who are a ***"firstfruit"*** to God and to Christ out of the fore mentioned literal tribes of Israel (verses 4-8), and

b) the ***"great crowd"*** which comes out of every tribe of Israel and out of every nation and peoples and tongues.

In chapter 8, like in other chapters, we observe that God sends even more plagues upon the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** **in order to bring them to repentance**; but, too bad, they do not repent from their sins. This statement is

supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 9:20,21
"[20]***And the rest of men, those not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they will not worship demons, and "golden idols, and silver, and bronze, and stone, and wooden idols, which neither are able to see, nor to hear," nor to walk.*** [21]***And they did not repent of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts."***

Revelation 16:9
"And men were burned with great heat. And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent to give Him glory."

When the Lamb opened the ***"seventh seal"***, before the new woes fell upon the symbolic ***"earth"*** or upon the symbolic ***"sea"***, ***"silence took place in Heaven for about half an hour"***. I wonder if John's thoughts were: "What is going on? What are we expecting to see? What will take place that is so big and so serious that a complete silence occurred in heaven?"

Verse 2: ***"And I saw the seven angels who stood before God, and seven trumpets were given to them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2
In the above verse, we meet again the seven archangels who stand before God. For a full understanding, as to how we know that they are archangels, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:4[b].

Verse 3: ***"And another angel came and stood on the altar, holding a golden censer. And many incenses were given to him, in order to offer them with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which is before the throne."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

What is a censer?

A ***"censer"*** is a container in which they burn incense. It was used in the temple of Jehovah. Let us read the following verses:

Leviticus 16:12,13

"[12]And he shall take a censer full of coals of the fire from off the altar before Jehovah, and his hands full of fragrant perfumes beaten small, and bring it within the veil. [13]And he shall put the incense on the fire before Jehovah, and the cloud of the incense shall cover the mercy-seat on the testimony; and he shall not die."

Verse 4: ***"And the smoke of the incenses, along with the prayers of the saints, went up out of the hand of the angel before God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

The above words present a symbolism: As the smoke of incenses goes up before God, so are the prayers of the saints. In the explanation of Revelation 5:8, I wrote (in blue):

"As the sweet smell of incense goes up towards heaven, so are the prayers of the saints! The fact that the incenses are kept in ***"golden bowls"***, signifies that **the prayers of the saints are very precious before God, and none is wast-**

ed!"

Verse 5: ***"[a]And the angel took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and he cast it into the earth; [b]and sounds and thunders and lightning and an earthquake took place."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"[a]And the angel took the censer, and filled it from the fire of the altar, and he cast it into the earth;"

In Revelation 6:9,10, we saw **under the altar** the souls of those who have been slain for the word of God and for the testimony they had, crying out to God, ***"Until when, holy and true Master, do You not judge and take vengeance for our blood, from those dwelling on the earth?"*** And in verse 11 they were told to wait a little longer.

Why am I referring to this case?
Because here, we see the angel of God taking ***"fire"*** **from the altar** and casting it into the ***"earth"*****!**

What does this action signify?
In Revelation 7:16[c] we saw that the symbolic ***"fire"*** and any kind of ***"heat"*** represent the anger of God. Therefore, the above action of the angel shows that **the time has come for God to respond to the prayers of the saints and to cast His anger upon those who dwell on the symbolic *"earth"* for persecuting and killing His servants!** In chapters 8-11, we will see **the different forms of God's judgment** as it falls upon the symbolic ***"earth"***.

Explanation of verse 5[b]

"[b]and voices and thunders and lightning and an earthquake took place."

What do the above words refer to?

They refer to the **speaking of the Almighty God** (please read the explanation of Revelation 4:5[a]). It means that God agrees that it is time **to visit the symbolic *"earth"* with His burning anger**. This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Isaiah 29:6

"Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with thunder, and with earthquake, and great noise, with storm and tempest, and the flame of devouring fire."

Isaiah 2:19

"And they shall go into the caves of the rocks, and into the holes of the earth, for dread of Jehovah, and from the glory of His majesty; when He rises up to make the earth quake."

Revelation 4:5

"And out of the throne come forth lightnings and thunders and voices."

Revelation 16:17-21

"[17]And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a great voice came from the throne from the temple of Heaven, saying, It has happened! [18]And voices and thunders and lightnings occurred. And a great earthquake occurred, such as did not occur since man came into being on the earth, such a huge earthquake, so great! [19]And the great city came to be into three parts, and the

cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the anger of His wrath. [20]***And every island fled away, and mountains were not found.*** [21]***And a great hail, as the size of a talent, came down out of the heaven upon men. And men blasphemed God from the plague of the hail, because its plague is exceedingly great."***

Verse 6: ***"And the seven angels, who had the seven trumpets, prepared themselves to trumpet."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

Who are the seven angels?

Please read the explanation of verse 2 above and that of Revelation 1:4[b].

What is the purpose of the seven trumpets?

Every time one of the seven angels blows his trumpet, a great event takes place. When the seventh angel trumpets, the mystery of God is finished: **The kingdom of God has come!** This truth is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 10:7

"but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, whenever he is about to trumpet, was even ended the mystery of God, as He preached to His slaves, the prophets."

Revelation 11:15

"And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's, even of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages."

Now, let us move on to see how God's judgments will hurt the symbolic ***"earth"***.

Verse 7: ***"And the first*** (angel) ***trumpeted. And hail and fire mixed with blood took place, and it was cast into the earth; and one-third of the earth was burned down; and one-third of the trees was burned down and all the green grass was burned down."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

In Revelation 2:21-23, we observed that the Lord Jesus was very angry with Jezebel who lived in sin and said about her the following:

"[21]***And I gave her time to repent from her fornications, and she did not repent.*** [22]***Look, I will make her bedridden, and*** (I will put) ***those committing adultery with her in a great tribulation, if they will not repent from their works.*** [23]***And I will kill her children with death. And all the churches will know that I am the One who searches kidneys and hearts; and I will give to each one according to your works."***

In 2 Peter 3:9, the apostle said that **God does not wish any to perish but all to come to repentance.**

And, in 1 Corinthians 11:28-32, Paul said,

"[28]***But, let the man examine himself, and then let him eat from the bread, and let him drink from the cup.*** [29]***Because, the one eating and drinking unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.*** [30]***It is for this reason that there are many weak and sick among you and many sleep*** (die)***.*** [31]***Because, if we***

would discern ourselves, we would not be judged. [32]***But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord, in order not to be condemned*** (along) ***with the world."***

From the previous scriptures, we realize that those who claim to be Christians **cannot play games with God**. They must truly appreciate the fact that the Eternal Son of God became flesh to die for their sins, and they must **live a life which is worthy of repentance** (Acts 26:20). Unfortunately, though, millions of people who make up the symbolic ***"earth"*** live in sin, **they do evil works** and many more ignore God's provision for salvation! For this reason, when the first angel trumpets his trumpet, God casts in the symbolic ***"earth"*** a deadly mixture: **Hail and fire mixed with blood!** As a result, one third of the ***"earth"***, one third of the ***"trees"*** and **all** the ***"green grass"*** were burned up!

What are the evil works of the symbolic *"earth"* which caused God to be angry against her? How do we understand the mixture of hail with fire and blood?
Let us read Revelation 9:20,21, again. There it says,

"[20]***And the rest of men, those not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they will not worship demons, and "golden idols, and silver, and bronze, and stone, and wooden idols, which neither are able to see, nor to hear," nor to walk.*** [21]***And they did not repent of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts."***

Since the Christian community is part of the symbolic ***"earth"***, the burning questions are:

1) Why do they worship demons instead of the True God?

2) Why do they worship idols?

3) Prayer is worship and worship belongs to God only (Exodus 34:14)! Why do they pray to dead believers of the past like those who pray to their dead ancestors? In other words, why do they worship creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25)? Don't they know that praying to the dead expecting them to answer is necromancy? (Leviticus 20:27; 1 Samuel 28:8; 1 Chronicles 10:13)

4) Why are they guilty of murders (remember those whose souls are under the altar), sorceries, fornications, and thefts?

5) Shouldn't they worship the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of the living God, **who truly became flesh and came into our world through water and blood of His mother's womb,** to save His people from their sins? (1 John 5:6; John 1:1,14; Matthew 1:21) Shouldn't they have appreciated His death on the cross where **He truly died** for their sins and this fact was proven by **the blood and the water** that came out of His side (John 19:34)?

6) Are they not supposed to have allowed the Lord Jesus to wash their feet with **water** as a symbol that they must walk with Him in purity (John 13:4-9)? Were they not **baptized in water** to have **a good conscience toward God** (1 Peter 3:21)**?** Doesn't He

sanctify and cleanse His Church with **the washing of water** by the word (Ephesians 5:26)?

7) Are they not supposed to be God's elect through the **sanctification of the Spirit to obedience** (1 Peter 1:2)**?** Did He not give **a witness** that He came to be with the believers? Did He not make His presence known when He appeared as **tongues of fire** (Acts 2:3)**?** Did He not give **a witness** of who Jesus is by working powerfully through Him (Acts 5:32; Matthew 12:28)?

8) Are they not supposed to have been **cleansed by the blood** of Jesus (1 John 1:7)? Are they not supposed to have washed their robes in His **blood** so they can walk with Him in white (Revelation 7:14; 3:4)? Shouldn't have the **blood** of Christ **purged their conscience** to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14)? An impostor would not have shed his blood willingly on behalf of others; Jesus did (Isaiah 53:5)! **Isn't His blood the one that speaks better things than that of Abel** (Hebrews 12:24)**?** Don't they know that those who are **justified by his blood shall be saved from wrath** (Romans 5:9)**?** Are they not supposed to examine themselves before they partake of His body and **of His blood so they will not partake unworthily and fall into judgment and condemnation** (1 Corinthians 11: 29,32)**?**

9) How can they ignore **the witness** of the above three elements, **the water, the Spirit/fire, and the blood**, which testify that Jesus is the Savior God, the Re-

deemer, who came to pay for and to cleanse them from their sins? (1 John 5:8; Isaiah 59:15-20; 60:16)

In view of the above, it is not the literal elements (**hail** [frozen water] and **fire** mixed with **blood)** that we should be concerned with. We should be concerned with **what these elements represent and the fiery judgment that falls upon the masses of the symbolic *"earth".*** We should be concerned with them because not only they don't appreciate but also, they look down upon the Person and the work of the Savior God! I wonder if the prophecy that follows will be fulfilled on them also:

Zechariah 13:8,9
"[8]***And it shall be in all the land*** (HOT: ***'earth'*****), says Jehovah, two parts in it shall be cut off and perish, but the third shall be left in it.** [9]***And I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined. And I will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, It is My people, and they shall say, Jehovah is my God."***

Regarding the Person of Christ and **the witness of the above elements,** John wrote:

"[6]***This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth …*** [8] ***And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."*** (1 John 5:6,8)

The above verses confirm that our explanation on the three elements is correct.

Isn't the witness of the above elements the very basis of the gospel which the truly born-again Christians must preach?
Yes, indeed! Therefore, those who claim to know and to believe in the True God of Abraham and yet **they have rejected His gospel of salvation,**

1. **they have ignored the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets** (such as the prophecies found in Isaiah chapter 53),

2. **they have trampled the Son of God under their feet**,

3. **they have regarded as common the blood of the covenant** by which they were sanctified (because the provision for their sanctification is real and available to all) and

4. **they have insulted the Spirit of grace.**

For this reason, **they have caused God's righteous wrath to fall upon them!** The writer of the letter to the Hebrews wrote:

"how much worse punishment do you think will be thought worthy to receive, the one trampling the Son of God, and having counted common the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified, and having insulted the Spirit of Grace?" (Hebrews 10:29)

Therefore, in His **righteous** (Revelation 19:2) anger, the Lord God casts down upon them the very **mixture** by

which they could have been cleansed from their sins and received God's grace:

a) The water --- not the water which could be warm and soothing, not the water which has the power to cleanse them, but the cold, the frozen water which is hard like a stone --- **the hailstones that can kill them!**

b) The Spirit --- not the Spirit that can give life, not the ***"fire"*** of Pentecost which has the power to cleanse them and to bring them joy, but **the Spirit that can burn them like fire!** (Meditate on John 7:38,39, Revelation 22:1 and Daniel 7:10: ***"river of fire"*** [LXX].)

c) The blood --- not the blood by which they can be cleansed from their sins, but **the blood that can make them sick and even kill them if they partake of it unworthily!** (1 Corinthians 11:29,32)

And, too bad, ***"the*** (one) ***third of the earth was burnt up, and the*** (one) ***third of the trees was burnt up, and all*** (the) ***green grass was burnt up."*** **What a great number!**

Lord God, how many people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** got sick and how many have died prematurely throughout the Christian era? In other words, how many were ***"burned up"*** by your fiery anger without even realizing it? Please Lord God, send Your workers to the symbolic ***"earth"*** to preach Your true gospel of salvation **and of repentance!** (Acts 2:38; 17:30)

Verses 8,9: ***"***[8]***And the second angel trumpeted. And as a great mountain which was burning with fire was cast into the sea. And the one third of the sea became blood;*** [9]***and the one third of the creatures which*** (were) ***in the sea, those who had souls, died; and the one third of the ships was corrupted."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 8 and 9

The above verses present a very powerful prophecy. To understand its encrypted meaning, we must examine the symbolic terms it contains, the timing of its fulfillment and the history of the "church" throughout the Christian era. Let us begin with the symbolic terms:

1. The ***"burning mountain"***.
2. The ***"sea"***.
3. The ***"creatures in the sea which had souls"***.
4. The ***"ships"***.

What does the *"burning mountain"* symbolize?

In the explanation of Revelation 6:14[b], we learned that a ***"mountain"*** pictures a ***"kingdom"***, whether it is political or religious. We will return to the ***"burning"*** part soon.

What does the *"sea"* symbolize?

In the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3, we determined that the symbolic term ***"sea"*** refers to the ***"world"***, to the unbelieving (in Jesus) mankind!

What do the "*creatures in the sea which had souls"* represent?

In Matthew 13:47-49 Jesus said:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a large net thrown into the sea that gathered all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen hauled it ashore. Then they sat down, sorted the good fish into containers, and threw the bad ones away. That is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the evil from the righteous."

In the above verses, we meet three symbols:

a) The ***"net"***, which, as Jesus said, represents ***"the kingdom of heaven"*** (which is thrown into the ***"sea"***, i.e., into the world, through the preaching of the gospel),

b) the ***"sea"***, which represents the ***"world"***, the unbelieving (in Jesus) mankind, and

c) the good or bad ***"fish"***, which, according to our Lord, represent **people** (whether they are ***"righteous"*** or ***"evil"***).

The fact that these individuals live in the symbolic ***"sea"*** which some day will cease to exist (Revelation 21:1), **does not indicate that they will remain unsaved and unrighteous forever.** Through the preaching of the gospel some will be pulled out of the ***"sea",*** and they will be ***"sealed"*** with the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption (Revelation 7:3; Ephesians 4:30). This is the reason, in Luke 5:10, Jesus said to Simon that he will be **a fisher of men**.

In Matthew 8:21,22, we read:

"Another disciple said to Jesus, "Lord, let me wait till I bury my father." Jesus answered, "Come with me, and let the dead bury their dead.""

From the above words, we realize that Jesus views all those who do not believe in Him ***"dead"*** --- **without soul!**

In John 17:11-16, we read:

"[11]***And no longer am I in the world, yet these are in the world; and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You gave to Me, that they may be one as We are.*** [12]***While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name; I guarded those whom You gave to Me, and not one of them was lost, except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*** [13]***And now I come to You, and I speak these things in the world, that they may have My joy being fulfilled in them.*** [14]***I have given them Your Word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world.*** [15]***I do not pray that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil.*** [16]***They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."***

From the above verses, we realize that **the creatures which are in the sea and have souls** are those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ --- the born-again; **these believers are *"in the world"* but they are not *"of the world"*!**

Please bear with me! Next, we must deal with the symbolic term ***"ships"***, and then, we will make the connection.

What do the *"ships"* symbolize?
In Revelation 18:17 we read,

"For in one hour such great wealth was desolated. And every captain and all company on the ships, and sailors, and as many as work the sea, stood from afar …."

In the above verse, we met five symbolic terms:

1. The ***"ships"***.
2. The ***"captains"***.
3. The ***"company on the ships"***.
4. The ***"sailors"***.
5. Those who ***"work the sea"***.

As the born-again Christians are in the symbolic ***"sea"*** but they are not part of it, likewise the symbolic ***"ships"*** are in the ***"sea",* but they are not part of it**.

The *"ships"* symbolize Christian Churches. As a ship has a **captain**, likewise a church has **a leader --- a pastor**. As a ship has **sailors** and other **officers** who assist the **captain** to carry out his responsibilities, likewise a church has ***"elders"*** and other ***"officers"*** to assist the **pastor**. As a ship has ***"company"*** on it, in other words, **passengers**, likewise a church has the **fellowship** or **the churchgoers**.

The above hierarchy is like that of old Israel. Let us read Deuteronomy 29:10. There it says,

"Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel …." (KJV)

In the above verse, Revelation 18:17, we also met those who *"work the sea"*. Who are they?
Those who work the ***"sea"*** are **those who preach the true gospel of salvation to the unbelieving** (in Jesus) **mankind** (Romans 10:14,15).

Now that we have decoded the symbolic terms which we met in verses 8 and 9, we must keep in mind one more thing before we identify the ***"burning mountain"*** which fell into the ***"sea"***: That the book of Revelation does not present events which will take place in the very last days only, but, events which will take place **during the entire Christian era** --- from the first century (like the birth of the male child of chapter twelve) until all things become perfect and mankind's last enemy, **death**, is no more (1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 20:14). Now, let us continue our study on the ***"burning mountain"***.

What took place when the *"burning mountain"* fell into the *"sea"*?
Let us refresh our memory:

"[8]***And the second angel trumpeted. And as a great mountain which was burning with fire was cast into the sea. And the one third of the sea became blood;*** [9]***and the one third of the creatures which*** (were) ***in the sea, those which had souls, died; and the one third of the ships were corrupted*** (**WH/GNT:** ***'διεφθάρησαν'***).***"***

From the above words, we see that,

1. The one third of the ***"sea"*** became blood!

2. The one third of ***"the creatures which*** (were) ***in the sea, those which had souls, died"*****!**

3. The one third of the ***"ships"*** were corrupted!

Now, let us attempt to present the foregoing verses by incorporating **the meaning** of the above symbolic terms:

"[8]And the second angel trumpeted. And as a great mountain which was burning with fire was cast into the unbelieving (in Jesus) world. And the one third of the unbelieving (in Jesus) world became blood; [9]and the one third of the born-again Christians who were in the world, died; and one third of the Christian churches were corrupted."

The apostle Paul prophesied about the upcoming corruption also. In Acts 20:27-31, he said,

"[27]For I did not keep back from declaring to you all the counsel of God. [28]Then take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit placed you as overseers, to shepherd the assembly of God which He purchased through His own blood. [29]For I know this, that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; [30]and out of you yourselves will rise up men speaking perverted things, in order to draw away the disciples after themselves. [31]Because of this watch, remembering that I did not cease admonishing each one with tears night and day for three years."

Paul's words, ***"after my departure"***, help us realize that the prophesied corruption would take place early in the history of the church.

Can we identify the *"burning mountain"* which would:

a) **turn a big part of the unbelieving** (in Jesus) **world into blood,**

b) **bring death to so many born-again Christians, and**

c) **bring about the corruption of Christian churches?**

The answer is, **"Yes, we can!"**

At first, I thought that the ***"burning mountain"*** was **Babylon**, the great harlot of chapters 17 and 18, for the following reasons:

1. A ***"mountain"*** represents **a kingdom** and in Revelation 17:18 we read about Babylon,

   "And the woman whom you saw is the great city, having a kingdom over the kings of the earth."

2. Revelation 17:6 says about her,

   "And I saw the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the witnesses of Jesus…."

3. In Jeremiah 51:25 we hear Jehovah saying against Babylon:

   "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, declares Jehovah, who destroys all the earth.

> ***And I will stretch out My hand on you, and will roll you down from the rocks, and I will make you a burned*** (HOT: ***'burning'***) ***mountain,"***

4. In Revelation 18:21 it says,
"And one strong angel lifted a stone like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying, This way, on a violent impulse, Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and it will never more still be found."

The similarities between the ***"burning mountain"*** of chapter 8 and ***"Babylon the great"*** are overwhelming! And yet, **they are not one and the same** --- something does not fit in! ***"Babylon the great"*** will be thrown into the ***"sea"*** **in the future** and this action will mean her end! The ***"burning mountain"*** of chapter 8 was cast into the ***"sea"*** **in our past** and it had time, a lot of time, to corrupt Christian churches and to bring premature death to many born-again Christians! And yet, these two entities look so similar that they can confuse the reader!!!

And I prayed to the Lord and I asked Him to help me see the ***"burning mountain"*** which was cast into the ***"sea"***, in other words, **amongst the Pagan nations** and brought so much bloodshed, killed so many born-again Christians by the sword and with fire and corrupted so many primordial Christian churches. Yes, I asked the Lord to help me identify the ***"burning mountain"*** which led the simple and uninformed Christian masses into practicing **idolatry, demon worship, creature worship, necromancy, murders, sorceries, thefts and sexual immorality,** bringing thus upon them the **fiery** judgment of God, **sickness and death, for**

partaking of the body and of the blood of Christ unworthily! (Revelation 9:20,21; 1 Corinthians 11:29,30)

And the Lord God showed me **the first and the greatest of the harlot daughters of Babylon the great which, before the schism took place in the 11th century between East and West** (between the Roman Catholics and the Greek Orthodox), constituted the so-called **"Christian religion"** which was supported, protected and used by the Pagan emperor Constantine the great and by other "Christian" emperors of the Byzantine Empire, who had no idea that **Christianity is not a religion**, but a faith, a walk and a personal relationship with God! And for the first time I realized **how much a harlot daughter can look and act like her harlot mother!** (Revelation 17:5)

Verse 10: ***"[a]And the third angel trumpeted. And a great star fell out of heaven burning like a lamp. [b]And it fell onto the one-third of the rivers, [c]and onto the springs of waters."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10[a]

"[10a]And the third angel trumpeted. And a great star fell out of heaven burning like a lamp."

The plagues of God continue to fall upon the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** because of their sinful ways. When the third angel gave the signal (when he trumpeted), John saw ***"a great star"*** falling out of heaven which was ***"burning like a lamp"***.

What does a *"great star"* symbolize?

From the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under **Description #7**, we learned that ***"stars"*** represent **angels**.

Therefore, a ***"great star"*** symbolizes **a high-ranking angel!**

Have we met before, in our study, high ranking angels who look like *"burning lamps of fire"*?
Yes, we have! We met them in Revelation 4:5; and in the explanation of Revelation 1:4[b], we explained that they are archangels (leaders of angels).

Is it possible that an angel of God would turn the waters into *"wormwood"* so that people would become bitter and die?
Of course he would, if he were to carry out God's judgment against those who are supposed to be His own and for this reason, they should worship Him alone in holiness instead of worshipping idols! Let us read the following verses from the book of prophet Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 9:13-15
"[13]***And Jehovah says, Because they have forsaken My Law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, and have not walked in it;*** [14]***but have walked after the stubbornness of their own heart, and after the Baals, which their fathers taught them;*** [15]***so Jehovah of Hosts, the God of Israel, says this: Behold, I will feed them, this people with wormwood, and make them drink poison waters."***

Jeremiah 23:15
"So Jehovah of Hosts says this concerning the prophets: Behold, I will feed them wormwood, and make them drink poisonous water, for ungodliness has gone forth from the prophets of Jerusalem into all the land."

Doesn't the expression *"fell out of heaven"* signify that this angel was a fallen angel?
No, of course not! Here are the reasons:

1. Satan or any of his angels would not punish anyone for not worshipping God in holiness!

2. God --- not Satan --- is the One who has authority over all the plagues mentioned in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 16:9, we read:

   "And men were burned with great heat. And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent to give Him glory."

3. In verse 10, John saw **a *"star"* falling out of heaven** while in Revelation 20:1 he saw an ***"angel"* coming down out of heaven**. Let us read that verse:

   "And I saw an angel coming down out of Heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain on his hand."

   What we must realize here is the fact that in verse 10 we are dealing with the symbolic term ***"star"*** which signifies **an angel**, and that in Revelation 20: 1, John sees **an actual angel in person!** Therefore, when one refers to a star, it is only natural to say that he saw **a star falling out of heaven** and when he refers to a person, it is only natural to say that he saw **an angel coming down out of heaven!**

From all the above reasons, we realize that the ***"great star"*** of verse 10 is not a fallen angel but an archangel of God!

Explanation of verse 10[b]

"[b]And it fell onto the one-third of the rivers,"

What do *"rivers"* refer to?
In Revelation 12:15, it says:

"And the serpent threw water out of his mouth like a river after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried off by the river."

From the above verse, we realize that the water which came ***"out of the mouth"*** of the serpent like a ***"river"***, symbolizes **the spoken word of the serpent!** We do find other allegories in the Bible, of different things, which ***"come out of the mouth"*** of different entities and which point to the same conclusion. Let us observe a few cases:

a) ***"And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations. And He will shepherd them with an iron rod. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of God Almighty."*** (Revelation 19:15; compare with Hebrews 4:12)

b) ***"and having in His right hand seven stars; and a sharp, two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth, and His face shining as the sun in its power."*** (Revelation 1:16; compare with Hebrews 4:12)

c) ***"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth:***

and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." (Isaiah 11:4)

d) ***"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:"*** (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

e) ***"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons doing signs, which go forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole habitable world to assemble them to the war of that day, the great day of God Almighty."*** (Revelation 16:13,14)

In the above case, although we observe three demon spirits coming out of the mouth of the foregoing entities, it is easily understood that they will accomplish their task through trickery and **misleading words**. After all, is this not the trademark of false prophets? (Matthew 24:11,24)

What does it mean that the star *"fell onto the one-third of the rivers"* only?

In the explanation of verses 8,9 above, we read Paul's prophecy about the coming of those ***"grievous wolves"*** who would speak ***"perverted things, in order to draw away the disciples after themselves"*** (Acts 20:27-31). Thank God that **all the preachers of the gospel were not corrupted and the truth of the gospel is still around us today!**

Explanation of verse 10[c]

"[c]and onto the springs of waters."

What do the *"springs of waters"* refer to?

The symbolic term ***"springs of waters"*** refers to the authors of the misleading words --- **to the source!** In the foregoing verse, Revelation 12:15, as ***"the water like a river"*** comes out of the mouth of the serpent, makes the serpent **the source or the spring** of that river!

Verse 11: ***"[a]And the name of the star was called Wormwood. And one-third of the waters became wormwood. [b]And many people died from the waters, because they became bitter."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11[a]

"[a]And the name of the star was called Wormwood. And one-third of the waters became wormwood."

Why is this angel called "Wormwood"?

He is called ***"Wormwood"*** because of the result of his action.

Explanation of verse 11[b]

"[b]And many people died from the waters, because they became bitter."

What does it mean that *"many people died from the waters, because they became bitter"*?

The apostle Paul was not the only one who prophesied about the coming of those who would speak ***"perverted things in order to draw away the disciples after themselves"***. The apostle Peter also prophesied about the coming of **false teachers who would be among the born-**

again Christians and who would, secretly, bring in <u>destructive heresies</u>. Let us read his words from 2 Peter 2:1-3:

"[1]***But false prophets were also among the people, as also false teachers will be among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, and denying the Master who has bought them, bringing swift destruction on themselves.*** [2]***And many will follow their destructive ways, by whom the way of truth will be evil spoken of.*** [3]***And by covetousness, with well-turned words, they will use you for gain, for whom judgment of old does not linger, and their destruction does not slumber."***

The expression ***"destructive heresies"*** reveals that the false teachers will twist the gospel of salvation **so that those who hear it and believe it will not be saved but they will die in their sins!** For example, the most resent perversion of the gospel, which is like **bitter and poisonous waters**, is the false doctrine which proclaims that **one does not have to believe that Jesus is God in essence to be saved!** This **destructive heresy** is in direct opposition with the words of Jesus in John 8:24 where He said,

"Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins."

When Jesus made the above statement, the Jews asked Him:

"Who are You?"

And Jesus said to them,

"I am exactly who I told you from the beginning." (John 8:25)

Who did the Lord Jesus say He was from the very beginning?
In John 3:16, He said that He is **God's only begotten Son**. This title reveals one truth only: **That Jesus is the only Son of God's essence!** Therefore, He is God by nature and equal to the Father (John 5:18). According to John 3:16 those who believe this way, have everlasting life. Those who have drunk the polluted and bitter waters of ***"another gospel"*** (Galatians 1:8,9) which presents ***"another Jesus"*** (2 Corinthians 11:4) who is not God in essence, **will die in their sins;** and, oh God, they are so many!

Please, Father, send more workers to Your field to preach the true gospel! (Luke 10:2)

Verse 12*:* ***"And the fourth angel trumpeted. And one-third of the sun, and one third of the moon, and one-third of the stars, was struck, in order for one-third of them to be darkened, so that the day will lose one-third of its light (brightness) and the same with the night."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12
The above words foretell the gloomy and **dark period** which would follow, after the ***"waters"*** would turn into wormwood. Since so many people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** accepted and drank the bitter ***"waters"*** which came out of the mouth of the false teachers and of the false prophets, it was to be expected that the spiritual light or guidance from heaven would be reduced dramatically! And we can see the results of this condition all around us today!

Before we close this chapter, I would like to bring to your attention one more thing: As we observe from Isaiah 13:9-11, Joel 2:31 and Matthew 24:29,30, the darkening of the sun, of the moon and of the stars is always mentioned as an event that takes place before the fiery anger of God falls upon the sinners of the symbolic ***"earth"***. Let us read these verses:

Isaiah 13:9-11
"[9]Behold, the day of Jehovah comes, cruel and with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land waste. And He shall destroy its sinners out of it. [10]For the stars of the heavens and their constellations shall not give light; the sun shall be darkened in its going forth, and the moon shall not reflect its light. [11]And I will visit evil on the world, and their iniquity on the wicked. And I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease; and I will humble the pride of tyrants.

Joel 2:31
"The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of Jehovah."

Matthew 24:29,30
"And immediately after the affliction of those days the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the land will wail. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory."

Verse 13: ***"And I saw, and I heard*** (the sound) ***of an angel*** (other manuscripts: 'of an eagle') ***flying in mid-heaven, which was saying with a great voice, Woe! Woe! Woe to those who dwell on the earth, from the rest of the voices of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to trumpet!"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13

The above verse is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Chapter Nine

Verse 1: ***"And the fifth angel trumpeted. And I saw a star falling from heaven to the earth, and the key to the pit of the abyss was given to it."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

In the above verse, we observe that a ***"star"*** fell from heaven to the earth and that the key to the pit of the abyss was given to it.

What does a *"star"* symbolize?

From the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under **Description #7**, we learned that a ***"star"*** represents an **angel**.

Does the expression *"falling from heaven"* signify that this angel was a fallen angel?

Absolutely not! Please read the explanation of Revelation 8:10[a]. God would not give the key to the abyss to Satan or to any of his fallen angels. Here is why:

In Revelation 20:1-3 we read,

"And I saw an angel coming down out of Heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain on his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the old serpent who is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut him up, and sealed over him, that he should not still lead astray the nations, until the thousand years are fulfilled…"

From the above verses, we learn that the ***"star"***, which had the key to the abyss, **threw Satan in it** and sealed over him!

If that ***"star"*** were a fallen angel, would he have had more authority than his master in order to ***"throw"*** him into the abyss and seal over him? Or, if the above ***"star"*** who had the key were Satan, would he use the key to lock himself in there for a thousand years? The answer is "No!"

What kind of place is the *"abyss"*?
When a man dies the body lays in the grave where it decays, while the soul goes into Hades. This statement is supported by the following scripture. Please pay close attention:

Acts 2:31
"foreseeing, he spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, "that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.""

The *"abyss"* is the lowest parts of Hades.
When the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, He went into the ***"abyss"***. This statement is supported by the following scripture:

Roman 10:7
"or, "Who will go down into the abyss?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)"

Another word for ***"abyss"*** is ***"tartarus"***. We find this word in 2 Peter 2:4. There, the apostle Peter wrote:

"For if God did not spare sinning angels, but delivered them to chains of darkness, thrust down into Tartarus …."

Who is the One who has the key of the *"abyss"* or of *"Hades"*, its entrance?
The One who has the key to that prison is the Lord Jesus Christ. In Revelation 1:17,18, we read:

"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." (ASV)

We know that the *"stars"* symbolize angels; but can we say that Jesus is a *"Star"* also?
Yes, we can! In Revelation 22:16, we hear Jesus calling Himself a ***"Star"***. Let us read His words:

"I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you over the assemblies. I am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star."

What does the *"key"* symbolize?
The ***"key"*** symbolizes authority (Isaiah 22:22; Revelation 3:7). Please read the explanation of Revelation 3:7, section c).

Why does verse 1 say that *"the key to the pit of the abyss was given to it"* (to Him)**? Does it mean that Jesus is not God, that He never had this authority before?**
No, of course not! Jesus is the Eternal God the Son (Micah 5:2). However, for a short period of time, **He emptied Himself from His Godly glory** (Philippians 2:5-11), He

lowered Himself lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:7) and **became flesh** (John 1:1,14)**!** Let us read Philippians 2:5-11:

"[5]***For think this within you, which mind was also in Christ Jesus,*** [6]***who subsisting in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God,*** [7]***but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, having become in the likeness of men*** [8]***and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, having become obedient until death, even the death of a cross.*** [9]***Because of this also God highly exalted Him and gave Him a name above every name,*** [11]***that at the name of Jesus "every knee should bow," of heavenly ones, and earthly ones, and ones under the earth,*** [12]***and "every tongue should confess" that Jesus Christ is "Lord," to the glory of God the Father."***

From the above verses, we realized that when **the man Jesus** accomplished the work He came to accomplish on the cross (John 17:4; 19:30), God the Father highly exalted **THE MAN** Jesus and gave Him the Name which is above all names (Philippians 2:9). For this reason, He said to His disciples, ***"… All authority in Heaven and on earth was given to Me."*** (Matthew 28:18)

The foregoing words, ***"all authority"***, include the authority to open or to shut any door He wishes --- even the door to the abyss. In Revelation 3:7, the Lord Jesus said about Himself, ***"… These things says the Holy One, the True One, the One having "the key of David," "the One opening, and no one shuts; and shuts, and no one opens:""***

If you wish to also see Jesus as an ***"angel"*** (not by nature) **who always *"had"*** the key to the abyss, please read the explanation of Revelation 20:1.

Verse 2: ***"And he opened the pit of the abyss, and smoke went up from the pit like smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened from the smoke of the pit."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

The smoke that went up out of the pit darkened the sun and the air. This prophecy tells us that the time will come when the spiritual visibility will be greatly reduced on the symbolic ***"earth"***. The dwellers of the symbolic ***"earth"*** who do not have ***"the seal of God on their foreheads"*** (verse 4), in other words, those who are not born-again, **will not be able to see clearly** what will take place next; however, they will feel the terrible results of the work of the ***"locusts"*** as they are described in verses 3 and 4!

Verse 3: ***"And locusts came into the earth from the smoke, and authority was given to them, like the authority of the scorpions of the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

As the smoke came out of ***"the pit of the abyss"*** and as the ***"locusts"*** came out of the smoke, it is manifest that the ***"locusts"*** are evil angels. The Lord God will let loose those evil angels in the symbolic ***"earth"*** to carry out His judgment against those who have not accepted His Son as their God and Savior, and against those who are born-again, but who **live in sin** (1 Corinthians 5:5; Revelation 2:21-23).

It is not the first time that God lets loose **evil angels** to execute His judgment. Let us read Psalms 78:49. There it says,

"He sent on them the heat of his wrath, his bitter disgust, letting loose evil angels among them." (BBE)

The people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** will feel the terrible torment, but it will be hard for them to accept the fact that the **tormentors**, the ***"locusts"*** which will hurt them like ***"scorpions"***, **are demonic spirits**. As the visibility will be reduced because of the smoke, many of them will not believe that demons have authority to touch them and others will not even believe that demons exist; for this reason, **they will not repent from their evil works** (verses 20,21)!

However, the Bible gives comfort to those of the symbolic ***"earth"*** who are truly born-again Christians and who live a life of holiness (Hebrews 12:14): **They will not be hurt by those demonic forces which have the authority to hurt men like scorpions.** Let us read Luke 10:19,20 and 1 John 5:18:

Luke 10:19,20
"Behold, I have given you the authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and on all the power of the hostile one, and nothing shall hurt you, no, never! But stop rejoicing in this, that the evil spirits submit to you. But rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven."

1 John 5:18
"We know that everyone being generated from God does not sin, but the one having been generated from God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him."

Verse 4: ***"And it was said to them not to harm the grass of the earth, neither every green thing, nor every tree, except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

In the above verse, we meet the following symbolic terms:

1. The ***"grass of the earth"***.
2. ***"Every green thing"***.
3. The ***"trees"***.

What do the above symbolic terms signify?

As the symbolic term ***"earth"*** pictures **"all those who claim to know and to believe the True God of the Bible, i.e., the Judeo-Christian community"**, and since ***"the grass of the earth", "every green thing"*** and the ***"trees"*** grow on the ***"earth"*** **---** not in the ***"sea"*** **--- they picture individuals of various "spiritual" levels and status within that community**.

The following scriptures help us realize that as the symbolic term ***"trees"*** refers to people (please read the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3), so do the symbolic terms ***"grass of the earth"*** and ***"every green thing"***:

Job 5:25

"Thou shalt know also that thy seed shall be great, and thine offspring as the grass of the earth."

Isaiah 40:6,7

"[6]The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: [7]The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass." (Also read 1 Peter 1:24.)

Isaiah 37:27

"Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house-tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up."

Some of the above dwellers of the symbolic ***"earth"*** are saved and some are not. This is the reason the ***"locusts"*** were told **not to harm** any of the above elements **except those who *"do not have the seal of God on their foreheads"***.

Verse 5: ***"And*** [the commandment] ***was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months; and their torment is like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

From the above verse, we observe that, because of their evil works, **God delivered the people of the symbolic *"earth"* up to the tormentors**. This action of God is like the one we read in Matthew 18:34,35**.** There Jesus said,

"And being angry, his lord delivered him up to the tormentors until he pay back all that debt to him. So also My heavenly Father will do to you unless each of you from your hearts forgive his brother their deviations."

The life span of the natural locusts is up to five months. Therefore, since these demonic beings have authority to ***"harm men five months"***, it is easily understood that they will hurt men to the fullest.

Verse 6: ***"And in those days men will seek death and they will not find it, and they will desire to die and death will flee from them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

Obviously, the torment will be so great that men will prefer to die rather than experience all that torment! And even so, **they will not repent** from their evil works (verses 20,21) just as the people in Revelation 16:9 did not repent from their works. Let us read that verse:

"And men were burned with great heat. And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent to give Him glory."

Other scriptures which show **the importance of repentance** are Revelation 2:5,21-23.

Verse 7: ***"[a]And the likenesses of the locusts were like horses which have been prepared for war; [b]and on their heads were crowns which looked like gold, [c]and their faces were like the faces of men*** [humans]***."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7[a]

"[a]And the likenesses of the locusts were like horses which have been prepared for war;"

In verses 7-11, John gives us a description of the ***"locusts"***. Let us go through his description slowly to have a better understanding of the nature and of the work of these evil entities.

The above verse says that the ***"locusts"*** were ***"like horses"*** which **had been prepared for war**. These words remind me of Joel 2:1-7. There, we read in part:

"Blow a ram's horn in Zion, and shout an alarm in My holy mountain. Let all those living in the land (HOT: ***'earth'***) ***tremble. For the day of Jehovah approaches; it is near, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the dawn spread out on the mountains, a great and a strong people. There has never been the like, nor shall there ever be again to the years of many generations; … yea, also there is no escape to them. Their appearance is like horses; and as horsemen, so they run. They shall leap like the noise of chariots on the tops of the mountains, like the noise of flames of fire that devour the chaff, as a strong people set in order for battle. Before their face, the people shall be pained; all faces collect heat. They shall run as mighty ones; they shall go up the wall as men of war. And they each go on his way, and they do not change their paths."***

What kind of *"warfare"* are these evil entities carrying out?
Their ***"war"*** is a spiritual one. Their purpose is to attack and to torment the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** who ***"do not have the seal of God on their foreheads"*** (verse 4). The truly born-again Christians will not be tormented because they will follow Paul's advice:

"[11]***Put on all the armor of God, for you to be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil,*** [12]***because wrestling against flesh and blood is not to us, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world's rulers, of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the***

heavenlies. [13]***Because of this, take up all of the armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand.*** [14]***Then stand firm, "having girded your loins about with truth" and having put "on the breastplate of righteousness,"*** [15]***and having shod the feet with the preparation of the "gospel of peace."*** [16]***Above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the darts of the evil one being kindled.*** [17]***Also, take "the helmet of salvation," and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God;"*** (Ephesians 6:11-17)

Explanation of verse 7[b]

"[b]and on their heads were crowns which looked like gold,"

As we noticed in Ephesians 6:12 above, speaking of similar entities, the apostle Paul explained that they are ***"the rulers … the authorities … the world's rulers of the darkness of this age".*** For this reason, John saw them wearing ***"crowns which looked like gold"*** --- but they **were not gold**! These evil forces appear as if they are kings --- but **they are not kings over the truly born-again Christians**! They appear to have full authority --- but **their authority is limited!** They only have the authority which God grants them (verse 4)!

Explanation of verse 7[c]

"[c]and their faces were like the faces of men [humans]***."***

Those who are involved with the ministry of deliverance (exorcism), know very well that although they see the faces of those men and women they are delivering in the Name

of the Lord Jesus Christ, in reality **they fight against evil tormentors!**

Verse 8: ***"[a]And they had hair like the hair of women, [b]and their teeth were like*** [the teeth] ***of lions."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]
"And they had hair like the hair of women,"

The fact that ***"… they had hair like the hair of women"*** tell me that **they are under someone else's authority** (1 Corinthians 11:3,10,15)**! And they are**! (See verse 11)

Explanation of verse 8[b]
"[b]and their teeth were like [the teeth] ***of lions."***

The above words remind me of the words of Joel 1:1-6. There it says in part:

"The Word of Jehovah that was to Joel, the son of Pethuel: Hear this, you old men, and give ear, all you people of the land (HOT: ***'earth'***) ***... What was left by the cutter, the swarming locust ate; and that left of the swarming locust, the locust larvae ate; and that left of the locust larvae, the stripping locust ate ... For a nation has come up on my land*** (HOT: ***'earth'***)***, strong and without number; its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and it has the jaw teeth of a lioness."***

Truly, these evil entities have a lot of power over the unbelievers. No one will be able to escape their torment … **unless they turn to Jesus, the True Savior who is *"God over all"* and *"blessed forever"*** (Romans 9:5)**!**

Verse 9: ***"And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running to war."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

From the above verse, we see that the attack of the enemy forces is powerful and well organized. The fact that they wear breastplates like iron shows me that a human cannot hurt them. **Those who carry out God's judgment against those who do not have His *"seal"* on their forehead are very strong!**

YHWH, the God of Abraham, does not find pleasure in judging His ***"earth"*** in such a terrible manner. What He wants to accomplish is to make them understand that He is angry with their ways and their apostasy. **He wants them to repent and to turn to Him** --- to their God whose ***"Arm"*** (Isaiah 53) became flesh in order to come to Zion to be their Savior and their Redeemer (Isaiah 59:15-20; 60:16; 53:1-12)! Let us verify the above statements by reading in part from Joel 2:15-27 which was written for the original ***"earth"***, Israel, but which could also encourage all today's ***"earth"***, i.e., the whole Judeo-Christian community:

"15 Blow a ram's horn in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly. 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, gather the elders, gather the children, and those who suck the breasts. 17 Let the bridegroom go out of his room, and the bride out of her room. Let the priests, ministers of Jehovah, weep between the porch and the altar; and let them say, Have pity on Your people, O Jehovah, and do not give Your inheritance to shame, for a proverb among those of the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, Where is their God? 18 Then Jehovah will be jealous

for His land (HOT: ***'earth'***) ***and have pity on His people.*** [19]***Yea, Jehovah will answer and say to His people, Behold, I will send you grain, and wine, and oil, and you shall be satisfied with it. And I will no more make you a curse among the nations.*** [20]***But I will remove the northern army far from you, and I will drive him into a dry and desolated land with his face toward the eastern sea, and his rear toward the western sea. And his stench shall come up, and his ill odor shall come up, because he was doing great things.*** [21]***Fear not, O land*** (HOT: ***'earth'***), ***be glad and rejoice, for Jehovah is doing great things ...*** [23]***Then be glad, sons of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God ...*** [24]***And the floors shall be full with grain, and the wine vats shall overflow with wine and oil.*** [25]***And I will restore to you the years which the swarming locust has eaten, the locust larvae, and the stripping locust, and the cutting locust, My great army which I sent among you.*** [26]*And* ***you shall eat fully and be satisfied; and you shall praise the name of Jehovah your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And My people shall not be ashamed forever.*** [27]***And you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is no other."***

Verse 10: ***"And they have tails like scorpions, and stings, and their authority is in their tails to harm men five months."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10

The ***"sting"*** or the **suffering** these demonic beings can induce to humans is mighty great. Only those afflicted and those who are involved in the ministry of deliverance can appreciate the size of it.

In the explanation of verse 5 above, I wrote, "The life span of the natural locusts is up to five months. Therefore, since these demonic beings have authority to ***"harm men five months"***, it is easily understood that they will hurt men to the fullest."

Verse 11: ***"And they have a king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew [is] Abaddon, and in Greek he has the name Apollyon."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

From the above verse, we realize that the ***"locusts"*** are under the authority of a king whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon and in Greek is Apollyon.

Is Apollyon Jesus or Satan?

Some have said that Apollyon is Jesus, and others have said that Apollyon is Satan. To avoid confusion, can we determine who Apollyon is? Yes, we can! Let us consider the following:

In 2 Peter 2:4, we read:

"For if God did not spare sinning angels, but delivered them to chains of darkness, thrust down into Tartarus, having been kept to judgment;"

And in Jude 1:6 it says:

"And those angels not having kept their first place, but having deserted their dwelling-place, He has kept in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of a great Day;"

From the above verses, we realize that the angels who are in the abyss (Tartarus), are those angels who had sinned. Therefore, the ***"locusts"*** who came out of the abyss (Tartarus), **are not Christ's subjects**. If they were, they would be with Him in heaven --- they wouldn't be chained in the abyss waiting for the Day of Judgment! Consequently, Jesus **is not** their king, **neither is He Apollyon!** And from the fact that the ***"locusts"*** came out of the abyss **before** Satan is cast there (Revelation 20:1-3), we realize **that Satan is not Apollyon either!**

Who, then, is Apollyon?
From the words of Paul in Ephesians 6:12, ***"but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world's rulers, of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenlies"***, we gather that there are many rulers in the dark spiritual realm. Apparently, one of them is ***"Apollyon"*** who happens to be ***"the king"*** in the abyss. Therefore, **Apollyon is his own entity**, a **"strong man"** in that terrible prison, which, even the demons avoid (Luke 8: 31)!

Verse 12: ***"***[12]***The first woe has passed; look, after these*** (things) ***two more woes are coming."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12
The above verse is simple. It does not need an explanation.

Verses 13,14: **"***And the sixth angel trumpeted; and I heard a voice out of the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,* [14]***saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Release the four angels, those who have been bound at the great river Euphrates."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 13 and 14

In the above verses, we hear a ***"voice"*** which comes out of the ***"four horns"*** of the altar, which is before God. The ***"voice"*** says to the angel who has **the sixth trumpet** to release the four angels who had been bound ***"at the great river Euphrates"***.

Whose voice is this?

The above verses do not reveal the source of that voice. However, they mention **three things** which can help us uncover this mystery:

1. The ***"altar"***.
2. The ***"sixth angel"***.
3. The ***"river Euphrates"***.

Let us consider these things separately:

1. The *"altar"*

The very first Person who laid His life on ***"the golden altar which is before God"*** was the man Jesus Christ. In turn, throughout the Christian era, a multitude of born-again children of God have placed their lives on that same precious (***"golden"***) altar as a sacrifice to Him. This is the same altar under which we saw the souls of those having been slain for the Word of God, and for the witness which they had (Revelation 6:9).

In verse 13 above, John tells us that he heard a voice out of ***"the four horns of the golden altar"***.

What are *"the four horns"* of the altar?
The ***"four horns"*** are the four raised parts at the four corners of the altar (Exodus 27:2).

Was there a specific use for those *"four horns"*?
Yes, there was! When we read Psalms 118:27, we learn that the priests used cords to tie the sacrificial animals to them. Let us read that verse:

"Jehovah is God, and He gives light to us. Tie the sacrifice with cords, to the horns of the altar."

Spiritually speaking, ***"the four horns of the golden altar which is before God"*** can bear witness to the fact that a multitude of born-again Christians have poured their blood on it.

2. The *"sixth angel"*
In Revelation 10:7 we read,

"but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, whenever he is about to trumpet, was even ended the mystery of God, as He preached to His slaves, the prophets."

And in Revelation 18:24 it says,

"And in her (Babylon the great) ***was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all the ones having been slain on the earth."***

Therefore, the fact that the blowing of the seventh trumpet marks the end of ***"the mystery of God"*** (in other words His kingdom is here), it tells us that **Babylon the great which is responsible for the shed blood of the prophets and of**

the saints, must fall in the days of the sixth angel! This is the reason, in verse 14, the ***"voice"*** said to **the sixth angel** who had the trumpet,

"Release the four angels, those who have been bound at the great river Euphrates."

What does the river Euphrates have to do with the fall of Babylon the great?

3. The *"river Euphrates"*

Why is *"the great river Euphrates"* mentioned here?
Because the river Euphrates played a great role in the fall of the ancient city of Babylon:

Babylon was built on both sides of Euphrates; therefore, Euphrates, which was flowing through the middle of the city, was its life force --- so to speak. Babylon had massive walls and it was impossible to be taken by enemy attacks. Thus, when Cyrus went against Babylon, he diverted Euphrates to flow around the city and when the level of the river was dropped, his army was able to go up to the city and take it.

This piece of history also helps us understand Revelation 16:12. There we read,

"The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east."

Here, we must remember one more thing:

In Revelation 6:10, we heard **the voice of the souls** which were ***"under the altar"*** saying,

"… Until when, holy and true Master, do You not judge and take vengeance for our blood, from those dwelling on the earth?"

And they were told to ***"… rest for a little time, till the number was complete of the other servants, their brothers, who would be put to death, even as they had been."*** (Revelation 6:11; BBE)

From all the above, we realize that now, in the days of the sixth angel, the time has come for God to take vengeance for the blood of the saints out of the hand of the symbolic ***"Babylon"***, the great harlot of Revelation 17 and 18, who motivated the ignorant religious masses of the symbolic ***"earth"*** to kill His prophets and the witnesses of Jesus (Revelation 17:6; 18:24; Matthew 23:29-39)!

As the blood of Abel cried out from the ground (Genesis 4:10), so did the blood of the saints, which had been poured on the golden altar, **spoke out from the *"four horns"*** of the altar**.**

Why from the *"four horns"*?
Because, symbolically speaking, the ***"four horns"*** which were used to tie the saints with cords in the sacrificial position, had witnessed the pouring out of their blood!

Therefore, it was as if the voice which spoke from the ***"four horns"*** of the altar, was the voice of the blood of the saints. In other words, it was as if **the blood of the saints said to the sixth angel**, "There is no time left! When the

seventh angel blows his trumpet, it will be too late! **Babylon the great must pay for her crimes now; she must fall now!** Release the four angels, those who have been appointed to dry up the great river, so that Babylon, the great murderer who sits on ***"many waters"*** (Revelation 17:1,15), can fall!"

Verse 15: ***"And the four angels were released, those who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, in order to kill the one third of men."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15

The above verse is simple. It only tells us that the four angels, who were appointed to "dry up the river" in God's due time were released. Their action would lead up to the fall of the mysterious ***"Babylon the great"***.

What does it mean that the modern day *"Euphrates"*, in other words, the *"waters"* on which *"Babylon the great"* sits will dry up? (Revelation 17:1,15)

It means that before the return of the King of kings, the symbolic ***"waters"***, i.e., the people who had accepted her rulership, will stop supporting her.

Verse 16: ***"And the number of the armies of the cavalry, two myriads of myriads; and I heard their number."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16

This verse is very simple as well. It *shows* how strong God's army is. It will be used to ***"dry up"*** the modern day ***"waters"*** that support ***"Babylon the great"***, it will execute God's judgments against her. This verse reminds me of scriptures such as Psalms 68:17 and Daniel 7:10. There we read:

Psalms 68:17

"The chariots of God are myriads, thousands of thousands, the Lord is among them, in Sinai, in the holy place."

Daniel 7:10

"A stream of fire went out and came out from before Him. A thousand thousands served Him, and a myriad myriads stood before Him. The judgment was set and the books were opened."

Verse 17: ***"[a]And this is how I saw the horses in the vision and those sitting on them, having breastplates of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone; [b]and the heads of the horses were like heads of lions, [c]and out of their mouths come fire and smoke and brimstone."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17[a]

"[a]And this is how I saw the horses in the vision and those sitting on them, having breastplates of fire and of hyacinth and of brimstone;"

God's army is strong! Nothing can penetrate the blue and yellow supernatural **breastplates of fire!**

Explanation of verse 17[b]

"[b]and the heads of the horses were like heads of lions,"

God's warriors are experts in war --- they will not miss and they will not spare! Even their horses were fearless; their heads were like ***"heads of lions"***.

The above description reminds me of 1 Chronicles 12:8, which describes the expert warriors who joined David as follows:

"From the Gadites there went over to David at the stronghold in the wilderness mighty and experienced warriors, expert with shield and spear, whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were swift as gazelles upon the mountains:"

Explanation of verse 17[c]

[c]***and out of their mouths come fire and smoke and brimstone."***

The above description clearly points to the fact that the cavalry will bring upon those who support ***"Babylon the great"*** the full, the fiery anger of God. This statement, is supported by the following verses:

2 Samuel 22:8,9

"[8]And the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the heavens were troubled, and were shaken; for He was angry. [9]Smoke rose up in His nostrils, and fire devoured out of His mouth; coals were kindled by it."

Verse 18: ***"By these three plagues the one third of men was killed, by the fire and by the smoke and by the brimstone which came out of their mouths."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 18

For more information on the connection between the above description and the anger of God, please read the explanation of Revelation 7:16[c].

Verse 19: ***"because, the authority of the horses is in their mouth and in their tails; because their tails are like snakes, they have heads, and with them they injure."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19

The word ***"authority"*** in Greek is **"εξουσία"** (exousia). It is a word that refers to **ability**, **privilege**, **capacity**, **freedom** and **power.** Therefore, the above verse tells us that **the cavalry of the Lord God has the power to carry out His judgment and to bring His fiery wrath** upon the ***"one third"*** (verse 18) of the supporters of the symbolic ***"Babylon the great"***. (Read explanation of verses 13,14 above, under subtitle #**3. The *"river Euphrates"***)

No one can escape or to hide from God's supernatural army because ***"the horses"*** are not lacking vision or ability to kill from front and back as their tails, which naturally look like snakes, have heads.

Verses 20-21: ***"[20]And the rest of men, those who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent from the works of their hands, in order not to worship demons and idols of gold and of silver and of bronze and of stone and of wood, which are not able to see, neither to hear, nor to walk. "[21]And they did not repent from their murders, neither from their sorceries, nor from their fornications, nor from their thefts."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 20-21

The above verses are simple. They do not need an explanation.

Chapter Ten

Verse 1: "***And I saw another strong angel coming down from heaven, who was clothed with a cloud and a rainbow on his head, and his face like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

Who is this strong angel? Can we identify him?
Of course, we can! All we must do is to examine the four points of John's description:

1. He ***"was clothed with a cloud"***.
2. He had ***"a rainbow on his head"***.
3. His face was ***"like the sun"***.
4. His feet were ***"like pillars of fire"***.

Let us have a closer look at those descriptions:

1. He *"was clothed with a cloud"*
This description reminds me of the following scriptures:

Exodus 33:9-11
"[9]And it happened as Moses went into the tabernacle, the pillar of cloud would come down and stand at the door of the tabernacle. And He spoke with Moses. [10]And all the people would see the pillar of the cloud standing at the

door of the tabernacle. And all the people rose and bowed themselves, each one at the door of his tent. [11]***And Jehovah would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend…."***

Exodus 34:5
"And Jehovah came down in the cloud. And he placed himself there with Him, and he called on the name of Jehovah."

Exodus 40:35
"And Moses was not able to come into the tabernacle of the congregation because the cloud dwelt on it. And the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle."

1 Corinthians 10:2-4
"[2]***And all were baptized to Moses in the cloud, and in the Sea,*** [3]***and all ate the same spiritual food.*** [4]***And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual rock following, and that Rock was Christ."***

From the above verses, we observe that when Jehovah came down to liberate His people, He spoke to Moses through a ***"pillar of cloud"***. From this case, we realize two things:

a) The very Person of the blessed God who followed the Israelites and spoke to Moses **was covered completely from their eyes with a cloud**, and

b) This Person was the pre-human Lord Jesus Christ**!**

2. He had *"a rainbow on his head"*
The rainbow refers to **the likeness of the glory of Jehovah.** This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 4:3
"And the One sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone, and a sardius; and a rainbow was around the throne, in appearance like an emerald."

Ezekiel 1:26-28
"[26]***And from above the expanse that was over their heads was an appearance like a stone of lapis lazuli azure blue, the likeness of a throne. And on the likeness of the throne was a likeness in appearance like a man on it from above.*** [27]***And I saw Him, like the color of polished bronze, looking like fire within it all around. From the appearance of His loins and upward, and from the appearance of His loins and downward, I saw Him looking like fire; and brightness to it all around.*** [28]***As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of the rain, so appeared the brightness all around. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah. And I saw, and I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking."***

***"Glory"* means: honor, value, praise, and splendor.**
The degree of glory varies from man to man or from angel to angel; it depends on one's social position.

The glory of God is unique. None of the created beings can possess or even share God's glory. God **YHWH** is a jealous God (Exodus 34:14). **He does not share the glory which belongs to Him alone.** Let us examine what He says about this in Isaiah 42:8:

"I am YHWH; that is My name, and I will not give My glory to another …"

And in Isaiah 48:11, He repeats:

"... I will not give My glory to another."

When we read the Old Testament, we see that God **YHWH** is called, ***"The King of glory"***. Let us read from Psalms 24:7-10:

"Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? YHWH strong and mighty. YHWH mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates; even lift up, O everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? YHWH of hosts, He is the King of glory."

In Psalm 29:3, we read:

"The voice of Jehovah is on the waters; the God of glory thunders;"

However, reading from the New Testament, we see that **the Lord Jesus is called:** ***"the Lord of glory"*** and **the Holy Spirit is called:** ***"the Spirit of glory."***

Regarding the Lord Jesus Christ, in 1 Corinthians 2:7,8, the apostle Paul wrote the following:

"… we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery ... which not one of the rulers of this age has known. For if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

And regarding the Holy Spirit, the apostle Peter said:

"... you are blessed, because the Spirit of God and of the glory rests on you." (1 Peter 4:14 --- from the Greek text)

The same apostle, who knew very well how jealous God **YHWH** is, as far as ***"the glory"*** is concerned, wrote the following:

"... grow in ... knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, <u>To Him be the glory</u>, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." (2 Peter 3:18).

And in Revelation 5:13, John wrote:

"... every creature which is in Heaven and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, <u>and to the Lamb be … the glory</u> … forever and ever."

Please note:
If Jesus were a creature of God, outside the only True and uncreated Godhead **YHWH**, then, **God YHWH would not have shared His glory with Him** (Isaiah 42:8; 48:11).

From all the above, we see that glory belongs to all the fullness of the Godhead:

a) To the Father, **the *"King of glory"***,

b) To the Son, **the *"Lord of glory"***, and

c) To the Holy Spirit**, the *"Spirit of glory"*!**

Therefore, the ***"strong angel"*** (not an angel by nature) who appeared to John having the rainbow on His head, was the Lord Jesus Christ!

3. His face was *"like the sun"*
Again, this description reveals that the ***"strong angel"*** who appeared to John, was the Lord Jesus Christ! Please read the explanation of Revelation 1:16, under **Description #9**.

4. His feet were *"like pillars of fire"*
This description further supports our conclusion that this ***"strong angel"*** was the Lord Jesus Christ. Please read the explanation of Revelation 1:15, under **Description #5**.

For more information on the fact that Jesus had also appeared in the past as an ***"angel"*** [not an angel by nature], please read the explanation of Revelation 1:16, under **Description #9**.

Verse 2: ***"[a]And in his hand he had an open booklet. [b]And he put his right foot on the sea, and the left on the earth,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2[a]
"[a]And in his hand he had an open booklet."

What does the fact that the booklet was open signify?
In Daniel 12:9, we read:

"… Go, Daniel! For the words are closed up and sealed until the end time."

Contrary to Daniel's experience, where the words were ***"closed up and sealed"***, here we observe that the ***"strong***

angel", holds an ***"open booklet"***! From this fact, we realize that the ***"end time"*** is near and that whatever is written in the booklet, **will be revealed soon**.

Explanation of verse 2[b]

"[b]And he put his right foot on the sea, and the left on the earth,"

The fact that the ***"strong angel"*** placed one foot on the symbolic ***"sea"*** and the other on the symbolic ***"earth"***, signifies that what He is about to reveal will affect both parts of humanity: Those who do not believe in the True God of the Bible (the ***"sea"***), and those who proclaim that believe in the True God of the Bible, in other words, the Judeo-Christian community (the ***"earth"***)!

(For a full understanding on the symbolic terms ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c] and the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3, under the subtitle, **The *"sea"***.)

Verse 3: ***"[a]and he cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars. [b]And when he cried, the seven thunders spoke their voices."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"[a]and he cried with a loud voice, as a lion roars."

Why is Jesus likened to a *"lion"*?
Because He is ***"the Lion of the tribe of Judah"***! Please read the explanation of Revelation 5:5[a].

What is the significance that He roared as a lion?
To show that He is Jehovah --- that He has Godly authority! When He ***"roars"***, people tremble; when He ***"roars"***, prophets prophesy! Let us support these statements with the following scriptures:

Hosea 11:10
"They shall walk after Jehovah; He shall roar as a lion. When He roars, then sons shall tremble from the west."

Amos 3:7,8
"[7]For the Lord Jehovah will do nothing unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. [8]A lion has roared. Who will not fear? The Lord Jehovah has spoken, who will not prophesy?"

What things will John prophesy about next?
The answer lies in verse 11.

Explanation of verse 3[b]
"[b]And when he cried, the seven thunders spoke their voices."

What connection is there between the voice of God and *"thunders"*?
Please read the explanation of Revelation 4:5[a].

Verse 4: ***"And when the seven thunders spoke their voices, I was going to write. And I heard a voice from Heaven saying, seal the things which the seven thunders spoke, and do not write them*** [down]***."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

It was the will of the Lord God not to reveal the words of the ***"seven thunders"*** to us. For this reason, let us move on.

Verses 5-7: ***"[5]And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the earth lifted his hand towards Heaven, [6]and swore by Him who lives to the ages of the ages, who created the heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it, that there will be no more time [7]but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he will trumpet, the mystery of God will be complete, according to the good news which He gave to His servants the prophets."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 5-7

In Matthew 24:36, **the man** Jesus Christ said,

"But as to that day and that hour, no one knows, neither the angels of Heaven, except My Father only."

And in Acts 1:6,7, when the disciples asked Jesus whether He would restore the kingdom to Israel in their days, Jesus said to them,

"… It is not yours to know times or seasons which the Father placed in His own authority;"

From the above scriptures, we realize that none of the created beings has the power to decide the time of the coming of the kingdom of God, but God alone! And yet, in the foregoing verses (5-7), we see that the ***"strong angel"*** (Jesus) lifted his hand towards heaven and swore that **the mystery of God** (in other words, the kingdom of God: Revelation 11:15), **will be complete** ***"in the days of the***

voice of the seventh angel, when he will trumpet" (verse 7)! This fact proves, one more time, that Jesus, the **only begotten** Son of God, is not a created being but God in essence, the One who ***"created the heaven and the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea and the things in it"***. The fact that Jesus is the Creator God who created the heaven and the earth, is supported by Hebrews 1:8-12. There, speaking about ***"the Son"***, it says,

"[8]but as to the Son, … [10]And, "You, Lord, at the beginning founded the earth, and the heavens are works of Your hands. [11]They will vanish away, but You will continue; and they will all become old, like a garment, [12]and You shall fold them up like a covering, and they shall be changed. But You are the same, and Your years shall not fail."

Some might object to the above statements because in Mark 13:32 it says,

"But concerning that day and the hour, no one knows, not the angels, those in Heaven, nor the Son, except the Father."

These people must not forget the following truth:

The pre-human Jesus was always God in essence (John 1:1) and He always existed in the form of God (Philippians 2:6). For a short period of time, when He emptied Himself from His Godly glory, **He became a man** (Philippians 2:7; John 1:14) **assuming a nature and a position which is lower even than the nature and the position of the angels** (Hebrews 2:7). During this short period of time, **He lived as a man --- not as God**. **As a man He did not know the time**

of the coming of the kingdom of God. However, the time came when the man Jesus Christ received back from God the Father **all** His Godly glory and authority He had before He became a man (John 17:5; Matthew 28:18). Today, Jesus is both **Lord** (God) **and Christ**. This statement is supported by Acts 2:36 and 10:36. Let us read these verses:

Acts 2:36
"Then assuredly, let all the house of Israel acknowledge that God made Him both Lord (God/YHWH: Romans 10:9, 13,14) ***and Christ, this same Jesus*** (the man Jesus: 1 Timothy 2:5, ***whom you crucified."***

Acts 10:36
"The Word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching the gospel of peace through Jesus Christ, this One is Lord of all."

Only God is the ***"Lord of all"***! Therefore, Jesus is God! And this is the reason we see Jesus, the ***"strong angel"*** of John's vision, **having the authority to set the time of the coming of the kingdom of God**. He swore that it would come ***"in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he will trumpet"*** (verse 7)! And, true enough, in Revelation 11:15 we read that when the seventh angel blew his trumpet, **the mystery of God was ended**. **In other words, the kingdom of God came!** Let us read this verse:

"And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's, even of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages."

Verses 8-10: ***"[8]And the voice which I heard from heaven was speaking with me again and it was saying, go take the open booklet which is in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the earth. [9]And I went towards the angel saying to him, Give me the booklet, and he says to me, Take and eat it up, and it will make your belly bitter, but, in your mouth, it will be sweet as honey. [10]And I took the booklet from the hand of the angel, and I ate it up; and in my mouth it was sweet like honey; and when I ate it, my belly was made bitter."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 8-10

Here, we observe that John was asked to go and take the booklet from the hand of the ***"strong angel"***. When John did that, the ***"angel"*** asked John to eat the booklet up! This command and action show us that John was about to receive more knowledge to prophesy again about coming events.

The fact that the booklet tasted sweet in John's mouth signifies that John would be happy to declare God's feelings and actions against the apostatic ***"earth"*** and against the sinful ***"sea"*** of mankind. However, the fact that it became bitter in his belly means that it would cause John to feel a deep sadness!

The above case of 'eating the booklet' reminds me of Ezekiel 3:1-9. There, we read:

"[1]And He said to me, Son of man, eat what you find. Eat this roll (scroll/book)***, and go speak to the house of Israel. [2]So I opened my mouth, and He made me eat that roll*** (scroll)***. [3]And He said to me, Son of man, make your belly eat, and fill your bowels with the roll*** (scroll)***, this that I***

give to you. And I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey for sweetness. [4]***And He said to me, Son of man, Go! Come to the house of Israel and speak with My Words to them.*** [5]***For you are not sent to a people of deep lip and difficult of language, but to the house of Israel;*** [6]***not to many peoples of deep lip and of a difficult language, whose words you cannot hear. If I had sent you to them, they would have listened to you.*** [7]***But the house of Israel is not willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me, for all the house of Israel are strong of forehead and hard of heart.*** [8]***Behold, I have made your face strong over against their faces, and your forehead strong over against their foreheads.*** [9]***I have made your forehead as an adamant harder than flint. Do not fear them, and do not be frightened by their faces, though they are a house of rebellion."***

Verse 11: ***"And he says to me, You must prophesy again about peoples and nations and tongues and many kings."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

The above verse is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Chapter Eleven

Verses 1,2: **"**[1]***And a reed like a measuring stick was given to me; and the angel stood, saying: Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar, and those who worship in it.*
[2a]***And leave out the outer yard of the temple, and do not measure it, because it was given to the nations,*** [b]***and they will trample the holy city forty-two months."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 1 and 2[a]

If the above verses had mentioned specific measurements of the temple and of the altar and the exact number of those who worship in the temple, then, I would look for a better understanding of what those measurements represent. However, since the above verses do not present any specific numbers, I realized that they show the reader **"what counts"**, in other words, **what is of value in the eyes of God and what isn't**.

Apparently, what **"counts"** in the eyes of God are:

a) His ***"temple"***,

b) the ***"altar"***, and

c) **those who worship in the temple.**

What **"does not count"** in the eyes of God is the outer yard ***"because it was given to the nations, and they will trample the holy city forty-two months."***

First, let us consider the ***"temple"*** and the ***"altar"*** and then we will examine the ***"yard"*** and the ***"nations"*** which ***"will trample the holy city forty-two months."***

What does the *"temple"* refer to?
The above verses do not refer to the earthly temple, which was in Jerusalem, but to the ***"temple"*** which is in heaven. This ***"temple"*** refers to the throne-room of God, to the Holy of Holies, in other words, to the very place where God dwells. (For more information on the heavenly ***"temple"***, please read the explanation of Revelation 7:14,15.)

Why is the *"altar"* important to God?
The ***"altar"*** is important to God because multitudes of truly born-again sons and daughters of God have laid their lives on it throughout the Christian era for their faith in Jesus. (For more comments, please read the explanation of Revelation 9:13,14, under the subtitle **1. The *"altar"***)

Is there a connection between the old temple of YHWH and the heavenly one?
Yes, there is! The earthly temple of YHWH consisted of three parts:

a) The outer yard (or court), where **all Israelites could enter**,

b) the Holy Place, where **only the priests could enter**, and

c) the Holy of Holies, where **only the high priest could enter** once a year.

The layout of the above temple and all the instructions regarding the worship of **YHWH** (which were part of the **old covenant**: Exodus 34:27,28), were given to Moses by God (Exodus 25:40) when He visited the sons of Israel in Egypt (Exodus 4:31) and led them to Himself (Exodus 19:4).

However, in Jeremiah 31:31-33, we hear God **YHWH** saying that He would ***"cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah".*** Let us read these verses:

"[31]***Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,*** [32]***not according to the covenant that I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah).*** [33]***But this shall be the covenant that I will cut with the house of Israel: After those days, declares Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."***

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews said that those who served in the earthly temple served the ***"shadow of heavenly things"*** (Hebrews 8:5). Therefore, there is a spiritual connection between the earthly temple and the heavenly one. The first, served the things of the old covenant and the second, serves the things of the ***"new covenant"*** which is based on the shed blood of the Real Lamb of God (Isaiah 53:7).

As the old covenant had a priesthood so does the new. **Jesus is the eternal High Priest according to the order of**

Melchizedek (Hebrews 6:20), and all His truly born-again followers are priests (1 Peter 2:5-9) according to the same order.

In the first temple, the Holy Place was separated from the Holy of Holies with a thick curtain known as the ***"veil"*** (Exodus 26:31). On the day Jesus died, ***"the veil of the Holy Place was torn into two, from top to bottom*** (Mark 15: 38). This event signified that Jesus removed the barrier and entered the Holy of Holies as a High Priest to offer to God His own blood as an atonement for the sins of all those who believe in Him (Hebrews 9:11,12; John 8:24). Also, this event signified that the time had come for His followers who, as we mentioned above, according to the ***"new covenant"*** are ***"priests"***, to freely **enter the heavenly temple**, the real Holy of Holies, in order to worship God (Hebrews 6:19,20; 10:19; Revelation 7:15; 20:6).

According to the old covenant, those who were not priests could only remain in the ***"outer yard"***; they could not enter the Holy place. Likewise, today, those who do not believe in the God Jesus Christ, who is the Most Holy One of Daniel 9:24 (NIV/footnote), cannot become ***"priests of God and of Christ"*** (Revelation 20:6) and, for this reason, they cannot enter the heavenly temple of God (Revelation 7:15). This principle reminds me of those who cannot enter the holy city. Let us read Revelation 22:14,15:

"[14]***God will bless all who have washed their robes. They will each have the right to eat fruit from the tree that gives life, and they can enter the gates of the city.*** [15]***But outside are the dogs and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone loving a lie, and making it."***

Explanation of verse 2[b]

In verse 2[b] we read that they ***"will trample the holy city forty-two months."***

Do we know the name of the *"holy city"*?
Yes, we do! In Revelation 21:2, John wrote:

"And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, having been prepared as a bride, having been adorned for her Husband."

Who are the citizens of the *"holy city"*?
The citizens of the ***"holy city"*** are all those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible, who is God in essence (John 1:1) because He is God's **only begotten** --- not only created --- **Son** (John 3:16). Because they have this faith, the Bible calls them ***"overcomers"*** (1 John 5:5). And in Revelation 3:12, Jesus said,

"The one overcoming, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more. And I will write the name of My God on him, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of Heaven from My God, and My new name."

The writing of the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** on those **Christian saints** will identify them as citizens of that great Metropolis (Greek for 'Mother City')! The apostle Paul is in total agreement with this statement. In Galatians 4:26, he wrote,

"but the Jerusalem from above is free, who is the mother of us all;"

Who, then, is the *"Holy City"*?
As the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** is written on those Christian saints (whether they are Jews or Gentiles), we can call them: ***"The Holy City"*!** (For more information on this topic, please read the explanation of Revelation 21:2,3,9,10.)

Now that we have the above insight, it is easier to understand how it is possible for the dwellers of the ***"outer yard"*** to ***"trample the holy city".***

For more information on this subject, whether the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** is the name of a literal city or whether it is one of the names which refer to the Church of the born-again, please read the explanation of Revelation 20:9[a], and 21:2,3,9,10.

When will the persecution start against those who make up the *"holy city"* of the last days?
The persecution against the Christian saints of the last days will begin forty-two months (3½ years) prior to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Are there more scriptures to prove that the persecution of the saints will go on for 3½ years?
Yes, there are! Let us read the following verses:

Daniel 7:21,25
"[21]***I was looking, and that horn made war with the saints and overcame them …*** [25]***And he shall speak words against the Most High, and he shall wear out the saints of the Most High. And he intends to change times and law. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and one half time."***

In the above prophecy, ***"a time"*** refers to one year; ***"times"*** refers to two years; ***"one half time"*** refers to half a year. They refer to the same period as the ***"42 months"*** (Revelation 11:2) and the ***"1,260 days"*** (Revelation 11:3).

Revelation 13:5-7
"[4]and they worshiped the dragon who had given its authority to the beast. They also worshiped the beast and said, "No one is like this beast! No one can fight against it." [5]And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to it (to the ***"beast"***). ***And authority to act forty-two months*** (3½ years) ***was given to it. [6]And it*** (the ***"beast"***) ***opened its mouth in blasphemy toward God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and those tabernacling in Heaven. [7]And it was given to it*** (to the ***"beast"***) ***"to war with the saints, and to overcome them." And authority was given to it over every tribe and tongue and nation."***

From the above words, we observe that the one who wars against the Christian saints is called ***"the beast"*** (verse 4).

What does the *"beast"* refer to?
In Daniel 7:1-7 we read,

"[1]In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters. [2]Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. [3]And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. [4]The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon

the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. [5]***And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh.*** [6]***After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it.*** [7]***After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns."*** (KJV)

And in Daniel 7:17, Daniel was told that,

"[17]***The four beasts are four earthly kingdoms."*** (CEV)

From the above verses, we realize that **the symbolic term *"beast"* refers to an earthly kingdom --- an earthly government.**

Do we know the time of the appearance of the specific *"beast"* which will persecute the Christian saints?
The Bible does not inform us of the date in which this specific ***"beast"*** will come into power; however, it does say that this ***"beast"*** will be **the last world government before the coming of the kingdom of God**. Let us pay attention to the following scriptures:

Daniel 7:25-28
"[25]***And he*** (the leader of the ***"beast"***) ***shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times***

and the law; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. [26]***But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it*** (the ***"beast"***) ***unto the end.*** [27]***And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: his kingdom*** (of the Most High) ***is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him*** (the Most High)***.*** [28]***Here is the end of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts much troubled me, and my countenance was changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart."***

Revelation 17:10,11
"[10]***And there are seven kings. The five fell, the one is, the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must remain a short time.*** [11]***And the beast which was and is not, he is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to perdition.*** (AT)

From the above verses, we learn that the ***"eighth"*** king, the persecuting ***"beast"***, is truly **the last earthly kingdom,** a political world government which will be followed by the kingdom of God.

How do we know that the last *"beast"* will be a world government?
Regarding the authority of the ***"beast"***, Revelation 13:7 says the following:

"And it was given to it (to the ***'beast'***) ***"to war with the saints, and to overcome them." And authority was given to it*** (to the ***"beast"***) ***over every tribe and tongue and nation."***

And in Revelation 17:11-13, we read,

"[11]***And the beast which was and is not, he is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to perdition.*** [12]***And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.*** [13]***These have one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast."***

What will happen to the *"beast"* at the end of the forty-two months?
At the end of the forty-two months of persecution, the Lord Jesus will return to annihilate the central governmental authority of the ***"beast"***. At the same time, He will destroy all the earthly kingdoms, and He will set up His own which will stand forever. This statement, is supported by Daniel 2:44. Let us read that verse:

"And in the days of these kings, the God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Do the above words mean that at that time the Lord Jesus will destroy all the nations, all the people?
No, of course not! **He will only remove the governmental authority from all the governments of that time, including that of the *"beast"*,** so that the nations will walk in the light of His kingdom and be healed (Revelation 21:24; 22: 2). At that time, the Lord Jesus will annihilate two entities:

a) The ***"beast"*** of Daniel 7:11, who is the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8, (along with the ***"man of sin"*** of 2

Thessalonians 2:3,4,8, who is the ***"image of the beast"*** of Revelation 13:14,15), and

b) The ***"false prophet"***.

The Lord Jesus will throw those two alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20).

Other verses that show that the ***"beast"*** will be destroyed are:

Daniel 7:26
"But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end." (KJV)

Revelation 17:8
"The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss, and goes to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written on the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast that was, and is not, and will be." (AT)

Revelation 17:11
"And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goes to perdition."

Revelation 19:20
"And the beast was seized, and with this one the false prophet doing signs before it, by which he led astray those having received the mark of the beast, and those worshiping its image. The two were thrown alive into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone."

We will discuss more things about the ***"beast"*** in chapters 13 and 17.

Verse 3: ***"And I will give to My two witnesses, and they will prophesy 1,260 days, dressed with sackcloth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3

This verse says that God will raise ***"two witnesses"*** who will prophesy for 1,260 days. This number of days equals to 3½ years! From this fact, it is obvious that the ***"two witnesses"*** will appear during the 3½ years of persecution.

What does the fact that they are dressed in sackcloth indicate?

Those who wore sackcloth in ancient Israel, did so as a sign of **mourning** and **repentance** (Jeremiah 4:8; 6:26; Matthew 11:21). When the two witnesses appear, they will **mourn** for the spiritual condition of the people of the symbolic ***"earth",*** and they will call them to **repentance**.

Verse 4: ***"These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands, which are standing before the God of the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

In the above prophecy regarding the coming of the ***"two witnesses"***, we observe that they are called ***"the two olive trees"*** and ***"the two lampstands"*** who ***"stand before the God of the earth"***.

To understand the above verse, we must read Zechariah 4:1-14. There, it says:

"[1]***And the angel who was speaking with me returned and awakened me, as a man is awakened out of his sleep.*** [2]***And he said to me, What do you see? And I said, I see, and behold, a lampstand, all of it gold, and a bowl on its top, and its seven lamps on it, and seven spouts each to the seven lamps on its top;*** [3]***and two olive trees are beside it, one on the right of the bowl, and one on its left.*** [4]***And I answered and spoke to the angel who was talking with me, saying, What are these, my lord?*** [5]***And the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, my lord.*** [6]***Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the Word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of Hosts.*** [7]***Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts: Grace! Grace to it!*** [8]***And the Word of Jehovah was to me, saying,*** [9]***The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it. And you shall know that Jehovah of Hosts has sent me to you.*** [10]***For who has despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice and shall see the plummet stone in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of Jehovah; they run to and fro through all the earth.*** [11]***And I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand, and on its left?*** [12]***And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two clusters of olive trees beside the two golden pipes, emptying the golden oil from themselves?*** [13]***And he spoke to me, saying, Do you not know what these are? And I said, No, my lord.*** [14]***And he said, These are the two sons of fresh oil who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."***

From the above prophecy, we realize that the ***"two witnesses"*** are not two groups of people but two individuals, ***"two sons"***, whom the Lord God will fill with ***"fresh oil"*** (fresh anointing). The Lord will do this to support, to encourage the true Church spiritually during the 42 months of harsh persecution! Their ***"oil"*** will help the true Church keep the flame of their faith alive!

How can we prove that the *"two witnesses"* are not two groups of people but two individuals?
In the above prophecy of Zechariah, verse 12 says that these two are actually ***"two branches"*** (clusters) of olive trees! The symbolic term ***"branches"*** refers **to individuals**. This fact, is supported by the following scriptures:

Romans 11:16-23
"[16]***Now if the firstfruit is holy, so also the lump. And if the root is holy, so also the branches.*** [17]***But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree were grafted in among them, and became a sharer of the root and the fatness of the olive tree,*** [18]***do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, it is not you that bears the root, but the root bears you.*** [19]***You will say then, The branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.*** [20]***Well! For unbelief they were broken off. And you stand by faith. Do not be highminded, but fear.*** [21]***For if God did not spare the natural branches, fear that it may be He will not spare you either.*** [22]***Behold, then, the kindness and severity of God: On those having fallen, severity. But on you, kindness, if you continue in the kindness. Otherwise, you will also be cut off.*** [23]***And those also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again."***

John 15:1-5
"[1]I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. [2]Every branch in Me not bearing fruit, He takes it away; and each one bearing fruit, He prunes, so that it may bear more fruit. [3]You are already pruned because of the Word which I have spoken to you. [4]Remain in Me, and I in you. As the branch is not able to bear fruit of itself, unless it remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. [5]I am the Vine; you are the branches. The one abiding in Me, and I in him, this one bears much fruit, because apart from Me you are not able to execute, nothing."

Why are they called *"the two olive trees"*?
In the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3, under the subtitle ***"The trees"***, I explained that the symbolic term ***"trees"*** refers to **people**, whether they are believers in Christ or not.

The ***"two witnesses"*** are described as ***"olive trees"*** because of the ***"fresh oil"*** that God will fill them with in order to keep the flame of faith of His Church alive during the great tribulation. Because of their personal faith in the True Jesus of the Bible, the ***"two witnesses"*** will not be part of the great falling away of the last days, therefore, **they stand** ***"before the God of the earth"***.

Why are they called *"the two lampstands"*?
In Revelation 1:20, the Lord Jesus said that ***"lampstands"*** symbolize Christian churches which are part of His One Church which carries and reflects His light! Likewise, as the two witnesses are part of the one True Church of Jesus Christ, as they carry and reflect His light, it is only logical to say that they are ***"two lampstands"*****!** To make it simpler, let us consider the following example:

All those who believe in God's only begotten --- not only created --- Son, are **God's temple** (2 Corinthians 6:16). And yet, every one of those believers, **individually**, can say, **"I am God's temple"!**

A point to consider:
As the Church of Jesus Christ is a twofold Church, in other words, it is comprised of both Jewish and Gentile believers, it is very possible that one of these two witnesses is of Jewish origin and the other one is of Gentile origin representing both symbolic ***"lampstands"***!

Verse 5: ***"And if one wishes to harm them, fire comes out of their mouth and devours their enemies. And if one wishes to harm them, he must be killed the same way."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

The above verse shows that the Lord God will give these ***"two witnesses"*** all the power and protection they need in order to complete their mission!

Thank You, Father! Glorify Your Name in their days (John 12:28)!

Verse 6: ***"These have the power to shut the heaven, so that it will not rain during the days of their prophecy, and they have power over the waters in order to turn them into blood, and to strike the earth with every plague, as many times as they wish."***

Explanation of verse 6

The power and authority which God will give them, will be like the power and authority He gave to Elijah and to Mo-

ses to lead people to **repentance** and to **freedom from religious slavery!** Let us read the following scriptures to see that Elijah and Moses performed similar miracles for similar reasons:

1 Kings 17:1

"And Elijah the Tishbite, of the sojourners of Gilead, said to Ahab, As Jehovah the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall be no dew nor rain these years, except according to my word."

1 Kings 18:37-39

"[37]***Answer me, O Jehovah, answer me; and this people shall know that You are Jehovah God; and You shall turn their hearts back again.*** [38]***And fire fell from Jehovah and burned up the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and the water in the trench was licked up.*** [39]***And all the people saw, and fell on their faces, and said, Jehovah, He is the God; Jehovah, He is the God!***

Exodus 7:17-21

"[17]***So says Jehovah, By this you shall know that I am Jehovah: Behold, I am about to strike the water in the river with the staff in My hand, and it shall be turned to blood.*** [18]***And the fish in the river will die, and the river will stink, and the Egyptians will become weary of drinking water from the river.*** [19]***And Jehovah said to Moses, Say to Aaron, Take your staff, and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over the rivers, over their canals, and over their pools, and over every body of their waters, so that they may become blood. And blood shall be in all the***

land of Egypt, both in wooden and in stone vessels. [20]***And Moses and Aaron did so, as Jehovah had commanded. And he lifted up the staff and struck the water which was in the river before Pharaoh's eyes, and before his servants' eyes. And all the water in the river turned to blood.*** [21]***And the fish in the river died, and the river stunk. And the Egyptians were not able to drink water from the Nile. And the blood was in all the land of Egypt."***

Does this mean that the *"two witnesses"* will actually be Elijah and Moses in person?

Absolutely not! Do not let anyone mislead you with such a false doctrine. As in the case of John the Baptist who came ***"in the spirit and power of Elijah"*** (Luke 1:17), the same will be with ***"the two witnesses"***. They will not be Elijah and Moses back in this life in a different body! To believe so will mean to believe in reincarnation! The Bible teaches **resurrection of the same body that died** (John 5:28,29; 1 Corinthians 15:53) --- not a comeback to occupy another body!

Verse 7: ***"And when they will complete their witness, the beast which is coming up out of the abyss will make war with them, and will overcome them, and will kill them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

From the above verse, we realize that the two Christian witnesses, who are dressed in sackcloth, will go through the great tribulation and that, in the end, **the beast which comes out of the abyss**, will kill them!

What is *"the beast which comes out of the abyss"*?

As we learned in the explanation of verse 2[b] above, **the term *"beast"* refers to an earthly kingdom --- an earthly government**.

What does it mean that this *"beast"* will come *"out of the abyss"*?

It means that this ***"earthly kingdom"* once existed**, and that at a certain time it had been destroyed, in other words, **it had ceased to exist as a kingdom.** However, at some point in time, before the return of the Lord Jesus, **it would come back to life!** This statement is supported by the following verses:

Revelation 17:8
"The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss, and goes to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written on the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast that was, and is not, and will be." (AT)

Revelation 13:2,3
"[2]***And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as a lion's mouth. And the dragon gave its power to it, and its throne, and great authority.*** [3]***And I saw one of its heads, as having been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed. And all the earth wondered after the beast."***

Please keep the above points in mind because, as I said earlier, we will discuss more things about the ***"beast"*** in chapters 13 and 17.

Verse 8: ***"And their dead bodies [will be] in the square of the great city, which, spiritually, is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was also crucified."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8

Can we identify the city that is described here?
Of course, we can! Our Lord was not crucified in Sodom neither was he crucified in Egypt but in Jerusalem! Therefore, the ***"beast"*** will kill the ***"two witnesses"*** in Jerusalem and their dead bodies will be on public display in the city's square!

Why does the above verse call Jerusalem *"Sodom"*?
Jerusalem was supposed to be the centre of worship of the True God! However, **YHWH** said that Judah and Jerusalem **apostatized** from Him and He called them ***"Sodom"***. Let us read His words from Isaiah 1:1,2 and 10:

"[1]The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. [2]Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth! For Jehovah has spoken: I have nursed and brought up sons, but they have rebelled (HOT: ***'apostatized'***) ***against Me ... [10]Hear the Word of Jehovah, rulers of Sodom. Listen to the Law of our God, people of Gomorrah."***

Also, in Ezekiel chapter 16, **YHWH** speaks to Jerusalem and calls her a ***"harlot"***. Let us read a few verses:

"[1]And the Word of Jehovah was to me, saying, [2]Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations … [28]You have fornicated with the sons of Assyria without being satisfied. Yea, you fornicated and yet you were not

satisfied ... [30]***How weak is your heart, declares the Lord Jehovah, since you do all these, the work of a woman, an overbearing prostitute …*** [35]***Therefore, O harlot, hear the Word of Jehovah,"*** (Please read the entire chapter 16.)

From the above cases, we realize that God called Jerusalem ***"Sodom"*** because of her **spiritual sexual immorality!**

Why is Jerusalem also called *"Egypt"*?
In Galatians 4:21-31 the apostle Paul likens Jerusalem to a ***"slave woman"*****!** Let us read his words:

"[21]***Tell me, those desiring to be under Law, do you not hear the Law?*** [22]***For it has been written, Abraham had two sons, one out of the slave woman and one out of the free woman.*** [23]***But, indeed, he of the slave woman has been born according to flesh, and he out of the free woman through the promise,*** [24]***which things are being allegorized, for these are two covenants, one, indeed, from Mount Sinai bringing forth to slavery (which is Hagar,*** [25] ***for Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, and she slaves with her children),*** [26] ***but the Jerusalem from above is free, who is the mother of us all;*** [27]***for it has been written, "Be glad, barren one not bearing; break forth and shout, the one not travailing; for more are the children of the desolate rather than she having the husband."*** [28]***But, brothers, we are children of promise according to Isaac.*** [29]***But then, even as he born according to flesh persecuted the one according to Spirit, so it is also now.*** [30]***But what says the Scripture? "Cast out the slave woman and her son, for in no way shall the son of the slave woman inherit with the son of the free woman."*** [31]***Then, brothers, we are not children of a slave woman but of the free woman."***

Paul's words about Jerusalem's **religious slavery to the Law of Moses**, also reminds me of Israel's **slavery in Egypt**!

From all the above, we conclude that verse 8 calls Jerusalem ***"Sodom"*** and ***"Egypt"*** because these names refer to **spiritual sexual immorality and spiritual slavery!**

Verses 9,10: ***"[9]And [men] from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will be looking at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and they do not allow their dead bodies to be put in tombs. [10]And those who are dwelling on the earth will rejoice over them, and they will be happy; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 9 and 10

Why would the people of the symbolic *"earth"* rejoice that the *"two witnesses"* were killed?

In Revelation 14:9-12, it says:

"[9]And a third angel followed them, saying in a great voice, If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or in his hand, [10]he also shall drink of the wine of the anger of God having been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath. And he will be tormented by fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb. [11]And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. And those worshiping the beast and its image have no rest night and day, even if anyone receives the mark of its name. [12]Here is the patience of the saints; here are the ones keeping the commands of God, and the faith of Jesus."

It is obvious that the above words point to the time in which the ***"beast"*** will be ruling as a world power. In order for the ***"beast"*** to be accepted and perhaps voted into power by the people of the symbolic ***"earth"***, it will speak great and fanciful words. In fact, the ***"beast"*** will exult itself to the point that **its words will constitute a blasphemy before God**. This statement, is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 13:1
"And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten diadems, and on its heads names of blasphemy."

Revelation 17:3
"And he carried me away into a desert, by the Spirit. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, filled with names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

Revelation 13:5
"And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to it. And authority to act forty-two months was given to it."

Revelation 13:6
"And it opened its mouth in blasphemy toward God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and those tabernacling in Heaven."

Daniel 7:8
"I was thinking about the horns. And behold! Another little horn came up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted before it. And behold! In this horn

were eyes like the eyes of the man, and a mouth speaking great things."

Daniel 7:11
"Then I was looking because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke. I was looking until the beast was killed, and his body was destroyed and given to the burning flame."

Daniel 7:20-22
"[20]***also of the ten horns that were on its head, and the other which came up, and before whom three fell, even that horn that had eyes, and a mouth speaking great things, and its appearance was greater than his fellows.*** [21]***I was looking, and that horn made war with the saints and overcame them,*** [22]***until the Ancient of Days came. And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."***

Daniel 7:25
"And he shall speak words against the Most High, and he shall wear out the saints of the Most High. And he intends to change times and law. And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and one half time."

From all the above scriptures, we gather that the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8, the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 11:7 which persecutes the two witnesses, the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 13:1,5,6, and the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 17:3, are one and the same ***"beast"***! That ***"beast"*** and especially its ***"image"*** (Revelation 13:14,15) or ***"the man of sin"*** (2 Thessalonians chapter 2), **will blaspheme against God by trying to prove that,**

a) **he is God** (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36) and,

b) **his kingdom is the kingdom of God on earth!** (Meditate on Revelation 13:4,12.)

And that's where the ***"two witnesses"*** come in! According to 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10, ***"the man of sin"*** (who has a great authority in the government of the ***"beast"***), **will mislead many people**. Let us read these verses:

"[8]***And then "the Lawless One" will be revealed, "whom" "the Lord" "will consume" "by the spirit of His mouth," and will bring to nought by the brightness of His presence.*** [9]***His coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and miraculous signs and lying wonders,*** [10]***and in all deceit of unrighteousness in those being lost, because they did not receive the love of the truth in order for them to be saved."***

Therefore, **the *"two witnesses"* will be preaching against this deception!** They will be exposing the ***"beast"***! They will be repeating, out loud, the words of Revelation 14:9-11 warning the people that, ***"***[9]***… If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or in his hand,*** [10]***he also shall drink of the wine of the anger of God having been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath. And he will be tormented by fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb.*** [11]***And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. And those worshiping the beast and its image have no rest night and day, even if anyone receives the mark of its name."***

This kind of preaching and strong warning will torment those who dwell the symbolic ***"earth"*** and will bring up the

"fury" of the ***"beast"*** as Daniel prophesied in Daniel 11:44. There, it says:

"But news shall trouble him from the east and from the north. And he will go out with great fury to destroy and to devote many to destruction."

This is the reason Revelation 14:12 says: ***"Here is the patience of the saints …."!*** This is the reason the ***"beast"*** will kill the ***"two witnesses"***! This is the reason the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** will ***"rejoice over them, and they will be happy; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth"***!

As the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** will know the words of the following verse (11), they will not allow the dead bodies of the two witnesses to be put in tombs! In their arrogance, they will try to ridicule the ***"two witnesses"*** even after they are dead! They will try to prove to those who ***"will be looking at their dead bodies for three and a half days"*** that the ***"two witnesses"*** were a hoax!

Verse 11: ***"And after the three and a half days, spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood on their feet, and a great fear fell upon those who were looking at them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

WOW!!! What a glorious sight! Glory to God! Hallelujah! Thank You, Father, for Your great power! Thank You, God of the true prophecy! Let Your fear fall upon all those who belittle You and doubt You! **Let them repent and give You glory**!

Verse 12: ***"And they heard a great voice out of heaven saying to them, Come up here. And they went up into the heaven in the cloud. And their enemies saw them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12

This is a very important event! Throughout the centuries of the Christian age, all the truly born-again believers were looking forward to this moment! This is the glorious moment when the Church meets the Lord in the air!

Where does the Bible speak about 'meeting the Lord in the air'?

In 1Thessalonians 4:16,17, the apostle Paul wrote:

"[16]***Because the Lord Himself will come down from Heaven with a command, with the voice of an archangel, and with God's trumpet. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*** [17]***Then we who remain alive will be caught up at the same time together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."*** (Author's translation from the Greek text)

How can human bodies meet the Lord in the air?

The human bodies of all those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible **will be changed** by the Lord, so we can meet Him in the air. Let us read the words of the apostle Paul from 1 Corinthians 15:51-53:

"[51]***Behold, I speak a mystery to you: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed.*** [52]***In a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet; for a trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed.*** [53]***For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."***

Please note
In verse 53 above, the words ***"this corruptible"*** and ***"this mortal"*** refer to the human body --- not to the human spirit nor to the human soul because these are not ***"corruptible"*** neither are they ***"mortal"*** (1 Kings 17:21,22; Revelation 6: 9; Acts 7:59).

Where does the Bible say that men are comprised of spirit and soul and body?
In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, we read,

"And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Has this change of the body happened before?
Yes, it has! The moment the dead body of Jesus was raised, it was changed! This is the reason He could go to heaven with it (Acts 1:9-11)**!**

Had this change happened to others who had been raised from the dead before Him?
No! Eventually, the bodies of those who were raised from the dead before Him, like Lazarus (John 11:43), grew old and died again. Jesus is the very first Person whose body put on incorruption and immortality at the very moment He rose from the dead. The same thing will happen to the bodies of all those who believe in Him. Let us read Paul's comments on this subject from 1 Corinthians 15:20-23:

"[20]***But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He became the firstfruit of those having fallen asleep.*** [21]***For since death is through man, also through a Man is a resurrection of the dead;*** [22]***for as in Adam all die, so also in***

Christ all will be made alive. [23]***But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruit; afterward those of Christ at His coming."***

From the above comments, and from his words in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, **we realize that the moment the *"two witnesses"* were raised from the dead and *"went up into the heaven in the cloud"*, this specific moment, is the glorious moment the entire Church will meet the Lord in the air!** The Bible does not say anywhere that different members of the Church will meet the Lord in the air at different times! Neither does it say anywhere that other people who are not part of His Church will also go to heaven!

"But," one might say, "I don't understand! Before the two witnesses went up in the clouds, they first went through the 42 months of the great persecution which the *"beast"* launched against the saints. Didn't the rest of the Church meet the Lord in the air before the great tribulation began?"
Absolutely not! There is no scripture to support such doctrine. As we read above, the apostle Paul made it clear that **the entire Church will be gathered to the Lord in the air, in the clouds, at the same time** (Greek text: ***'αμα συν αυτοις'***)**!** And in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, he said that **our (complete) gathering** (Greek text: ***'επισυναγωγή'***) **to the Lord** will not take place until **after** the man of sin is revealed whom the Lord **will destroy with the breath of His mouth as soon as He comes** (Greek text: ***'τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ'*** (verse 8; Revelation 19:20)**!**

The reason I used the word **(complete)** in the above paragraph, is the fact that here the apostle does not speak of a

partial gathering, but about **the complete gathering to the Lord <u>of the entire Church</u>**.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:1, Paul wrote about,

"our gathering upon Him".

The word ***"our"*** refers to the dead saints who will be raised up from the dead and to the living saints who will be changed in order to meet, all together, at the same time, in a glance of an eye, the Lord in the air (1 Corinthians 15: 51,52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17)!

The above solid truth must not be changed in any way. The word of God does not contradict itself. If our understanding on another subject demands a change on the above truth, we will do well to re-examine that other subject. Therefore, the true Church of the last days will experience **persecution** which the ***"beast"*** will launch against her!

To further support the truth that the resurrection, the change and gathering of the Church to Christ will **not** take place before the tribulation of the last days but **after**, let us examine carefully the words of the apostle Paul from 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4,8, from the Greek text. There, Paul says that our gathering will take place on the day of **the** (second) **presence of the Lord**, which he calls ***"the day of Christ"*** (verse 2) and that the gathering is not the only event which will take place **as soon as the Lord appears**:

(Blue color: Author's translation)

2 Thessalonians 2:1

Ἐρωτῶμεν δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς παρουσίας
But we beg you, brothers, concerning the presence

τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἡμῶν
of our Lord Jesus Christ and our
ἐπισυναγωγῆς ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν,
gathering upon Him,

2 Thessalonians 2:2

εἰς τὸ μὴ ταχέως σαλευθῆναι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ νοὸς μήτε
don't be quickly shaken in your mind neither
θροεῖσθαι, μήτε διὰ πνεύματος μήτε διὰ λόγου
be frightened, not by (a) spirit nor by (a) word/doctrine
μήτε δι᾽ ἐπιστολῆς ὡς δι᾽ ἡμῶν,
neither by (a) letter as if (it was written) by us,
ὡς ὅτι ἐνέστηκεν ἡ ἡμέρα τοῦ Χριστοῦ.
as if the day of Christ has come near.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

μή τις ὑμᾶς ἐξαπατήσῃ κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον· ὅτι
do not (let) anyone deceive you by any means; because
ἐὰν μὴ ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀποστασία πρῶτον
(that day will not come) unless the apostasy comes first
καὶ ἀποκαλυφθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἁμαρτίας,
and the man of sin is revealed,
ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας,
the son of perdition,

2 Thessalonians 2:4

ὁ ἀντικείμενος καὶ ὑπεραιρόμενος ἐπὶ πάντα
the one who opposes and exalts himself above all
λεγόμενον Θεὸν ἢ σέβασμα,
that is called God or an object of worship,
ὥστε αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν ναὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ ὡς Θεὸν καθίσαι,
so that he will sit himself in the temple of God as God,
ἀποδεικνύντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἐστὶ Θεός.
proving himself that he is God.

2 Thessalonians 2:8

καὶ τότε ἀποκαλυφθήσεται ὁ ἄνομος, ὃν ὁ Κύριος
and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord
ἀναλώσει τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ καὶ
will consume with the breath of His mouth and
καταργήσει τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ τῆς παρουσίας αὐτοῦ·
will bring him to an end as soon as He appears;

From the above verses, we see that **there are two things that will take place as soon as the Lord comes**:

a) The complete gathering of the Church to Him in the clouds, and

b) the annihilation of the man of lawlessness.

Therefore, those who make up the true Church of the last days will go through **the great tribulation** that the ***"beast"*** will launch against them. Hot persecution against Christians has never been **God's wrath** against them! **God has not appointed born again Christians to wrath** (1 Thessa-

lonians 5:9). And ***"the man of sin"***, of 2 Thessalonians 2:3, who is the ***"image"*****,** in other words, the king, the representative and the very core of authority of that political power known as ***"the beast"***, will join forces with ***"Babylon the great"*** to persecute the witnesses of Jesus! (Revelation 13:14,15; 17:6; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36,37) Later, I will present more details on this subject.

Are there other scriptures to support the above conclusion?
Yes, there are! Let us examine the following points:

Point 1
In Revelation 7:9-16, we read about the ***"great crowd"*** which has become part of the Church ***"out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues"***. In verse 14, John was told that ***"These are those coming out of the great tribulation"***, and verse 15 says that they are before the throne of God and they serve Him day and night **in His temple**.

Is it possible that they had entered God's heavenly temple before the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed?
The biblical answer to this question is "**NO**" because, in Revelation 15:8, it says,

"… no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels should be completed."

Therefore, we see that the Church could not enter the heavenly temple until ***"the kingdoms of the world became our Lord's"*** (Revelation 11:15)! This event will take place as soon as the Lord destroys the ***"beast"*** --- **not before** (Dan-

iel 7:25-27). Thus, the Church will be here during the tribulation!

Point 2

In Revelation 19:1-9, we read:

"[1]And after these things, I heard a great voice of a large multitude in Heaven, saying, Hallelujah! The salvation and the glory and the honor and the power of the Lord our God! [2]For true and righteous are His judgments, because He judged the great harlot who defiled the earth with her fornication. And He avenged the blood of His slaves out of her hand. [3]And a second time they said, Hallelujah! Also her smoke goes up to the ages of the ages. [4]And the twenty four elders, and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God sitting on the throne, saying, Amen! Hallelujah! [5]And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His slaves, and the ones fearing Him, the small and the great. [6]And I heard as a sound of a numerous crowd, and as a sound of many waters, and as a sound of strong thunders, saying, Hallelujah! Because the Lord God Almighty reigned. [7]Let us rejoice and let us exult, and we will give glory to Him, because the marriage of the Lamb came, and His wife prepared herself. [8]And it was given to her that she be clothed in fine linen, pure and bright; for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. [9]And he says to me, Write: Blessed are the ones having been called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb. And he says to me, These Words of God are true."

From the above scriptures, we observe that the marriage of the Lamb and His Church, His bride, will take place **after** the destruction of the symbolic ***"Babylon the great"*** who sits on the ***"beast"***. ***"Babylon the great"*** will be there dur-

ing the tribulation of the last days and, in fact, **she will motivate the *"beast"* to persecute the truly born-again Christians** because Revelation 17:6 says,

"And I saw the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And I marveled, seeing her, with a great marveling."

How do we know that the marriage of the Lamb will take place as soon as the Lord comes?
Marriage is a unity! When the Bridegroom comes to take the Bride, they enter ***"the wedding feast"***. Let us read from Matthew 25:1-10:

"[1]***Then the kingdom of Heaven shall be compared to ten virgins who taking their lamps, went out to a meeting of the bridegroom.*** [2]***And five of them were wise, and five foolish.*** [3]***Those being foolish, taking their lamps, did not take oil with them.*** [4]***But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.*** [5]***But the bridegroom delaying, all nodded and slept.*** [6]***And at midnight, a cry occurred: Behold, the bridegroom comes! Go out to meet him.*** [7]***Then all those virgins were aroused and prepared their lamps.*** [8]***And the foolish said to the wise, Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.*** [9]***But the wise answered, saying, No, lest there not be enough for us and you. But rather, go to those who sell and buy for yourselves.*** [10]***But they going away to buy, the bridegroom came. And those ready went in with him to the wedding feast, and the door was shut."***

Therefore, as the marriage of the Lamb will not take place until **after *"Babylon the great"*** is destroyed, and as ***"Babylon the great"*** will be there during the tribulation orches-

trating the persecution against the saints, so will the Bride and the two witnesses who are part of her!

Point 3
In Revelation 20:4-6, we read:

"[4]***And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them, and the souls of the ones having been beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the Word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast nor its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*** [5]***But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.*** [6]***Blessed and holy is the one having part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years."***

In the above verses, we observe that **those who did not worship the *"beast"* and had not received its mark,** will:

a) **Have part in the first resurrection!!** Those who have part in the first resurrection is the Church which will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:23; Revelation 20:4-6)!

b) **Reign with Christ a thousand years**!! The promise to rule as kings with Christ was given to the Church only (Revelation 1:6; 5:10; Matthew 19:28)!

Consequently, the above words of Revelation 20:4-6 prove the fact that the Church of the last days will face the

"beast" with all its fury! And Revelation 14:12 says ***"Here is the patience of the saints"***.

Point 4

In Revelation 10:5-7, we read:

"[5]And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted his hand to Heaven, [6]and swore by Him living to the ages of the ages, "who created the heaven" and the things in it, "and the earth" and the things in it, "and the sea and the things in it," that time shall no longer be; [7]but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, whenever he is about to trumpet, was even ended the mystery of God, as He preached to His slaves, the prophets."

From the above verses, we realize that when the seventh angel trumpets his trumpet, it will signify **the end of the mystery of God! At that specific moment, the *"beast"* does not rule any longer because the kingdom of God is here!** This statement, is further supported by Revelation 11:15. There, it says,

"And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's, even of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages."

Therefore, all the events that took place, even the things concerning the ***"beast"*** and the ***"two witnesses"***, took place during the trumpeting of the six trumpets! For this reason, I would like you to please consider the following reasoning carefully:

Those who preach that the resurrection of the dead saints and the change of the living saints will take place **before** the great tribulation of the last days, place the ***"rapture"*** in the days of the **sixth** trumpet which **is not the last of the trumpets** (Revelation 8:2)**!**

However, the apostle Paul, whose writings are part of the written word of God, in 1 Corinthians 15:51,52 said,

"[51]***Behold, I speak a mystery to you: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed.*** [52]***In a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet; for a trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed."***

The ***"last trumpet"*** is the ***"seventh"*** (not the sixth) and it takes place when the ***"beast"*** is gone and ***"The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's, even of His Christ"*****!!!**

For this reason, I encourage the Christian leaders who are advocates of the pre-tribulation ***"rapture"*** to become like the Bereans (Acts 17:11) and to re-examine this doctrine **before** they appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Why do so many Christians today believe that they will not go through the great tribulation of the last days?
Because the preparation for the great deception has already begun! Believing that they will be **"raptured"** before the coming of the ***"beast"***, many will not recognize it when it appears, and they will join the prophesied ***"apostasy"*** or ***"falling away"*** (2 Thessalonians 2:3)! In fact, they will ***"admire"*** the ***"beast"*** when it comes into power (Revelation 17:8 --- from the Greek text)!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ take courage: Those who will ***"admire"*** the ***"beast"*** will be those ***"whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world"*** (Revelation 17:8). Rejoice my Brothers and Sisters in Christ because our names **are** written in the Book of Life (Philippians 4:3). ***"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, Rejoice!"*** (Philippians 4:4).

Verse 13: ***"And in that hour a great earthquake took place, and the one tenth of the city fell, and 7,000 [famous] people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest [of the people] became terrified, and they gave glory to the God of Heaven."*** (AT)

Please note
My decision to insert in brackets the word ***[famous]*** in the above verse is because the Greek text says that in the ***"earthquake"*** were killed 7,000 ***"ονόματα ανθρώπων". "Ονόματα ανθρώπων"*** literally means: ***"names of people"***. However, because it is impossible to kill names, we are to understand that the verse says that the ***"earthquake"*** killed 7,000 ***"people of name"*** or ***"famous people".***

Explanation of verse 13
In Revelation 11:9, we read that ***"… some from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations will see their dead bodies three days and a half; and they do not allow their dead bodies to be put in tombs."***

From the above words, it is easy to understand the reason the enemies of the ***"two witnesses"*** did not wish to put their dead bodies in tombs. The famous religious leaders who had deceived the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** to accept the rulership of the ***"beast"*** and to worship it (Revelation

13:11-14), wanted to prove to them that **there is no God other than the man of lawlessness** of 2 Thessalonians 2:4! For them, therefore, these ***"two witnesses"*** must be a hoax! Certainly, these two will not be raised from the dead as the scriptures say! Will they? And they kept looking at the bodies of the ***"two witnesses"*** as they lay dead in the square of the great city Jerusalem ***"where our Lord was also crucified"*** (verse 8).

However, they were wrong! **God lives!** And the ***"man of lawlessness"*** is a false "god"! After three and a half days, God raised them from the dead and everyone saw that glorious event! At this point, many of the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** realized that their **famous religious leaders**, those whom they had trusted, had deceived them; and ***"a great earthquake took place"*** -- a great uproar! The previously deceived masses became angry and violent; ***"the one tenth of the city fell"*** and thousands of popular religious leaders of the Judeo-Christian community (the symbolic ***"earth"***) were killed in the symbolic ***"earthquake"***! ***"And the rest became terrified and they gave glory to the God of Heaven"*****!**

I praise You Lord Jesus! Thank You, Father! You are the God of true prophecy!

Verse 14: ***"The second woe is gone; look, the third woe is coming quickly."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14

The first ***"woe"*** was departed in Revelation 9:12 and had affected **the people of the symbolic *"earth"***; these people had been tormented by the ***"locusts"*** because of their sinful

ways. (For more information on the symbolic term ***"earth"***, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c].)

Here, the second ***"woe"*** is gone and it had brought death to thousands of popular religious leaders who had the authority of the ***"beast"*** and who deceived the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** in order to ***"worship the first beast, of which was healed its deadly wound."*** (Revelation 13:11-14).

The third ***"woe"*** is coming quickly, and it refers to the judgment that God will bring upon ***"Babylon the great"***. This statement, is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 18:10
"standing from afar because of the fear of her torment, saying, Woe! Woe to the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment came."

Revelation 18:16
"and saying, Woe! Woe to the great city having been clothed in linen and purple and scarlet, and having been gilded with gold and precious stone, and pearls!"

Revelation 18:19
"And they threw dust on their heads, and cried out, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe! Woe to the great city, by which all those having ships in the sea were rich, from her costliness, because in one hour she was ruined."

Verse 15: **"**[15]***And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's and of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15

In Revelation 10:7, we read:

"but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he will trumpet, the mystery of God will be complete, according to the good news which He gave to His servants the prophets."

And now, verse 15 has brought us to this point! The ***"seventh angel trumpeted"*****!** The Kingdom of God is here! ***"The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's and of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages"*****!** Now, the prophecies of Daniel 2:44 and 7:27 are fulfilled! We thank You Lord Jesus! Glory to God!

Verses 16-18: ***"***[16]***And the twenty-four elders who are sitting on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,*** [17]***saying, We thank You, Lord God the Almighty, the One who is, and the One who was, and the One who is coming, because You took Your great power and reigned.*** [18]***And the nations became angry; and Your wrath came, and the time to judge the dead, and to give the wages to Your slaves, to the prophets, and to the saints, and to those who fear Your name, to the small and to the great, and to destroy those who corrupt the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 16-18

The above verses are very simple; they do not need an explanation. Truly, the time has come for the words of Revelation 22:12 to be fulfilled and for the Lord Jesus to destroy those who corrupt the symbolic ***"earth"***!

Verse 19: ***"[a]And the temple of God in Heaven was opened, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple, [b]and lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and a great hail took place."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19[a]
"And the temple of God in Heaven was opened and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple,"

Why is the Ark of the Covenant seen in His heavenly temple?
To remind everyone that:

1. **YHWH**, the God of Israel, **is a covenant God**!

2. **He fulfilled the old covenant through Christ who is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone that believes in Him (Romans 10:4).

3. He kept His promise to Israel, that after the days of the old covenant, **He would cut a new covenant with them in order to forgive their sins**. Let us read His promise to Israel from Jeremiah 31:31-34:

   "[31]Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will cut a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, [32]not according to the covenant that I cut with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which covenant of Mine they broke, although I was a husband to them, says Jehovah). [33]But this shall be the covenant that I will cut with the house of Israel: After those days, declares Jehovah, I will put My Law in their inward parts,

and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. [34]***And they shall no longer each man teach his neighbor, and each man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah. For they shall all know Me, from the least of them even to the greatest of them, declares Jehovah. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more."***

4. He forgave the sins of all those who believed in Jesus through His blood, **the blood of the new covenant** (Matthew 26:28)! Let us read Isaiah 53:1-12 to see that the **"Arm of YHWH"** had to become a man in order to be slaughtered for our sins:

"[1]***Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of Jehovah revealed?*** [2]***For He comes up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form nor magnificence that we should see Him; nor form that we should desire Him.*** [3]***He is despised and abandoned of men, a Man of pains, and acquainted with sickness. And as it were hiding our faces from Him, He being despised, and we did not value Him.*** [4]***Surely He has borne our sicknesses, and He carried our pain; yet we esteemed Him plagued, smitten by God, and afflicted.*** [5]***But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His wounds we ourselves are healed.*** [6]***All we like sheep have gone astray; we have each one turned to his own way; and Jehovah made meet in Him the iniquity of all of us.*** [7]***He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, but He did not open His mouth. He was***

> ***led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a ewe before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth.*** [8]***He was taken from prison and from justice; and who shall consider His generation? For He was cut off out of the land of the living; from the transgression of My people, the stroke was to Him.*** [9]***And He appointed Him His grave with the wicked, but He was with a rich man in His death; though He had done no violence, and deceit was not in His mouth.*** [10]***But Jehovah pleased to crush Him, to make Him sick, so that If He should put His soul as a guilt offering, He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days; and the will of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand.*** [11]***He shall see the fruit of the travail of His soul; He shall be fully satisfied. By His knowledge the righteous One, My Servant, shall justify for many, and He shall bear their iniquities.*** [12]***Because of this I will divide to Him with the great, and with the strong He shall divide the spoil; because He poured out His soul to death; and He was counted with those transgressing; and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for those transgressing."***

Dear Reader, if you are one of the sons or daughters of Israel, please consider the above truth with an open heart! Please, turn your eyes to see Jesus on the cross (Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14,15) --- **to see the Redeemer of Israel, the Mighty One of Jacob** (Isaiah 60:16) **who became flesh** (John 1:14) **to offer Himself as a sacrifice for your sins** (Isaiah 53:5,12)**!** Please, do not belittle His great love for you (John 3:16)! Let us read a few verses from Isaiah chapters 59 and 60 to see the reason the God of Israel, the One who appeared to your father Abraham by the oaks of

Mamre (Genesis 18:1-8) and ate with him, had to become a man for a short period of time in order to become the Redeemer of Israel:

Isaiah 59:15-17,20
"[15]***And the truth is lacking; and whoever turns from evil makes himself a prey. And Jehovah saw; and it was evil in His eyes, that there was no justice.*** [16]***And He saw that there was no man, and He was astonished that there was no intercessor. And His own arm saved for Him; and His righteousness sustained Him.*** [17]***For He put on righteousness like armor, and a helmet of salvation on His head. And He put on robes of vengeance as clothing; and He put on zeal like a mantle …*** [20]***And the Redeemer comes to Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn back from their rebellion, declares Jehovah."***

Isaiah 60:16
"[16]***You shall also suck the milk of nations, and you shall suck the breast of kings. And you shall know that I, Jehovah, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."***

Please consider:
Unless the God of Israel became a man to offer Himself as a payment for your sins, how else would He, Personally, become your Redeemer?

Also, please consider the words of the Psalmist who, in Psalms 118:14-16,26-29, wrote:

"[14]***Jehovah is my strength and my song; and He is my salvation.*** [15]***The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; the right hand of Jehovah works***

mightily. [16]***The right hand of Jehovah is exalted; the right hand of Jehovah acts mightily …*** [25]***O Jehovah, I beseech You, save now; I beseech You, O Jehovah, cause us to prosper now.*** [26]***Blessed is he who comes in the name of Jehovah; we blessed you from the house of Jehovah.*** [27]***Jehovah is God, and He gives light to us. Tie the sacrifice with cords, to the horns of the altar.*** [28]***You are my God, and I will exalt You; My God, I will thank You!*** [29]***O give thanks to Jehovah, for He is good; for His mercy endures forever."***

Let us consider what we just read
In this chapter, the inspired Psalmist proclaims that Jehovah is his salvation and that His Right-Hand acts mightily (verses 14-16).

In verse 25, he said,

"O Jehovah, I beseech You, save now…."

In verse 26, he said,

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of Jehovah;"

Who is the One who comes to save in the name of Jehovah?
We'll find out in a second!

In verse 27, he wrote,

"Jehovah is God, and He gives light to us."

Of course, it is Jehovah who gives us understanding to see the One who comes in His name to save us! And suddenly, after these words, he says,

"Tie the sacrifice with cords, to the horns of the altar."

Now the Psalmist realizes what kind of salvation would the One who comes in the name of Jehovah bring! **A blood sacrifice is needed** because, ***"without blood there is no forgiveness"*** (Hebrews 9:22)**!**

Immediately after, as the Psalmist was in the Spirit, he must have looked on the altar to see the sacrifice! And Jehovah must have given him light to recognize the One who was on the altar because he exclaimed,

"You are my God, and I will exalt You; My God, I will thank You!" (Verse 28)

From David's inspired exclamation and thanksgiving, we realize that he, in a flash, recognized that the One who would ***"come in the name of Jehovah"*** to pour His own blood on the ***"altar"*** **in order to be the Redeemer of Israel, was his God**!

And I, like David, have also come to recognize **the Redeemer of Israel**. And I realized that He is:

a) **The YHWH who appeared to Abraham and ate with him** (Genesis 18:1-8)**;**

b) **the *"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15;

c) **the *"Son"*** of Psalm 2:12;

d) the *"Son"* of Isaiah 9:6 whose name is ***"Mighty God"*;**

e) the *"Son"* of Proverbs 30:4;

f) the Almighty *"Said"* of Genesis chapter 1, and

g) the *"Word"* of Psalms 33:6 and of John 1:1-3,14, who created all things for Himself (Colossians 1:16) and who became flesh to die for our sins!

Dear Son or Daughter of Abraham, would you like to ask Jehovah, the God of Israel, to give you light to see the One who poured His blood on the ***"altar"*** for **your** sins? I pray to God that you will; and I pray that you will cry out to Jesus with your own mouth and out of your own free will, the words of David which were repeated by Jesus in Matthew 23:39,

***"Blessed is He who comes in the name of Jehovah"*!**

The understanding of who Jesus is and your willingness to pray to Him will save you because the scriptures say,

"Whoever may call on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Joel 2:32)

Explanation of verse 19[b]

"and lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and a great hail took place."

Please read the explanation of Revelation 8:5[b] and 4:5[a].

Chapter Twelve

Verse 1: ***"[a]And a great sign was seen in heaven, a woman draped with the sun, [b]and the moon was under her feet; [c]and on her head she had a crown of twelve stars;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]
"[a]And a great sign was seen in heaven, a woman draped with the sun,"

Who is this symbolic *"woman"*?
In Genesis 3:15 we read:

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will bruise (or crush) ***your head, and you shall bruise His heel."***

From the above verse, we realize that the words of God towards the serpent are symbolic and prophetic. Women do not have seed; this is exclusive to men. Yet, God said that the ***"Seed"***, the One who would crush the head of the serpent, **would come out of this symbolic *"woman"***. For this reason, if we can identify the ***"Seed"***, we will also be able to identify the ***"woman"***!

The promised *"Seed"*
In Genesis 22:18, Moses wrote that the ***"Seed"***, in which not only Israel, but all the nations of the earth will be

blessed, **would come out of the seed of Abraham**. There we read:

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" (KJV; also read Genesis 26:4).

Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob (whom God called ***"Israel"***; Genesis 35:10), and Jacob fathered twelve sons. The twelve sons of Jacob became the Patriarchs of the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. **Therefore, the promised *"Seed"* would come out of the nation of Israel**.

The coming of the promised ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15 and 22:18, is the main theme of the Bible and it is carried over from the book of Genesis to the book of Revelation. From the numerous and accurate prophecies that were given about the timing of His coming (Daniel 9:24-26), about the place of His birth (Micah 5:2), about His Person (Isaiah 9:6) and about His work (Isaiah 53:4,5,11; Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14), we learn that **the promised *"Seed"*, the Messiah, would come out of the tribe of Judah and out of the bloodline of King David** (Genesis 49:8-10; Jeremiah 23:5,6; 33:14-16).

Are there any scriptures to prove that Israel became the symbolic *"woman"*?
Yes, there are! The Bible says that Yahweh, the God of Abraham, **made a covenant with the nation of Israel and thus Israel became God's symbolic *"woman"* or "wife"**. This statement is supported by Exodus 19:3-6; Jeremiah 2:2-4, Isaiah 54:1-8 and Ezekiel 16:2,3,8-14. Let us familiarize ourselves with Ezekiel 16:2,3,8-14:

"[2]Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, [3]and say, So says the Lord Jehovah to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth is of the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite … "[8]And I passed by you, and I looked on you, and, behold, your time was the time of love. And I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah. And you became Mine. [9]And I washed you with water; I washed away your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil. [10]And I dressed you with embroidered work, and I shod you with dugong sandals. And I wrapped you in fine linen, and I covered you with silk. [11]And I adorned you with ornaments, and I put bracelets on your hands and a chain on your neck. [12]And I put a ring on your nose and earrings on your ears and a crown of beauty on your head. [13]And you were adorned with gold and silver. And your clothing was fine linen and silk and embroidered work. Fine flour and honey and oil you ate. And you were very, very beautiful. And you advanced to regal estate. [14]And your name went out among the nations, because of your beauty, for it was perfect by My splendor which I had set on you, declares the Lord Jehovah."

What does it mean that this symbolic *"woman"* was *"draped with the sun"*?

In the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, **Description #9**, under the subtitle, '**What does the *"Sun"* represent?'**, we concluded that the term ***"sun"*** symbolizes **the LORD God and the shining splendor of His glory!** Therefore, the expression ***"draped with the sun"***, reveals that this symbolic ***"woman"*** was **draped with God's favor and glory!** This conclusion is also supported by verse 14 above. Let us read this verse again:

"[14]And your name went out among the nations, because of your beauty, for it was perfect by My splendor which I had set on you, declares the Lord Jehovah."

Explanation of verse 1[b]

"and the moon was under her feet;"

What do the above words signify?
They signify that **this symbolic *"woman"* stood on God's promise that the *"Seed"* of Genesis 3:15 will definitely come out of her and that as the moon will be forever, so will His throne**! This statement is supported by Psalms 89: 29-37. There, it says:

"[29]And I have established his Seed forever, and His throne as the days of the heavens. [30]If his sons forsake My Law, and do not walk in My judgments; [31]if they profane My statutes and do not keep My commandments; [32]then I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their sins with stripes. [33]But I will not annul My mercy from him, and I will not be false in My faithfulness. [34]I will not profane My covenant, nor change what goes from My lips. [35]Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. [36]His Seed shall be forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. [37]Like the moon, it shall be forever; and a faithful witness in the sky …."

Explanation of verse 1[c]

"and on her head she had a crown of twelve stars;"

In the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, **Description #7**, under subtitle **'What do the *"stars"* symbolize'**, and in the explanation of Revelation 2:1[b], we concluded that the symbolic term ***"stars"*** refers to heavenly angelic beings and

individuals on earth who are used by God to be **His messengers** such as priests of the Old Testament time and overseers of Christian churches. However, from Daniel 12:3 and Genesis 37:9, we realize that the symbolic term ***"stars"*** also refers to individuals who turn people to righteousness and even to individuals who hold special positions of honor such as **the twelve Patriarchs** of the twelve tribes of Israel. Let us read the fore mentioned scriptures:

Daniel 12:3
"And those who act wisely shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and those turning many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

Genesis 37:9,10
"[9]***And he*** (Joseph) ***dreamed still another dream, and told it to his brothers. And he said, Behold, I have dreamed another dream: And, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars were bowing themselves to me.*** [10]***And he told it to his father, and to his brothers. And his father rebuked him, and said to him, What is this dream which you have dreamed? Shall we indeed come to bow ourselves to the earth to you, I, your mother, and your brothers?"***

Thus, the ***"twelve stars"*** which made up the crown that she had ***"on her head"***, is a symbol of **the twelve Patriarchs** of the twelve tribes of Israel!

Verse 2: ***"and as she was pregnant, she cries, having labor pains and she was in distress to bear."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

The above verse refers to the turbulent and painful times this symbolic ***"woman"*** went through until she gave birth, so to speak, to the promised "***Seed"***.

Verse 3: ***"[a]And another sign was seen in heaven. And, look, a great red dragon [b]having seven heads [c]and ten horns, [d]and on his heads were seven diadems,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"[a]And another sign was seen in heaven. And, look, a great red dragon"

Who is this *"great red dragon"*?

Verse 9 gives the answer. Let us read it:

"And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent, the one who is called devil and Satan; the one who deceives the entire world …."

What does it mean that the *"dragon"* is *"red"*?

It means that this ***"dragon"*** is **very angry!** This statement is supported by verse 12. There, we read,

"… the devil came down to you having great anger, knowing that he has a little time."

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"having seven heads"

What do the *"seven heads"* symbolize?

In Revelation 17:9,10, the angel explained to John that:

"[9]***… the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated;*** [10]***they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while."*** (ESV)

From the above words, we learn that the symbolic terms ***"heads"*** or ***"mountains"*** symbolize ***"kingdoms"*** or ***"governments"*** including their leaders or kings, **whether these kingdoms are political or religious.**

For biblical support on the above statement, please read the explanation of Revelation 6:14[b].

How can the symbolic term *"mountains"* symbolize both *"kings"* and their *"kingdoms"*?
Because every kingdom has a king! Those two are interconnected!

Explanation of verse 3[c]
"and ten horns,"

What does the term *"horns"* symbolize?
Although the symbolic term ***"mountains"*** refers to ***"Kingdoms"*** including their ***"kings"***, the symbolic term ***"horns"*** refers to ***"kings"*** only. This statement is supported by Revelation 17:12, Daniel 7:24 and 8:20,21. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 17:12
"And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast."

Daniel 7:24
"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise …."

Daniel 8:20,21
"[20]***The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia.*** [21]***And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king."***

Explanation of verse 3[d]

"and on his heads were seven diadems,"

What do the *"diadems"* signify?
"Diadems" (i.e., crowns) are signs of authority, and they are placed on the heads of ruling kings.

The above appearance of the ***"red dragon"*** (Satan) which had ***"seven heads"*** and ***"ten horns"***, reminds us of the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 13:1 and 17:3. There, we read:

Revelation 13:1
"And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten diadems, and on its heads names of blasphemy."

Revelation 17:3
"And he carried me away into a desert, by the Spirit. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, filled with names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

The above ***"beast"*** of Revelation chapters 13 and 17 is a political ***"beast"***. It represents seven world empires or

"kings" that have ruled on this planet and the ***"beast"*** itself will become the **eighth king** or world government (Revelation 17:10,11). Consequently, the burning questions are:

1. **Why does Satan** (the ***"red dragon"***) **appear like the political *"beast"* of Revelation chapters 13 and 17?**

2. **As the *"heads"* or *"mountains"* symbolize *"kingdoms"*, as the *"horns"* symbolize *"kings"* and as the *"diadems"* symbolize their authority to rule, how is it possible that Satan** (the ***"red dragon"***)**, carries them all on himself?**

The answer is simple! **Satan has authority over all of the above!** This statement is supported by Luke 4:5-7. There, it says,

"[5]And leading Him (Jesus) ***up into a high mountain, the Devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. [6]And the Devil said to Him, I will give all this authority and their glory to You, because it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. [7]Then if You worship before me, all will be Yours."*** (Author's parenthesis)

Also, please meditate on the first part of Revelation 13:4.

Verse 4: ***"[a]and his tail draws the one third of the stars of heaven, and he threw them to the earth. [b]And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear, in order to devour her child when she gives birth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4[a]

"and his tail draws the one third of the stars of heaven, and he threw them to the earth."

The above words are very simple because in the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under **Description #7**, we established that the symbolic term ***"stars"*** refers to angels. Therefore, the words, ***"his tail draws the one third of the stars of heaven"***, tell us that one third of the angels in heaven **followed** Satan in his rebellion against God and that at a certain time he commanded them to come to the planet earth.

Explanation of verse 4[b]

"And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear, in order to devour her child when she gives birth."

How did Satan try to *"devour"*, in other words, to destroy the child after it was born?
In Matthew 2:13-16, we read:

"[13]***…an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph by a dream, saying, Rise up! Take the child and His mother with you, and flee into Egypt. And be there until I shall tell you. For Herod is about to look for the child in order to destroy Him.*** [14]***And rising up, he took along the child and His mother by night and withdrew into Egypt.*** [15]***And he was there until the end of Herod, that might be fulfilled that spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I have called My Son."*** [16]***Then seeing that he was mocked by the wise men, Herod was greatly enraged, and having sent, he killed all the boys in Bethlehem and in all***

its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he exactly asked from the wise men."

Verse 5: ***"And she gave birth to a son,*** (to) ***a male, who is going to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught away to God, and to His throne."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

The time came when all the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets, regarding the coming of the ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15, were fulfilled! The ***"Word"*** of God (Psalms 33:6; John 1:1,14), the Almighty ***"Said"*** of Genesis chapter one who created all things, became flesh to be sacrificed for the sins of all those who will believe in Him (Matthew 1:21; John 3:15). After He died on the cross, He was buried. Then, on the third day, **He rose from the dead proving in power that He is** ***"the Son of God"*** (Romans 1:4), a title which demands Deity (John 5:18; Matthew 26: 63-65), and went to heaven and sat at the right hand of God (Hebrews 10:12).

Is there an Old Testament prophecy which says that the Son of God will *"shepherd all the nations with an iron rod"*?

Yes, there is! In Psalms 2:1-12, we read:

"[1]Why have the nations raged and the peoples are meditating on vanity? [2]The kings of the earth set themselves; yea, the rulers have plotted together against Jehovah and His Anointed, saying, [3]We will break their bands in two, and throw off their cords from us. [4]He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall mock at them. [5]Then He will speak to them in His anger, and He will terrify

them in His wrath; [6]***Yea, I have set My king on My holy mount on Zion.*** [7]***I will declare concerning the statute of Jehovah: He said to Me, You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.*** [8]***Ask of Me, and I will give the nations as Your inheritance; and the uttermost parts of the earth as Your possession.*** [9]***You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*** [10]***Now, then, be wise, O kings; be taught, O judges of the earth:*** [11]***Serve Jehovah with fear; yea, rejoice with trembling.*** [12]***Kiss*** (love) ***the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Oh the blessings of all those who flee to Him for refuge!"***

Verse 6: ***"And the woman fled to the desert, where she has a place prepared by God, in order to be fed there a thousand two hundred and sixty days."*** (AT)

Because verse 14 expresses the same truth as verse 6, it is a good idea to read it now and to include it in the explanation of verse 6.

Verse 14: ***"And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order to fly into the desert, to her place, where they will feed her*** (for) ***a time, and times, and half a time, away from the face of the serpent."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 6 and 14

From the above verses, we observe that God was in control and it was He who helped the symbolic ***"woman"*** to ***"fly"*** to the ***"desert"***, to be ***"fed"*** there for 3½ years ***"away from the face of the Serpent"***.

Did the symbolic *"woman"* *"fly"* into the *"desert"* before she gave birth to her Son or after?

In the last part of verse 5 (above), we read:

"… her child was caught away to God, and to His throne."

These words correspond to the words of Hebrews 12:2. There, it says,

"looking to the Author and Finisher of our faith, Jesus, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, "and sat down at the right" of the throne of God."

Therefore, the symbolic ***"woman" "fled"*** to the ***"desert"***, **after** the resurrected Lord Jesus ascended to heaven and **sat at the right hand of God!**

As we realized previously (in the explanation of verse 1ª), the symbolic ***"woman"*** who gave ***"birth"*** to the promised ***"Seed"***, consisted of **all of Israel**. However, the question is:

Who made up the symbolic *"woman"* after her Son was taken to the throne of God?
When Jesus, the promised ***"Seed"*** of Genesis 3:15, came to save His people from their sins (Isaiah chapter 53 and Matthew 1:21), **all Israel did not believe in Him**. Their rulers did not recognize Him because if they had, ***"they would not have crucified the Lord of glory"*** (1 Corinthians 2:8). Thus, by that time, the faithful symbolic ***"woman"*** **was reduced to those Israelites who believed and followed Him only**!

To further prove the above point, let us read the words of Jesus towards His compatriots who did not believe in Him and who wanted to kill Him:

John 8:37-47
"[37]***I know that you are Abraham's seed, but you seek to kill Me, because My Word is not given room in you.*** [38]***I speak what I have seen with My Father. And you therefore do what you have seen with your father.*** [39]***They answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, If you were children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham.*** [40]***But now you seek to kill Me, a man who has spoken the truth to you, which I heard alongside of God. Abraham did not do this.*** [41]***You do the works of your father. They said to Him, We were not born of fornication; we have one father, God.*** [42]***Then Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I went forth and have come from God. For I have not come from Myself, but that One sent Me.*** [43]***Why do you not know My speech? It is because you are not able to hear My Word.*** [44]***You are of the Devil as father, and the lusts of your father you desire to do. That one was a murderer from the beginning, and he has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own, because he is a liar, and the father of it.*** [45]***And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.*** [46]***Who of you reproves Me concerning sin? But if I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?*** [47]***The one who is of God hears the Words of God; for this reason you do not hear, because you are not of God."***

Why was it necessary for the symbolic *"woman"* to *"fly"* into the *"desert"*?
To avoid persecution from her compatriots!

After the crucifixion of Christ, the religious leaders of Jerusalem launched ***"a great persecution"*** against the ***"woman"***, in other words, **against the Jews who believed in Jesus**. For this reason, the first Jewish believers who were in Jerusalem were scattered to other places (Acts 8:1,3; 23:12, 21). Running away to avoid persecution and being surrounded by **spiritually dry people**, it was as if they ***"flew"*** into a ***"desert"***!

The prophet Isaiah prophesied about the dry spiritual condition that would exist in Israel **at the time of the coming of their Redeemer God to Zion**. To appreciate how dry the conditions would be, all we have to do is to read the whole chapter of Isaiah 59 and Isaiah 40:3 carefully, **and to consider Isaiah's words in a new and fresh way**. There, Isaiah likened Israel to a ***"desert"***. He said,

"A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

What does the expression, *"And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman"*, mean?
The student of the Bible will easily realize that the eagle is associated with God Himself. **The eagle depicts God's ability to deliver people from their captivity in order to bring them to Himself**. In the book of Exodus, God said to the Israelites, whom He delivered from their captivity in Egypt,

"You have seen what I did to Egypt and I bore you on wings of eagles and brought you to Me." (Chapter 19:4),

Also, in Deuteronomy 32:11,12, we read:

"[11]***As the eagle stirs up its nest; it hovers over its young; it spreads out its wings and takes it, and bears it on its wing.*** [12]***Jehovah alone led him, and there was no strange god with him."***

At the time of the exodus, when God bore this symbolic ***"woman" "on wings of eagles"*** (Exodus 19:4), He

a) Brought them out of their slavery (Jeremiah 34:13).

b) Sent them into the **desert** (Deuteronomy 29:5) where **He fed them** manna (Deuteronomy 8:16).

c) **Brought them to Himself** (Exodus 19:4).

Likewise, at that time, God gave the ***"woman" "the two wings of the great eagle"***. This expression has the same meaning as if we were to say that God bore them ***"on wings of eagles"***. By giving them ***"the two wings of the great eagle"***, He:

a) Brought them **freedom from their religious slavery** under the Mosaic Law (Luke 4:18,19; Colossians 2:14),

b) Took them ***"away from the face of the serpent"***,

c) Sent them into the ***"desert"*** where **He fed them** spiritually through His Holy Spirit who was with them and in them (John 14:17)**,** and

d) Brought them to the point of developing **trust** and **a personal relationship with Him** through their faith in Jesus Christ (John 14:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

And there was nothing that Satan could do to stop Him!

Why would God feed the symbolic *"woman"* spiritually for 3½ years only? Would He stop feeding her after this specific length of time?
No, of course not! Simply, the 3½ years would fulfill the prophecy found in Daniel 9:24-27 **regarding the 70 weeks of years, which God had appointed for Israel only**. Let us read and examine these verses one at a time:

(The following four verses are author's translation from the Greek "Βάμβα" (Vamva) version.)

Daniel 9:24-27: ***"***[24]***Seventy weeks have been appointed for your people, and for your holy city, in order to finish the transgression, and to bring the sins to an end, and to make atonement for lawlessness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy One.*** [25]***Know then, and understand, that from the issuing of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, until*** (the coming of) ***Christ the Leader, will be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks; the city square and the wall will be built again in troubled times.*** [26]***And after the sixty two weeks, the Christ will be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the leader who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its end will come with a flood, and destructions have been determined until the end of the war*** (after the word ***"war"***, LXX contains the word [συντετμημένου] which means: ***'the days of which have been cut short'***; compare with Matthew 24:22.) [27a]***And He will establish*** (or ***'make solid'***, ***'make unshakable'***; LXX: [δυναμώσει] = ***'strengthen'***) ***the covenant with many in one week;*** [b]***and in the middle of the week the sacrifice and the offering will come to an end,***

[c]***and the abomination of the desolation*** (or ***'the abomination which causes desolation'***) ***will be upon the wing of the holy place,*** [d]***and until the end of time, a deadline*** (or ***'an extension of time'***) ***will be given to the desolation."*** (AT)

A synopsis
To understand the above verses, one must read the entire chapter of Daniel 9. In that chapter, Daniel prayed to God (verse 4) and asked **forgiveness for the sins and the iniquities on behalf of the people of Israel who had departed from the commandments of God** (verse 5).

While he was praying (verse 20), Gabriel came to give him understanding (verses 21,22). And in verses 24-27, Gabriel revealed God's plan for Israel regarding:

a) The time in which He would provide the means for Israel's forgiveness,

b) who would the Messiah be, the Leader, who would come to save Israel from their sins, and

c) how He would accomplish this task,

At the same time, Gabriel indicated that:

- **Not all** of Daniel's people would accept the Messiah, the Leader of their salvation, and that,
- they would **kill Him!** For this reason,
- He would establish the unshakable covenant **with many** in Israel in one week --- but not with all**!**

Also, Gabriel spoke of another ***"leader"*** who, along with his ***"people"***, would come like a ***"flood"*** to destroy the city and its temple! Now, let us examine Daniel 9:24-27 one verse at a time:

Daniel 9:24: ***"Seventy weeks have been appointed for your people, and for your holy city, in order to finish the transgression, and to bring the sins to an end, and to make atonement for lawlessness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy One."*** (AT)

Examining Daniel 9:24

From the above verse, we realize that Gabriel (verse 21), presented to Daniel the gospel of salvation hundreds of years before the coming of Christ, because **he presented the Person and the work of the Savior!**

What did Gabriel reveal about the Person of the Savior?
In the end of verse 24, we read the words,

"… to anoint the Most Holy One" (please check NIV's footnote).

There is only one Person in the whole universe who is the ***"Most Holy One"*** --- **God!** From Gabriel's words then, we realize that the One who would become the Christ in order to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21), would be God in the flesh (Philippians 2:6-11; John 1:1,14)!

What did Gabriel say about the work of the Savior?
He said that He would:

1. Bring an **end to transgression**!

2. Bring an **end to sins**!

3. Make **atonement for lawlessness**!

4. Bring in **everlasting righteousness!**

5. ***"Seal up vision and prophecy"***!

Now, let us examine the foregoing five points one at a time:

1. Bring an end to transgression.

Did Jesus bring an end to transgression?
Yes, He did! He brought an end to transgression **by removing the Old Covenant with its Law and ordinances** that were against the people of Israel (Colossians 2:14), and **by establishing the New Covenant in His blood** (Jeremiah 31:31; Matthew 26:28).

What connection is there between Law and transgression?
In Romans 4:15, the apostle Paul wrote that,

"… where there is no law neither is there transgression." (EMTV)

2. Bring an end to sins.

Did Jesus bring an end to the sins?
Yes, He did! Please consider the following scriptures:

Luke 24:47
"… remission of sins must be preached on His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

John 1:29
"On the morrow, John sees Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold! The Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world!"

Acts 13:38
"… through this One remission of sin is announced to you."

Hebrews 9:26
"… But now once for all, at the completion of the ages, He has been manifested for putting away of sin through the sacrifice of Himself."

Matthew 1:21
"And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.

Matthew 26:28
"For this is My blood of the New Covenant which concerning many is being poured out for remission of sins."

3. Make atonement for lawlessness.

Did Jesus make atonement (propitiation, reconciliation) **for lawlessness?**

Yes, He did! Let us read the following verses:

1 John 3:4,5
"[4]Everyone practicing sin also practices lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. [5]And you know that that One was revealed that He might take away our sins, and sin is not in Him."

Romans 3:24,25
"being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, as a demonstration of His righteousness through the passing over of the sins that had taken place before, in the forbearance of God,"

Hebrews 2:17
"For this reason He ought by all means to become like His brothers, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the things respecting God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of His people."

Titus 2:14
"who gave Himself on our behalf, "that He might redeem us from all lawlessness and purify a special people for Himself," zealous of good works."

1 John 2:2
"And He Himself is the propitiation relating to our sins, and not relating to ours only, but also relating to all the world."

1 John 4:10

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation relating to our sins."

4. Bring in everlasting righteousness.

Did Jesus bring in everlasting righteousness?
Yes, He did! Let us consider the following scriptures:

Romans 3:21-26

"[21]But now a righteousness of God has been revealed apart from Law, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, [22]even the righteousness of God through faith of Jesus Christ toward all and upon all those believing; for there is no difference, [23]for all sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24]being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus, [25]whom God set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, as a demonstration of His righteousness through the passing over of the sins that had taken place before, in the forbearance of God, [26]for a demonstration of His righteousness in the present time, for His being just and justifying the one that is of the faith of Jesus."

Romans 10:3,4

"[3]For being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit to the righteousness of God. [4]For Christ is the end of Law for righteousness to everyone that believes."

Hebrews 9:12
"nor through the blood of goats and of calves, but through His own blood, He entered once for all into the Holy of Holies, having procured everlasting redemption."

1 Corinthians 1:30
"But of Him, you are in Christ Jesus, who was made to us wisdom from God, both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,"

Please note:
In Romans 3:22 and 10:4, **the righteousness of God is towards all those who believe in Jesus only**! To the Jews who did not believe in Him, Jesus said,

"Therefore, I said to you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I AM, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)

And to the scribes and Pharisees, He said,

"Serpents! Offspring of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Hell?" (Matthew 23:33)

From the above words of the Lord Jesus, we realize that His everlasting righteousness would not apply to all the Jews as a nation, but only to those Jews who will hear the gospel and who will believe that **Jesus is the YHWH** (the Lord) **of Romans 10:13 whose Name they must call upon (to whom they must pray) in order to be saved** (Romans 10: 1,9,13-14)!

5. *"seal up vision and prophecy".*

Did Jesus *"seal up* (fulfill) ***vision and prophecy"*?**
Yes, He did! In Matthew 5:17 Jesus said that He did not come to annul the Law and the Prophets but to **fulfill** them! And from the Scriptures we know that He fulfilled (or ***"sealed up"***) every prophecy which referred to the Person and to the work of the Messiah concerning sin!

How did Jesus accomplish the foregoing 5 points?
Through His death and resurrection! We conclude, therefore, that **all the prophecies mentioned in verse 24, were fulfilled in the first Christian century** by the Lord Jesus Christ!

Daniel 9:25: ***"Know then, and understand, that from the issuing of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem, until*** (the coming of) ***Christ the Leader, will be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks; the city square and the wall will be built again in troubled times."*** (AT)

Examining Daniel 9:25
Wow! The above words constitute one of the most powerful prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah! Other prophecies had pointed to the place of His birth and to the work He was to do in order to save His people from their sins. But, **this prophecy, gives us the exact timing of the appearance of the Christ:** From the issuing of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of Christ, there would be sixty-nine weeks (7+62) or 483 years (***"a day for a year"***: Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6)! For this reason, there was no excuse for any Jew of the first century who had read this verse, not to look around to see whether the Messiah had arrived!

The last part of verse 25, ***"the city square and the wall will be built again in troubled times"***, is simple and it needs no explanation.

An important point
In verse 25, Gabriel did not say that Christ would come sometime in the 68th week or sometime in the 69th week; he was specific and said, ***"until*** (the coming of) ***Christ the Leader, will be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks"***, in other words, **69 complete weeks**. Consequently, the Most Holy One would become the Christ **in the beginning of the seventieth week**!

Daniel 9:26: ***"[a]And after the sixty-two weeks, the Christ will be cut off, but not for Himself; [b]and the people of the leader who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its end will come with a flood, and destructions have been determined until the end of the war."*** (AT)

Examining Daniel 9:26[a]
"[a]And after the sixty-two weeks, the Christ will be cut off, but not for Himself;"

The above words are clear: The Christ was to be ***"cut off"*** (to be executed) ***"after"*** the 69th week (7+62) and consequently, **during the 70th week!**

What do the words, *"the Christ will be cut off, but not for Himself"*, mean?
These words mean that the Christ would die for the sins of the world (John 1:29), ***"but not for Himself"*** because He was without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21)**!**

Did the Christ die for the sins of the world in the first century?
Amen! Yes, He did! He died, He was buried and, on the third day, He was raised from the dead **for the everlasting justification of all those who believe in Him** (1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Romans 4:25; 10:4).

Examining Daniel 9:26[b]

"[b]and the people of the leader who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its end will come with a flood, and destructions have been determined until the end of the war."

A point of interest
In verse 26, we observe that right after the mention of the execution of Christ, Gabriel went on to say that there will be another ***"leader"***, who, along with his ***"people"*** (his ***"soldiers"***; please see glossary below and compare with Luke 21:20), would come like a ***"flood"*** to destroy the city and its temple!

Glossary
In verse 26[b], we met the words ***"people"*** and ***"flood"***. What do these words mean? About the word ***"people"***, please check Strong's Dictionary, word #H5971 from H6004: a people [as a congregated unit] … **troops** … ;). And about the word ***"flood"***, please meditate on Isaiah 59:19.

Daniel 9:27: ***"[a]And He will establish*** (or ***'make solid'***, ***'make unshakable'***; LXX: [δυναμώσει] = ***'strengthen'***) ***the covenant with many in one week; [b]and in the middle of the week the sacrifice and the offering will come to an end, [c]and the abomination of the desolation*** (or ***'the abomination which causes desolation'***) ***will be upon the***

wing of the holy place, [d]***and until the end of time, a deadline*** (or ***'an extension of time'***) ***will be given to the desolation."*** (AT)

Examining Daniel 9:27[a]

"[a]***And He will establish*** (or ***'make solid'***, ***'make unshakable'***; LXX: [δυναμώσει] = ***'strengthen'***) ***the covenant with many in one week;"***

In verses 25 and 26[a], we met ***"Christ the Leader"*** who would be ***"cut off"*** (executed)**,** and in verse 26[b] we met this other ***"leader"*** who, along with his ***"people"*** (his ***"soldiers"***), would come like a ***"flood"*** to destroy the city and its temple.

How do we know that *"Christ the leader"* of verses 25 and 26[a] is not the same Person as *"the leader"* of verse 26[b]?

The answer is simple: ***"Christ the leader"*** would come to be ***"cut off"*** on behalf of others --- a fact that took place 3½ years after He started His ministry, while the other ***"leader"*** would come later with his ***"people"*** (his soldiers) to destroy Jerusalem --- a fact that took place approximately 40 years after the death of Christ, in the year 70 A.D.

In the above verse, 27[a], it says:

"He will establish the covenant with many in one week".

Who does the word *"He"* refer to? To Christ who would be *"cut off"* or to the other *"leader"* who would come to destroy Jerusalem and its temple?

As the words of Gabriel were an answer to Daniel's plea for forgiveness for the sins and the transgression of his people, **the above word *"He"* refers to Christ** because, according to verse 24, it would be Him who would bring an end to all these! And as we learned earlier, Jesus accomplished this task through His death! Thus, when He poured His own blood on the cross, He brought the Old Covenant to its end (the covenant which He, as ***"the Angel of the Covenant"*** and as ***"the Angel of Jehovah"***, had established with Israel [Malachi 3:1; Judges 2:1), and He replaced it with **the New Covenant which He established in His blood** (Jeremiah 31:31; Mark 14:24). On the other hand, the work of the other ***"leader"*** was to destroy the city and its temple --- **not to make a covenant with those who were about to be destroyed by him!**

Please note:
The above verse (27[a]) says that He will establish the covenant ***"with many"*** (in Israel because verse 24 says, ***"for your people"***) in one week or seven years!

Why did the prophecy say that Christ would establish the covenant *"with many in one week"*? Why not with all Israel?
The prophet Jeremiah had prophesied that God would ***"cut a new covenant with the house of Israel"*** (Jeremiah 31: 31). Therefore, when Jesus established the new covenant with His blood, **the invitation to enter His new covenant was extended to the entire house of Israel**. However, only those Israelites who would recognize the fact that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God and therefore God in essence and believe in Him would be partakers of it (John 3:16; 6:40; 8:24)! And **many did** --- but not all! This is the reason Jesus said,

"… this is my blood, the blood of the new covenant, which is poured out <u>on behalf of many</u> for the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:28; AT)

The above words of the Lord echoed the words of Daniel 9:27[a]!

Does this mean that the Christ would not include other nations in His newly established covenant?
Absolutely not! Jesus died for the sins of **all mankind** (1 John 2:2). However, according to the foregoing prophecy of the seventy weeks which God had appointed **for Israel only** (Daniel 9:24), we realize that it was His will for Israel to receive that benefit **first** (Romans 1:16; 2:9,10; Luke 24: 47)! In other words, God had decided to offer grace and salvation from their sins, through faith in His Son Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8), **exclusively to Israel** (Matthew 10: 5,6; 15:22,24; 19:9,10) **for one week (the 70th week) only**! After the end of the 70th week, without cutting Israel off, **God would bring this exclusivity with Israel to an end** and He would extend this offer of grace and salvation from their sins **to all people of all nations** (Genesis 22:18) who would believe that Jesus, ***"the Angel of Jehovah"*** of Judges 2:1, **is the *"Lord of all"***; and He started with the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 10:36; please read the entire chapter of Acts 10.)

Examining Daniel 9:27[b]

"[b]and in the middle of the week the sacrifice and the offering will come to an end,"

Did the Christ bring *"the sacrifice and the offering"* of the Old Covenant to an end *"in the middle of the week"*?

Yes, He did! After 3½ years of ministry as the Christ, He poured His own blood on the cross for the sins of all those who will believe in Him (John 8:24). By doing so, **He brought the sacrifices and the offerings concerning sins to their end** because these were only a ***"shadow"*** of the real things to come! Let us read Hebrews 10:1-18:

"[1]***For the Law had a shadow of the coming good things, not the image itself of those things. Appearing year by year with the same sacrifices, which they offer continually, they never are able to perfect the ones drawing near.*** [2]***Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? Because those serving did not still have conscience of sins, having once been cleansed.*** [3]***But in these there is a remembrance of sins year by year,*** [4]***for it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*** [5]***For this reason, coming into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You prepared a body for Me.*** [6]***You did not delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices concerning sins."*** [7]***"Then I said, Lo, I come, in the heading of the Book it was written concerning Me, to do Your will, O God."*** [8]***Above, saying, "You did not desire nor were pleased with sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and sacrifices concerning sins," (which are offered according to the Law),*** [9]***then He said, "Lo, I come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first in order that He may set up the second;*** [10]***by which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*** [11]***And indeed every priest stands day by day ministering, and often offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.*** [12]***But He, offering but one sacrifice for sins, "sat down" in perpetuity "at the right hand" of God,*** [13]***from then on expecting "until His enemies are placed as a footstool" of His feet.*** [14]***For by one offering***

He has perfected in perpetuity the ones being sanctified. [15]***And the Holy Spirit witnesses to us also. For after having said before,*** [16]***"This is the covenant which I will covenant to them after those days, says the Lord: Giving My Laws on their hearts, and I will write them on their minds;"*** [17]***also He adds, "I will not at all still remember their sins" and their lawlessnesses.*** [18]***But where remission of these is, there is no longer offering concerning sins."***

Can we prove from the Scriptures that Christ's ministry lasted 3½ years, in other words, that He died in the middle of the 70th week?
Yes, we can! Let us consider the following truths:

1. After His baptism, where the Holy Spirit anointed Him (Luke 3:22), He went to the desert to be tried by the Devil for 40 days [about 1½ months] (Matthew 4:1).

2. He celebrated 4 Jewish Passovers:

   The first is mentioned in John 2:13; there, it says,

   "And the Passover of the Jews was near. And Jesus went up to Jerusalem."

   The second is mentioned in John 5:1; there, we read:

   "After these things, there was the feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." (AT)

Please note
Although the word ***"Passover"*** is not mentioned in the above verse, I believe that it refers to a Passover for two reasons:

a) Although in English translations of John 5:1 we meet the phrase ***"a feast of the Jews"*** with the article ***"a"*** in front of the words ***"feast of the Jews"***, there are some Greek manuscripts which have **the definite article** ***"the"*** (η) in front of the words ***"feast of the Jews"*** and the phrase appears as ***"the feast of the Jews"*** (check GNT-V).

b) The ***"Passover"*** was the most important feast of the Jews, and John, in the past, had called it, ***"the feast of the Jews"*** (please read John 6:4 below).

The third is mentioned in John 6:4. There, it says,

"And the Passover was near, the feast of the Jews."

The fourth appears in John 13:1. Let's read it:

"And before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He should move from this world to the Father, loving His own in the world, He loved them to the end."

Jesus was executed on the 4th.

The above four Passovers account for 3 years.

3. After He was tried in the desert and up to the time He celebrated the first Passover, Jesus dwelled for some time in Capernaum where He started preaching about the kingdom of God, He selected His disciples, He travelled throughout Galilee (Matthew 4: 12-25) and He went to Cana to attend a wedding (John 2:1). All this activity required time --- **at least a few months!**

4. After He died and was raised from the dead, He spent another 40 days [approximately 1½ months] with His disciples (Acts 1:13).

When we add all the above time together, we come very close to 3½ years!!!

What have we learned so far?
That **through His eternal sacrifice**, which took place ***"after"*** the 69th week (7+62) and consequently in the middle of the 70th week, **Jesus established a new covenant with the people of Israel and brought an end to the sacrifices and to the offerings which were prescribed by the Law concerning sins!** Therefore, Jesus fulfilled the prophecies found in Daniel 9:27[a] and 27[b] in the first Christian century!!

Examining Daniel 9:27[c]

"[c]and the abomination of the desolation (or ***'the abomination which causes desolation'***) ***will be upon the wing of the holy place,"***

Was this part of the prophecy to be fulfilled in the first Christian century also?

Yes, indeed! In Matthew 24:15,16, Jesus referred to the above words of Daniel 9:27 and warned His disciples as follows:

"[15]***Then when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one reading, let him understand),*** [16]***then let those in Judea flee into the mountains;"***

Examining Daniel 9:27[d]
"[d]***and until the end of time, a deadline*** (or ***'an extension of time'***) ***will be given to the desolation."***

The above words show us that the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple (Matthew 24:1,2), would not take place in the 70th week, but **later**, because an extension of time would be given to the desolation!

How much later?
In Matthew 24:34, Jesus said that all these things would take place in their generation! Let us read His words:

"Truly I say to you, In no way will this generation pass away until all these things have occurred."

The above words of the Lord Jesus Christ constituted a true prophecy because the destruction of Jerusalem and of its temple took place **in their generation**, approximately 40 years later, in the year 70 AD.!

From all the above, we realized that all the prophecies found in Daniel 9:24-27, in other words, **the prophecy of the 70 consecutive weeks concerning the sins and the transgression of the people of Israel, the prophecy con-**

cerning the timing of the coming of the Most Holy One who would be the Christ, the prophecy regarding the timing of His death by which He would make atonement for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, establish the new covenant, seal up vision and prophecy (regarding the coming and the work of Christ) and the prophecy of the destruction of the city and of its temple which would take place later, after the 70 consecutive weeks, were all fulfilled in the first century! With the exception of the mention of that other ***"leader"*** who, with his ***"people"*** (his soldiers), would come like ***"a flood"*** to destroy Jerusalem and the temple, all the verses (24-27) referred to the coming of the True Christ and to His salvific work --- not to the coming of a future antichrist and to the political future of the nation of Israel!

Now that we have a clear understanding on the fulfillment of the seventy weeks, we can see why God, after the death and resurrection of Christ (which took place 3½ years after the beginning of His ministry), continued to ***"feed"*** His faithful Jewish ***"woman"*** in the ***"desert"*** for another **3½ years only**! **He did it in order to complete the 70th week of exclusive favor for Israel!**

Before we move on to our explanation of Revelation 12:7-9, I feel that it is a good idea to spend a little more time on Daniel 9:26 and 27. When we read these two verses, we observe that both, **right after the statements they make about the execution of Christ, they mention the destruction of Jerusalem and of its temple!** I find it so peculiar! Let us read these verses again, focusing on their second part:

Daniel 9:26
"[26]***And after the sixty-two weeks, the Christ will be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the leader who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary; and its end will come with a flood, and destructions have been determined until the end of the war."***

Daniel 9:27
[27]***And He will establish the covenant with many in one week; and in the middle of the week the sacrifice and the offering will come to an end, and the abomination of the desolation will be upon the wing of the holy place, and until the end of time, a deadline*** (or ***'an extension of time'***) ***will be given to the desolation."***

Why do verses 26 and 27 above mention the destruction of Jerusalem and of its temple right after they announce the execution of Christ?
To understand the depth of this question and to give a biblical answer, we must consider the following truths:

In John 5:36-40, Jesus said to the Jews,

"[36]***But I have the greater witness than John's, for the works which the Father has given Me, that I should finish them, the works which I do, themselves, witness concerning Me, that the Father has sent Me.*** [37]***And the Father, the One sending Me, has Himself borne witness concerning Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor have you seen His form.*** [38]***And you do not have His Word abiding in you, for the One whom that One sent, this One you do not believe.*** [39]***You search the Scriptures, for you think in them you have everlasting life. And they are the***

ones witnessing concerning Me. [40]***And you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life."***

From the above words, we observe that there were three sources which gave witness as to who the man Jesus was:

a) The works (the miracles) He did,

b) the Father (Matthew 3:17; 17:5), and

c) the Scriptures.

All the first century Jews had to do to identify Him was to pay attention to the above-mentioned sources!

From the Scriptures, they knew that **apart from shedding of blood there is no remission of sins** (Hebrews 9:22). This is the reason the Law demanded blood sacrifices.

A point to consider:
If God was to be the Savior and **the Redeemer** of Israel, He would have to become a man for the purpose of paying **for their sins with His own blood**! Otherwise, the title **"Redeemer"** would not belong to Him!

Had God told the Israelites that He would become their Redeemer?
Yes, He had! In Isaiah 59:12-20! There, He had told them clearly that **He would come to Zion to be their Redeemer.** Let us read these verses:

"[12]***For our rebellions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us. For our transgressions are with us, and we know our iniquities;*** [13]***transgressing and lying***

against Jehovah, and backsliding from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and murmuring words of falsehood from the heart. [14]***And justice is driven back; and righteousness stands far off; for truth stumbles in the plaza, and right is not able to enter.*** [15]***And the truth is lacking; and whoever turns from evil makes himself a prey. And Jehovah saw; and it was evil in His eyes, that there was no justice.*** [16]***And He saw that there was no man, and He was astonished that there was no intercessor. And His own arm saved for Him; and His righteousness sustained Him.*** [17]***For He put on righteousness like armor, and a helmet of salvation on His head. And He put on robes of vengeance as clothing; and He put on zeal like a mantle.*** [18]***According to works, so He will repay; fury to His foes; recompense to His foes; He will repay recompense to the coasts.*** [19]***So they shall fear Jehovah's name from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the foe comes like a flood, the Spirit of Jehovah shall cause him to flee.*** [20]***And the Redeemer comes to Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn back from their rebellion, declares Jehovah."***

Also, in Isaiah 60:16, God had clearly told them,

"… And you shall know that I, Jehovah, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."

The above prophecy was fulfilled when God, through His Word, became flesh (John 1:1,14) and died for their sins on the ***"pole"***, fulfilling thus the ***"shadow"*** of things that took place in the desert (please read Numbers 21:6-9)!

However, in His foreknowledge, God knew that they would not recognize the man Jesus as their Savior and Redeemer!

He knew that they would not accept His good news of salvation by grace through faith in His Son (Ephesians 2:8). He knew that instead of believing in God the Son, the Word who became flesh to die for their sins, **they would hate Him and kill Him** (Matthew 21:33-39)! He knew that they would count His blood, **the blood of the prophesied *"new covenant"*** (Jeremiah 31:31; Luke 22:20), **as common!** And this is the reason Isaiah wrote that ***"He put on robes of vengeance as clothing"*** (Isaiah 59:17).

The above words of Isaiah show that God would take **vengeance** for their apostasy! God would **punish** them for trampling His Son and for insulting the Spirit of grace! This statement is supported by Hebrews 10:28-31. There, it says:

"[28]If anyone did not regard the Law of Moses, that one dies without pities on "the word of two or three witnesses," [29]how much worse punishment do you think will be thought worthy to receive, the one trampling the Son of God, and having counted common the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified, and having insulted the Spirit of Grace? [30]For we know Him who has said, "Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people." [31]It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

How would God punish them for their apostasy and for executing the God who appeared to Abraham (please read Genesis 18:1; 17:1; John 8:56-58)**, the great *"Angel of Jehovah"* who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and followed them in the desert** (please read Exodus 3:2 and 1 Corinthians 10:4)**, the One who emptied Himself from His Godly glory** (Philippians 2:6-11) **and**

became flesh (John 1:1,14) **in order to save His people from their sins** (Matthew 1:21)**?**

God would destroy Jerusalem and its temple and many-many Jews would be killed! Jesus spoke about this ***"vengeance"*** in Luke 21:20,24. There, He said:

"[20]***And when you see Jerusalem being encircled by armies, then recognize that its destruction has come near.*** [21]***Then let those in Judea flee into the mountains; and those in its midst, let them go out. And those in the open spaces, let them not go into her.*** [22]***For these are days of vengeance when all things that have been written are to be fulfilled ...*** [24]***And they will fall by the mouth of the sword and will be led captive to all the nations …."***

Please, my Lord and my God, turn your anger into mercy and remove the veil (2 Corinthians 3:14-16) from all the sons of Israel so they can see their Redeemer God who became flesh and poured His holy blood on the cross for their sins, so they can repent and call on His Name to be saved. And I ask the same for all the people of the symbolic ***"earth"***. I pray in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

I hope that all the truly born-again Christians will agree and say, **"Amen!"**

Verses 7-9: ***"***[7]***And war took place in heaven, Michael and his angels made war against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought*** (back)***.*** [8]***but they did not have the power, neither was found a place for them in heaven any longer.*** [9]***And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent, the one who is called devil and Satan; the one***

who deceives the entire world, was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him." (AT)

Explanation of verses 7-9
The above verses are easy to understand:

Verse 7 tells us that Michael the archangel (Jude 1:9) and his angels made war against the ***"dragon"*** (Satan: verse 9) and his angels, and that they fought back.

Verse 8 says that Satan and his angels did not have the power to win the war and that they were not able to remain in heaven any longer.
Verse 9 explains that Satan, the one who misleads the entire world, and his angels, were cast down to the planet earth. The reason the word ***"earth"*** here is not symbolic is because it is topical --- it points to **a place** because it says that there was no **place** found for them in heaven any longer and they were cast down to **the planet** earth.

Has the above event taken place?
Yes, it has! The Lord Jesus spoke about the war that broke out in heaven when He prophesied about the destruction of Jerusalem and of its temple in Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21. To have a better perspective regarding the timing of the war which broke out in heaven, and the falling of Satan and of his angels to the earth, we must examine the above chapters carefully:

When we study the above-mentioned chapters, we observe that,

1. Jesus made **a statement** regarding the destruction of Jerusalem.

Three of His disciples asked **a question** based on that statement, and

2. Jesus gave them **an answer**.

Therefore, apart from a few comments the Lord made regarding His second coming, the fore mentioned chapters contain His comments regarding **the end of Jerusalem and of its temple** --- not the end of the world! So, let us familiarize ourselves with **the statement**, with **the question** and with **the answer**:

One day, Jesus and His disciples were walking out of the temple. The disciples were fascinated with the buildings of the temple and Jesus made **a statement**:

"… Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon a stone which shall not be thrown down." (Mark 13:2)

With the above words, Jesus prophesied **the end of Jerusalem and of its temple** --- not the end of the world.

Later, as they were sitting in the Mount of Olives, Peter, James and John, privately (Mark 13:3), asked Jesus the following **question**:

"… Teacher, then when will these things be? And what will be the sign when these things are about to happen? (Luke 21:7)

In the above verse, the words, ***"these things"*** refer to **the end of Jerusalem ---** not to the end of the world.

Responding to their question, the Lord revealed several events that must take place **prior to the destruction of Jerusalem**. However, one of the most important signs was His reference to the prophecy of Daniel 9:27[c] that we studied earlier. Remember? There it says:

"[c]and the abomination of the desolation (or ***'the abomination which causes desolation'***) ***will be upon the wing of the holy place"***.

The understanding of the fulfillment of the above section of Daniel 9:27 would help them determine **when to run away from the city and area for their safety**. Let us read the words of Jesus that refer to Daniel 9:27[c] from Matthew 24: 15-22:

"[15]***Then when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one reading, let him understand),*** [16]***then let those in Judea flee into the mountains;*** [17]***the one on the housetop, let him not go down to take anything out of his house;*** [18]***and the one in the field, let him not turn back to take his garment.*** [19]***But woe to the ones having a child in womb, and to those suckling in those days!*** [20]***And pray that your flight will not occur in winter nor in a sabbath.*** [21]***For there will be great affliction, such as has not happened from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be.*** [22]***And except those days were shortened, not any flesh would be saved. But on account of the elect, those days will be shortened."***

What would this *"abomination of desolation"* be that the disciples of Christ had to recognize in order to *"flee into the mountains"*?

In Luke 21:20-22, Jesus told them exactly what the ***"abomination of desolation"*** would be. Let us read His words:

"[20]***And when you see Jerusalem being encircled by armies, then recognize that its destruction has come near.*** [21]***Then let those in Judea flee into the mountains; and those in its midst, let them go out. And those in the open spaces, let them not go into her.*** [22]***For these are days of vengeance when all things that have been written are to be fulfilled."***

In other words, Jesus pointed to the fact that the ***"abomination"*** which would bring ***"desolation"*** to Jerusalem, would be the Roman armies!

A few moments ago, we read the words of the Lord Jesus from Matthew 24:15-22. Here, it is important that we read them again and this time focus on verse 21:

"[15]***Then when you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (the one reading, let him understand),*** [16]***then let those in Judea flee into the mountains;*** [17]***the one on the housetop, let him not go down to take anything out of his house;*** [18]***and the one in the field, let him not turn back to take his garment.*** [19]***But woe to the ones having a child in womb, and to those suckling in those days!*** [20]***And pray that your flight will not occur in winter nor in a sabbath.*** [21]***For there will be great affliction, such as has not happened from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be.*** [22]***And except those days were shortened, not any flesh would be saved. But on account of the elect, those days will be shortened."***

As we notice here, the Lord Jesus said that the days of the destruction of Jerusalem would be days of great tribulation ***"such as has not happened from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be"*****!** And history proved Him right because, at that time, the conditions in Jerusalem were so bad that according to Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian who was with the Roman armies during the siege of Jerusalem, even cannibalism took place as a mother ate her own child --- an act which Flavius described as ***"unparalleled in the history of either the Greeks or the barbarians"***!! Therefore, the ***"great tribulation"*** of Matthew 24:21, **does not** refer to the persecution that will take place during the reign of the eighth ***"beast"***, but, **to the last days of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.** After all, as the ***"beast"*** will kill the two witnesses in Jerusalem (read explanation of Revelation 11:8), we realize that the ***"beast"*** will not go against Jerusalem, but against all those who will not receive its ***"mark"*** because of their faith in Jesus --- wherever they may be!

The foregoing conclusion, that the ***"great tribulation"*** of Matthew 24:21 refers to the last days of Jerusalem in the year 70 AD, helps us understand the timing of the war that broke out in heaven and the casting out of the ***"red Dragon"*** (Satan) and of his angels (the ***"stars"***), to the planet earth!

How so?
Because, in Matthew 24:29, Jesus said,

"But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" (ASV)

The above words of Jesus, ***"the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"***, and ***"the stars shall fall from heaven"***, are clear: The war which broke out in heaven and the casting down to the earth of Satan and his angels (the ***"stars"***), must have taken place ***"immediately after the tribulation of those days"***, in other words, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D.

Verses 10,11: ***"***[10]***And I heard a great voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the might and the kingdom became our God's and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers was cast down, the one who accused them before our God day and night.*** [11]***And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their soul*** (even) ***until death."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 10,11

The above verses are simple; they do not need an explanation. About the fact that Satan is called an ***"accuser"***, read Job 1:9-11; 2:1-7 and Zechariah 3:1.

Verse 12: ***"For this reason, heavens be glad and those who dwell in them; woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil came down to you having great anger, knowing that he has a little time."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12

The above verse is simple. However, from the words, ***"woe to the earth, and to the sea"***, we realize that both, the Judaeo-Christian community (the symbolic ***"earth"***) and the nations that do not believe in the True God of the Bible (the symbolic ***"sea"***), will experience Satan's ***"great anger"***!

Verses 13,14: ***"***[13]***And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male*** (child)***.*** [14]***And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order to fly into the desert, to her place, where they will feed her*** (for) ***a time, and times, and half a time, away from the face of the serpent."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 13 and 14

Verse 13 is simple and verse 14 was explained together with verse 6.

Verse 15: ***"And the serpent threw water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, in order to cause her to be carried away by the river."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15

What does the *"water like a river"* symbolize?

The fact that the ***"water like a river"*** comes ***"out of his mouth"***, denotes that it is a symbol of **spoken words!**

In the Bible, we find allegories of different things which **come out of the mouth of different entities,** and which point to the same conclusion. Let us pay attention to the following verses:

a) ***"And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations. And He will shepherd them with an iron rod. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of God Almighty."*** (Revelation 19:15; compare with Hebrews 4:12)

b) ***"and having in His right hand seven stars; and a sharp, two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth, and His face shining as the sun in its power."*** (Revelation 1:16)

c) ***"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."*** (Isaiah 11:4)

d) ***"***[13]***And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*** [14]***For they are spirits of demons doing signs, which go forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole habitable world to assemble them to the war of that day, the great day of God Almighty."*** (Revelation 16:13,14)

Please note: In this case, although we observe three demon spirits coming out of the mouth of the foregoing entities, it is understood that they will accomplish their purpose through trickery and **misleading words**.

Why did Satan wish *"to cause her to be carried away by the river"*? What was Satan's goal?
The answer is simple:

In John 17:14-16, the Lord Jesus prayed to His Father about His followers and said:

"[14]***I have given them Your Word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, as I am not of the world.*** [15]***I do not pray that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil.*** [16]***They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."***

Contrary to the Lord's will regarding His followers, Satan, through **many twisted doctrines** which come out of his mouth like a river, tried to corrupt the symbolic ***"woman"***. As the rivers end up in the sea**,** so Satan hoped that the symbolic ***"river"*** which came out of his mouth would carry the symbolic ***"woman"*** away into the symbolic ***"sea"*****!** His plan was to see her lose her faith and her identity and become part of the symbolic ***"sea"***. The reason he did so, was because he knew that one day, the symbolic ***"sea"*** will cease to exist (Revelation 21:1)! So, he only hoped! However, this is not possible to happen (Matthew 24:24).

Verse 16: ***"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon threw out of his mouth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 16

Who is the *"mouth of the earth"*?

As the mouth is a member of the human body, and as the symbolic ***"earth"*** represents **all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible** (please read explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]), the ***"mouth of the earth"*** represents **those of the *"body"* of Christ who preach and defend the biblical gospel and all the faith which once for all was delivered to the saints** (Jude 3) **--- especially the *"teachers"*** (Ephesians 4:11,12)!

For a better understanding on the different ***"members"*** of the ***"body"*** of Christ, please read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

How did the *"mouth of the earth"* help the symbolic *"woman"*?
By speaking out the truth at any cost! By speaking against false doctrines and heresies (2 Peter 2:1; 2 Timothy 2:16-18; 2 Corinthians 10:4,5).

Verse 17: ***"And the dragon became angry against the woman, and went to make war with the rest of her seed, those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17

Who are *"the rest of her seed"* that Satan went to make war with?
The last part of verse 17 above says that they are ***"those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*** In Galatians 3:16,29, the apostle Paul wrote:

"[16]***But the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his Seed (it does not say, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," which is Christ) ...*** [29]***And if you are of Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, even heirs according to promise."***

Do the words, *"those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"*, indicate that the born-again Christians must keep the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic Law?
No, of course not! The above statement **does not refer to the Ten Commandments**, simply because in the above

verse, the word **"Ten"** does not appear before the word ***"commandments"***!

As children of the Jerusalem above, the truly born-again Christians are free; they are not slaves under the regulations and the laws of the Sinaitic Covenant (Galatians 4:21-26). They Know that ***"… Christ is the end of Law for righteousness to everyone that believes"*** (Romans 10:4) and, for this reason, they ***"worship the Father in spirit and truth"*** (John 4:23) --- **not according to the regulations for worship of the first covenant**.

In Matthew 26:28, Jesus spoke of a **new covenant**. The believers in Christ are **partakers of the new covenant** which Jesus established in His blood. By naming His covenant ***"new"***, He automatically made the first covenant of Sinai **"old"**. On the day of His death, His Covenant came into effect (because every covenant comes into effect after the person who made it dies), while, at the same time, **the old covenant died**. Indeed, the apostle Paul said that Jesus took the old covenant out of the way by symbolically **nailing it to the cross** (Colossians 2:13,14).

Therefore, looking at the first covenant **as a thing of the past**, the Christian writer of the letter to the Hebrews went on to explain **which things were included in that first covenant** that are now **obsolete**. When we read his account, we notice that the verbs are **in the past tense**. He wrote:

"[1]***Now even this first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary.*** [2]***For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of Presence; it is called the Holy Place.***

[3]***Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies,*** [4]***having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables*** (tablets) ***of the covenant;"*** (Hebrews 9:1-4; ASV)

From the above words, we observe that ***"the tables of the covenant"***, in other words, **the Ten Commandments,** were not just a part of, but the very basis for the worship regulations of the old covenant, which, as far as the Hebrew Christians are concerned, **was a thing of the past**. And, in Hebrews 8:6-13, the writer of the letter referred to the ***"new covenant"*** that Jeremiah the prophet spoke about (in Jeremiah 31:31), and said the following:

"[6]***But now He*** (Jesus) ***has gotten a more excellent ministry, also by so much as He is a Mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.*** [7]***For if that first was faultless, place would not have been sought for a second.*** [8]***For finding fault, He said to them, "Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make an end on the house of Israel and on the house of Judah; a new covenant shall be,*** [9]***not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day of My taking hold of their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not regard them, says the Lord.*** [10]***Because this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord, giving My Laws into their mind, and I will write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*** [11]***"And they shall no more teach each one their neighbor, and each one his brother, saying, Know the Lord; because all shall know***

Me, from the least of them to their great ones. [12]***For I will be merciful to their unrighteousnesses, and I will not at all remember their sins and their lawless deeds."*** [13]***In the saying, New, He has made the first old. And the thing being made old and growing aged is near disappearing."***

From all the above, we realize that the truly born-again Christians are not obligated to keep the commandments of the first covenant which God made with **the circumcised sons of Israel only! Neither are they allowed to keep any part of the Law of Moses** (not even the smallest of the requirements), **without the literal circumcision in the flesh** (Exodus 12:44; Acts 15:5).

Also, to the Christian church in Galatia, the apostle Paul wrote the following:

"[1]***The Messiah has set us free so that we may enjoy the benefits of freedom. So keep on standing firm in it, and stop putting yourselves under the yoke of slavery again.*** [2]***Listen! I, Paul, am telling you that if you allow yourselves to be circumcised, the Messiah will be of no benefit to you.*** [3]***Again, I insist that everyone who allows himself to be circumcised is obligated to obey the entire Law.*** [4]***Those of you who are trying to be justified by the Law have been cut off from the Messiah. You have fallen away from grace."*** (Galatians 5:1-4; ISV)

Then, which commandments of God do *"the rest of her seed"* keep? Are there any in the New Testament?
Yes, there are! One is written in Matthew 17:5. There, we read:

"While he was yet speaking, behold, a radiant cloud overshadowed them. And, behold, a voice out of the cloud saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have been delighting; hear Him."

In 1 John 3:23, the apostle John presents **two more** commandments which God gave to Christians:

a) Believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.

b) Love one another.

From the foregoing, we realize that God's commandments to the followers of Jesus are only **three**, and the two of them command us **to believe and to obey His Son!** Thus, **since we must hear or obey His Son, we must keep the commandments of His Son!** For this reason, in John 14: 15, we hear Jesus saying,

"If you love Me, keep My commandments."

And in John 15:10, we hear Him saying,

"If you keep My commandments you will continue in My love, as I have kept My Father's commandments and continue in His love."

From the above verse, it is clear that the Lord Jesus Christ was the only One who kept all His Father's commandments without failing. Now He expects His followers to keep **His commandments**. His commandments are not many, neither are they burdensome (1 John 5:3). These are:

a) **Love one another** (John 13:34).

b) **Preach** (Mark 16:15).

c) **Teach** (Matthew 28:19.

d) **Baptize** (Matthew 28:19).

e) **"… this do in remembrance of me"** (Luke 22:19).

And in John 14:21, Jesus said,

"He that has My commandments and keeps them, it is that one who loves Me; and the one that loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I shall love him and will reveal Myself to him."

Before we close this chapter, we must ask one more question:

Are the believers in Christ aware of the war that Satan makes against them?
Yes, they are, because, in Ephesians 6:12-18, the apostle Paul wrote,

"[12]***because wrestling against flesh and blood is not to us, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world's rulers, of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenlies.*** [13]***Because of this, take up all of the armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand.*** [14]***Then stand firm, "having girded your loins about with truth" and having put "on the breastplate of righteousness,"*** [15]***and having shod the feet with the preparation of the "gospel of peace."*** [16]***Above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench***

all the darts of the evil one being kindled. [17]***Also, take "the helmet of salvation," and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God;*** [18]***through all prayer and petition, praying at all times in the Spirit, and watching to this same thing with all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints."***

Chapter Thirteen

Verse 1: ***"[a]And I stood on the sand of the sea. [b]And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, which had ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and on its heads names of blasphemy."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]
"And I stood on the sand of the sea."

What does the *"sand of the sea"* symbolize?
When God gave a promise to Abraham, He said,

"… blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your seed like … the sand which is on the seashore …" (Genesis 22:17).

Therefore, the ***"sand"*** is a symbol of the seed of Abraham.

Who is the seed of Abraham? Is the seed of Abraham only the ones by birth?
The answer is **"No!"** The apostle Paul says that **all Christians are the seed of Abraham**. Let us read his words from his letter to Galatians, chapter 3 and verses 26-29:

"[26]For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. [27]For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [28]There is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for

you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29]***And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."***

Therefore, the fact that John stood upon the ***"sand of the sea"***, denotes that **he is one of the seed of Abraham**, not only by birth, but also from a spiritual point of view.

Explanation of verse 1[b]

"And I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, which had ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and on its heads names of blasphemy."

In the above verse, we meet several symbolic terms which we have explained in past chapters:

The *"beast"*

The symbolic term ***"beast"*** refers to an earthly kingdom, an earthly government. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 11:2[b], under the subtitle, **"What does the *"beast"* refer to?"**)

The *"sea"*

The ***"sea"*** is a symbol of the "world", of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 7:1, under the subtitle **The *"sea"***.)

The *"ten horns"*

The symbolic term ***"horns"*** refers to ***"kings"***. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:3[c].)

The *"seven heads"*

The symbolic term ***"heads"*** symbolizes ***"kingdoms"*** or ***"governments"*** including their leaders or kings, **whether**

these kingdoms are political or religious. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:3[b].)

The *"ten diadems"*
"Diadems" (i.e., crowns) are signs of authority, and they are placed on the heads of ruling kings. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:3[d].)

The *"names of blasphemy"*
The Greek word **"βλασφημία"** (vlasphemia) means "irreverence", "sacrilege", "impiety", "mockery of God".

When Jesus healed the paralytic, He said to him, ***"Child, your sins have been forgiven you"*** (Mark 2:5). Some of the scribes, who were sitting there, heard Him speak the foregoing words and said,

"Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who is able to forgive sins except God alone?" (Mark 2:7)

Again, when Jesus claimed to be ***"the Son of God",*** it meant that He claimed to be ***"equal to God"*** (John 5:18). And it was for this very reason that, in the end, they killed Him f**or blasphemy** (Matthew 26:63-66).

From the above, we realize that to have ***"names of blasphemy"***, means **to claim authority and titles which belong exclusively to God!**

There are four entities which are guilty of **speaking presumptuous things about themselves**, that is, which have ***"names of blasphemy"***:

a) The ***"man of sin"*** of 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4. Let us read these verses:

"Do not let anyone deceive you in any way, because that Day will not come unless first comes the falling away, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, the one opposing and exalting himself over everything being called God, or object of worship, so as for him "to sit in the temple of God" as God, setting forth himself, that he is God."

b) The ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8,11. There, we read:

"[8]Just as I was thinking about these horns, a smaller horn appeared, and three of the other horns were pulled up by the roots to make room for it. This horn had the eyes of a human and a mouth that spoke with great pride … [11]Then I was looking because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke. I was looking until the beast was killed, and his body was destroyed and given to the burning flame.

c) The ***"scarlet beast"*** of Revelation 17:3. There, it says:

"And he carried me away into a desert, by the Spirit. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, filled with names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns."

d) The ***"beast"*** of Revelation 13:5,6. Let us read these verses:

> ***"***[5]***And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to it and authority was given to it to make war*** (for) ***forty-two months.*** [6]***And it opened its mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and His temple*** (tent)***, and those who dwell in Heaven."***

So then, what does the *"beast"* of verse 1[b] represent?
From all the above, we realize that the ***"beast"*** with the ***"seven heads"***, which comes out of the ***"sea"*** of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind, represents **eight world governments** which have ruled and will rule on this planet until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This statement is supported by Revelation 17:9-11. There, we read:

"[9]***Here is the mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains, where the woman sits on them. And they are seven kings.*** [10]***The five fell, and the one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he does come, he must remain a short time.*** [11]***And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to destruction."*** (AT)

Since we have a total of eight world governments, why does the *"beast"* have *"seven heads"* only? Should it not have eight?
No, because in the above verses, the eighth ***"head"***, which one day will become the **eighth world government**, is represented by the **'body'** of the ***"beast"***. To have a better understanding of this fact, let us revisit the above verses and study them carefully one at a time:

Revelation 17:9
"[9]***Here is the mind that has wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains, where the woman sits on them. And they are seven kings.***

The above verse tells us that ***"the seven heads"*** are ***"seven mountains"*** (seven ***"kingdoms"***) and ***"seven kings"***. Thus, whether we say ***"heads"***, ***"beasts"***, ***"mountains"***, ***"kingdoms"***, or even ***"kings"***, **is one and the same!** (Please read the explanation of Revelation 6:14[b]; 11:2[b]; 12:3[b]; 12:3[c]; also, please read Daniel 7:17.)

Revelation 17:10
"[10]***The five fell, and the one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he does come, he must remain a short time."***

Here, we must keep in mind that John received the book of Revelation in the 90's AD. Therefore, the words, ***"the five fell"*** (past tense) tell us that the five ***"heads"*** which had become ***"world governments"***, existed, ruled and came to the end of their rulership **before** the 90's AD.

The words, ***"the one is"*** (present tense), tell us that **the sixth *"head"***, Rome, which had become a world government, was present and ruling at the time John received the book of Revelation.

The words, ***"the other has not yet come"***, refer to the **seventh *"head"*** which would come after the fall of the Roman Empire. (I will present more details regarding the seventh ***"head"*** in chapter 17.)

Therefore, there is one more ***"head"*** or world government to come --- **the eighth!** And **the eighth** ***"head"*** appears in verse 11 as ***"the beast"*** (because, as we learned earlier, the symbolic terms ***"heads"*** and ***"beasts"*** symbolize the same thing: Nations that rise to become world governments)! Now that we have this knowledge, let us read verse 11:

Revelation 17:11
"[11]***And the beast which was, and is not, even he is the eighth and is out of the seven, and goes to destruction."***

In chapter 17, we will talk more about that ***"head"*** (about that nation), which, according to Bible prophecy, will become the eighth and the last world government before the second coming of the Lord Jesus. However, the present chapter will give us a few pointers, a few characteristics of that ***"beast"***, to help us recognize it when we'll examine chapter 17.

Verse 2: ***"***[a]***And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as*** (feet) ***of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion;*** [b]***and the dragon gave its power to it, and its throne, and great authority."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2[a]
"And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion;"

An important clarification
As I mentioned earlier, the ***"beast"*** of verse 1, with the ***"seven heads"*** and the ***"ten horns"*** that comes out of the symbolic ***"sea"***, represents **eight** world governments. Thus, the different **'parts'** of the ***"beast"*** (of verse 1), **refer to different entities**. To have a clear understanding of the

"beast" which will become the eighth world government, we must identify the different entities and keep them separate. So, let us identify them:

1. The ***"seven heads"*** refer to **seven world governments** that have ruled peoples up to this day. (We will talk more about them in chapter 17.)

2. The ***"ten horns"***, refer to the ***"ten kings"*** who, **in the future**, will give their authority to a specific nation, to help it become the central authority of **the eighth** world government.

3. The ***"beast"*** which will become the eighth and the last world government before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, **is not** the entire ***"beast"*** of verse 1, but **the composite part of its 'body' only!** This is the ***"beast"*** that we dealt with in Revelation chapter 11, this is the ***"beast"*** that we will be dealing with in the present chapter, and this is the ***"beast"*** that we will be dealing with in Revelation chapter 17.

The eighth ***"head"*** or ***"beast"*** **is not** one of the previous ***"seven heads"***. None of the previous ***"seven heads"*** will ever become a world government for a second time. There is no scripture to support such a myth! **The nation which will rise to become the central authority of the eighth world government, has its own entity!** John's description of its appearance,

"the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion",

tells us that the eighth ***"king"*** will be **a composite world government.** That means that the nation which will rise to become the dominant power of the eighth world government, of the ***"beast"***, **will be joined and supported** by nations which at one time they had been ruled by at least one of the first ***"seven"*** world governments! This is the reason Revelation 17:11 says that the eighth ***"beast"*** will be ***"out of the seven"* --- not one of the seven!**

Why did I say that the eighth *"beast"* is a composite one?

In Daniel 7:3-6, we read one of Daniel's dreams. He dreamed of four ***"beasts"*** which came out of the ***"sea"***! Those ***"beasts"*** were four of the seven symbolic ***"heads"*** which we met in verse 1 of the present chapter. The three of the ***"beasts"*** in Daniel's dream, looked ***"like a lion"***, ***"like a bear"*** and ***"like a leopard"***! Let us read Daniel's words:

"[3]And four great beasts came up from the sea, different from one another. [4]The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings. I watched until its wings were torn off. And it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. [5]And, behold, another beast, a second, like a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth. And they said this to it, Rise up, eat much flesh. [6]After this I was looking, and, behold, another like a leopard, and to it were four wings of a bird on its side. And also to the beast were four heads. And rulership was given to it."

The above verses verify the fact that the ***"beast"*** of the present chapter, which looked ***"like a leopard"*** and had feet

"like a bear" and its mouth was like the mouth ***"of a lion"***, will be **a composite one**. It means that it will be joined and supported by nations which once were ruled by the seven world governments of the past!

Explanation of verse 2[b]
"and the dragon gave its power to it, and its throne, and great authority."

This verse says that Satan (the dragon), will give his power, his throne and great authority to the ***"beast"***. From Revelation 17:12,13, we learn that the ten kings (the ***"ten horns"***), will give their power and authority to the ***"beast"***!! And Revelation 17:17, tells us that it is God who will put it in their hearts to do so!! **WOW!!** If one has three great powers behind him to promote him to become the eighth and last world government which will rule until the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will certainly happen!

Let us read Revelation 17:12,13,17, to verify the above comments:

"[12]And the ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but will receive authority as kings one hour with the beast. [13]These have one mind, and their power and authority they shall give up to the beast … [17]For God gave into their hearts to do His mind, and to act in one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled."

Verse 3: ***"[a]And one of its heads was as if it had been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed. [b]And marvelled all the earth that was behind the beast."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"And one of its heads was as if it had been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed."

Let us not lose focus! The symbolic terms ***"head"*** and ***"beast"*** symbolize a ***"kingdom"***, a nation! Therefore, **the nation which will rise to become the central authority of the eighth world government, is both the last** (the eighth) ***"head"*** **and the last** ***"beast"*****!**

Now that we have the above truth, we can understand why verse 3[a] says that it was ***"one of its heads"*** that ***"had been slain to death and its deadly wound was healed"***, while verses 12 and 14 (of this chapter) say that it was ***"the beast"*** who had ***"the wound of the sword"*** and ***"whose deadly wound was healed"*****!!!**

From the above, it is easily understood that the nation out of which the central authority of the composite ***"beast"***, of the eighth world government, will come, had a very dramatic past. It had been slain by the sword and it was no more --- it had died --- it was as if it had gone into the abyss! And yet, the above prophecy said that the time would come when its wound would be healed and it would bounce back up out of the abyss again! And Revelation 17:8 agrees with our conclusion. Let us read that verse:

"The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss and goes to destruction. And those dwelling on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast, which was, and is not, and yet it will be."

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"And marvelled all the earth that was behind the beast"

As Revelation 17:8 said, ***"And those dwelling on the earth will marvel"***, when the ***"beast"*** will come up out of the abyss, so does verse 3[b]. Those who make up the symbolic ***"earth"*** (the Judaeo-Christian community; please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]), those who will stand ***"behind the beast"*** to support it and to promote it to become the central authority of the composite eighth world government, ***"will marvel"*****!** However, as Revelation 17:8 said, those who will marvel are ***"those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world"*****!** And it is ***"they"*** who are mentioned in verse 4 below:

Verse 4: ***"And they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like the beast? Who can make war with it?"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

Woe to them! As people of the symbolic ***"earth"***, they should glorify and worship God and His Christ alone! Instead, they glorify and worship the ***"beast"*** and Satan (the ***"dragon"***) who gave great authority to the ***"beast"*****!** Their words, **"*Who is like the beast? Who can make war with it?"*** are an insult to the Person, to the power and to the sovereignty of God! No wonder God, in His foreknowledge, did not write their names in the book of life!

Verses 5,6: ***"[5]And a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies was given to it and authority was given to it to make war*** (for) ***forty-two months. [6]And it opened its mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name***

and His temple (tent)***, and those who dwell in Heaven."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 5 and 6

As I mentioned in the explanation of verse 1[b], under the subtitle '**The *"names of blasphemy"'***, there are four entities which speak presumptuous things about themselves:

a) The ***"man of sin"*** of 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4,

b) the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8,11,

c) the ***"scarlet beast"*** of Revelation 17:3, and

d) the ***"beast"*** of the present verses.

And all the above entities refer to the same ***"beast"***, in other words, to the eighth world government, to the very core of its authority.

The fact that ***"authority was given to it to make war*** (for) ***forty-two months"*** (3½ years), proves again that the ***"beast"*** of this chapter is the same as the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8,24,25 which will make war against the saints for ***"a time and times and one half time"*** (3½ years)**.** The fact that the expression, ***"a time and times and one half time"*** equals 3½ years, can be verified by Revelation 12:6 and 14. Let us read these verses:

"[6]***And the woman fled to the desert, where she has a place prepared by God, in order to be fed there a thousand two hundred and sixty days*** (3½ years) **…** [14]***And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order to fly into the desert, to her place, where they will feed her*** (for)

a time, and times, and half a time, away from the face of the serpent."

Verse 7: ***"[a]And it was given to it to make war with the saints, and to conquer them. [b]And authority was given to it over every tribe and tongue and nation."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7[a]

"And it was given to it to make war with the saints, and to conquer them."

Please read the explanation of verses 5,6 above and meditate on Daniel 7:21 and 25.

Explanation of verse 7[b]

"And authority was given to it over every tribe and tongue and nation."

From the above words, we can easily see that the eighth ***"beast"*** will become a world government!

Verse 8: ***"And all those who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb which has been slain from the foundation of the world."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8

As we have already seen, the symbolic term ***"horn"*** symbolizes a ***"king"*** (please read explanation of Revelation 12:3[c]). The definition ***"little horn"*** refers to the authority figure of **a small nation**. No wonder the people of the symbolic ***"earth"***, those ***"whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb"*** will marvel when they will realize that the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8, will be

supported to the point of becoming the central authority of the composite world government of the end times! Wow!!! They will admire it to the point of worshipping it!

Verse 9: ***"If one has an ear, let him hear."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

The above verse delivers an important message to the student of the book of Revelation: The prophecy about the ***"beast"*** **will come to pass!** Whoever has an ear, ***"let him hear"*** --- let him pay attention to the warnings of God! If we ignore the details given to us through the Scriptures, we might fail to identify the ***"beast"*** and we might, in our ignorance, worship it! Revelation 14:9,10, says,

"[9]And a third angel followed them, saying in a great voice, If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or in his hand, [10]he also shall drink of the wine of the anger of God having been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath. And he will be tormented by fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb."

Verse 10: ***"If anyone gathers in captivity, into captivity he goes. If anyone will kill by a sword, by a sword he must be killed. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10

This verse contains important advice:

As born-again Christians, we must trust God for protection through all this. We should not try to prevent the rising of the ***"beast"***! It is not our place to fight against it because,

God says, ***"If anyone will kill by a sword, by a sword he must be killed."*** God's prophecies **will be fulfilled** whether we like it or not! This is why the word says, ***"Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."***

Verse 11: ***"And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and it had two horns like lamb's, but it spoke like a dragon."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

Next, John saw another ***"beast"*****!** While the first ***"beast"*** came out of the symbolic ***"sea"*** (out of the unbelieving in Jesus mankind), the second ***"beast"*** came out of the symbolic ***"earth"***, in other words, out of the Judaeo-Christian community! While the first ***"beast"*** is a political power, the second is a religious one.

The fact that it had two ***"horns"*** which looked like the horns of a ***"lamb"*** (Christ-like) indicates that its two figures of authority will appear as if they are Bible believing leaders of the Jews and of the Christians. However, the words that come out of their mouths will be very misleading; they will be like the words of a snake (of a ***"dragon"***)!

Verse 12: ***"And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it. And it makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12

From the above verse, we realize that this **religious** ***"beast"*** is totally interconnected with the **political** ***"beast"*** which came out of the symbolic ***"sea"***. In fact, ***"it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it".*** Its goal is to use

misleading words, such as a false gospel, false doctrines and heresies, to make the people of the symbolic ***"earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed"*****!**

What else will this religious ruling (theocratic) **class do to achieve this goal?**
Let us read verses 13 and 14:

Verses 13,14: **"**[13]***And it does great signs, it will even make fire come down from heaven on the earth before men.*
[14]***And it deceives those who dwell on the earth, through the signs which were given to it to do before the beast, saying to those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast which has the wound of the sword, and lived."***
(AT)

Explanation of verses 13 and 14
Besides using misleading words, this religious ruling class will deceive those of the symbolic ***"earth"*** through ***"great signs"*****!** And it will say to those who dwell the symbolic ***"earth"*** to make ***"an image to the beast which has the wound of the sword, and lived".***

What does an *"image"* symbolize?
An ***"image"*** is a representation of a thing or person. An ***"image"*** can be a thing or a person. For instance, Jesus is the ***"image"*** of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15), and a king is the ***"image"*** of his country because **he represents it**.

Therefore, the two religious authorities will deceive those who dwell on the symbolic ***"earth"*** to accept the authority of a king who will represent ***"the beast which has the***

wound of the sword, and lived". I will not be surprised if they say that the kingdom of the ***"beast"*** is actually the kingdom of God on earth and that its leader is actually God's anointed --- both of which will constitute a blasphemy against God and against His True Anointed One! Because of the miraculous signs that he will perform through the power of Satan, he will even dare to try to prove that he is God (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36,37)!

Do the scriptures give an indication as to who can play the role of the *"image"* of the *"beast"*?
Yes, they do! The ***"man of sin, the son of perdition"*** of 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4,9,10, fits this position! An evil spirit will speak through him **to deceive** those who are lost. Let us read these verses:

"[3]Do not let anyone deceive you in any way, because that Day will not come unless first comes the falling away, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, [4]the one opposing and exalting himself over everything being called God, or object of worship, so as for him "to sit in the temple of God" as God, setting forth himself, that he is God … [9]His coming is according to the working of Satan in all power and miraculous signs and lying wonders, [10]and in all deceit of unrighteousness in those being lost, because they did not receive the love of the truth in order for them to be saved."

This ***"man of sin"***, will act exactly like the last ***"king"*** of Daniel 11:36-38. There, it says:

"[36]And the king shall do according to his will. And he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god; he shall even speak marvelous things against the God of gods and

shall prosper until the fury is completed. For that which is decreed shall be done. [37]***He shall not regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women; yea, he will not come to any god. For he shall magnify himself above all.*** [38]***But in his place he shall honor the god of forces, and he shall honor a god whom his fathers did not know, with gold and silver and with precious stones, and desirable things."***

What do the words, *"he shall … speak … against the God of gods"* and *"He shall not regard the God of his fathers"*, reveal?
They reveal that this ***"king"*** of the end times is a descendant of those who knew and worshipped the True God of the Bible who is the ***"God of gods"*** (Joshua 22:22)! For this reason, this ***"king"*** will be guilty of **apostasy** (2 Thessalonians 2:3)!

What do the words, *"He shall not regard … the desire of women"*, mean?
The above words do not say that the ***"king"*** will not regard a god who is desirable to women, neither do they say that he will not regard or take care about other desires that women have; they speak about the desire people have about ***"women"***. In other words, the ***"king"*** will not regard, neither will he take care of things that have to do with the True God, nor will he take care of things that have to do with false gods, nor will he take care of things that have to do with ***"women"***.

What connection is there between *"women"* and *"gods"* so that they are both mentioned in the same sentence?
Obviously, none; **unless** the word ***"women"*** is a symbolic term! And it is: **It refers to religions!**

The above conclusion is supported by the fact that ***"Babylon the Great"***, the wicked **religious entity** of Revelation chapter 17, is called a ***"woman"*** (verse 6), a ***"harlot"*** (verses 15,16), and the ***"mother"*** of other religious entities who have inherited her traits of **apostasy and whoredom** and who, for this reason, are called ***"the harlots"*** of the ***"earth"*** (verse 5)**!**

Based on the above information, we realize that when it says that the last ***"king"*** of the last days ***"… shall not regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women; yea, he will not come to any god"***, it means that the last ***"king"*** will not regard the True God, neither will he regard any false gods nor will he regard any **religion**, because he will ***"magnify himself above all"*****!**

Verse 15: ***"And was given to him to give spirit to the image of the beast, in order for the image of the beast to speak, and to make as many as will not worship the image of the beast to be killed."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15

The foregoing verse is clear: The leader (the ***"image"***) of the first ***"beast"*** that came out of the symbolic ***"sea"*** will receive a spirit and he will ***"speak"***, in other words, he will come up with laws which will cause all those who will not worship him, **to be killed!**

The ***"spirit"*** that the ***"beast"*** will impart into his ***"image"***, will not be the Spirit of God but ***"another"***! ***"Another spirit"*** is associated with ***"another Jesus"*** and ***"another gospel"***. Let us read 2 Corinthians 11:4. There it says,

"For if, indeed, the one coming proclaims another Jesus, whom we have not proclaimed, or if you receive another spirit which you have not received, or another gospel which you never accepted, you might well endure these."

I pray that God will raise more of His servants to preach the true gospel of salvation which presents the real Jesus of the Bible who is ***"our only Master, God, and Lord"*** (Jude 1:4; YLT).

Verse 16: ***"And to make everyone, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the freemen and the slaves, to receive*** (from him) ***a mark on their right hand, or on their foreheads,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16

In the old days, masters marked (branded) their slaves with their family logo as a sign that they belonged to them. In the last days, when the ***"beast"*** comes, he will demand that all accept him as the ultimate Master, as God, and **worship him instead of God**! This is where the truly born-again Christians will draw the line because **they know** the True God of Abraham and His Christ and they will worship none else but Him alone! I pray that all peoples, especially those who dwell the symbolic ***"earth"***, **will recognize the True Jesus of the Bible as their Ultimate Master** and that they will worship (serve) Him alone, fulfilling thus Daniel's vision from Daniel 7:13,14. There, Daniel wrote:

"[13]I was looking in the night visions. And behold! One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of the heavens. And He came to the Ancient of Days. And they brought Him near before Him. [14]And dominion was given to Him, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and

languages should serve (Hebrew "pel-akh" = **'worship'**) ***Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."***

However, as we read earlier (from 2 Thessalonians 2:10 and Revelation 13:12), those of the symbolic ***"earth"*** who ***"did not receive the love of the truth in order for them to be saved"***, **will worship the *"beast"***! And, by doing so, they will be guilty of **apostasy from the True God!** On the other hand, those who will refuse to worship the ***"beast"*** and to receive its ***"mark"*** as a sign that they have joined it in **its apostasy from the True God**, will ***"not be able to buy or sell"***. This statement is supported by the following verse:

Verse 17: ***"so that they would not be able to buy or sell, except the one who has the mark,*** (or) ***the name of the beast, or the number of its name."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17

The above words, ***"they would not be able to buy or sell"***, refer to two things:

a) To a law which will disallow all those who refuse to be part of his **great apostasy,** and all those who will refuse to accept his 'godly' authority, to literally buy or sell or to own a business.

b) To a law which will **forbid the born-again Christians to preach the word of God** (Revelation 3: 18).

By doing so, he will try to achieve two things:

1. The ***"beast which comes out of the earth"*** will continue to deceive the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** without opposition.

2. He will try to stop them from exposing the identity of the ***"beast which comes out of the sea"***.

However, the work of the two witnesses of Revelation chapter 11, proves that the ***"beast"*** will not achieve to silence all of them.

Verse 18: ***"Here is wisdom; let the one who has reason*** (mind), ***calculate the number of the beast, because it is the number of a man and his number is 666."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 18

From the above two verses, we gather that:

a) The ***"beast"*** has a ***"name".***

b) Those who claim to know the ***"beast"*** should also be able to **identify its *"name"***.

c) Those who believe that have identified the ***"name of the beast",*** should be able to ***"calculate"*** the ***"number of its name"*** and the total of this calculation must be equal to ***"666"*!**

The above is not an easy thing to achieve! That's why this verse comes with **a challenge**. In simple terms, the challenge is: Let the one who has the wisdom of God, calculate the number of the ***"beast"*** and ***"its number is 666"***.

Please note: There are a few manuscripts which (by mistake of the copyist), present the number as 616. However, Irenaeus of Lyons who lived in the second century AD., who himself was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John, supported the fact that the number was indeed **666** (Against Heresies, V, 30).

In what language, should we look for *"the name of the beast"*?
The book of Revelation was written in the Greek language. The ***"number of the beast"*** was given in Greek as "χξϛ" (666) – not as "ϛ-ϛ-ϛ" (6-6-6) as some claim! Therefore, those who preach that ***"the number of the beast"*** is simply a repetition of the number six (6) are wrong.

As the book of revelation was written in Greek, and the number 666 was given in Greek, we conclude that ***"the name of the beast"*** must be a Greek word which describes **the main characteristic of that *"beast".***

The Greek alphabet is alpha-numeric. That means that **the letters of the Greek alphabet represent numbers**. Let us familiarize ourselves with the Greek Alpha-numeric table:

Letter	Value	Letter	Value	Letter	Value
α΄	1	ι΄	10	ρ΄	100
β΄	2	κ΄	20	σ΄	200
γ΄	3	λ΄	30	τ΄	300
δ΄	4	μ΄	40	υ΄	400
ε΄	5	ν΄	50	φ΄	500
στ΄ (ϛ)	6	ξ΄	60	χ΄	600
ζ΄	7	ο΄	70	ψ΄	700
η΄	8	π΄	80	ω΄	800
θ΄	9	ϟ΄	90	ϡ΄	900

An important recap:
The **blasphemous *"man of sin"*** of 2 Thessalonians 2:4 **who exalts himself**, the **blasphemous *"beast"*** of Revelation 13:6, the ***"little horn"*** of Daniel 7:8-26 which ***"speaks great things"***, the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 11:7 which comes out of the abyss and the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 17:3,8 which is ***"full of names of blasphemy"***, **are one and the same**. They are all representations of **the last world government on earth which will be succeeded by the kingdom of God of Daniel 2:44 and 7:27;** and ***"the man of sin"*** is the ***"image"*,** in other words, the king, the representative and the very core of authority of that political power! (Revelation 13:14,15; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36,37)

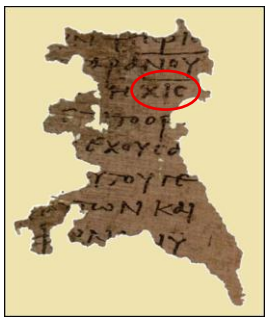
When we read 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, we observe that the ***"man of sin"*** is responsible for the ***"falling away"*** or **apostasy from the True God**. Let us read these verses again:

"[1]***But we beg you, brothers, concerning the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering upon Him,*** [2]***don't be quickly shaken in your mind neither be frightened, not by*** (a) ***spirit nor by*** (a) ***word/doctrine neither by*** (a) ***letter as if*** (it was written) ***by us, as if the day of Christ has come near.*** [3]***do not*** (let) ***anyone deceive you by any means; because*** (that day will not come) ***unless the apostasy comes first and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,*** [4]***the one who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or an object of worship, so that he will sit himself in the temple of the God as God, proving himself that he is God."*** (Author's translation from **GNT**)

Thus, **the main characteristic of the *"beast"* is *"apostasy"***, the prophesied ***"falling away"***, which will take place when the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** will be expected

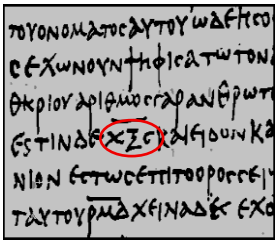
to **worship the blasphemous *"beast"* instead of the True God!**

How can this *"apostasy"* help us identify *"the name of the beast"*?
The Greek word for ***"falling away"*** is ***"αποστασία"*** (apostasia [apostasy]) and the name which describes a man who is guilty of ***"apostasia"*** is **"αποστάτης"** (apostatis [apostate]). So then, let us add the numbers that the letters of the Greek word **"Αποστάτης"** (apostatis) represent:



Α (α΄) = 1
Π (π΄) = 80
Ο (ο΄) = 70
ΣΤ (στ΄) = 6
Α (α΄) = 1
Τ (τ΄) = 300
Η (η΄) = 8
Σ (σ΄) = 200

(χξϛ΄) = 666



Please note:
Although the Greek letters Σ (σ΄) and Τ (τ΄) separately represent the numbers 200 and 300, **when they appear together as ΣΤ΄** (στ΄), **they represent the number 6**.

Please look at the above images of ancient manuscripts of Revelation 13:18. The manuscript on the right presents the number 666, while the manuscript on the left presents the number 616. Please concentrate on the third character. The character "stigma" (Ϛ ϛ) is a cluster of the letters σ and τ, used in the Greek numeral system as a symbol of number

six. Those who ignore this fact project an incomplete scale from 1 to 10.

From all the above, I conclude that since the name of the ***"beast"*** is **"Apostatis"** (the apostate one), to receive ***"the mark of the beast"*** or ***"the name of the beast"*** or ***"the number of its name"***, it simply means to join the great apostasy which will come upon the face of the whole symbolic ***"earth"*****!** This apostasy will demand of the Christians to accept the authority of the beast and **to worship it!** Everyone who will agree to do so, will automatically be an apostate (**αποστάτης**)! This apostasy or falling away will spread and will be supported by an apostatic, a heretical gospel, which will try to **alter** the true gospel of the Bible. The true gospel of the Bible proclaims **salvation by grace through faith** (Ephesians 2:8) **in the True Jesus of the Bible**. The True Jesus of the Bible **deserves to be worshipped** (Revelation 5:13) because He is the Mighty God of Isaiah 9:6, and the Almighty God **YHWH** who appeared to Abraham (Genesis 17:1; 18:1; John 8:56-58)**!**

My true Christian brothers and sisters, do not lose your joy! The names of those who will worship the beast, have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb (Revelation 13:8; 20:15).

Chapter Fourteen

Verse 1: ***"[a]And I saw, and look, the Lamb standing on the mountain Zion, and with him 144,000, [b]who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]
"[a]And I saw, and look, the Lamb standing on the mountain Zion, and with him 144,000,"

Who is the Lamb?
In the explanation of Revelation 5:6[a], I wrote (in blue):

According to John 1:29,36, Isaiah 53:7 and 1 Peter 1:19, the Lamb is the Lord Jesus Christ who shed His precious blood for the sins of the world. Let us read these verses:

John 1:29,36:
"[29]On the morrow, John sees Jesus coming toward him and said, Behold! The Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world … [36]And looking at Jesus walking, he said, Behold, the Lamb of God!"

Isaiah 53:7:
"He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, but He did not open His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a ewe before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."

1 Peter 1:19:
"but with precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish …."

Who are the 144,000 and what does it mean that they stand with the Lamb (with Christ) **on mount Zion?**
The first time we met this group of believers in Christ, it was in Revelation 7:4-8. Let us read these verses:

"[4]And I heard the number of the sealed: 144,000 were sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel: [5]Out of the tribe of Judah, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Reuben, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Gad, 12,000 sealed. [6]Out of the tribe of Asher, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Naphtali, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Manasseh, 12,000 sealed. [7]Out of the tribe of Simeon, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Levi, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Issachar, 12,000 sealed. [8]Out of the tribe of Zebulun, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Joseph, 12,000 sealed. Out of the tribe of Benjamin, 12,000 sealed."

In the explanation of Revelation 7:4-8, I wrote (in blue):

Do the above verses say that only 144,000 people will be saved out of the fore mentioned tribes of Israel?
The answer is a resounding **"No!"** If that were the case, then, the gospel of salvation which Jesus preached in John 3:16 would not be accurate! There, we read:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (KJV)

The above statement, ***"whosoever believes in Him"***, tells us that **all** who believe in Jesus, even if they are millions of Israelites, will be saved and sealed!

Then, why did verses 4-8 mention a specific number?
The specific number shows us that this is **a special group** among all those who will be saved and consequently sealed throughout the Christian era out of the literal fore mentioned tribes of Israel! This special group is a ***"firstfruit"*** to God and to Christ from among the people of Israel. The word ***"firstfruit"*** refers to **the first and the best** of the fruits of the land that were offered to God (Exodus 23:11). This conclusion is supported by Revelation 14:4. Let us read this verse:

"These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may go. These were redeemed from among men as a firstfruit to God and to the Lamb."

This special group of Jewish believers will be elevated by God into the highest position in His kingdom. They will receive great authority and they, together with Jesus, will make up the core, **the central part of God's kingdom!**

How do we know that some believers will be elevated by God to higher positions of authority than others?
Let us read a few scriptures:

Matthew 11:11
"Truly I say to you, There has not arisen among those born of a woman any greater than John the Baptist. But the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is."

Luke 19:16-19
"[16]***And the first came, saying, Lord, your mina has gained ten minas.*** [17]***And he said to him, Well done, good slave! Because you were faithful in a least thing, have authority over ten cities.*** [18]***And the second came, saying, Lord, your mina has made five minas.*** [19]***And he said to this one also, And you be over five cities.***

2 Corinthians 5:10
"For we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive the things done through the body, according to what he did, whether good or bad."

How can we tell that the 144,000 believers will, together with Jesus, make up the core, the central authority of God's kingdom?
To give a complete answer to the above question, I must present to you one more symbolic term: The ***"mountain".***

What does a *"mountain"* symbolize?
A ***"mountain"*** pictures a **"kingdom"** or **"government"**, whether it is political or religious. This explanation is supported by the following:

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream. In that dream, he saw a stone which struck an image and broke it into pieces. Then, that stone became ***"a great mountain"*** and filled the whole earth. The prophet Daniel explained the dream to the king saying:

"You O king were seeing … until a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them into pieces … and the stone that

struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:31-35).

Daniel explained that **this *"great mountain"* symbolized God's kingdom**. He said,

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." (Daniel 2:44).

Another place that mentions the symbolic term ***"mountains"***, is Revelation 17:9,10. There, the angel explained to John that ***"mountains"*** refer to ***"kings"*** --- to world empires which will rule on the planet before the coming of the kingdom of God. Let us read these verses:

"This calls for a mind with wisdom: the seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman is seated; they are also seven kings, five of whom have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come, and when he does come he must remain only a little while." (ESV)

A third place where we meet the symbolic term ***"mountain"*** is Isaiah 2:2. There, the prophet said,

"And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it."

According to the foregoing understanding of the symbolic term ***"mountain"***, the prophet simply said that in the last

days, **the kingdom of the house of Jehovah will be exalted above all other kingdoms, whether these kingdoms are big** (like mountains) **or smaller** (like hills).

Please keep the above information in your mind because, in a few moments, we will combine it with the words of three ***"witnesses"***. These ***"witnesses"*** are three scriptures which bear testimony to the fact that,

- **The rod** of Christ's strength (His rulership),
- **His law** and
- **His word**

will go forth **out of Zion**. Let us pay attention to their testimony:

Psalms 110:2
"Jehovah shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion to rule in the midst of Your enemies."

Isaiah 2:3
"And many people shall go and say, Come and let us go up to the mount of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For out of Zion the Law will go forth, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

Micah 4:2
"And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For the Law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem."

Now that we know that the term ***"mountain"*** refers to a ***"kingdom"*** and as we have learned that **the rod of Christ's strength, His law and His word will go forth out of Zion**, it is easy to understand Revelation 14:1. There, it says,

"[a]And I saw, and look, the Lamb standing on the mountain Zion, and with him 144,000, [b]who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads;"

As **we do not see all the believers *"standing on mount Zion"*** with Christ but the 144,000 only, we realize that the foregoing symbolism denotes that **Jesus and the 144,000 Jewish believers who are *"the Firstfruit to God and to the Lamb"*, will make up the core, the central authority of God's kingdom**!

Does this mean that only 144,000 will rule with Christ?
The answer is **"No!"** In Revelation 5:9,10, we read:

"[9]And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy are You to receive the scroll, and to open its seals, because You were slain, and by Your blood purchased us to God out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, [10]and made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign over the earth."

Thank You, Lord Jesus!

Explanation of verse 1[b]
"[b]who had His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads;"

What is the significance that the 144,000 have the Name of God the Father written on their foreheads?

It means that they were ***"overcomers"*** or ***"conquerors"*** and that Jesus keeps His promises.

Who is the one who conquers?
The one who ***"conquers"*** is **the one who believes that Jesus is the only begotten** (not the only created) **Son of God** (1 John 5:4,5; John 3:16).

One of the promises Jesus gives to those who ***"overcome"*** is to write the Name of His God on them. Let us read Revelation 3:12. There, He said,

"The one overcoming, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more. And I will write the name of My God on him, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of Heaven from My God, and My new name."

Are the 144,000 part of the true Church of Jesus Christ or are they a different entity altogether which appears after the Church meets the Lord in the air?
We know that the true Church of Jesus Christ is a unique entity. We also know that the promises the Lord has given to her cannot be applied to any other group. For this reason, I feel we should make a list of questions based on things the Bible says about the 144,000 and compare them to the things the Bible says about the Church. If we find out that the things the Bible says about them also apply to the Church, then, the group of the 144,000 believers is part of the Church! Here is the list:

1) Will **the 144,000** follow the Lamb **wherever He may go?**

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 14:4**[b] says about the 144,000 that ***"These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may go"***.

2) Will **the Church** follow the Lamb **wherever He may go?**

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: In **John 14:3** Jesus said to His Church, ***"… I am coming again and will receive you to Myself, that where I am you may be also."***

3) How many different groups will **follow the Lamb wherever He may go?**

Answer: **One: The Church!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **1 Thessalonians 4:17; John 17:24; 14:3; 12:26.**

Therefore, since there is only one group that will follow the Lamb wherever He may go, it is manifest that the 144,000 are part of the Church!

4) Will **the Church** go to heaven?

Answer: **Yes!** However, in order for the Church to be able to go to heaven, **their fleshly bodies must be changed first**.

Scriptures to support our answer: **1 Thessalonians 4:16,17!** In **1 Corinthians 15:51-53** we read,

"Behold, I speak a mystery to you: we shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in a glance of an eye, at the last trumpet; for a trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

5) Why is it necessary for the Church to have **their bodies changed** to go to heaven?

Answer: **Because their present bodies do not have the capability to follow Him wherever He may go!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **1 Corinthians 15:49,50.** There, the apostle Paul wrote that flesh and blood cannot inherit God's kingdom. Let us read His words:

"And as we bore the image of the earthy man, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. And I say this, brothers, that flesh and blood is not able to inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption."

6) Will **the 144,000** go to heaven?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: In **Revelation 14:4**[b] it says about them that,

"These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may go."

If the Lamb will be on earth, they will be on earth with Him. If the Lamb will be in heaven, they will be with Him in heaven.

Other scriptures that show that the 144,000 will go to heaven and will stand **before the throne of God**, are Revelation 14:3 and Revelation 14:5. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 14:3
"And they sing as a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders …."

Revelation 14:5
"And no guile was found in their mouth, for they are without blemish before the throne of God."

Now that we have established the fact that the 144,000 will go to heaven, we must consider the next important question:

7) Since the 144.000 will go to heaven, will their bodies be **changed** like the bodies of the Church?

   Answer: **Yes! They must!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Read my comments and the scriptures under question #5.**

The Scriptures are clear that **only the Church** will meet the Lord in the air so they can always be with Him. In **1 Thessalonians 4:16,17** we read,

"[16]***Because the Lord Himself shall come down from Heaven with a commanding shout of an archangel's voice, and with God's trumpet. And the dead in Christ will rise again first.*** [17]***Then we who remain alive will be caught up*** (GT: ***"άμα"*** at the same time) ***together with them in the clouds to a meeting with the Lord in the air. And so we will always be with the Lord."***

Therefore, since the 144,000 will go to heaven, since their bodies must be changed to go there, and **since the Bible speaks of one rapture only**, **the 144,000 are part of the Church!**

8) Is **the Church** being ***"sealed"*****?**

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Ephesians 1:13; 4:30.**

9) What is the ***"seal"*** with which the Church is ***"sealed"*****?**

Answer: **The Holy Spirit!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Ephesians 1:13; 4:30.**

10) Are **the 144,000** ***"sealed"***?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 7:4**. There, it says,

"And I heard the number of those having been sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand having been sealed out of every tribe of the sons of Israel:"

11) Is the ***"seal"*** the 144,000 receive different than the ***"seal"*** the Church receives?

Answer: **No!**

Scriptures to support our answer: The Scriptures do not mention of another ***"seal".*** There aren't two standards or ways by which sinners can be saved! Likewise, there aren't two different ***"seals"*** for the day of redemption**.** In **Ephesians 4:30**, the apostle Paul wrote,

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed to the day of redemption."

And in **Ephesians 1:13,14**, the same apostle wrote,

"in whom also you, hearing the Word of Truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also believing you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is an earnest of our inheritance, to the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."

Therefore, all those who receive the ***"seal"*** for the day of redemption, make up the one and only Church! For this reason, I conclude again that **the 144,000 are part of the Church!**

12) Is **the Church** a ***"firstfruit"***?

Answer: **Yes! The Greek word for "firstfruit" is "απαρχή"** (apar-hee) and it means: ***"the first and the best out of a group of people or things"***. **For this reason, the Church is the "firstfruit" or the *"aparhee"* of all mankind.**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Romans 8:23 and James 1:18.** Let us read these verses:

Romans 8:23
"And not only so, but also we ourselves having the first-fruit of the Spirit, also we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly expecting adoption, the redemption of our body;"

James 1:18
"Having purposed, He brought us forth by the Word of truth, for us to be a certain firstfruit of His creatures."

13) Are **the 144,000** a ***"firstfruit"***?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 14:4:**

"These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones following the Lamb wherever He may go. These were redeemed from among men as a firstfruit to God and to the Lamb."

Therefore, as it is impossible for two groups to be a ***"firstfruit to God and to Christ"***, it only stands to reason that **the 144,000 are part of the Church!**

14) Will **the Church** stand before God **without blemish**?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support your answer: **Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; Colossians 1:22; Jude 1:24:**

Ephesians 1:4
"even as He elected us in Him before the foundation of the world, for us to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,"

Ephesians 5:27
"that He might present it to Himself as the glorious assembly, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such things, but that it be holy and without blemish."

Colossians 1:22
"in the body of His flesh, through death, to present you holy and without blemish and irreproachable before Him,"

Jude 1:24
"Now to Him being able to keep you without stumbling, and to set you before His glory without blemish, with unspeakable joy;"

15) Will **the 144,000** stand before the throne of God **without blemish?**

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 14:5.** Let us read that verse:

"And no guile was found in their mouth, for they are without blemish before the throne of God."

16) According to the scriptures we read earlier (Ephesians 1:4, 5:27, Colossians 1:22 and Jude 1:24) **how many different groups will stand before the throne of God without blemish?** One or two?

Answer: **One! The Church!**

Therefore, **the 144,000 are part of the Church!**

17) Does **the Church** have **the Name of God written on their foreheads**?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 3:12,13:**

"[12]***Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.*** [13]***He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."***

The above words apply to the Church only because all those who make His Church are overcomers (1 John 5:5).

18) Do **the 144,000** have **the Name of God written on their foreheads?**

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 14:1:**

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."

Therefore, as the ***"overcomers"*** make up the Church, as it is the ***"overcomers"*** only who have the Name of God written on them and as the 144,000 have the Name of God written on their foreheads, then, **the 144,000 are part of the Church!**

19) Will **the Church reign** with Christ?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30; Revelation 3:21,22.** Let us read these verses:

Matthew 19:28
"And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, You who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 22:30
"that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Revelation 3:21,22
"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

20) Will **the 144.000 reign** with Christ?

Answer: **Yes!**

Scriptures to support our answer: **Revelation 14:1:**

"And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion! And with Him were a hundred and forty four thousands, with the name of His Father having been written on their foreheads." (Please read the explanation of Revelation 14:1 above.)

From all the above, we see that the group of the 144,000 is not unrelated to the Church, but **they are part of it!**

Verse 2: ***"and I heard a voice out of heaven, as the sound of many waters, and as the sound of a great thunder, and I heard a sound of harpers harping with their harps,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2
Here, John heard the 144,000 (verse 3) singing a hymn with a thunderous voice which was like the sound of ***"many waters"*** and at the same time, he heard a sound of playing harps.

The fact that the voice was like ***"the sound of many waters"***, simply refers to the fact that this group consisted of

many people (Revelation 17:1,15). This explanation, is also verified by the following verse:

Verse 3: ***"[a]and they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders; [b]and no one was able to learn the song except the 144,000, who were bought from the earth;"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"[a]and they sing a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and the elders;"

The above words prove the fact that the 144,000 will go to heaven since they sing their new song ***"before the throne, and before the four living creatures, and*** (before) ***the elders"***.

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"[b]and no one was able to learn the song except the 144,000, who were bought from the earth;"

The foregoing words tell us that:

1) The 144,000 are a very special group of believers within the Church of Jesus Christ because no one else was able to learn the hymn, and

2) they are not a group of heavenly creatures but earthly because they ***"were bought from the earth"*** by the blood of the Lamb (Acts 20:28).

Verse 4: ***"[a]these are those who have not been defiled with women; for they are virgin. [b]These are the ones who are following the Lamb wherever He may go; [c]these were***

bought from among men (as) ***first-fruit to God and to the Lamb"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4[a]

"[a]these are those who have not been defiled with women; for they are virgin."

Some people take the above words literally and teach that the 144,000 were never married! However, their doctrine is wrong because it insinuates that:

1) The 144,000 are all men (since they have not defiled themselves with ***"women"***), and

2) the Lord God will bless and elevate more, those who remain single.

Those who support the above false doctrine must adjust their thinking according to Matthew 8:14 and 1 Corinthians 9:5 which reveal that **the apostle Peter and other apostles were married!** God will not bless Peter and the rest of the apostles who were married less than those who were single! In fact, the apostle Paul says that **the doctrine which forbids people to marry is part of the teachings of demons!** Let us read his words:

"But the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, cleaving to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons, in lying speakers in hypocrisy, being seared in their own conscience, forbidding to marry, saying to abstain from foods, which God created for partaking with thanksgiving by the believers and those knowing the truth." (1Timothy 4:1-3)

Then, what does it mean that they are not defiled with *"women"*?
From the explanation of Revelation 13:13,14 we learned that the symbolic term ***"women"*** **refers to religions!** This conclusion is supported by the fact that ***"Babylon the great"***, the wicked **religious entity** of Revelation chapter 17, is called a ***"woman"*** (verse 6), a ***"harlot"*** (verses 15, 16) and the ***"mother"*** of other religious entities who have inherited her traits of **apostasy and whoredom** and who, for this reason, are called ***"the harlots"*** of the ***"earth"*** (verse 5)**!**

Therefore, the words, ***"these are those who have not been defiled with women; for they are virgin"***, refer to those who **have not defiled themselves with religions!** Since the time they established a personal relationship with God Jesus, **they abandoned religion and they truly followed Him!** The apostle Paul spoke of their ***"virginity"*** in 2 Corinthians 11:2,3. There, he said,

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Religion corrupts the simplicity that is in Christ and those who **devote** themselves to religion rather than to Christ become guilty of harlotry! **It is a matter of submission and Headship!**

Explanation of verse 4[b]

"[b]These are the ones who are following the Lamb wherever He may go;"

Please read the explanation of verse 1, under question #6.

Explanation of verse 4[c]

"[c]these were bought from among men (as) ***firstfruit to God and to the Lamb"***

Please read the explanation of verse 1[a], questions #12 and 13 and explanation of verse 3[b].

Verse 5: ***"and in their mouth was found no lie; because they are without blemish before the throne of God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

Please read the explanation of verse 1, under questions #14,15 and 16.

Verse 6: ***"And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having*** (the) ***everlasting gospel to preach*** (it) ***to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

In Colossians 1:23, the apostle Paul stated that the ***"gospel"*** was ***"proclaimed in all the creation under heaven"***; and yet, in the present verse, John tells us that he saw an angel who **was about to preach** ***"the everlasting gospel"*** to those who dwell on the symbolic ***"earth"***, in other words to the Judaeo-Christian community, and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people.

How do we know that the above word *"earth"* refers to the symbolic term *"earth"* and not to the planet earth?
If it would have referred to the planet earth, there would be no need to write the words ***"and to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people"*****!**

What does the fact that the *"everlasting gospel"* had to be preached again indicate?
It indicates that the time would come when false teachers would try to pervert the true apostolic gospel by preaching ***"other gospels"***. It indicates that these ***"other gospels"*** would confuse the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** as to how one can be saved and who the True Jesus of the Bible is. For this reason, God would send His angel to preach the ***"everlasting"*** (the unchangeable) gospel again!

Speaking about those ***"other gospels"***, the apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians the following:

"I wonder that you are so quickly turning back from the One having called you by the grace of Christ to another gospel, which is not another; only there are some troubling you, even determined to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel out of Heaven, should preach a gospel to you beside the gospel we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, and now I say again, If anyone preaches a gospel beside what you received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-9)

What is the *"everlasting gospel"* in its shortest form?
God, through His Word, became flesh according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 9:6; 53:1-3; 35:4-6; John 1:1,14; Philippians 2:5-8), He died for our sins on the cross according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:7,8; Numbers 21:9; John 3:14), He

was buried (in a rich man's grave) according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60), on the third day He was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:10,11[a]; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4), and whosoever recognizes Him as the **LORD (YHWH)** of Romans 10:9,13 and prays to Him in faith (Romans 10:13,14), will not perish but has everlasting life (John 3:16; 6:40).

The above paragraph contains the true and everlasting biblical gospel! **It proclaims the Person and the work of the Savior and explains what one must do to be saved. Any other contradicting gospel is a perversion of the everlasting gospel!**

Verse 7: ***"saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment has come, and worship the One who made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and fountains of waters.'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

Who is the God whom we must fear and who must receive glory and worship?

His Name is Jesus! **He is the Creator God the Son who created all things for Himself!** This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

John 1:3

"All things were made by Him (Greek text: **δι' αυτού**), ***and without Him not even one thing was made."***

Colossians 1:16

"because in Him (i.e., within Him) ***all things were created, the things which are in heaven and the things which are***

on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or governments or authorities, all things were created by Him (Greek text: **δι' αυτού**) ***and for Him."***

The above two verses have been translated by the author from the Greek text; about the expression ***"by Him"*** [instead of through Him], please read the explanation that follows:

The Greek word **"διά"** ([dia] or **"δι'"** for short) in the above text is a preposition. It has many different meanings depending on whether it is used for a place, for distance, for time, for a person, etc. Some of the meanings are: for, by, with, about, through, etc., e.g. **"διά να"** ([dia na]: in order to). **"διά βίου"** ([dia viou]: for life). **"διά τούτο"** (for this reason). **"διά πλοίου"** ([dia ploiou]: by boat). **"διά μέσου της πόλεως"** ([dia mesou tis poleos]: through the city). Check Divrys Greek-English Dictionary, 1971, page 471, under the word "διά".

According to Εκσυγχρονισμένον "1970", Νέον Λεξικόν (Δημητράκου [Dimitrakou]), page 397, under the word **"διά"**, no. 7, the grammar of the Greek language dictates that:

When the word "διά" (dia) **is used in regard to an act of a person, followed by genitive case, it means that the person is the cause of this act not just the medium.**

When the word **"διά"** is followed by the word **"μέσου"** (mesou), it means **"through"** and shows that the person is **only the medium**. The combination of both words makes the person to be **"διάμεσος"** (diamesos)**: intermediate or**

medium. (Check the above Lexicon Dimitrakou, page 409, under the word **"διάμεσος"** [diamesos]).

In John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16, we **do not** find the word **"μέσου"** after the word **"διά"**; it **does not** say **"διά μέσου αυτού"**. Instead, we see that the word **"διά"** or **"δι'"** is followed by the word **"αὐτοῦ"** (Him) **which is in the genitive case!** When a Greek word is in the genitive case and is translated into English, it should receive in front of it the words **"of the"** or **"of"**. Therefore, the expression **"δι' αὐτοῦ"**, should literally be translated as **"by of the Him"** or **"by of Him"**. Although **"by of Him"** would sound strange in English, in Greek it makes an irrefutable statement**: It makes the Person** (Him) **to be the Cause or the Author of creation. It means that He created all things, that He is the Creator God, One of the True Godhead YHWH!**

Other scriptures that show clearly that Jesus is the Creator God, are:

Hebrews 1:7-12
"[7]And as to the angels, He said, "Who makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire;" [8]but as to the Son, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom; [9]You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; because of this God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness beside Your fellows." [10]And, "You, Lord, at the beginning founded the earth, and the heavens are works of Your hands. [11]They will vanish away, but You will continue; and they will all become old, like a garment, [12]and You shall fold them up like a covering, and they shall be

changed. But You are the same, and Your years shall not fail."”

Should, then, Jesus be worshipped?
Absolutely! As He is the Creator God and One of the True Godhead **YHWH**, He deserves to be worshipped!

For more information on this important issue, please read the explanation of Revelation 5:7,8.

A crucial point to consider:
Worshipping Jesus is a matter of salvation!

How so?
Please remember that the Name **YHWH** does not belong to the Father only. It belongs to all Three Persons of the True Godhead **YHWH**. According to Matthew 28:19, this Name belongs to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit!

In Romans 10:13, Paul applied the words of Joel 2:32 **to Jesus** and wrote:

“For everyone, ‘whoever may call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

The expression, ***“call upon”*** or ***“call on”***, means to **“pray to”**. And **prayer is worship!** The person who will not see the truth that Jesus is the Creator God and One of the True Godhead **YHWH**, will not pray to Him and therefore he/she will not be saved!

Did the first Christians pray to Jesus?
Yes, they did because they had believed that Jesus is God! This statement, is supported by the following scriptures:

Acts 7:59
"So they stoned Stephen, while <u>he prayed</u>, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."" (WNT)

1 Corinthians 1:2
"to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, those having been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called-out saints, with <u>all those calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place</u>, both theirs and ours:"

I pray that all those who do not believe the fact that Jesus is God in essence, and for this reason they do not call on His Name (in other words, they do not pray to Him to ask Him to save them), will allow the truth of the above verses to help them adjust their thinking because their eternity is at stake (John 8:24).

Verse 8: ***"And another, a second angel followed, saying, 'Babylon, the great city, has fallen, has fallen, the one who has given to all the nations to drink from the wine of the wrath of her whoredom.'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8
Who is *"Babylon the great"*?
The identity of this ***"great city"*** will be fully presented in chapter 17.

What do the words, *"the wine of the wrath of her whoredom"*, mean?
In Greek, the word for ***"wrath"*** or ***"anger"*** is **"θυμός"** (thymos). According to the Εκσυγχρονισμένον "1970" Νέον Λεξικόν Δ. Β. Δημητράκου, page 691, we see that in addition to **"wrath"** and **"anger"**, the word **'θυμός'** also refers to **the soul** (which is the seat of anger), or to **the**

spirit, to **the element of life**, **of the feelings** or **of the thought**. It also refers to **breath**, to **the strength of a man**, to **the heart**, to **the condition of the soul** and to **the desires**. Apparently, it refers to all the above because all of them are affected by one's anger.

Based on the above information, we understand that ***"Babylon the great"*** is fornicating with **"passion"** and **"intensity"!** Here, God does not view ***"Babylon the great"*** as an entity who just made a mistake, but as someone who is involved in spiritual whoredom with **all her heart, mind, and spirit!**

What does it mean that "she" gives *"to all the nations to drink from the wine of the wrath of her whoredom"*?
It means that she makes them **"drunk"**, **"dizzy"** or **"confused"** through false and twisted doctrines which **alter** the true gospel of God (Romans 1:1).

Not only did she run away from her "Husband" (Isaiah 54:5), but also, with her false doctrines, proclamations, and attitude, she is preventing others from seeing the Redeemer God who became flesh in order to be wounded and bruised for their transgression and iniquities (Isaiah 53:4,5).

Because they drink her ***"wine"*** without examining the Scriptures, those who loved her became so confused, that they cannot see the fact that instead of accepting the authority of the ***"King of kings"*** (Revelation 19:16) in their lives, they have accepted her authority as a ***"queen"*** (Revelation 18:7)! For this reason, they are committing spiritual fornication with her! This statement, is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 17:2
"with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the ones inhabiting the earth became drunk from the wine of her fornication."

Revelation 18:3
"because of the wine of the anger of her fornication which all the nations have drunk, even the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; and the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her luxury."

What do the words, "*'Babylon … has fallen, has fallen"*, signify?
The expression, ***"has fallen, has fallen"***, is a pronouncement of **judgment** that has come out against ***"Babylon the great"***.

Has *"Babylon"* already fallen?
No! Her actual fall does not take place until Revelation 17:16. However, God has already passed His judgment against ***"her"***. In His eyes, **she has fallen!** She no longer stands in the prestige position she once held before the God of Abraham! In the eyes of God, hers is a house of desolation (Matthew 23:38; Jeremiah 22:5)!

What is *"Babylon the great"* guilty of? Why will God cause her to fall?
God judged ***"Babylon the great"*** for two reasons:

a) Because she has defiled the symbolic ***"earth"*** with her ***"fornication"***, and

b) because ***"she"*** has killed His servants.

The above statements are supported by Revelation 19:2. There it says,

"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He judged the great harlot who defiled the earth with her fornication. And <u>He avenged the blood of His slaves out of her hand</u>."

Verses 9-12: ***"[9]And another, a third angel followed them, saying with a great voice, `If any one worships the beast, and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, [10]also he will drink from the wine of the wrath of God, which has been served undiluted in the cup of His anger, and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone before the holy angels, and before the Lamb, [11]and the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, those who are worshipping the beast and his image, and whosoever 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.'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 9-12

The foregoing verses are straight forward. An explanation is not needed here since, in chapter thirteen, I have already explained what the ***"beast"*** is. However, verse 12 above is loud and clear about the fact that the Church, the ***"saints"***, those who have ***"the faith of Jesus"***, will go through the tribulation of the last days; and **because they will not receive the mark of the *"beast"*** (verse 9)**, they will have *"part in the first resurrection"*** (Revelation 20:4-6)**!** Praise God!

When will *"the first resurrection"* take place?
The ***"first resurrection"*** is completed in two parts:

a) The first Person who had ***"part in the first resurrection"*** (Revelation 20:6), was the man Jesus.

b) All those who belong to Him, in other words, His Church, will have ***"part in the first resurrection"*** at His second coming.

The above statements are supported by the following scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:20-23
"[20]***But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He became the firstfruit of those having fallen asleep.*** [21]***For since death is through man, also through a Man is a resurrection of the dead;*** [22]***for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.*** [23]***But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruit; afterward those of Christ at His coming."***

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
"[14]***For if we have faith that Jesus underwent death and came back again, even so those who are sleeping will come again with him by God's power.*** [15]***For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are still living at the coming of the Lord, will not go before those who are sleeping.*** [16]***Because the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a word of authority, with the voice of the chief angel, with the sound of a horn: and the dead in Christ will come to life first;*** [17]***Then we who are still living will be taken up*** (Greek text: ***"άμα"*** [***"at the same time"***])

together with them into the clouds to see the Lord in the air: and so will we be for ever with the Lord." (BBE)

2 Thessalonians 2:1
"But we beg you, brothers, concerning the presence (or coming) ***of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering upon Him,"***

Verse 13: ***"And 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, 'in order to rest from their labours --- and their works follow them!'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13
The words, ***"from now on"***, refer to the entire Christian era: From the first century to the end of the tribulation of the last days.

The words, ***"their works follow them"***, refer to the rewards they will receive from the Lord when He comes. This statement is supported by Revelation 22:12. There it says:

"And, behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each as his work is."

Verse 14: ***"And I saw, and look, a white cloud, and on the cloud*** (there was one) ***sitting*** (who looked) ***like a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14
Who is this *"Son of man"* who sits on a white cloud?

The answer is very simple: In Matthew 9:6, Jesus gave the title ***"Son of man"*** to Himself. Other verses which reveal that the title ***"Son of Man"*** applies to Jesus are:

Matthew 24:30
"And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens. And then all the tribes of the land will wail. And they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and much glory."

Revelation 1:7
"'Behold, He (Jesus) ***comes with the clouds," and "every eye will see Him, and the ones who pierced" Him, and all the tribes of the earth "will wail on account of Him." Yes, Amen."***

What does the *"golden crown"* on His head signify?
The fact that He wears a ***"golden crown"*** on His head signifies that He has kingdom authority. This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Daniel 7:13,14
"[13]***I was looking in the night visions. And behold! One like the Son of Man came with the clouds of the heavens. And He came to the Ancient of Days. And they brought Him near before Him.*** [14]***And dominion was given to Him, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."***

Daniel 7:27
"And the kingdom and rulership, and the greatness of the kingdom under all the heavens shall be given to the peo-

ple of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And all kingdoms shall serve and obey Him."

Revelation 19:13-16
"[13]and having been clothed in a garment which had been dipped in blood. And His name is called The Word of God. [14]And the armies in Heaven followed Him on white horses, being dressed in fine linen, white and pure. [15]And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, that with it He might smite the nations. And He will shepherd them with an iron rod. And He treads the winepress of the wine of the anger and of the wrath of God Almighty. [16]And He has on His garment and on His thigh a name having been written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Why does He hold a *"sharp sickle"* in His hand?
We will find the answer in verses 15 and 16. So, let us read these verses:

Verses 15,16: ***"[15]and another angel came out of the temple crying in a great voice to*** (the One) ***sitting on the cloud: `Send Your sickle and reap, because the time came for You to reap, because the harvest of the earth has dried; [16]and the One who is sitting on the cloud threw his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 15 and 16
In Mark 4:26-29 we read the following parable:

"[26]… So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed on the earth, [27]and should sleep, and rise night and day; and the seed should sprout and lengthen of itself, as he does not know. [28]For of itself the earth bears fruit: first

greenery, then an ear, then full grain in the ear. [29]***And when the fruit yields, immediately he "sends forth the sickle, for the harvest has come."***

From the above words, we gather that when the earth produces fruit, the owner of that earth, ***"sends forth the sickle, because the harvest has come"***. Likewise, in the foregoing verses (15,16), we see that when the time of the symbolic ***"harvest"*** comes, the Lord Jesus Christ will send His symbolic ***"sickle"*** to reap the symbolic ***"earth"***, in other words, all those who claim to know and believe in the True God of the Bible!

When will that event take place and who are the reapers?
In Matthew 13:39,40, Jesus said,

"[39]***… the harvest is the end of the age, and the angels are the reapers."***

What do the words, *"the harvest of the earth has dried"* mean?
They mean that **it is finished!** They mean that God, in His patience, waited to the very end! They mean that **there isn't another person who will turn to the Lord God to be saved** (Isaiah 45:22).

Verse 17: ***"And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, having a sharp sickle also,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17
This verse is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Verse 18: ***"[a]and another angel came out of the altar, having authority over the fire, [b]and he called with a great cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Send your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe;'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 18[a]

"[a]and another angel came out of the altar, having authority over the fire,"

I believe that we have met this angel who ***"came out of the altar"*** and who has ***"authority over the fire"*** of the altar, in Revelation 8:3-5. There we read:

"[3]And another angel came and stood on the altar, having a golden censer. And many incenses were given to him, that he should give them with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne. [4]And the smoke of the incenses went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel before God. [5]And the angel has taken the censer, and has filled it from the fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and sounds and thunders and lightnings and earthquakes occurred."

Explanation of verse 18[b]

"[b]and he called with a great cry to the one who had the sharp sickle, saying, 'Send your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, because her grapes are fully ripe;'"

From the above words, we realize that the Lord's ***"harvest"*** will affect two areas:

a) The symbolic ***"earth"*** as a whole (verses 15 and 16), and

b) especially, the ***"vine of the earth"*****!**

What does the *"the vine of the earth"* symbolize?
The ***"vine of the earth"*** symbolizes the nation of Israel! This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Psalms 80:8
"You have led a vine out of Egypt; You have cast out the nations, and have planted it."

Psalms 80:14-19
"[14]***O God of Hosts, we beg You, return! Look down from Heaven and see and visit this vine,*** [15]***and the vineyard which Your right hand has planted, and on the son You made strong for Yourself.*** [16]***It is burned with fire, cut down; they perish at the rebuke of Your face.*** [17]***Let Your hand be on the man of Your right hand; on the son of man whom You have made strong for Yourself.*** [18]***So we will not backslide from You; make us live, and we will call on Your name.*** [19]***O Jehovah, God of Hosts, turn us again! Cause Your face to shine, and we will be saved."***

Isaiah 5:3-7
"[3]***And now, O people of Jerusalem and men of Judah, I ask you, judge between Me and My vineyard.*** [4]***What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Who knows? I waited for it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes.*** [5]***And now I will make known to you what I will do then to My vineyard. I will take away its hedge, and it will be burned. I will breach its wall, and it will become a trampling ground.*** [6]***And I will lay it waste;***

it shall not be pruned nor hoed; but briers and thorns shall come up. And I will command the clouds from raining rain on it. [7]***For the vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Judah is His delightful plant. And He waited for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry!"***

As the *"vineyard"* is *"the house of Israel"*, what do *"the clusters"* of the *"vine"* symbolize?
Congregated people --- cities, villages, synagogues!

Based on the above understanding, we realize that along with the rest of the symbolic ***"earth"***, Israel will not escape God's judgment! Instead, as the next two verses indicate, the ***"clusters"*** of the ***"vine of the earth"*** would experience the full intensity of the wrath of God!

Verses 19,20: ***"***[19]***and the angel put his sickle in the earth, and he gathered*** (the clusters of) ***the vine of the earth, and he threw*** (them) ***in the great winepress of the wrath of God;*** [20]***and the winepress was trampled out of the city, and blood came out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses, one thousand and six hundred stadia."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19
I lack words to express the pain I feel in my soul for the sons of Israel! Why would God be so angry against the ***"clusters"*** of the ***"vine of the earth"***? Why would He throw them ***"in the great winepress of His wrath"***? Why would He "squeeze" them to the point that blood would come ***"out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses"*** (verse 20)? Why would God remove the ***"hedge"*** He had placed around them for their protection and let them go

through such a terrible bloodshed, persecution and suffering?

When one reads Isaiah 5:1-7 (we read verses 3-7 a few moments ago), Matthew 21:31-46, 27:1-26 and Hebrews 10:26-31, one starts to understand the depth of the matter. It is important that we read these verses. First, let us read Isaiah 5:1-7, and this time let us focus on verse 5 to see that it would be God Himself the One who would take away the ***"hedge"*** of protection which He had placed around Israel:

Isaiah 5:1-7
"[1]Now I will sing to my Beloved a song of my Beloved concerning His vineyard: My Beloved has a vineyard in a fruitful horn. [2]And He dug it, and cleared it of stones, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in its midst, and also hewed out a wine vat in it. And He waited for it to produce grapes, but it produced rotten grapes. [3]And now, O people of Jerusalem and men of Judah, I ask you, judge between Me and My vineyard. [4]What more could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it? Who knows? I waited for it to yield grapes, but it yielded rotten grapes. [5]And now I will make known to you what I will do then to My vineyard. I will take away its hedge, and it will be burned. I will breach its wall, and it will become a trampling ground. [6]And I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned nor hoed; but briers and thorns shall come up. And I will command the clouds from raining rain on it. [7]For the vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the man of Judah is His delightful plant. And He waited for justice, but behold, bloodshed; for righteousness, but behold, a cry!"

Now, let us read Matthew 21:33-46 to hear one of the Lord's parables regarding the ***"vineyard"***, the ***"hedge"*** and the actions of the ***"vinedressers"***. Please note how the words of Jesus in verse 33 below, echo the above words of Isaiah 5:1,2:

Matthew 21:33-46
"[33]Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a house master, who planted a vineyard and placed a hedge around it; and he dug a winepress in it, and built a tower. And he rented it to vinedressers and left the country. [34]And when the season of the fruits came, he sent his slaves to the vinedressers to receive his fruits. [35]And the vinedressers, taking his slaves, they beat this one, and they killed one, and they stoned another. [36]Again he sent other slaves, more than the first. And they did the same to them. [37]And at last he sent his son to them, saying, They will respect my son. [38]But seeing the son, the vinedressers said among themselves, This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and possess his inheritance. [39]And taking him, they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. [40]Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers? [41]They said to Him, Bad men! He will miserably destroy them, and he will rent out the vineyard to other vinedressers who will give to him the fruits in their seasons. [42]Jesus said to them, Did you never read in the Scriptures, "A Stone which the builders rejected, this One became the Head of the Corner? This was from the Lord, and it is a wonder in our eyes?" [43]Because of this I say to you, The kingdom of God will be taken from you, and it will be given to a nation producing the fruits of it. [44]And he who falls on this Stone will be broken; but on whomever It falls, It will pulverize him. [45]And hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He

was speaking about them. [46]***And seeking to lay hold of Him, they feared the crowds, because they held Him as a prophet."***

From the above words, it is obvious that the religious leaders of Israel of the time of Jesus were not willing to accept Him as their prophesied Messiah. Why? Because, according to Isaiah 9:6,7, Daniel 7:14 and Luke 1:31-33, the Messiah would come to set up **His kingdom** in Israel and to sit on the throne of His father David. Let us read these scriptures:

Isaiah 9:6,7
"[6]***For a Child is born; to us a Son is given; and the government is on His shoulder; and His name is called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*** [7]***There is no end to the increase of His government and of peace on the throne of David, and on His kingdom, to order it, and to sustain it with justice and with righteousness, from now and forever. The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will do this."***

Daniel 7:14
"And dominion was given to Him, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Luke 1:31-33
"[31]***And behold! You will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you will call His name Jesus.*** [32]***This One will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.***

[33]***And He will reign over the house of Jacob to the ages, and of His kingdom there will be no end."***

However, the religious leaders of Israel did not wish to give up their authority; and it was for this reason that Jesus said,

"… from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent (ones) ***take it by force."*** (Matthew 11:12; AT)

Their decision to hold on to their authority drove them to the point of crucifying Him. Let us read Matthew 27:1-26:

"[1]***And early morning occurring, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel together against Jesus, so as to put Him to death.*** [2]***And binding Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor.*** [3]***Then Judas, the one betraying Him, seeing that He was condemned, repenting, returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,*** [4]***saying, I sinned, betraying innocent blood. But they said, What is it to us? You see to it.*** [5]***And tossing the silver pieces into the temple, he left. And going away he hanged himself.*** [6]***And taking the pieces of silver, the chief priests said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is the price of blood.*** [7]***And taking counsel, they bought of them the potter's field, for burial for the strangers.*** [8]***So that field was called Field of Blood until today.*** [9]***Then was fulfilled that spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him who had been priced, on whom they of the sons of Israel set a price,*** [10]***and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.*** [11]***And Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor questioned Him, saying, Are You the King of the***

Jews? And Jesus said to him, You say it. [12]***And when He was accused by the chief priests and the elders, He answered nothing.*** [13]***Then Pilate said to Him, Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?*** [14]***And He did not answer him, not even to one word, so that the governor greatly marveled.*** [15]***And at a feast, the governor customarily released one prisoner to the crowd, whom they wished.*** [16]***And they had then a notable prisoner, Barabbas.*** [17]***Then they, having been assembled, Pilate said to them, Whom do you wish I may release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus being called Christ?*** [18]***For he knew they delivered Him up through envy.*** [19]***But as he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, Let nothing be to you and that just one. For I have suffered many things today by a dream because of Him.*** [20]***But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds, that they should ask for Barabbas, and to destroy Jesus.*** [21]***And answering, the governor said to them, From the two, which do you wish that I release to you? And they said, Barabbas.*** [22]***Pilate said to them, What then should I do to Jesus being called Christ? They all say to him, Crucify Him!*** [23]***But the governor said, For what badness did He do? But they the more cried out, saying, Crucify!*** [24]***And seeing that nothing is gained, but rather an uproar occurs, taking water, Pilate washed his hands before the crowd, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this righteous one; you will see.*** [25]***And answering, all the people said, His blood be on us and on our children.*** [26]***Then he released Barabbas to them. But having flogged Jesus, he delivered Him up that He might be crucified."***

The reading of the above verses leads us to ask the following question:

Who, then, killed Jesus? The Romans or the Jews of His generation?
Although many people today say that it was the Romans that killed Jesus (which of course is a true statement because in the end it was them who had the authority to nail Him to the cross), the above scriptures tell us that it was the Jews who killed Him because they applied pressure on Pilate to crucify Him (also, please read Acts 2:23). In verses 24 and 25 above, we saw that the Roman governor declared Jesus ***"righteous"*** and he washed his hands with water before the Jews saying, ***"I am innocent of the blood of this righteous one".*** And then, we heard the Jews who wanted to kill Him cursing themselves and their children saying, ***"His blood be on us and on our children."***

O my God! The height of the hatred of the Jews towards the ***"Righteous One"*** of Isaiah 53:11! Dear God, in the Name of Jesus I pray for the sons of Israel: Please, have mercy on them and on their offspring! Please bring this curse to an end! Please open the eyes of their understanding to recognise the fact that Jesus, the promised ***"Seed of the woman"*** of Genesis 3:15, the promised ***"Seed"*** of Abraham of Genesis 22:18, their Messiah, **came** and that He died on the cross to save them from their sins fulfilling thus the great prophecies of Isaiah chapter 53!

Has God thrown the *"clusters"* of the *"vine of the earth"* *"in the great winepress of His wrath"*?
Oh yes, He has! From the first century to this day, the Jews have experienced hot persecution many times, such as the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. (Luke 21:20-22), their persecution in Spain from the Catholic church and the holocaust.

Why did God allow the Jews to go through such terrible times?

Let us consider the following: God, through the prophets, had foretold Israel that He would come to save them from their sins. However, Israel did not pay attention to the prophetic word and, for this reason, when He ***"suddenly"*** (Malachi 3:1) came in their midst, they were not able to recognize Him. **Here are a few prophecies that Israel should have paid attention to:**

a) About the place of birth of their Redeemer God who would become a Man and whose goings forth have been **from the days of eternity**, Micah 5:2 says,

"And you, Bethlehem Ephratah, being least among the thousands of Judah, out of you He shall come forth to Me to become One ruling in Israel; and His goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity."

b) About the bloodline out of which He would come as a Man, Jeremiah 23:5,6 says,

"[5]Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will raise to David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and act wisely, and He shall do justice and righteousness in the earth. [6] In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this is His name by which He shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness",

and Jeremiah 33:14,15, says,

"[14]***Behold, the days come, says Jehovah, that I will fulfill the good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.*** [15]***In those days, and at that time, I will cause a Branch of Righteousness to grow up to David. And He shall do judgment and righteousness in the land."***

c) About the time of His coming as the Messiah, Daniel 9:25 says,

"Know, then, and understand that from the going out of a word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem, to Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks…."

If we are to declare Daniel as a true prophet of **YHWH**, then, we must look for the Messiah **in the first century** --- not twenty centuries later!

How so?
Because 7 weeks + 62 weeks = 69 weeks of years [a day for a year: Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6] or **483 years from the time of the issuing of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem**!

d) About the work He would do in order to be recognized as their God who became flesh to save them, Isaiah 35:4-6 says,

"[4]***Say to those of a hasty heart, Be strong! Do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance; with the full dealing of God, He will come and save you.*** [5]***Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf opened.*** [6]***Then the***

lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing. For waters shall break out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert."

Now, please keep the above prophecy in mind as we read Matthew 11:1-5:

"[1]And it happened when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, He left there to teach and to proclaim in their cities. [2]But hearing in the prison of the works of Christ, sending two of his disciples, [3]John said to Him, Are You the One coming, or are we to look for another? [4]And answering, Jesus said to them, Going, relate to John what you hear and see: [5]The blind receive sight, and the lame walk; lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear; the dead are raised, and the poor are given the gospel."

With the words ***"the poor are given the gospel"***, Jesus referred to Isaiah 61:1,2. There it says,

"[1]The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is on Me, because Jehovah has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the meek. He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and complete opening to the bound ones; [2]to proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah, and the day of vengeance of our God; …"

e) **About the work He had to do to save them from their sins,** (His death, burial, and resurrection), Isaiah chapter 53 says it all!

Although Israel was fully aware about the coming of the Messiah, when He came and fulfilled all the above prophecies and displayed the powerful works of God before their very eyes, **they rejected Him;** they rejected the One who, before He became flesh in order to sacrifice His body for their sins, He was **the Word** who created all things (Psalms 33:6), the visible and the invisible when God **spoke** all things into existence. They thought He was only a mere man, a blasphemer, and they crucified Him! **They certainly thought His blood was common**! **They certainly insulted God's Holy Spirit who was the Author of the above prophecies! They willfully became guilty of the sin of apostasy from the living God who came to save them by grace through faith in Him as the "only begotten" ---** not "only created" **--- Son of God!** And the writer of the letter to the Hebrews wrote,

"[26]***For if we are willfully sinning after receiving the full knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice concerning sins,*** [27]***but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and "zealous fire being about to consume the adversaries."*** [28]***If anyone did not regard the Law of Moses, that one dies without pities on "the word of two or three witnesses,"*** [29]***how much worse punishment do you think will be thought worthy to receive, the one trampling the Son of God, and having counted common the blood of the covenant in which he was sanctified, and having insulted the Spirit of Grace?*** [30]***For we know Him who has said, "Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The Lord will judge His people."*** [31]***It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."*** (Hebrews 10:26-31)

Explanation of verse 20

"[20]***and the winepress was trampled out of the city, and blood came out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses, one thousand and six hundred stadia."***

What does the fact that the *"winepress"* of the anger of God would be *"trampled out of the city"* signify?
As the destruction of Jerusalem took place in the year 70 AD and the book of Revelation was given to John approximately 20 years later, the expression ***"the winepress was trampled out of the city"*** indicates that the persecution against the Jews would continue even outside Israel. And it has happened!

What does the expression, *"and blood came out of the winepress up to the bridles of the horses"* mean?
It is a hyperbolic expression; it is used to show the size of their persecution and its devastating results.

A huge Jewish dilemma
The way I see it is that the Jews of the time of Jesus (like the Jews of today), had to decide between two things: Either they had to believe that Jesus was indeed the Christ (because He fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, especially those which revealed the **time** of His coming, His **bloodline** and the **place** of His birth as a Man), or they had to proclaim that their prophets were in fact false prophets --- an act which would greatly insult God's Holy Spirit who spoke through them!

What should a Jew do today?
Here, I will present the words of a Jew who believed and followed Jesus. He is known as "Apostle Peter". On the day of Pentecost, Peter said to his fellow Jews:

"[22]***Men, Israelites, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man from God, having been approved among you by works of power and wonders and miraculous signs, which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know,*** [23]***this One given to you by the before-determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you having taken by lawless hands, having crucified Him, you killed Him.*** [24]***But God raised Him up, loosing the throes of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it ...*** [36]***Then assuredly, let all the house of Israel acknowledge that God made Him both Lord and Christ, this same Jesus whom you crucified.*** [37]***And hearing, they were stabbed in the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men, brothers, What shall we do?*** [38]***And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, each of you on the name of Jesus Christ to remission of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*** [39]***For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all those afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call.*** [40]***And with many other words he earnestly testified and exhorted, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation.*** [41]***Then truly the ones gladly welcoming His Word were baptized. And about three thousand souls were added that day."*** (Acts 2:22-24,36-41)

My invitation to all the Jews

Dear Reader, if you are an Israelite who does not know Jesus, please, search the Scriptures to find out what they say about the coming of Christ. **Read Isaiah chapter 53. Pray to the Lord God of Abraham to help you see the truth on this matter.** Then, if you see that Jesus is your suffering Messiah, your Savior God who became a Man to die for your sins, please, pray to Him and ask Him to save you! The moment you do this, your sins will be forgiven, and

instantly you and your household will receive everlasting life (Acts 16:31).

I do not invite you to join a "Christian" religious institution **in order to be saved**! **I invite you to call on the Name of Jesus because whoever calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved** (Joel 2:32; Romans 10:1-14). The reason I do not invite you to join a "Christian" religious institution **in order to be saved**, is because **they do not have the power to save anyone!** Only the resurrected Jesus (whose Name means: **"YHWH the Savior"**) has the power to save you! And I am more interested in your salvation rather than your fellowship in a religious institution. May the Lord God of Abraham bless you!

A point of interest
The last part of verse 20 says that the ***"blood"*** would cover an area of ***"one thousand and six hundred stadia"***. Is this another hyperbolic expression, or is it an actual measurement of a place?

From the previous verses, we realized that the ***"blood"*** that came out of God's ***"winepress"***, is the result of God's wrath and judgment upon Israel. Is it possible that the 1,600 stadia point to the land of Israel? Yes, it is! One Athenian stadio is equal to 185 meters; 185x1600=296,000 meters or 296 kilometers. This was approximately the length of the land of Israel in the first century! Therefore, the notion that the **"blood"** would cover 1,600 stadia indicates that **all** of Israel would experience God's wrath for not believing in His Son who came to die for their sins.

Chapter Fifteen

Verse 1: ***"And I saw another sign in heaven, great and wonderful, seven angels having the last seven plagues, because the anger of God was completed in them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1
This verse is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Verse 2: ***"And I saw a sea which looked like glass*** (as if it was made from glass) ***mixed with fire; and those who conquered against the beast, and against its image, and against its mark, and against the number of its name, were standing on the sea that was made out of glass, having harps of God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2
What is the *"sea"*?
In the explanation of Revelation 4:6[a], I wrote (in blue):

In the first temple, there was a basin which was made from bronze. This basin contained a huge amount of water, and for this reason it was known as ***"the sea"***! The priests ought to use that water to wash their hands and feet **before** they entered the tabernacle. If they would approach the presence of God without having been washed, **they would die!**

Let us read the following scriptures:

Exodus 30:17-21:
"And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, And you shall make a bronze laver for washing, and its base bronze. And you shall put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar; and you shall put water there. And Aaron and his sons shall wash from it, their hands and their feet; as they go into the tabernacle of the congregation they shall wash with water, and shall not die; or as they draw near to the altar to minister, to burn a fire offering to Jehovah. And they shall wash their hands and their feet, and shall not die. And it shall be a never ending statute to them, to him and to his seed for their generations."

Exodus 38:8: ***"And he made the laver bronze, and its base bronze, from the mirrors of the serving women, those assembling, who served at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation."***

1 Kings 7:23-25: ***"And he made a casted sea of ten cubits from brim to brim; it was round all about. And its height was five cubits; and a line of thirty cubits went around it all about. And gourds were below its brim all around, going around it, ten by the cubit, circling the sea all around; the gourds were cast in two rows when it was cast. It stood on twelve oxen: three facing the north, and three facing the west, and three facing the south, and three facing the east. And the sea was above on them; and all their hinder parts were inward."***

1 Kings 7:39,44: ***"And he put the five bases on the right side of the house, and five on the left side of the house. And he put the sea on the right side of the house, east-***

ward, across from the south … and one sea, and twelve oxen under the sea;

From the foregoing verses, we realize that **no one could come before the presence of the Holy God without first being washed --- cleansed**. As I said earlier, those who would try to serve Him without first being washed would die!

How can one approach the throne of God today? What cleanses us from our sins?
The apostle John wrote, ***"… the blood of … Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin"*** (1 John 1:7) and the writer of the letter to the Hebrews said, ***"Therefore, brothers, having confidence for the entering of the Holy of Holies by the blood of Jesus, which He consecrated for us, a new and living way through the veil; that is, His flesh;"*** (Hebrews 10:19,20).

Those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible, who is the ***"mighty God"*** of Isaiah 9:6, have ***"… washed their robes and whitened them in the blood of the Lamb. Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His sanctuary…."*** (Revelation 7:14, 15)

Unlike the bronze basin of the first temple and the water it contained, the flesh of the body of Jesus and the blood it contained had the ultimate and unique power in the whole cosmos to cleanse people from their sins because they were superior, supernatural, holy and pure. This **supernatural and holy purity** was symbolized by the more refined and glorious ***"sea of glass"*** which was bright like crystal and which, unlike the earthly ***"sea of bronze"***, was made with-

out human hands! (Hebrews 10:5; Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:24,25)

Therefore, the fact that they stood on the glassy ***"sea"*** which is before the throne of God (Revelation 4:6), signifies that they had been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. Although they went through the fire of the tribulation of the last days, **they were able to conquer *"against the beast, and against its image, and against its mark, and against the number of its name"***. For this reason, they were able to hold harps to sing praises to the Lord for their salvation. Let us hear their praise:

Verses 3,4: ***"***[3]***And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Your works, Lord God the Almighty, righteous and true are Your ways, King of the saints.*** [4]***Who will not fear You, Lord, and*** (who will not) ***glorify Your Name? For You alone are holy. For all the nations will come and will worship before You, because Your righteous acts*** (or judgments) ***have been revealed."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 3 and 4

From the above verses, we observe that the ***"song of Moses"*** is also the ***"song of the Lamb"***. The words of the song exalt God for His wonderful works, for His power, for His righteousness, for His majesty and for His holiness.

What was the *"song of Moses"*?

The ***"song of Moses"*** was the song that Moses and the sons of Israel sang to the Lord God after He saved them from the armies of Pharaoh at the Red Sea. There, God destroyed Pharaoh's military power by throwing ***"horse and rider"*** into the sea.

Where can we find the *"song of Moses"*?
In Exodus 15:1-21; let us read it:

"[1]***Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to Jehovah, and spoke, saying, I will sing to Jehovah, for He is highly exalted. He has thrown the horse and his rider into the sea.*** [2]***My strength and song is Jehovah, and it happened, He was to me salvation; this is my God and I will glorify Him; the God of my father, and I will exalt Him.*** [3]***Jehovah is a Man of war; Jehovah is His name.*** [4]***He has cast Pharaoh's chariots and his army in the sea; and the choice ones of his officers are drowned in the Sea of Reeds,*** [5]***the depths cover them; they have dropped into the depths like a stone.*** [6]***Your right hand, O Jehovah, is glorious in power; O Jehovah, Your right hand dashes the enemy to pieces.*** [7]***And in Your majesty's greatness You pull down those rising up against You; You send forth Your wrath; it consumes them like stubble.*** [8]***And by the spirit of Your anger waters were heaped up; the running waters stood like a wall; the depths congealed in the heart of the sea.*** [9]***The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my soul shall be filled with them; I will draw my sword; my hand will destroy them.*** [10]***You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; they sank like lead in mighty waters.*** [11]***Who is like You among the gods, O Jehovah? Who is like You, glorified in holiness, fearful in praises, O Worker of wonders?*** [12]***You stretched Your right hand; the earth swallowed them.*** [13]***In Your mercy You led the people whom You redeemed; You guided in Your strength to Your holy dwelling.*** [14]***Peoples heard; they tremble; trembling seized the dwellers of Philistia.*** [15]***Then the chiefs of Edom were terrified; the leaders of Moab were seized by trembling; all the dwellers of Canaan were melted.*** [16]***Terrors and dread fell on them; by the greatness***

of Your arm; they are silent as a stone, until Your people pass through, O Jehovah, until pass through the people whom You have bought. [17]***You shall bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, the place You have made for Your dwelling place, O Jehovah; the sanctuary which Your hands have prepared, O Lord.*** [18]***Jehovah reigns forever and ever!*** [19]***For the horses of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and Jehovah brought back the waters of the sea on them; and the sons of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.*** [20]***And the sister of Aaron, Miriam the prophetess, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.*** [21]***And Miriam answered to them, Sing to Jehovah, for triumphing He has triumphed gloriously; He has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea."***

How is it possible for the *"song of Moses"* to also be the song of the Lamb?

In the above verses, we observe that there is a great similarity between ***"the horse and its rider"*** and the ***"beast"*** and its rider, ***"Babylon the great"***, who will persecute the true Church of Christ before His return (Revelation 17:3; 18:24; 13:7)! This is the reason the ***"song of Moses"*** is also the song ***"of the Lamb"***! As God saved His people from the forces of Pharaoh under the leadership of Moses and destroyed ***"the horse and its rider"*** into the sea, likewise, God, under the leadership of Jesus, the Lamb, will save the true Church of the born-again believers and He will destroy the ***"beast"*** and its rider, ***"Babylon the great"*** (Revelation 18:21; 19:20). In fact, in a symbolic way, He will throw ***"her"*** into the sea (Revelation 18:20,21). Thank You, Father!

Verses 5-7: ***"[5]And after these things I saw and look: the temple of the tent of the testimony in Heaven was opened! [6]And the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple; they were clothed in clean and bright linen, and around their chests they wore golden belts. [7]And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls which were full of the anger of God who lives to the ages of the ages."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 5-7

These verses are very simple; they do not need an explanation.

Verse 8: ***"[a]And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power. [b]And no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]

"[a]And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power."

The above words are simple; they do not need an explanation.

Explanation of verse 8[b]

"[b]And no one was able to enter into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

The ***"temple"*** in heaven (where God dwells) and His throne room, **are one and the same**. This statement is supported by Revelation 16:17. There it says,

"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl onto the air, and a great voice came from the throne from the temple of heaven, saying, It is done!"

From verse 8[b], we see that no humans will be able to enter into the heavenly temple, in other words, **no one will be able to go to heaven to stand before the throne of God, until after the seven plagues have taken place!**

Chapter Sixteen

Verse 1: ***"And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels: Go and empty the bowls of the anger of God in the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

In Revelation 15:7, we observed that ***"one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled of the anger of God"***. And here, we hear the command which is given to them: ***"Go and empty the bowls of the anger of God in the earth."***

An amazing similarity

In chapters 8,9 and 11, we met ***"seven angels"*** who were given ***"seven trumpets"***. Every time one of the angels trumpeted his trumpet, certain **"elements"** were mentioned and/or were affected. Here, in chapter 16, we meet ***"seven angels"*** again, but, this time, they are given ***"seven bowls"***. When the seven angels pour out their bowls, the same **"elements"** are mentioned and/or they are affected again! For this reason, I feel that it will be a good idea to insert the verses that speak about the seven angels who were given the ***"trumpets"*** right after the verses which speak about the seven angels who were given the ***"bowls"*** **so we can observe this great similarity**. I believe that some of the explanation given about the seven angels who blew the ***"seven trumpets"*** will enhance our understanding on the pouring out of the ***"seven bowls"***. For those of you who have

not read my explanation of chapters 8-11, I encourage you to take the time to do so now.

Verse 2: ***"And the first*** (angel) ***went and poured out his bowl into the earth. And it became a bad and evil sore on those men who have the mark of the beast, and on those who are worshiping his image."*** (AT)

Revelation 8:7: ***"And the first*** (angel) ***trumpeted. And hail and fire mixed with blood took place, and it was cast into the earth; …"***

Explanation of verse 2
From this verse we realize that the first angel poured out his bowl into the symbolic ***"earth"*** during the days of the ***"beast"***. God's anger will cause ***"a bad and evil sore"*** to fall upon those who will receive ***"the mark of the beast"*** and who will worship its ***"image"*** (I have explained these symbolic terms in chapter 13).

Is the *"bad and evil sore"* (boil) **symbolic or literal?**
The *"sore"*, the boil or sickness, **is literal**. Here is why:

From 1 Corinthians 11:26-31, Revelation 2:20-23, Hebrews 10:30,31 and 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, we learn that those who claim to know the True God of the Bible and dwell in sin, are disciplined by God. God makes some of them sick, some of them He kills with death and some of them He hands over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. This kind of discipline has one goal: To bring them to **repentance!** Likewise, the ***"bad and evil sore"*** represents the painful sicknesses which God will send to all those who, although they claim to know Him, they will receive ***"the mark of the beast"*** and they will worship the ***"beast"*** and

its ***"image"*** becoming thus guilty of apostasy! However, in this case, there will be no room for repentance and forgiveness because they will receive everlasting condemnation! This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 14:9-11
"[9]And a third angel followed them, saying in a great voice, If anyone worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or in his hand, [10]he also shall drink of the wine of the anger of God having been mixed undiluted in the cup of His wrath. And he will be tormented by fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb. [11]And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. And those worshiping the beast and its image have no rest night and day, even if anyone receives the mark of its name."

Verse 3: ***"And the second angel poured out his bowl into the sea. And it became blood, like*** (the blood) ***of a dead person, and every living soul in the sea died."*** (AT)

Revelation 8:8: ***"And the second angel trumpeted. And as a great mountain which was burning with fire was cast into the sea …."***

Explanation of verse 3
The second angel poured out his bowl into the symbolic ***"sea"***, in other words, among those who do not believe in the true God of the Bible. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3 under the subtitle, [**The *"sea"***]).

What do the words, *"it became blood, like* (the blood) ***of a dead person, and every living soul in the sea died"*, signify?**

The above words show that **the symbolic *"sea"* of mankind will not escape God's wrath and judgment**. They point to a world disaster, something like, let's say, another terrible world war. During these extremely difficult times, the bloodshed in the symbolic ***"sea"*** will be indescribable and every backslid born-again Christian who has decided to live in sin in the symbolic ***"sea"*** will die.

How did we arrive to this conclusion?

In the explanation of Revelation 8:8,9, under the subtitle, **"What do the "*creatures in the sea which had souls"* represent?"**, I wrote (in blue):

In Matthew 13:47-49 Jesus said:

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a large net thrown into the sea that gathered all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen hauled it ashore. Then they sat down, sorted the good fish into containers, and threw the bad ones away. That is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the evil from the righteous."

In the above verses, we meet three symbols:

a) The ***"net"***, which, as Jesus said, represents ***"the kingdom of heaven"*** (which is thrown into the ***"sea"***, i.e., into the world, through the preaching of the gospel),

b) the ***"sea"***, which represents the ***"world"***, the unbelieving (in Jesus) mankind, and

c) the good or bad ***"fish"***, which, according to our Lord, represent **people** (whether they are ***"righteous"*** or ***"evil"***).

The fact that these individuals live in the symbolic ***"sea"*** which some day will cease to exist (Revelation 21:1), **does not indicate that they will remain unsaved and unrighteous forever.** Through the preaching of the gospel some will be pulled out of the ***"sea"*** and they will be ***"sealed"*** with the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption (Revelation 7:3; Ephesians 4:30). This is the reason, in Luke 5:10, Jesus said to Simon that he will be **a fisher of men**.

In Matthew 8:21,22, we read:

"Another disciple said to Jesus, "Lord, let me wait till I bury my father." Jesus answered, "Come with me, and let the dead bury their dead.""

In 1 Kings 17:18-22, we read:

"[18]And she said to Elijah, What have I to do with you, O man of God? Have you come to me to cause my iniquity to be remembered, and to cause my son to die? [19]And he said to her, Give me your son; and he took him out of her bosom, and caused him to go up into the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his own bed. [20]And he cried to Jehovah and said, Jehovah my God, have You also brought evil on the widow with whom I am staying by slaying her son? [21]And he stretched himself on the child three times, and called to Jehovah and said, O Jehovah my God, I pray, let the soul of this boy return to him. [22]And Jehovah listened to the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the boy returned to him, and he lived."

From the above verses, we realize that Jesus views all those who do not believe in Him ***"dead"*** **--- without soul!**

Does the expression, *"every living soul in the sea died"* signify that all the born-again Christians will lose their salvation?
No! Of course, not! (Please read the explanation of Revelation 2:5[b].) The expression, ***"every living soul in the sea died"***, does not point to loss of salvation, but to **dying in the flesh only** (1 Corinthians 5:5). This expression refers to those who although they are saved, they do not live in holiness, but they live their lives as if they are part of the symbolic ***"sea"* --- the backslid!** According to 1 Corinthians 11:28-32, those individuals will experience God's judgment (not condemnation). Let us read these verses:

"[28]***But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and let him drink of the cup;*** [29]***for he eating and drinking unworthily eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.*** [30]***For this reason many among you are weak and feeble, and many sleep*** (die). [31]***For if we discerned ourselves, we would not be judged.*** [32]***But being judged, we are corrected by the Lord, that we not be condemned with the world*** (the ***'sea'***)***."*** (Please read Revelation 2:20-23.)

Verse 4: ***"And the third angel poured out his bowl in the rivers, and in the springs of the waters; and it became blood."*** (AT)

Revelation 8:10: ***"And the third angel trumpeted. And a great star fell out of heaven burning like a lamp. And it fell onto the one-third of the rivers, and onto the springs of waters."***

Explanation of verse 4

In the book of Revelation, we meet two kinds of ***"fountains"*** of ***"water"*:**

a) The ***"fountains of waters of life"*** (Revelation 7:17) and

b) ***"the rivers and the fountains of waters"*** that turn into ***"blood"*** (Revelation 16:4).

First, let us identify the *"fountains of waters of life"*:
In Revelation 7:17, we read:

"for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life:"

What do the *"fountains of water of life"* refer to?
In Psalms 36:7-9, we read about God the following:

"O God … with You is the fountain of life …."

And, in John 5:26, we hear the man Jesus saying:

"For even as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave also to the Son to have life in Himself."

From the above verses we realize that God the Father and God the Son are ***"fountains of life"***.

Other scriptures which prove that the Eternal Son of God is also a ***"fountain of life***, are:

John 1:4
"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men;"

John 6:51
"I am the Living Bread that came down from Heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever. And indeed the bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

John 11:25
"Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the Life. The one believing into Me, though he die, he shall live."

Is God the Holy Spirit a *"fountain of life"*?
Yes, He is! In John 4:10-14 we read,

"Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who is the One saying to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked Him, and He would give you living water. The woman said to Him, Sir, You have no vessel, and the well is deep. From where then do You have living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and he and his sons and his livestock drank out of it? Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone drinking of this water will thirst again; but whoever may drink of the water which I will give him will not thirst, never! But the water which I will give to him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up into everlasting life."

And in John 7:38,39, Jesus said:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to

receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."

From the above verses, we conclude that **the Holy Spirit** is also One of the ***"fountains of the water of life"*****!**

Now that we know who the ***"fountains of the water of life"*** are, it is much easier to understand Revelation 7:17. Let us read it again:

"for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: …."

Now, let us identify the other kind of ***"fountains"*** whose ***"waters"*** turn into ***"blood"*** and bring death to those who drink them. Those other ***"fountains"*** are:

a) Satan --- the old serpent!
In Revelation 12:15, we read:

"And the serpent threw water out of his mouth like a river after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried off by the river."

From this verse, we observe that the ***"serpent"*** is a ***"fountain"*** of a different kind of ***"water"*** which, ***"like a river"***, can carry one away!

What is the *"water"* that comes out of the mouth of Satan?
The ***"water"*** which comes out of the mouth of Satan is nothing else than **twisted words** (please read the explanation of Revelation 12:5) by which he blinds ***"the thoughts***

of the unbelieving, so that the brightness of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, should not dawn on them." (2 Corinthians 4:4). Those who drink his poisonous ***"water"***, cannot ***"see"*** (John 6:40) who the real Jesus of the Bible is. For this reason, they cannot believe in Him, neither can they call on His Name to be saved (Romans 10:9,13,14); and, therefore, as Jesus said in John 8:24, they **will die in their sins!** Undeniably, the ***"water"*** of this ***"fountain"*** turns into ***"blood"***!

b) False prophets and false teachers!
The false prophets is another source of words which are ***"destructive"***. In 2 Peter 2:1-3, we read:

"But false prophets were also among the people, as also false teachers will be among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, and denying the Master who has bought them, bringing swift destruction on themselves. And many will follow their destructive ways, by whom the way of truth will be evil spoken of. And by covetousness, with well-turned words, they will use you for gain, for whom judgment of old does not linger, and their destruction does not slumber."

Another verse which speaks about the false prophets and their deceptive work is Matthew 24:11. There, it says,

"And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."

c) Babylon the great!
The book of Revelation identifies yet another source which leads people ***"astray"*** through ***"sorcery"*** (words that manipulate) and ***"wine"*** (words that make them ***"drunk"***, in

other words, dizzy and confused) so that they will not ***"see"*** the truth**.** Her words have caused an incredible bloodshed. This ***"fountain"*** is the religious entity known as ***"Babylon the great"*****!** Let us read the following verses:

Revelation 18:23,24
"… For your merchants were the great ones of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were led astray. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all the ones having been slain on the earth."

Revelation 17:2
"with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the ones inhabiting the earth became drunk from the wine of her fornication."

Unlike the above ***"fountains"*** whose words bring death and destruction to themselves and to their listeners, the ***"fountains of the waters of life"*** **speak life** to those who believe and follow Them. Let us pay attention to the following verses:

Matthew 4:4
"… Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word going out of the mouth of God."

John 6:68
"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of everlasting life."

The anger of God will fall against the rivers and the springs of water that turn into ***"blood"*** and He will destroy them! They will receive the full strength of it --- undiluted!

What do you think? Are God's judgments harsh or are they righteous? Let us read the following verses:

Verses 5-7: ***"[5]And I heard the angel of the waters saying, You are righteous, Lord, the One who is, and the One who was, and the One who will be, because You judged these things, [6]because they poured out the blood of the saints and of the prophets; and You gave them blood to drink, because they are worthy. [7]And I heard*** (the angel) ***of the altar saying, Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 5-7

When I read the above verses, the only word that comes out of my mouth is: AMEN!

Verses 8,9: ***"[8]And the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun. And it was given to him to burn men with fire. [9]And men were burned with great heat. And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent in order to give Him glory."***

Revelation 8:12*: "And the fourth angel trumpeted. And one-third of the sun, and one third of the moon, and one-third of the stars, was struck, in order for one-third of them to be darkened, so that the day will lose one-third of its light (brightness) and the same with the night."*

Explanation of verses 8 and 9

What does the *"sun"* represent? How were men burned with *"great heat"*? What does the *"great heat"* symbolize?

In the explanation of Revelation 7:16, I wrote in part (in blue):

Whom does the *"Sun"* represent?
Please read the entire **Description #9** in the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16. There, we learned that the ***"Sun"*** is a picture of God.

Explanation of verse 16c
"nor any burning heat".

What does the expression *"any burning heat"* refer to?
Let us meditate on the following scriptures:

2 Chronicles 28:11
"and now, hear me, and send back the captives whom ye have taken captive of your brethren, for the heat of the anger of Jehovah is upon you."

Exodus 22:24
"And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."

Ezekiel 38:19
"And in My jealousy, in the fire of My wrath, I have spoken. Surely, in that day there shall be a great quaking in the land of Israel."

Deuteronomy 6:15
"for Jehovah your God is a jealous God in your midst, lest the anger of Jehovah your God burn against you, and He destroy you from off the face of the earth."

Deuteronomy 29:24
"And all the nations shall say, Why has Jehovah done this to this land? For what is the heat of this great anger?"

From the above, we realize that the expression ***"burning heat"*** refers **to the intensity of the anger** of God.

How does Jehovah express His anger?
Let us pay attention on the following verses:

Numbers 11:33
"The flesh was yet between their teeth, it was not yet cut off, and the anger of Jehovah glowed among the people. And Jehovah struck among the people with a very great plague."

Ezekiel 38:22
"And I will judge him with a plague and with blood, and an overflowing shower, and hailstones. I will rain fire and brimstone on him, and on his bands, and on the many peoples who are with him."

From all the above, we realize that the words, ***"And men were burned with great heat"***, refer to the plagues that God sent against them in His great anger!

The fact that the ***"great heat"*** refers to the anger of God and to the terrible ***"plagues"*** He sent against them, is supported by the words that follow (in the second part of verse 9). There it says,

"And they blasphemed the name of God, the One having authority over these plagues and they did not repent to give Him glory."

A point of interest
Evil sores, blood in the sea, blood in the rivers and the fountains of waters, fire and great heat did not soften their hearts but like in the case of Pharaoh, they hardened them. Instead of repenting before the Lord God, they blasphemed His Holy Name!

Verses 10,11: ***"***[10]***And the fifth*** (angel) ***poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast. And its kingdom became darkened; and they were biting their tongues from the pain.*** [11]***And they blasphemed the God of heaven, from their pains and from their sores. And they did not repent of their works."*** (AT)

Revelation 9:1,5: ***"***[1]***And the fifth angel trumpeted …*** [5]***And*** [the commandment] ***was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented … their torment is like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man."***

Explanation of verses 10 and 11
The fact that the fifth angel poured out his bowl ***"on the throne of the beast"*** indicates **the timing** of this event. The kingdom of the ***"beast"*** is the eighth and last world government on the planet before the return of Christ (please read the explanation of Revelation 11:2[b]).

The fact that ***"its kingdom became darkened; and they were biting their tongues from the pain"***, reminds us of the words of Revelation 9:1-6. Let us read these verses:

"[1]And the fifth angel trumpeted. And I saw a star out of the heaven falling onto the earth. And the key to the pit of the abyss was given to it. [2]And he opened the pit of the abyss. And smoke went up out of the pit, like smoke of a great furnace. And the sun was darkened, and the air, by the smoke of the pit. [3]And out of the smoke locusts came forth to the earth. And authority was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have authority. [4]And it was said to them that they should not harm the grass of the earth, nor every green thing, nor every tree, except only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. [5]And it was given to them that they should not kill them, but that they be tormented five months. And their torment is as the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man (a lot of pain)***. [6]And in those days men will seek death, and they will not find it. And they will long to die, yet death will flee from them."***

From the above we realize that God is not a God who enjoys tormenting and killing people. He applies pressure as part of His discipline to help one realize that he/she lives in sin and that he/she **must repent**. However, they will ***"not repent of their works"*** and they will ***"blaspheme the God of heaven"***!

Verse 12: ***"And the sixth*** (angel) ***poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates; and its water was dried up in order to prepare the way of the kings from the rising of the sun."*** (AT)

Revelation 9:13,14: ***"[13]And the sixth angel trumpeted; and I heard a voice out of the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, [14]saying to the sixth angel who***

had the trumpet, Release the four angels, those who have been bound at the great river Euphrates."

Explanation of verse 12
In the explanation of Revelation 9:13 and 14, under the subtitle, **'The *"river Euphrates"*"**, I wrote (in blue):

Why is *"the great river Euphrates"* mentioned here?
Because the river Euphrates played a great role in the fall of the ancient city of Babylon:

Babylon was built on both sides of Euphrates; therefore, Euphrates, which was flowing through the middle of the city, was its life force --- so to speak. Babylon had massive walls and it was impossible to be taken by enemy attacks. Thus, when Cyrus went against Babylon, he diverted Euphrates to flow around the city and when the level of the river was dropped, his army was able to go up to the city and take it.

From the above information, we realize that verse 12 foretells the fall of ***"Babylon the great"*** who sits ***"on many waters"***, in other words, on many ***"peoples and crowds and nations and tongues"*** (Revelation 17:1,15,16). The words, ***"its water was dried up in order to prepare the way of the kings from the rising of the sun"***, tell us that before the return of the King with the kings who will follow Him ***"wherever He may go"*** (Revelation 19:16; 14:4; 1:6; Jude 1:14), the symbolic ***"waters"*** who had accepted her rulership will stop supporting her. Chapters 17 and 18 present more details about her fall.

Verses 13,14: ***"[13]And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of***

the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. [14]***Because they are spirits of demons performing signs, which go to the kings of the earth and of the whole habitable world in order to gather them to the war of that great day of God Almighty."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 13 and 14

We are in the days of the sixth angel, the end is near, and a preparation takes place. The stage is being set for ***"the war of that great day of God Almighty"***. The ***"Dragon"*** (Satan; Revelation 12:3), the ***"beast"*** and the ***"false prophet"*** (Revelation 13:1,11-14), are very active; they are trying to mislead as many people as possible. Their task is accomplished with the help of demon spirits that look like **slimy amphibian** ***"frogs"***! These demon spirits will not try to mislead ***"the kings of the whole world"*** only, but also ***"the kings of the earth"*** (please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]). For this reason, the born-again ***"kings of the earth"*** must be alert!

Verse 15: ***"Look, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who stays alert and keeps his garments, so that he will not walk naked, and they will not see his shame."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15

Here, the Lord tells us that He will come ***"as a thief"***. The only thing we know is that ***"… in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he will trumpet, the mystery of God will be complete, according to the good news which He gave to His servants the prophets"*** (Revelation 10:7). Therefore, those who live in the days of the sixth angel, especially those who will be around during the kingdom of the ***"beast"***, must be extra alert because the Lord might come at any moment.

Also, they must ***"keep their garments"***, in other words, they should not forget that as Christians they must walk in holiness. If they slack down and decide to walk in sin, others will ***"see their shame"***. Now is time for them to pay attention to the words of the Lord Jesus from Revelation 22:10-12. There, we read:

"[10]***And he said to me, Do not seal the Words of the prophecy of this Book, because the time is near.*** [11]***The one acting unjustly, let him still act unjustly; and the filthy, let him still be filthy; and the righteous, let him still do righteousness; and the holy, let him still be holy.*** [12]***And, behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each as his work is."***

Other scriptures that say that the Lord will come as a thief are:

Matthew 24:42-44
"[42]***Watch, then, for you do not know in what hour your Lord comes.*** [43]***But know this, that if the housemaster had known in what watch the thief comes, he would have watched and not have allowed his house to be dug through.*** [44]***Because of this, you also be ready, for in that hour you think not, the Son of Man comes."***

1 Thessalonians 5:1,2
"But concerning the times and the seasons, brothers, you have no need for it to be written. For you yourselves know accurately that the day of the Lord, as a thief in the night, so it comes."

2 Peter 3:10
"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with rushing sound, and having burned the elements will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be burned up."

Revelation 3:3
"Then remember how you received and heard, and keep, and repent. If, then, you do not watch, I will come upon you like a thief and you will not at all know what hour I come upon you."

A point of interest
Right after the words, ***"Look, I am coming as a thief"***, the Lord said, ***"Blessed is he who stays alert and keeps his garments"*****!** These words give me comfort and confidence that the Lord the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17) will announce the coming of the Lord Jesus to those who stay alert and who keep their garments. What gives me this confidence is the promise of the Lord Jesus, who, in John 16:13 said,

"But when that One comes, the Spirit of Truth, He will guide you into all Truth, for He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and <u>He will announce the coming things to you</u>."

Isn't the coming of the Lord important enough for the Holy Spirit to announce it to the Bride? (Matthew 25:6)

Verse 16: ***"And He gathered them in the place called, in Hebrew, Armageddon."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16
This verse is simple; an explanation is not needed.

Verse 17: ***"***[17]***And the seventh*** (angel) ***poured out his bowl in the air; and a great voice came out from the temple of Heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done!"*** (AT)

Revelation 11:15: ***"And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's and of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages."***

Explanation of verse 17
Hallelujah! Thank You, Father! Thank You, Lord Jesus! ***"It is done!"*** It happened! The words of Revelation 11:15-17 have now been fulfilled. There, it says,

"[15]***And the seventh angel trumpeted. And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the world became our Lord's, even of His Christ; and He shall reign to the ages of the ages.*** [16]***And the twenty four elders sitting before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,*** [17]***saying, We thank You, Lord God Almighty, the One who is, and who was, and who is coming, because You took Your great power and reigned."***

Verse 18: ***"And voices and thunders and lightnings took place, and a great earthquake took place, such as it had never taken place since man's existence on earth, such an earthquake, so great!"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 18
In Revelation 11:17,18 we read,

"… [17]***We thank You, Lord God Almighty, the One who is, and who was, and who is coming, because You took Your great power and reigned.*** [18]***And the nations were full of wrath; and Your wrath came …."***

The above words help us understand what just happened here: The time came when ***"the nations were full of wrath"***! The unrest and the bloodshed on the planet must have been terrible; and **the wrath of God came**. As soon as He took His ***"great power and reigned"***, **He spoke**. The expression, ***"And voices and thunders and lightnings took place"***, denotes that **God spoke** (please read the explanation of Revelation 4:5[a] and 8:5[b]). And when He spoke, the earth shook:

"a great earthquake took place, such as it had never taken place since man's existence on earth, such an earthquake, so great!"

Is the "earthquake" literal or symbolic?
From the words of the verses that follow, we see that this kind of ***"earthquake"*** is symbolic. In those verses, the elements which are affected by this ***"earthquake"***, that is, the ***"great city"***, the ***"cities of the nations"***, the ***"islands"*** and the ***"mountains"***, are symbolic.

Verse 19: ***"And the great city became*** (divided) ***into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and Babylon the great was remembered before God, in order to give her the cup of the wine of the intensity of His wrath."***

Explanation of verse 19

Who is the *"great city"*?

The ***"great city"*** is the religious entity known as ***"Babylon the great"***! This statement, is supported by the following verses:

Revelation 14:8

"And another angel followed, saying, The great city, Babylon, has fallen, has fallen because of the wine of the anger of her fornication she made all nations to drink."

Revelation 16:19

"And the great city came to be into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the anger of His wrath."

Revelation 18:10

"standing from afar because of the fear of her torment, saying, Woe! Woe to the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment came."

Revelation 18:21

"And one strong angel lifted a stone like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying, This way, on a violent impulse, Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and it will never more still be found."

Who are the *"cities of the nations"*?

The religious entities (the religions) of the nations; when the Almighty God will take His power and reign, all the

religions of the nations will fall! At that time, ***"Babylon the great"*** will be remembered by God and He will ***"give her the cup of the wine of the intensity of His wrath"***.

Verse 20: ***"And every island ran away, and mountains were not found."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20
What do the terms *"island"* and *"mountain"* symbolize?
Please read the explanation of Revelation 6:14[b].

Verse 21: ***"And great hail, the size of a talent, came down out of heaven upon men. And men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague is extremely great."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 21
In Job 38:22,23, God asked:

"[22]Have you entered into the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail, [23]which I have reserved for the time of distress for the day of battle and war?"

From the above verses, we realize that ***"hail"*** is one of the elements of nature which God can use against His enemies in order to express His wrath. In the past, God has used literal hail to hurt His enemies. Let us read the following verses:

Joshua 10:11
"And it happened, as they fled from the face of Israel, they were in the descent of Bethhoron, even Jehovah cast great hail stones on them out of the heavens, to Azekah;

and they died. The many who died by the hail stones were more than the sons of Israel had killed by the sword."

Psalms 78:44-50
"[44]He turned their rivers into blood, also their streams that they might not drink. [45]He sent swarms of flies against them, and they devoured them; also frogs, and they destroyed them. [46] He also gave their crops to the stripping locust, and their labor to the locust. [47]He killed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with sleet. [48]He gave their cattle up to the hail, and their flocks to bolts of fire. [49]He sent the heat of His anger on them, fury and indignation and distress, a sending of angels of evils. [50]He leveled a path for His anger; He did not keep back their soul from death, but gave their life over to the plague."

Chapter Seventeen

Verse 1: ***"And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying to me: Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

From this verse, we learn that God is against this ***"great harlot"*** who sits on ***"many waters"***. During the study of this chapter, we will identify this ***"great harlot",*** and we will learn why God is against her. The fact that God hates the ***"great harlot"*** with a passion is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 16:19
"And the great city came to be into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give to her the cup of the wine of the anger of His wrath."

Revelation 18:15-21
"[15]***The merchants of these things, the ones being enriched from her, will stand from afar because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning;*** [16]***and saying, Woe! Woe to the great city having been clothed in linen and purple and scarlet, and having been gilded with gold and precious stone, and pearls!*** [17]***For in one hour such great wealth was desolated. And every ship-pilot and all company on the ships, and sailors, and as many as work the***

sea, stood from afar, [18]***and cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, What is like the great city?*** [19]***And they threw dust on their heads, and cried out, weeping and mourning, saying, Woe! Woe to the great city, by which all those having ships in the sea were rich, from her costliness, because in one hour she was ruined.*** [20]***Rejoice over her, Heaven, and the holy apostles, and the prophets, because God judged your judgment on her.*** [21]***And one strong angel lifted a stone like a great millstone, and threw it into the sea, saying, This way, on a violent impulse, Babylon the great city will be thrown down, and it will never more still be found."***

What do the *"many waters"* symbolize?
In verse 15, we read:

"The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples and crowds and nations and tongues."

What does it mean that the great harlot *"sits on many waters"*?
It means that she exercises authority over them, that she sits over them like a ***"queen"***. This statement is supported by the following verses:

Revelation 18:7
"By what things she glorified herself, and luxuriated, by so much give back to her torment and mourning. Because she says in her heart, I sit as a queen, and I am not a widow; and I do not see mourning at all."

Revelation 17:18
"And the woman whom you saw is the great city, having a kingdom over the kings of the earth."

Verse 2: ***"with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and those who dwell the earth became drunk from the wine of her fornication."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2

Who are the *"kings of the earth"*?

In the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c], I wrote (in blue):

As the term ***"earth"*** symbolizes **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible, the Judeo-Christian community"**, the term ***"kings of the earth"*** refers to two groups of people within that community **only**:

c) The leaders of that community (whether they are regenerate or unregenerate), and

d) all the born-again individuals.

This is a very important subject; if you have not read the entire explanation of Revelation 1:5[c], please do so now.

How some of the *"kings of the earth"* commit *"fornication"* with her?

This ***"great harlot"*** is a religious entity and the comments I made in the explanation of Revelation 14:4[a], apply primarily to her. There, I wrote (in blue),

Religion corrupts the simplicity that is in Christ and those who **devote** themselves to religion rather than to Christ become guilty of harlotry! **It is a matter of submission and Headship!**

Who are those who *"dwell the earth"*?
They are those who make up the symbolic ***"earth"*** --- not the symbolic ***"sea"*** of mankind; please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c].

What does it mean that they *"became drunk"*?
It means that they became spiritually **confused** because they ***"drunk from the wine of her fornication"***. In the explanation of Revelation 14:8, I wrote (in blue):

What do the words, *"the wine of the wrath of her whoredom"*, mean?
In Greek, the word for ***"wrath"*** or ***"anger"*** is **"θυμός"** (thymos). According to the Εκσυγχρονισμένον "1970" Νέον Λεξικόν Δ. Β. Δημητράκου, page 691, we see that in addition to **"wrath"** and **"anger"**, the word **'θυμός'** also refers to **the soul** (which is the seat of anger), or to **the spirit**, to **the element of life**, **of the feelings** or **of the thought**. It also refers to **the breath**, to **the strength of a man**, to **the heart**, to **the condition of the soul** and to **the desires**. Apparently, it refers to all the above because all of them are affected by one's anger.

Based on the above information, we understand that ***"Babylon the great"*** is fornicating with **"passion"** and **"intensity"!** Here, God does not view ***"Babylon the great"*** as an entity who just made a mistake, but as someone who is involved in spiritual whoredom with **all her heart, mind and spirit!**

What does it mean that "she" gives *"to all the nations to drink from the wine of the wrath of her whoredom"*?

It means that she makes them **"drunk"**, **"dizzy"** or **"confused"** through false and twisted doctrines which **alter** the true gospel of God (Romans 1:1).

Not only did she run away from her ***"Husband"*** (Isaiah 54:5), but also, with her false doctrines, proclamations, and attitude, she is preventing others from seeing the Redeemer God who became flesh in order to be wounded and bruised for their transgression and iniquities (Isaiah 53:4,5).

Because they drink her ***"wine"*** without examining the Scriptures, those who loved her became so confused, that they cannot see the fact that instead of accepting the authority of the ***"King of kings"*** (Revelation 19:16) in their lives, they have accepted her authority as a ***"queen"*** (Revelation 18:7)! For this reason, they are committing spiritual fornication with her! This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 17:2
"with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, and the ones inhabiting the earth became drunk from the wine of her fornication."

Revelation 18:3
"because of the wine of the anger of her fornication which all the nations have drunk, even the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; and the merchants of the earth became rich from the power of her luxury."

How could they have avoided becoming *"drunk"*?

1. By spending quality time to study the word of God for themselves (2 Timothy 4:2)!

2. By becoming like the Bereans, examining the Scriptures to see if the things they heard from their leaders were correct (Acts 17:10,11)!

3. By ***"trying"*** those who appear before them as teachers (Revelation 2:2; 1 Corinthians 14:29).

The above actions would have kept them awake, alert and ***"sober"***. The apostles Paul and Peter exhorted the believers in Christ to be ***"sober"***. Let us read their words:

Paul --- 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8
"So then, we should not sleep, as the rest also do, but we should watch and be sober. For those sleeping sleep by night, and those having been drunk are drunk by night. But we being of day should be sober, "having put on the breastplate" of faith and love, and the hope of "salvation as a helmet;"

Peter --- 1 Peter 1:13
"Because of this, having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober, perfectly hope on the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ,"

Why does the great harlot make them *"drunk"*? In other words, why does she want to keep them in the dark, in a state of spiritual confusion?
Because she does not want to be identified! If she remains a ***"Mystery"***, she can do more harm --- she can mislead more people! For this reason, she has trained her lovers, the ***"kings of the earth"*** who are committing spiritual fornication with her, and who have the power to mislead the masses, to apply the title, ***"the great harlot"***, to other religious entities!

Verse 3: ***"[a]And he brought me, in the spirit, in a desert. [b]And I saw a woman sitting on a red beast,*** (which was) ***filled with names of blasphemy,*** (and which) ***had seven heads and ten horns."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"[a]And he brought me, in the spirit, in a desert."

Why did the angel bring John *"in a desert"* to show him the *"beast"* and its rider?

To help us realize that the spiritual environment at the time of the coming of the ***"beast"*** and of its **rider**, will be extremely dry!

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"[b]And I saw a woman sitting on a red beast, (which was) ***filled with names of blasphemy,*** (and which) ***had seven heads and ten horns."***

Here, the main point to remember is the fact that the ***"woman"*** and the ***"beast"*** appeared **together and at the same time!** They are a complex! They coexist! They are fully united! The ***"woman"*** rides the ***"beast"*** and the ***"beast"*** carries ***"her"***! The one is useful to the other for their existence, power, and glory! Those who will identify the one, should have no problem identifying the other!

What is the *"beast"*? What does it mean that it is filled with *"names of blasphemy"*? What do the *"seven heads"* symbolize? What do the *"ten horns"* signify? Who exactly is this mysterious *"woman"*?

In past chapters (Revelation 13:1[b] and 11:2[b]), we have dealt with nearly all the above. However, this chapter demands that we talk about some of them again to identify the mys-

terious ***"woman"*** and the ***"beast"*** that carries her, correctly. Identifying this ***"beast"*** and this ***"woman"*** correctly, is a matter of life and death (Revelation 14:11; 18: 4,24). For this reason, let us pay attention to the following verses (4-7), as they give us more clues as to who this ***"woman"*** is:

Verses 4-7: ***"[4]And the woman was dressed in purple and red, and was decorated with gold and precious stones and pearls,*** (and) ***in her hand she had a golden cup*** (which) ***was full of abominations and unclean things of her fornication. [5]And on her forehead a name was written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth. [6]And I saw the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And seeing her, I marveled with a great wonder. [7]And 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, the one that has the seven heads and the ten horns."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

"[4]And the woman was dressed in purple and red, and was decorated with gold and precious stones and pearls, (and) ***in her hand she had a golden cup*** (which) ***was full of abominations and unclean things of her fornication."***

In the above verse, we observe that one of the clues God gave to help us identify ***"Babylon the great"*** correctly, is the description of her clothing and of the precious ornaments she was adorned with. In fact, this clue is so important that the same description is repeated in Revelation 18:16. There, it says that she is ***"… clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls …."***

How could the above description help us identify the *"great harlot"* from the Scriptures? Was there a *"woman"* in the Old Testament who was dressed up the same way? If "Yes!", who had dressed her up in such a royal manner?

Yes, there was! The prophet Ezekiel tells us that the name of this symbolic ***"woman"*** was ***"Jerusalem"*** and that it was God Himself who had dressed her up in such glory! Let us read Ezekiel 16:1-13. However, before we read these verses, we must keep in mind that the things Jehovah said to Jerusalem through the prophet, applied to all Israel. God directed His words to Jerusalem because she, as a capital city, **represented all Israel and because she was the center of His worship**. There, we read:

"[1]***And the Word of Jehovah was to me, saying,*** [2]***Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,*** [3]***and say, So says the Lord Jehovah to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth is of the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.*** [4]***As for your birth, in the day you were born, your navel was not cut, and you were not washed with water to cleanse you. And you were not salted, and you were not at all swaddled.*** [5]***An eye did not have pity on you to do to you one of these, to have compassion on you. But you were thrown into the face of the field, for your person was loathed in the day you were born.*** [6]***And when I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you in your blood, Live! Yea, I said to you in your blood, Live!*** [7]***As a myriad, as a field shoot, I have given you, and you are grown and are great. And you come in the finest ornaments. Your breasts are formed, and your hair is grown, yet you were naked and bare.*** [8]***And I passed by you, and I looked on you, and, behold, your time was the time of love. And I spread My***

skirt over you and covered your nakedness. And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord Jehovah. And you became Mine. [9]***And I washed you with water; I washed away your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil.*** [10]***And I dressed you with embroidered work, and I shod you with dugong sandals. And I wrapped you in fine linen, and I covered you with silk.*** [11]***And I adorned you with ornaments, and I put bracelets on your hands and a chain on your neck.*** [12]***And I put a ring on your nose and earrings on your ears and a crown of beauty on your head.*** [13]***And you were adorned with gold and silver. And your clothing was fine linen and silk and embroidered work. Fine flour and honey and oil you ate. And you were very, very beautiful. And you advanced to regal estate."***

From the above verses, we realize that God had loved Jerusalem, the center of His worship, so much, that He had become her **"husband"** and had advanced her to ***"regal estate"***! For this reason, **His splendor was on her!** However, she did not always remain as a faithful wife to Him. This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Ezekiel 16:14-17, 25-30,35
"[14]***And your name went out among the nations, because of your beauty, for it was perfect by My splendor which I had set on you, declares the Lord Jehovah.*** [15]***But you trusted in your beauty, and you prostituted yourself because of your name, and poured out your fornications on all who passed by; it was to him!*** [16]***And you took from your clothes and made for you high places of various colors, and fornicated on them, such as had not come, nor shall be.*** [17]***And you have taken beautiful things of My gold and of My silver, which I had given to you, and you***

made images of males, and fornicated with them … [25]At the head of every highway you have built your high place, and have made your beauty despised. And you have parted your feet to all who passed by, and have multiplied your fornications. [26]You have whored with the sons of Egypt, your neighbors, great of flesh. And you have multiplied your fornications to provoke Me to anger. [27]And behold, I have stretched out My hand over you, and I drew back your portion. And I gave you to the will of those hating you, the daughters of the Philistines, who are ashamed of your wicked way. [28]You have fornicated with the sons of Assyria without being satisfied. Yea, you fornicated and yet you were not satisfied. [29]And you have multiplied your fornication in the land of Canaan, to the Chaldean, and yet you were not satisfied with this. [30]How weak is your heart, declares the Lord Jehovah, since you do all these, the work of a woman, an overbearing prostitute … [35]Therefore, O harlot, hear the Word of Jehovah,"

Jeremiah 3:1,3,6,8

"[1]They say, If a man sends away his wife, and she goes from him and will be for another man, will he return to her again? Would not that land be greatly defiled? But you play the harlot with many lovers; yet would you come back to Me, says Jehovah ... [3]And the showers are withheld, and there has been no latter rain. And the forehead of a woman, a harlot, was to you; you refused to be ashamed ... [6]Jehovah also said to me in the days of Josiah the king, Have you seen what the apostate Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every green tree, and has fornicated there ... [8]And I watched. When for all the causes for which the apostate Israel committed adultery, I sent her away and I gave the writ of her divorce to her. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did

not fear, but she also went and fornicated." (Also, please read Isaiah 1:18-21; Ezekiel 23:4,5,11,19,44 and Jeremiah 2:20.)

Explanation of verses 5 and 6

"[5]And on her forehead a name was written: Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth. [6]And I saw the woman being drunk from the blood of the saints, and from the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And seeing her, I marveled with a great wonder."

Who is this "woman"?

Some people might think that this verse refers to the ancient city of Babylon. However, if that were the case, ***"Babylon the great"*** would not be a ***"mystery"***! In order to identify the ***"great harlot"*** correctly, we must pay close attention to the following points:

Point 1

The title, ***"the Mother of the Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth"***, cannot apply to any Pagan religious entities because Pagans are not included in the symbolic ***"earth"***. They are part of the symbolic ***"sea"***.

Please read the explanation of Revelation 7:1-3, under the subtitle, **The *"sea"***!

Point 2

"Babylon", ***"the great city"***, **is not** one of ***"the cities of the nations"***. In Revelation 16:19 we read,

"And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in re-

membrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." (KJV)

Point 3

Again, in Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:18 and 18:10,16,18, 19,21, ***"Babylon the great"*** is called ***"the great city"***. And in Revelation 11:8, the ***"great city"*** is also called, spiritually, ***"Sodom"*** and ***"Egypt"*** where ***"our Lord was crucified"***. Certainly, our Lord was not crucified in Sodom nor was He crucified in Egypt but **in Jerusalem!** (Please read the explanation of Revelation 11:8; also, please read Isaiah 1:9,10,21.)

Point 4

"Babylon the great" **is guilty of killing the prophets, the saints, and all the righteous people who have been slain on the symbolic** ***"earth".*** This statement is supported by verse 6 above, and by Revelation 18:24. There, it says:

"… in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all the ones having been slain on the earth."

From the Bible we know that God sent His prophets to His people Israel. Therefore, it wasn't the Pagan nations who killed them, but **Jerusalem**! In Matthew 23:29-39, the Eternal Word of God who became flesh to offer His body as an eternal sacrifice for their sins and for the sins of the whole world, cried out the following shocking words:

"[29]Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the righteous. [30]And you say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. [31]So you witness to your-

selves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. [32]***And you fill up the measure of your fathers.*** [33]***Serpents! Offspring of vipers! How shall you escape the judgment of Hell?*** [34]***Because of this, behold, I send to you prophets and wise ones and scribes. And some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues and will persecute from city to city;*** [35]***so that should come on you all the righteous blood poured out on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Berechiah whom you murdered between the Holy Place and the altar.*** [36]***Truly I say to you, All these things will come on this generation.*** [37]***Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one killing the prophets and stoning those sent to her. How often I desired to gather your children in the way a bird gathers her chicks under her wings! And you did not desire it.*** [38]***Behold, "your house is left to you desolate."*** [39]***For I say to you, In no way shall you see Me from now on, until you say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.""***

The above harsh words of the Lord Jesus do not echo anti-Semitism. After all, according to the flesh He was a Jew Himself and, for this reason, He could not be anti-Himself! The words He spoke, expressed the truth which was also revealed in the Old Testament by the Jewish prophets. They, in turn, expressed the harsh words and the feelings of their God towards His beloved city whenever she became an apostate. Even those who recorded the words of Jesus in the New Testament were Jews! If anyone wishes to declare any of the words of the man Jesus as anti-Semitic, then, they would have to say that the New Testament, the Jewish men who wrote it, the Old Testament, the Prophets, and their God, were all anti-Semitic! God forbid!

From all the above, we conclude that ***"Babylon the great"*** represents the wicked and apostatic **religious authority** of Israel which was responsible for the blood of the prophets, for the blood of the saints, of the Martyrs of Jesus and of all the righteous men that were slain upon the symbolic ***"earth"*** (Revelation 18:24; Matthew 23:27-39)! Now I understand why John, who knew her very well, wrote, ***"And seeing her, I marveled with a great wonder."***

For further clarification of **what *"Babylon the great"* is**, let us consider the following:

What *"Babylon the great"* is not

"Babylon the great" is not a country. ***"Babylon the great"*** is not a race. God is not against any race **neither has He rejected all Israel** (Romans 11:17). In Romans 11:1-12, the apostle Paul said,

"[1]***So I ask, "God has not rejected his people, has he?" Of course not! I am an Israeli myself, a descendant of Abraham from the tribe of Benjamin.*** [2]***God has not rejected his people whom he chose long ago. Do you not know what the Scripture says in the story about Elijah, when he pleads with God against Israel?*** [3]***"Lord, they have killed your prophets and demolished your altars. I am the only one left, and they are trying to take my life."*** [4]***But what was the divine reply to him? "I have reserved for myself 7,000 people who have not knelt to worship Baal."*** [5]***So it is at the present time: there is a remnant, chosen by grace."*** (ISV)

In a nation, we have different elements such as the religious element, the political element, the military element, and the commercial element. ***"Babylon the great"*** **is not the polit-**

ical or the military or the commercial element of Israel but the religious one only. The other elements may have benefited by their association with ***"Babylon the great"***, but they are not ***"Babylon the great"*** themselves. As I wrote above, ***"Babylon the great"*** represents **the wicked and apostatic religious authority of Israel,** which was responsible for the blood of the prophets, for the blood of the saints, of the Martyrs of Jesus and of all the righteous men that were slain upon the symbolic ***"earth"***!

The above apostatic religious authority of Israel, ignored their God's promises that He would become a man to be their Redeemer (Isaiah 53; 59:16,17,20; 60:16^{b}; 9:6), and that He would cut a new covenant with them (Jeremiah 31:31,32). For this reason, when He ***"suddenly"*** (Malachi 3:1) appeared in their midst, they turned against Him:

a) They rejected Him (Mark 12:10,11).

b) They put Him to death (Acts 2:36; 7:51,52).

c) They rejected His new covenant of grace (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Romans 11:5,6).

d) They held on to a religion of works, to a ministry of death (2 Corinthians 3:7), which was produced by the Law of the old covenant which Jesus took out of the way by symbolically nailing it to the cross (Colossians 2:13, 14).

The above-mentioned religion produced children to religious slavery (Galatians 4:24,25) and persecuted to death those Jews who entered God's rest through their faith in Christ. This is the reason God is against her and against all

those who executed her will (Matthew 23:33). This is who ***"Babylon the great"*** is!

What does the title, *"the Mother of the harlots of the earth"*, signify and who are her daughters?
As the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to **"all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible, the Judeo-Christian community"** (please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]), the title, ***"the Mother of the Harlots … of the Earth"***, signifies that **she has passed her traits of apostasy and spiritual whoredom on to other religions which claim to serve the True God of the Bible**. Her "daughters" include many of the **"**Christian religions".

How so?
Because Christianity is **a faith** (Romans 10:9), **a relationship** (John 1:12,13; Romans 8:9; Revelation 3:20) **and a walk** (Revelation 3:4) **--- not a religion!** The so-called **"Christian religions"** which have adopted Babylon's traits of **apostasy**, **spiritual whoredom** and other **abominations**, **are her "daughters"**. Although **they are not Babylon the great**, they are Babylon's extended family --- so to speak!

Explanation of verse 7

"[7]And 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, the one that has the seven heads and the ten horns."

The above verse is simple. It does not need an explanation.

Verse 8: ***"[a]The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss, and to go to destruction.***

[b]***And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast that was, and is not, yet it will be."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8[a]

"[a]The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss, and to go to destruction."

What does the *"beast"* refer to?

The symbolic term ***"beast"*** refers to an earthly kingdom, to an earthly government and its leader. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 11:2[b], under the subtitle, **What does the *"beast"* refer to?**)

What does it mean that the beast "*was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss*"?

The words, **"*was, and is not, and it will come*"**, are a very strong clue in understanding the above ***"beast"*** and they should not be ignored!

John received the revelation in the 90's AD. Therefore, the words, **"*was, and is not, and it will come*"**, refer **to John's past**, **present**, and **future**! When the angel said to John that the beast ***"was"***, he meant that ***"the beast"*** was in existence **before** the time John received the revelation. The words, ***"is not"***, tell us that ***"the beast"*** **was not** in existence at the time John received the revelation --- that it had been killed; and the words, ***"will come up out of the abyss"***, are prophetic, and they tell us that in the future, the ***"beast"*** would come out of that state of non-existence, to become the ***"eighth king"*** or **the last world government** before the coming of Christ's kingdom (Revelation 17:11; 19:19-21;

Daniel 7:25-27). The fact that it will become a world power is supported by the following scriptures:

Revelation 13:7
"And it was given to it (to the ***'beast'***) ***"to war with the saints, and to overcome them." And authority was given to it*** (to the ***"beast"***) ***over every tribe and tongue and nation."*** (Author's parentheses)

Revelation 17:11-13
"[11]***And the beast which was and is not, he also is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to destruction.*** [12]***And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings with the beast*** (for) ***one hour."*** [13]***They have one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast."***

A very important point
Based on the words of the angel regarding the timing of the beast's existence, we can put to the test any sermon that tries to tell us who or what the ***"beast"*** is! For example, some years ago, some were teaching that the ***"beast"*** was a big computer somewhere in northern Europe. If those who believed that teaching had asked themselves, **"Was this computer in existence before the days John received the revelation?"** the obvious answer would have been **"No!"**, and they would have pronounced that teaching as false!

Others believe the ***"beast"*** is the Pope! All they must do, is to ask the same question: **"Was the Pope in existence before John received the revelation?"** As the answer is **"No!"** they should denounce that teaching as false!

Yet others believe that the ***"beast"*** will be the so-called "revival" of the Roman Empire. Again, these people should ask: **"Was the Roman Empire in existence before John received the revelation?**" The answer would be **"Yes!"** Then, they should ask again: **"Was the Roman Empire in existence during the days John received the revelation?"** Again, the answer would be **"Yes!"** In fact, the Roman Empire was in existence long before, during, and long after John received the revelation! At this point, they would realize that even this doctrine is false, because **the angel said to John that the beast was not** (*"is not"*) in existence at the time John received the Revelation!

Explanation of verse 8[b]

"[b]And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written in the Book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast that was, and is not, yet it will be."

The above verse goes hand in hand with Revelation 13:3. Let us read that verse and its explanation (in blue):

Revelation 13:3 ***"[a]And one of its heads was as if it had been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed. [b]And marvelled all the earth that was behind the beast."***

Explanation of verse 3[a]

"And one of its heads was as if it had been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed."

Let us not lose focus! The symbolic terms ***"head"*** and ***"beast"*** symbolize a ***"kingdom"***, a nation! Therefore, **the nation which will rise to become the central authority of the eighth world government, is both the last** (the eighth) ***"head"*** **and the last** ***"beast"*****!**

Now that we have the above truth, we can understand why verse 3[a] says that it was ***"one of its heads"*** that ***"had been slain to death and its deadly wound was healed"***, while verses 12 and 14 (of this chapter) say that it was ***"the beast"*** who had ***"the wound of the sword"*** and ***"whose deadly wound was healed"*****!!!**

From the above, it is easily understood that the nation out of which the central authority of the composite ***"beast"***, of the eighth world government, will come, had a very dramatic past. It had been slain by the sword and it was no more --- it had died --- it had gone into the abyss! And yet, the above prophecy said that the time would come when its wound would be healed, and it would bounce back up out of the abyss again! And Revelation 17:8 agrees with our conclusion. Let us read that verse:

"The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss and goes to destruction. And those dwelling on the earth will marvel, those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, seeing the beast, which was, and is not, and yet it will be."

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"And marvelled all the earth that was behind the beast"

As Revelation 17:8 above said, ***"And those dwelling on the earth will marvel"***, when the ***"beast"*** will come up out of the abyss, so does verse 3[b]. Those who make up the symbolic ***"earth"*** (the Judaeo-Christian community; please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c]), those who will stand ***"behind the beast"*** to support it and to promote it to become the central authority of the composite eighth world government, ***"will marvel"*****!** However, as Revelation 17:8

said, those who will marvel are ***"those whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world"*****!**

Which nation will play the main role in the government of the last *"beast"*?
Since we have realized that ***"Babylon the great"*** is the apostatic religious entity of Israel (please read the explanation of verses 5 and 6 above), it is only logical to conclude that the central power in the government of the eighth, of the composite ***"beast"***, will be the nation that carries her: Israel!

Which element of the nation of Israel will become the central power of the eighth world government? The religious, the political, the military or the commercial?
The political element of Israel of the end times only; and it will be represented by the ***"man of sin"*** whom the Lord will annihilate as soon as He returns (please read the explanation of Revelation 11:2[b] and 19:20).

Do the words, *"And one of its heads was as if it had been slain to death, and its deadly wound was healed"* (Revelation 13:3)**, and, *"The beast which you saw was, and is not, and it will come up out of the abyss"*** (Revelation 17:8[a])**, fit the history of Israel?**
Yes, they do! Israel ***"was"*** in existence before the time John received the revelation and it was not (***"is not"***) in existence at the time John received the revelation (around the year 95 A.D.), because the Roman General Titus had destroyed it in the year 70 A.D. And then, in the year 1948, it came back to life! And according to verses 12,13 and 17, the time will come when God puts into the hearts of the ten ***"horns"*** or ***"kings"***, to give their power and authority to

the ***"beast"***; thus, Israel **will become the central power of the eighth and last world government before the return of the *"King of kings"***. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 17:12,13,17
"[12]***And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings with the beast*** (for) ***one hour.*** [13]***They have one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast …*** [17]***Because God gave into their hearts to do His mind, and to become of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled."***

Does the name "apostate" (Greek: 'apostatis') **apply to Israel?**
Absolutely! It applies exclusively to Israel! **Pagan nations cannot be guilty of apostasy because they never had a covenant and a spiritual relationship with the God of Israel!** (Please read about the name and about the number of the name of the ***"beast"*** in the explanation of Revelation 13:18).

Has God ever called Israel *"apostate"*?
Yes, He has! Earlier, we read Jeremiah 3:1,3,6,8. Now, let us read Jeremiah 3:6-22:

"[6]***Jehovah also said to me in the days of Josiah the king, Have you seen what the apostate Israel has done? She has gone up on every high hill and under every green tree, and has fornicated there.*** [7]***And after she had done all these, I said, She will return to Me; but she did not return. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it.*** [8]***And I watched. When for all the causes for which the apostate Israel***

committed adultery, I sent her away and I gave the writ of her divorce to her. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she also went and fornicated. [9]***And it happened, from the wantonness of her harlotry she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with pieces of wood.*** [10]***And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not turned to Me with her whole heart, but with falsehood, says Jehovah.*** [11]***And Jehovah said to me, The apostate Israel has justified herself more than treacherous Judah.*** [12]***Go and cry these words toward the north, and say, Return, O apostate Israel, says Jehovah. I will not cause My face to fall on you, for I am merciful, says Jehovah; I will not keep anger forever.*** [13]***Only acknowledge your iniquity, that you have rebelled against Jehovah your God and have scattered your ways to the strangers under every green tree, and you have not obeyed My voice, says Jehovah.*** [14]***Return, O apostate sons, declares Jehovah; for I am Lord over you. And I will take you, one from a city, and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.*** [15]***And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.*** [16]***And it will be, when you multiply and increase in the land in those days, says Jehovah, they will no longer say, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah! Nor shall it come to the heart, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they miss it, nor shall it be made any more.*** [17]***At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah. And all nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem. And they shall not walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart.*** [18]***In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north, to the land that I have given for an inheritance to your fathers.*** [19]***But I said, How gladly would I put you among the sons,***

and give you a pleasant land, a beautiful inheritance among the multitudes of nations! And I said, You shall call Me, My Father; and you shall not turn away from Me. [20]***Surely as a wife treacherously departs from her lover, so you have dealt treacherously with Me, O house of Israel, declares Jehovah.*** [21]***A voice was heard weeping on the bare heights, pleadings of the sons of Israel; for they have perverted their way; they have forgotten Jehovah their God.*** [22]***Return, O apostate sons; I will heal your apostasies. Behold, we come to You, for You are Jehovah our God."*** (LITV)

Verses 9-11: ***"***[9]***Here is the mind that has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits; and they are seven kings.*** [10]***The five fell, the one is, the other has not come yet, and when he comes, he must remain for a short time.*** [11]***And the beast which was and is not, he also is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to destruction."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

"[9]***Here is the mind that has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sits; and they are seven kings."***

What do the terms *"heads"* and *"mountains"* symbolize?

Verse 9 above told us that the symbolic terms ***"heads"*** and ***"mountains"*** refer **to kings** (or kingdoms)!

For more information on the above symbolic terms, please read the explanation of Revelation 13:1[b] and 6:14[b].

Explanation of verse 10

"[10]***The five fell, the one is, the other has not come yet, and when he comes, he must remain for a short time."***

In this verse, the angel explained to John that ***"five"*** of the seven kings or world governments had come and gone before his time (***"fell"*** = past tense). Three of them were,

a) the Babylonian Empire, represented by the king of Babylon (Daniel 2:38),

b) the Medo-Persian Empire (Daniel 8:20), and

c) the Grecian Empire (Daniel 8:21).

Then, the angel said to John that the sixth ***"is"*** (present tense); and the sixth was the Roman Empire. The seventh would come after the fall of the Roman Empire, and, according to verse 11, the ***"beast"*** would be the ***"eighth"***.

Explanation of verse 11

"[11]***And the beast which was and is not, he also is the eighth, and is out of the seven, and goes to destruction."***

What do the words, *"is out of the seven"*, mean?
The ***"beast"***, in other words, the ***"eighth king"***, **is not a political government of one nation only**. The nation which will become the core, or the central authority of the eighth world government **will be joined and supported by nations that once were ruled by the previous seven world governments!** This is the reason we read (in the above verse), that the ***"beast"*** is ***"out of the seven"*** (Greek text: **εκ**=from, out of) **--- not *"one of the seven"*!** To un-

derstand this case better, let us read the explanation of Revelation 13:2[a] again (in blue):

Explanation of verse 2[a]
"And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion;"

An important clarification
As I mentioned earlier, the ***"beast"*** of verse 1, with the ***"seven heads"*** and the ***"ten horns"*** that comes out of the symbolic ***"sea"***, represents **eight** world governments. Thus, the different **'parts'** of the ***"beast"*** (of verse 1), **refer to different entities**. In order to have a clear understanding of the ***"beast"*** which will become the eighth world government, we must identify the different entities and keep them separate. So, let us identify them:

4. The ***"seven heads"*** refer to **seven world governments** that have ruled peoples up to this day.

5. The ***"ten horns"***, refer to the ***"ten kings"*** who, **in the future**, will give their authority to a specific nation, to help it become the central authority of **the eighth** world government.

6. The ***"beast"*** which will become the eighth and the last world government before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, **is not** the entire ***"beast"*** of verse 1, but **the composite part of its 'body' only!** This is the ***"beast"*** that we dealt with in Revelation chapter 11, this is the ***"beast"*** that we will be dealing with in the present chapter, and this is the ***"beast"*** that we will be dealing with in Revelation chapter 17.

The eighth ***"head"*** or ***"beast"*** **is not** one of the previous ***"seven heads"***. None of the previous ***"seven heads"*** will ever become a world government for a second time. There is no scripture to support such a myth! **The nation which will rise to become the central authority of the eighth world government, is its own entity!** John's description of its appearance,

"the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its feet as of a bear, and its mouth as the mouth of a lion",

tells us that the eighth ***"king"*** will be **a composite world government.** That means that the nation which will rise to become the dominant power of the eighth world government, of the ***"beast"***, **will be joined and supported** by nations which at one time they had been ruled by at least one of the first ***"seven"*** world governments! This is the reason Revelation 17:11 says that the eighth ***"beast"*** will be ***"out of the seven"*** **--- not one of the seven!**

Why did I say that the eighth *"beast"* is a composite one?

In Daniel 7:3-6, we read one of Daniel's dreams. He dreamed of four ***"beasts"*** which came out of the ***"sea"***! These ***"beasts"*** were four of the seven symbolic ***"heads"*** which we met in verse 1 of the present chapter (13). The three of the ***"beasts"*** in Daniel's dream looked ***"like a lion"***, ***"like a bear"*** and ***"like a leopard"***! Let us read Daniel's words:

"[3]And four great beasts came up from the sea, different from one another. [4]The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings. I watched until its wings were torn off. And it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet

like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. [5]***And, behold, another beast, a second, like a bear. And it was raised up on one side, and three ribs were in its mouth between its teeth. And they said this to it, Rise up, eat much flesh.*** [6]***After this I was looking, and, behold, another like a leopard, and to it were four wings of a bird on its side. And also to the beast were four heads. And rulership was given to it."***

The above verses help us realize that the fact that the ***"beast"*** of the present chapter (13) was ***"like a leopard"*** and had feet ***"like a bear"*** and its mouth was like the mouth ***"of a lion"***, reveals that this ***"beast"*** will be **a composite one** --- that it will be joined and supported by nations that once were ruled by those world governments of the past!

Since *"Babylon the great"* sits on the *"beast"* and since the *"beast"* will become a world government, does it mean that *"Babylon the great"* will, one day, be elevated to *"regal estate"* (Ezekiel 16:13) **again?**
Yes, that is correct! In Revelation 18:7, we read:

"By what things she glorified herself, and luxuriated, by so much give back to her torment and mourning. Because she says in her heart, I sit as a queen, and I am not a widow; and I do not see mourning at all."

Why can we not see *"Babylon the great"* exercising religious authority today?
Because this is a future event! John saw ***"Babylon the great"*** sitting on the ***"beast"*** **which is the last king or the last world government before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ**. Although ***"Babylon the great"*** is around today, if you will not live long enough to see the ***"beast"***, **the**

eighth king (Revelation 17:11), you will not see the powerful, the furious and dreadful ***"Babylon the great"*** of the end times! However, you can clearly see ***"Babylon's"*** unholy "daughters" who become more abominable by the day! God save your people!

Verses 12,13: **"**[12]***And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they will receive authority as kings with the beast*** (for) ***one hour.*** [13]***They have one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 12 and 13
What do the *"ten horns"* symbolize?
In the explanation of Revelation 12:3[c], I wrote (in blue):

Explanation of verse 3[c]
"and ten horns,"

What does the term *"horns"* symbolize?
Although the symbolic term ***"mountains"*** refers to ***"Kingdoms"*** including their ***"kings"***, the symbolic term ***"horns"*** refers to ***"kings"*** only. This statement is supported by Revelation 17:12, Daniel 7:24 and 8:20,21. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 17:12
"And the ten horns that you saw are ten kings who have not yet received royal power, but they are to receive authority as kings for one hour, together with the beast."

Daniel 7:24
"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise …."

Daniel 8:20,21
"[20]The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. [21]And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king."

When the time comes for the ***"beast"*** to become the central power of the last world government, these ***"kings"*** will stand behind it, they will support it, they will give their power and authority to it, and, for a short time (***"one hour"***), they will rule as kings with it.

Verse 14: ***"[14]They will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are called and chosen and faithful."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14
This verse is simple; it does not need an explanation. The fact that they will stand against the Lord Jesus to make war with Him, is also supported by Revelation 19:19. There, we read:
"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies being assembled to make war with the One sitting on the horse, and with His army."

Verse 15: ***"And he says to me: The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples and crowds and nations and tongues."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15
The above verse is self-explanatory.

Verses 16-18: *"*[16]***And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, they will hate the harlot, and they will make her desolate and naked. And they will eat her flesh, and will burn her with fire.*** [17]***Because God gave into their hearts to do His mind, and to become of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God will be fulfilled.*** [18]***And the woman whom you saw is the great city, the one who has a kingdom over the kings of the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 16-18

Up to this point, we have explained all the symbolic terms that appear in the above verses. Therefore, the message is clear: The time will come when God will move the kings of the symbolic ***"earth"*** who will rule together with the ***"beast"***, to hate and destroy the ***"harlot"***, the apostatic religious entity of the ***"beast"***, because in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all the righteous who have been slain in the symbolic ***"earth"*** (Revelation 18:24; Matthew 23:35,37). She will be destroyed forever, and she will never be found anymore --- never! (Revelation 18:21).

When I consider all the above, my heart goes out for the sons of Israel and for the people of the earth and my prayer is,

"LORD, God of Abraham, I pray for the sons of Israel. Please remember your promises and remove the veil from the eyes of those of your people who are trapped in the apostate ***'Babylon the great'***. Please say, **'It is enough!'** and open their eyes to ***'see'*** their Messiah, to believe in Him, and to be saved (John 6:40). Please do it now before the great ***"harlot"*** of the end times revives again to make

the people of the earth ***'drunk'*** at a greater scale! And, please Lord, help your people understand who ***'Babylon the great'*** is. Unless they recognize her, how can they obey your command to come out of her? (Revelation 18:4) And now, my Lord God, I pray for the people of the earth. Please help them recognize not only ***'Babylon the great'***, but also her harlot daughters who are acting up like their ***'Mother'***. Help them focus on the Lord Jesus who brought freedom to the captives so they can follow Him to freedom and to life! In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen!"

And let all those of the body of Christ who wish to join me in the above prayer, say **"Amen!"**

And the wish of my heart regarding Israel is:

May the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10, be fulfilled soon. There, it says,

"And I will pour on the house of David, and on those living in Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of prayers. And they shall look on Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they shall be bitter over Him, like the bitterness over the first-born."

And may the ***"veil"***, mentioned in 2 Corinthians 3:14-16, be removed soon! There it says,

"But their thoughts were hardened, for until the present time the same veil remains on the reading of the Old Covenant, not being unveiled, that it is being done away in Christ. But until today, when Moses is being read, a veil

lies on their heart. But whenever it turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away."

Chapter Eighteen

Verse 1: ***"And after these things I saw another angel*** (who) ***was coming down from heaven,*** (who) ***had great authority, and the earth was brightened up from his glory."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

Who is this *"angel"* who has such a *"great authority"* and so much light that *"the earth was brightened from his glory"*? Have we met this *"angel"* before?

Yes, we have! We have met Him in chapter 10! There, we concluded that this ***"angel"*** (not by nature), is no one else but the Lord Jesus Christ. For more details on this subject, please read the explanation of Revelation 10:1.

Other scriptures that prove that the above ***"angel"*** (whose glory made the earth shine) is the Lord Jesus Christ are Ezekiel 43:1-7. There, we see the pre-human Jesus as ***"the glory of the God of Israel"*** which **made the earth shine** (verse 2), and as the ***"Man"*** who spoke to the prophet (verse 6). Let us read these verses:

Ezekiel 43:1-7

"[1]And he made me go to the gate, the gate that faces eastward. [2]And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. And His voice was like the voice of many waters. And the earth shone from His glory. [3]And the appearance of the vision which I saw was as

the appearance which I saw when I came to destroy the city, and as the appearance that I saw by the river Chebar. And I fell on my face. [4]***And the glory of Jehovah came into the house, the way of the gate facing eastward.*** [5]***And the Spirit took me up and brought me into the inner court. And, behold, the glory of Jehovah filled the house!*** [6]***And I heard one speaking to me from the house. And standing beside me was a Man.*** [7]***And He said to me, Son of man, the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet, there where I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever, even the house of Israel shall not defile My holy name any more, they nor their kings, by their fornication, nor by the corpses of their kings in their high places."***

The fact that Jesus is the glory of God, is supported by Hebrews 1:1-3. There, the writer said:

"[1]***In many ways and in various ways of old, God spoke to the fathers in the prophets;*** [2] ***in these last days He spoke to us in the Son, whom He appointed heir of all; through whom He indeed made the ages;*** [3]***who being the shining splendor of His glory, and the express image of His essence, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, having made purification of our sins through Himself, He sat down on the right of the Majesty on high,"***

From all of the above verses, we realize that the ***"angel"*** (not an angel by nature) who will come down from heaven with great authority and whose glory will make the earth shine, is none else but the Lord Jesus Christ, the great ***"Angel of Jehovah"*** who appeared to Moses in the burning thorn-bush and who said to him, ***"I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the***

God of Jacob …" (Exodus 3:2-6; 13:21; 1 Corinthians 10: 4).

Verses 2,3: ***"[2]And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, Babylon the great has fallen, it has fallen, and it has become a dwelling-place of demons, and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean scavenging-bird that has been hated, [3a]because all the nations have drunk from the wine of the intensity of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; [b]and the merchants of the earth became rich from her uncontrollable passion."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 2 and 3[a]

How low has ***"Babylon the great"*** fallen! From being the wife of Jehovah (please read the explanation of Revelation 17:2-7), she ***"became a dwelling place of demons"***!

Why did she fall to that low level?

The ***"angel"*** gave the answer in verse 3. He said,

"[3]because all the nations have drunk from the wine of the intensity of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her;"

Instead of accepting the **headship** of her God who became flesh to shed His holy blood **on the cross** (Numbers 21:5-9; John 3:14,15), she rejected Him; and, turning around, she became ***"a queen"*** (verse 7) ***"having a kingdom over the kings of the earth"*** (Revelation 17:18), committing thus spiritual ***"fornication"*** with them (verse 9).

The prophetic words ***"Babylon the great has fallen, it has fallen"***, announce **the coming end of the religious entity**

known as *"Babylon the great"*; they do not point to the destruction of Jerusalem which took place about 20 years before John received the revelation! Please note the **future tense** in verses 7,8,9 and 21! However, it is true that ***"Babylon the great"* has *"fallen"*** in the eyes of God since the day Jesus died and ***"… the veil of the Holy Place was torn into two, from top to bottom"*** (Mark 15:37,38).

Explanation of verse 3[b]

"[b]and the merchants of the earth became rich from her uncontrollable passion." (AT)

Who are *"the merchants of the earth"*?

In the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c], we concluded that the symbolic term ***"earth"*** refers to "all those who claim to know and believe the True God of the Bible; **the Judeo-Christian community**". Therefore, the symbolic term ***"the merchants of the earth"*** refers to the merchants of that community who become rich by selling things which are used in the religious ceremonies and festivities of ***"Babylon the great"*** (and of her harlot daughters). They become rich because the people of the symbolic ***"earth"*** spend money during these holidays and festivities with an ***"uncontrollable passion"***. The things the ***"merchants of the earth"*** sell are listed in verses 11-13. Let's read these verses:

"[11]And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any longer; [12]cargo of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and every fragrant wood, and every vessel made of ivory, and every vessel made of very expensive wood, and of bronze, and of iron, and of marble, [13]and cinnamon, and unblemished, and incenses, and myrrh, and frankincense, and wine,

and oil, and semolina, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men." (AT)

What do the last words of verse 13 above, *"and souls of men"*, indicate?
They indicate that the title ***"the merchants of the earth"*** is extended to include religious leaders who **"sell"**, so to speak, the souls of men and women who trust them, for profit! These leaders don't seem to care about the salvation of their followers. For this reason, they do not teach them **the pure biblical gospel of salvation** (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; John 3:16; 6:40). They don't teach them **what they must do to be saved** (Romans 10:9,13,14; Acts 16:31). They don't teach them how to attain **the freedom from religion Jesus brings to those who believe and follow Him** (Luke 4:18).

Hence, they captivate them in spiritual darkness, they feed them ***"other gospels"*** (Galatians 1:6-9), and **they instill in them religious fear** in order to exploit them through religious rituals, tithing and other offerings, not to mention real estate and inheritances which should go to the rightful heirs and which cannot buy them forgiveness of sins and salvation!

Also, the words, ***"and souls of men"***, can be applied to certain harlot daughters of ***"Babylon the great"***, who, not only become rich by exploiting their followers while they are alive, but they also continue to make money from their families by offering prayers for the forgiveness of their sins and even for the salvation of their souls (!) **after they have departed**! How awful! I wonder, do they really believe that Jesus was raised from the dead, that He is alive today, and

that He will return to reward each one according to his work? (Revelation 1:17,18; 22:12)

Verses 4,5: ***"[4]And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her My people, so that you will not share in her sins, and that you will not receive of her plagues; [5]because her sins have piled up even up to Heaven, and God remembered her unjust actions."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 4 and 5

Now John hears God giving **a strong command** to all His people who are in ***"Babylon the great"***:

"Come out of her My people, so that you will not share in her sins, and that you will not receive of her plagues;"

In the explanation of Revelation 17:5,6, under **Point 4**, we concluded that ***"Babylon the Great"*** represents the wicked and apostate religious authority of Israel, which was responsible for the blood of the prophets, for the blood of the saints, of the Martyrs of Jesus and of all the righteous men that were slain upon the symbolic ***"earth"***! Therefore, the command, ***"Come out of her My people, so that you will not share in her sins"***, raises the following questions:

a) **What are her sins?**

b) **How can the people of God be in her? In other words, how can one share in her sins?**

c) **How can one come out of her?**

Let us deal with the above questions one at a time:

a) What are her sins?
"Babylon the great" became guilty of **apostasy, unbelief,** and **disobedience!**

How so?
Here, we must remind ourselves about the greatest promise of hope ever given to mankind:

When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, they enjoyed a beautiful personal relationship with their Creator. Being in the Garden was as if they were in God's presence.

Unfortunately, according to Genesis chapter 3, Adam and Eve fell into the sin of disobedience. For this reason, God sent them away from the Garden and placed a rotating fiery sword at the entrance of the Garden to prevent them from returning (Genesis 3:24). Ever since, all the descendants of Adam were alienated from God because of sin, lost the everlasting life that God had placed before them, and came under Satan's control (Acts 26:18). However, before God sent them away from the garden, He gave them a promise of hope. In Genesis 3:15, He said to the serpent (to Satan [Revelation 12:9]),

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He will bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Thus, the only hope for mankind **to be cleansed from their sins**, to break away from Satan's power, to reconcile with God, to enjoy a personal relationship with Him again, and **to have everlasting life**, was the coming of the promised Seed.

Where would the promised Seed come from?
Genesis 22:18, tells us that God promised Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed **in his Seed**. Let us read that verse:

"And in your Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed My voice."

An important point
Abraham did not receive the above promise through works of the Law but **through faith** (Genesis 15:6). In fact, the Law did not even exist in Abraham's time because it was given to Moses 430 years later; and when it was given, it did not annul the promise (Galatians 3:17). The apostle Paul explained this case in a simple manner when he wrote that God had decided to justify the nations like Abraham, in other words, **by faith, not by works of the Law.** Let us read his words from Galatians 3:6-9:

"[6]Even "as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness," [7]know, then, that those of faith, these are sons of Abraham. [8]And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the gospel before to Abraham: "All the nations will be blessed" "in you." [9]So that those of faith are blessed with the faithful Abraham."

As it was God's will to save the nations through faith, then, why did He give the Law?
In Galatians 3:19-29, the apostle Paul explained that **the Law was a temporary thing**, ***"for the sake of their transgressions, until the Seed should come"***. Let us read his words:

"[19]***Why the Law then? It was for the sake of transgressions, until the Seed should come, to whom it had been promised, being ordained through angels in a mediator's hand.*** [20]***But the Mediator is not of one, but God is one.*** [21]***Then is the Law against the promises of God? Let it not be! For if a law had been given which had been able to make alive, indeed righteousness would have been out of Law.*** [22]***But the Scripture locked up all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to the ones believing.*** [23]***But before the coming of faith, we were guarded under Law, having been locked up to the faith being about to be revealed.*** [24]***So that the Law has become a trainer of us until Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*** [25]***But faith coming, we are no longer under a trainer;*** [26]***for you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*** [27]***For as many as were baptized into Christ, you put on Christ.*** [28]***There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there is no slave nor freeman, there is no male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*** [29]***And if you are of Christ, then you are a seed of Abraham, even heirs according to promise."***

Has the *"Seed"* come?
Yes, He has! Let us consider the following points:

1. He came **in the first century AD** according to the Scriptures (Daniel 9:25).

2. **He was born in Bethlehem** according to the Scriptures (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1).

3. He proved Himself by **healing the blind, the deaf and the lame** according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 35: 4-6; Luke 7:22).

4. **They valued Him for thirty pieces of silver** according to the Scriptures (Zechariah 11:12,13; Matthew 27:9).

5. **They used the same thirty pieces of silver to buy the potter's field** according to the Scriptures (Zechariah 11:13; Matthew 27:3-8).

6. **They pierced His hands and His feet** according to the Scriptures (Psalms 22:16; Zechariah 12:10).

7. **He was lifted** (crucified) according to the Scriptures (Numbers 21:6-9; John 3:14,15).

8. **His garments were divided among them, and they threw a lot for His clothing** according to the Scriptures (Psalms 22:18; John 19:23,24).

9. **They gave Him vinegar to drink** according to the Scriptures (Psalms 69:21; Matthew 27:48).

10. **He who was without blemish was killed on the Preparation of the Passover and His bones were not broken** according to the Scriptures (Exodus 12: 46; Psalms 22:17; John 19:31-36).

11. **He was buried in a rich man's grave** according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60).

12. **He was raised from the dead** according to the Scriptures (Isaiah 53:10; Psalms 16:10; Matthew 28: 6; Acts 2:25-32).

Please consider
If Jesus were not the promised ***"Seed"*** whose ***"goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity"*** (Micah 5:2), if he were not the Word of God who became flesh (John 1:1) in order to save His people from their sins (Isaiah 53:5; Matthew 1:21; Daniel 9:24-27), if he were just a common man, would he have been able to manipulate his enemies, especially the religious leaders of Jerusalem who wanted him dead, to help him fulfill all the above prophesies? The answer is a resounding **"No!"** What can anyone say about His generation (Isaiah 53:7,8)? It is very hard to comprehend how the religious leaders of His generation could have missed all this evidence (1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 3:14)!

However, the faith has come because the Messiah has come! And according to the apostle Paul ***"Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes"*** (Romans 10:4).

How could Christ be *"the end of the Law"*?
Because, according to the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, the Christ had to be cut off **after** the sixty-nine weeks (7+62 [verse 25]), in other words, in the middle of the seventieth week, **to make atonement** for the transgressions, the sins and the iniquities of His people (verse 24), **bringing**, therefore, **an end to the sacrifices and to the offerings** (verse 27) which were prescribed by the Law. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:6, regarding Daniel 9:24-27.)

Considering all the above, we can clearly see that ***"Babylon the great"*** became guilty of **apostasy** because she **rejected** God **YHWH** who appeared to Abraham and ate with Him (Genesis 17:1; 18:1,8; John 8:56-59), and who became **the**

True Christ (Daniel 9:24: ***"to anoint the Most Holy One"***) in order to save **His** people from their sins (Daniel 9:24-27; Isaiah 53:1,5; Matthew 1:21).

She became guilty of **apostasy** because she **rejected** her Redeemer God (Jeremiah chapter 3; Isaiah 59:16-20; 60: 16) who, because of His great love for the world (John 3:16), became flesh to offer His body and His blood as an eternal sacrifice (Psalms 118:26-28). He sacrificed Himself for two reasons; first, in order **to fulfill the Law** (Matthew 5:17), and second, to make it possible for them to have everlasting life **by grace through faith** and not by works of the Law (Ephesians 2: 8,9).

She became guilty of **apostasy** because she **rejected His new covenant** (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 26:28) by which He gives **forgiveness of sins, everlasting life and freedom from religion** (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18) to all who believe that He is the Eternal Son of God (Micah 5:2; John 1:1,14; 3:16; 6:40).

Rejecting all the above, she held onto the first covenant, which was **a covenant of works and of death** (2 Corinthians 3:7); **she refused to enter in God's rest!** For this reason, she became guilty of **disobedience!** In her **disobedience**, she continued to keep the Law with its sacrifices and offerings concerning sins, **insulting and blaspheming** thus the eternal sacrifice of the Son of God! Her **actions of disobedience** reveal that she thought that the blood of the new covenant was common (Hebrews 10:29,30).

This was not the first-time Israel disobeyed God. In Psalms 95:10,11, we hear God saying about those who came out of Egypt the following:

"[10]For forty years I was disgusted with this generation; and I said, They are a people who err in heart; and, They do not know My ways, [11]to whom I swore in My anger, They shall not enter into My rest."

In Hebrews 3:7-19, the writer refers to the above case and says that those who would not enter God's rest were **those who disobeyed Him**. Let us read his words:

"[7]Because of this, even as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear His voice, [8]do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness, [9]there where your fathers tempted Me, testing Me, and saw My works forty years. [10]Because of this, I was angry with that generation and said, They always go astray in their heart; and they did not know My ways; [11]so I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest." [12]Watch, brothers, lest perhaps there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in withdrawing from the living God. [13]But exhort yourselves each day, as long as it is being called today, that not any of you be hardened by the deceit of sin. [14]For we have become partakers of Christ, if truly we hold the beginning of the assurance firm to the end; [15]as in the saying, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as in the provocation." [16]For hearing, some provoked Him, but not all those coming out of Egypt through Moses. [17]But with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with the ones sinning, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? [18]And to whom did "He swear" "they would not enter into His rest," except to those not obeying? [19]And we see that they were not able to enter in because of unbelief."

In verse 19 above, we discover one more sin that prevented them from entering God's rest: ***"unbelief"*!**

Continuing in chapter 4, the same writer explained to the Jews who had believed in Christ that ***"… we, the ones believing, enter into the rest …."*** Let us read a few verses from chapter 4:

"[1]***Therefore, let us fear lest perhaps a promise having been left to enter into His rest, that any of you may seem to come short.*** [2]***For, indeed, we have had the gospel preached to us, even as they also; but the Word did not profit those hearing it, not having been mixed with faith in the ones who heard.*** [3]***For we, the ones believing, enter into the rest, even as He said, "As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest," though the works had come into being from the foundation of the world.*** [4]***For He has spoken somewhere about the seventh day this way, "And God rested from all His works in the seventh day."*** [5]***And in this again, "They shall not enter into My rest."*** [6]***Therefore, since it remains for some to enter into it, and those who formerly had the gospel preached did not enter in on account of disobedience,*** [7]***He again marks out a certain day, saying in David, Today (after so long a time, according as He has said), "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."*** [8]***For if Joshua gave them rest, then He would not have afterwards spoken about another day.*** [9]***So, then, there remains a sabbath rest to the people of God.*** [10]***For he entering into His rest, he himself also rested from his works, as God had rested from His own.*** [11]***Therefore, let us exert ourselves to enter into that rest, that not anyone fall in the same example of disobedience."***

In the above words, we hear the writer exhorting **the people of God to enter His rest** and tells them that **they must also rest from their works!** If they continue to do the works of the Law, it will be counted to them as **disobedience!** In fact, the apostle Paul said that those who do the works of the Law, are **under a curse!** Let us read his words from Galatians 3:10-13:

"[10]***For as many as are out of works of Law, these are under a curse. For it has been written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things having been written in the book of the Law, to do them." Deut. 27:26*** [11]***And that no one is justified by Law before God is clear because, "The just shall live by faith." Hab. 2:4*** [12]***But the Law is not of faith, but, "The man doing these things shall live in them." Lev. 18:5*** [13]***Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us; for it has been written, "Cursed is everyone having been hung on a tree;" Deut. 21:23"***

When did the rest from the works of the Law begin?
It began the moment Jesus said, ***"It is finished!"*** (John 19: 30). Now, one is saved by grace **through faith** (Ephesians 2:8,9) **in the right Object of faith:** In the One who fulfilled the Law, in the One who nailed it to the cross (Colossians 2:14) --- **in Jesus!**

From the above study, we conclude that the sins of ***"Babylon the great"*** are those of **apostasy**, **unbelief** and **disobedience**! Now, let us move on to questions b) and c):

b) How can the people of God be in her? In other words, how can they share in her sins?

When those who claim to believe and follow Christ copy ***"Babylon the great"*** and do **even one** of the works which were prescribed by the Law that produced that religion, **they are in her! They are "playing" with her!** For example, those who **accept and follow a special priesthood class**, those who **make up a special priesthood class**, those who **keep the seventh day of the week**, those who **tithe**, and those who **keep the festivals**, **<u>are in her</u>!** These people must understand that Jesus has fulfilled the Law **completely** and that He has brought freedom to the captives! By continuing to **"play"** with the great whore, ***"Babylon the great"***, they try to **undo the work Jesus accomplished on the cross!** If they continue to **"play"** with her, they prove that they have not entered God's rest and thus, they share in her sins of **apostasy**, **unbelief**, and **disobedience!**

c) How can they *"come out of her"*?
When they come to the full understanding of the gospel of grace and freedom, and **stop practicing the above sins**, they ***"come out of her"*!** It is as simple as that! **If you are in her, will you obey God's command?**

Verses 6-8: ***"[6]Pay her back, even as she made you pay, and double up to her double, according to her works. With the same cup that she made you drink, make her drink double. [7]As much as she glorified herself and luxuriated, by so much give back to her torment and mourning; Because she says in her heart, 'I sit as a queen, and I am not a widow; and I will not see mourning at all.' [8]For this reason, her plagues will come in one day: death, and mourning, and famine; and she will be burned up with fire, because mighty is the Lord God who judges her."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 6-8

The above words show the size of God's wrath against her. According to verse 8, it is He who will judge her and bring her to her end.

Who will God use to destroy her?
In Revelation 17:16,17, we read,

"[16]***And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, and will make her desolated and naked. And they will eat her flesh, and will burn her down with fire.*** [17]***For God gave into their hearts to do His mind, and to act in one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the Words of God shall be fulfilled."***

Verses 9,10: ***"***[9]***And the kings of the earth, those who committed fornication with her and luxuriated*** (with her) ***will weep for her, and they will wail over her, when they will see the smoke of her burning;*** [10]***standing in a distance, because of the fear of her torment, they were saying, 'Woe, woe to the great city, Babylon, the strong city, because your judgment came in one hour.'*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 9 and 10

Who are *"the kings of the earth"*?
Please read the explanation of Revelation 1:5[c].

The words, ***"And the kings of the earth, those who committed fornication with her"***, indicate that it is not all ***"the kings of the earth"*** that have committed fornication with her. However, those who did commit spiritual fornication with her and luxuriated with her will weep and wail over her. And, from the words ***"standing in a distance, because***

of the fear of her torment", we realize that her "lovers" will not be able to protect her from the wrath of God.

Verses 11-13: ***"***[11]***And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargo any longer;*** [12]***cargo of gold, and silver, and precious stone, and pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and every fragrant wood, and every vessel made of ivory, and every vessel made of very expensive wood, and of bronze, and of iron, and of marble,*** [13]***and cinnamon, and unblemished, and incenses, and myrrh, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and semolina, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 11-13

Please read the explanation of verse 3[b] above.

Verses 14-16: ***"***[14]***And the fruits of the lust of your soul departed from you, and all the fat things, and the bright things departed from you, and you will never find them any longer.*** [15]***The merchants of these things, those who became rich from her, will stand away from her because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning;*** [16]***saying, 'Woe, woe*** (to) ***the great city who has been dressed with linen and purple and red, and who has been decorated with gold and precious stone, and pearls; because all this great wealth became desolate in one hour!"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 14-16

These verses are simple; they do not need an explanation. Simply, the words, ***"you will never find them any longer"***, indicate that her destruction is final, and the fact that the

"merchants" will stand away from her, shows that they will not be able to protect her either!

Verses 17-19: ***"***[17]***And every captain, and all those who travel on the ships, and the sailors, and all those who work the sea, stood in a distance,*** [18]***and they cried out, seeing the smoke of her burning, saying, 'Which*** (city) ***is like the great city?*** [19]***And they put dust*** (from the ground) ***on their heads, and they were crying out weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe*** (to) ***the great city, by which all those who have ships in the sea became rich, from her costliness; because in one hour she was ruined.'"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 17-19

In the above verses, we encounter several symbolic terms which we have explained in the explanation of Revelation 8:8,9. Let us read this part again (in blue):

What do the *"ships"* symbolize?

In Revelation 18:17 we read,

"For in one hour such great wealth was desolated. And every captain and all company on the ships, and sailors, and as many as work the sea, stood from afar …."

In the above verse, we met five symbolic terms:

1. The ***"ships"***.

2. The ***"captains"***.

3. The ***"company on the ships"***.

4. The ***"sailors"***.

5. Those who ***"work the sea"***.

As the born-again Christians are in the symbolic ***"sea"*** but they are not part of it, likewise the symbolic ***"ships"*** are in the ***"sea"*** **but they are not part of it**.

The *"ships"* symbolize Christian Churches. As a ship has a **captain**, likewise a church has **a leader --- a pastor**. As a ship has **sailors** and other **officers** who assist the **captain** to carry out his responsibilities, likewise a church has ***"elders"*** and other ***"officers"*** to assist the **pastor**. As a ship has ***"company"*** on it, in other words, **passengers**, likewise a church has the **fellowship** or **the church goers**.

The above hierarchy is like that of old Israel. Let us read Deuteronomy 29:10. There it says,

"Ye stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel …." (KJV)

In the foregoing verse, Revelation 18:17, we also met those who *"work the sea"*. Who are they?
Those who work the ***"sea"*** are **those who preach the true gospel of salvation to the unbelieving** (in Jesus) **mankind** (Romans 10:14,15).

What do the words, "*And they put dust* (from the ground) ***on their heads, and they were crying out weeping and mourning*", mean?**
The act of throwing dust on their heads was a Hebrew custom! We can verify this from the following two verses:

Joshua 7:6
"And Joshua tore his clothing, and fell on his face to the earth before the ark of Jehovah until the evening, he and the elders of Israel. And they threw dust on their heads."

Job 2:12
"And when they lifted up their eyes from a distance and did not recognize him, they lifted up their voice and wept then. And each one tore his robe. And they sprinkled dust on their heads toward the heavens."

Certainly, they wouldn't act this way about the destruction of a Pagan religious entity!

Based on the above understanding, we see that not even the Christian or the Jewish religious leaders will be able to protect ***"Babylon the great"***. Her fall has been determined by God and it will happen!

Verse 20: ***"Rejoice over her, heaven, and the saints, and the holy apostles, and the prophets, because God judged your judgment against her."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20
In Revelation 6:9-11, we read:

"[9]And when He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those having been slain for the Word of God, and for the witness which they had. [10]And they cried with a great voice, saying, Until when, holy and true Master, do You not judge and take vengeance for our blood, from those dwelling on the earth? [11]And there was given to each one a white robe. And it was said to them that they should rest yet a little time, until might be fulfilled also

the number ***of their fellow-slaves and their brothers, those being about to be killed, even as they."***

Verse 20 serves as an answer to the question of ***"the souls of those having been slain for the Word of God, and for the witness which they had"*****!** It tells us that at that point **the time has come** for God to judge ***"Babylon the great"*** and to take vengeance for the blood of the prophets and of the saints! Now, let us move on to verses 21-23 to hear God's judgment against the great whore:

Verses 21-23: ***"***[21]***And a strong angel lifted a stone like a great mill*** (stone)***, and he threw it into the sea, saying, 'With such a speedily force will, Babylon the great city, be thrown*** (down)***, and it will not be found any longer.*** [22]***And the sound of harpers, and of musicians, and of flutists, and of trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; And every craftsman of every occupation will not be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer.*** [23]***And the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of a bride-groom and of a bride will not be heard in you any longer; because, your merchants were the great ones of the earth, because with your sorcery all the nations were deceived."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 21-23

These verses are very clear: ***"Babylon the great"*** will experience an utter destruction and she ***"will not be found any longer"*** --- **never!** Halleluiah!

Verse 24: ***"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all those who have been slain on the earth."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 24
Please read the explanation of Revelation 17:5,6, under the subtitle, **Point 4**.

*****

A word from the author
Hear sons of Israel; hear people of the earth, all of you who do not know Jesus:

In Psalms 33:6, we read:

"Through the Word of Jehovah the heavens were made; and all their host were made by the breath of His mouth."

The Eternal Word of God, who created all things, came into our world in the flesh to bring into existence a new creation through faith in Him!

Do you wish to be part of His new creation? Or do you wish to remain as part of the old? The old creation is passing away, and it will be no more (Revelation 21:1). If you wish to become part of the new and to have everlasting life, I invite you today:

Come to Him! Ask Him to forgive you for allowing ***"Babylon the great"*** to make you drink from her wine, to make you dizzy, so that you will not be able to see His glory! She is doing the work of your enemy (2 Corinthians 4:3-6)! She wants your destruction and she has become drunk herself from the blood of the righteous ones because, in her pride, she wants to sit like a queen! However, she is not eternal!

God will remove her from her throne and will destroy her forever! Get out of her now! Don't let her bright dresses mislead you! Hers is the dress of a harlot!

Come to the One who shed His blood and was raised from the dead **for you** (2 Corinthians 5:15). He is Eternal! He is the everlasting life! He is the King of kings! He is ***"Worthy"*** (Revelation 5:12-14)!

"Come" (Revelation 22:17), do not hesitate! Now, at this very moment, lift your eyes towards Him, call Him ***"Lord"*** (Romans 10:9,13,14) and, instantly, all your sins will be forgiven (John 8:24), you will receive everlasting life (John 3:16), and you will become part of His new creation!

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, the apostle Paul says,

"So that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!"

And in Galatians 6:15 he says,

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision has any strength nor uncircumcision, but a new creation."

May the Lord Jesus bless you!

Chapter Nineteen

Verses 1-4: ***"[1]After these things, I heard a great voice like*** (the voice) ***of a great crowd in heaven saying, Hallelujah. The salvation and the glory and the power*** (belong) ***to our God. [2]Because true and righteous are His judgments; because He judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication. And He avenged the blood of His slaves out of her hand. [3]And for a second*** (time) ***they said, Hallelujah. And her smoke goes up forever and ever. [4]And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God the One who sits on the throne saying: Amen, Hallelujah."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

"[1]After these things, I heard a great voice like (the voice) ***of a great crowd in heaven saying, Hallelujah. The salvation and the glory and the power*** (belong) ***to our God."***

How beautiful it is to hear voices glorifying God!

Who gives such praise in heaven?

Those who give praise in heaven are: The angels, the four living creatures, the twenty-four elders and the great crowd. Let us read the following verses:

Revelation 5:11-14

"[11]And I saw, and I heard a sound of many angels around the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders, and

their number was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, [12]***saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb having been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.*** [13]***And every creature which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever.*** [14]***And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped the One living forever and ever."***

Revelation 7:9-12
"[9]***After these things I saw, and behold, a great crowd which no one was able to number them, out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues, standing in front of the throne, and before the Lamb, having been clothed with white robes, and in their hands palm branches.*** [10]***And they*** *(the great crowd)* ***cry with a great voice, saying, Salvation to our God sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb.*** [11]***And all the angels and of the elders and of the four living creatures stood around the throne. And they fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God,*** [12]***saying, Amen. Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and strength to our God forever and ever. Amen."***

Explanation of verse 2
"[2]***Because true and righteous are His judgments; because He judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication. And He avenged the blood of His slaves out of her hand."***

God had promised to avenge the blood of His servants a long time ago! And now that He did, He proved, one more time, that His words are true. Let us read Deuteronomy 32: 43:

"Rejoice, O nations, of His people; for He shall avenge the blood of His servants, and shall render vengeance to His foes, and shall have mercy on His land and His people."

Explanation of verses 3 and 4

"[3]***And for a second*** (time) ***they said, Hallelujah. And her smoke goes up forever and ever.*** [4]***And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God the One who sits on the throne saying: Amen, Hallelujah."***

The above verses are simple; they do not need an explanation.

Verses 5-8: ***"***[5]***And a voice came out of the throne saying: Praise our God, all His slaves and the ones fearing Him, the small and the great.*** [6]***And I heard as a voice of a great crowd, and as a sound of many waters, and as a sound of loud thunders saying: Hallelujah. Because the Lord, the Almighty God, reigned.*** [7]***Let us rejoice and let us be exceedingly glad and*** (let us) ***give the glory to Him because the marriage of the Lamb came and His wife prepared herself.*** [8]***And it was given to her to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright; because the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 5 and 6

"[5]***And a voice came out of the throne saying: Praise our God, all His slaves and the ones fearing Him, the small and the great.*** [6]***And I heard as a voice of a great crowd, and as a sound of many waters, and as a sound of loud thunders saying: Hallelujah. Because the Lord, the Almighty God, reigned."*** (AT)

We can only imagine the extent of the joy the servants of God felt after He destroyed ***"Babylon the great"*** who sat like a queen over the kings of the earth! Now she is gone forever, and the Almighty God reigned! And the heavens were filled with the praises of His servants: Hallelujah!

Explanation of verses 7 and 8

"[7]***Let us rejoice and let us be exceedingly glad and*** (let us) ***give the glory to Him because the marriage of the Lamb came and His wife prepared herself.*** [8]***And it was given to her to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright; because the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."*** (AT)

An important truth

From the above verses, we realize that ***"the marriage of the Lamb"*** **will not** take place until **after** ***"Babylon the great"*** is destroyed**!** And ***"Babylon the great"*** rides the ***"beast"*****!** Therefore, ***"the marriage of the Lamb"*** **will not** take place **before** the coming of the ***"beast"*****!**

Verse 9: ***"And he says to me: Write: Blessed are those who have been called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb. And he says to me: These are the true words of God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9

Who are *"those who have been called"*?
The called ones are all those who:

1. **Confess in faith that Jesus is the only begotten** (not the only created) **Son of God and for this reason He is God/Lord in essence.**

2. **Believe that God raised Him bodily from the dead.**

3. **Worship Him by calling on His Name!**

The above statements are supported by the following scriptures:

John 3:16
"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone believing into Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Romans 10:9,10,13,14
"[9]Because if you confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. [10]For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth one confesses unto salvation … [13]For everyone, "whoever may call on the name of the Lord will be saved." [14]How then may they call on One into whom they have not believed? And how may they believe One of whom they have not heard? And how may they hear without preaching?"

1 Corinthians 1:2
"to the assembly of God which is in Corinth, those having been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called-out saints, with all those calling on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, both theirs and ours:"

The invitation was **first** extended to the Jews and **later** to the Greeks (the Gentiles). In Romans 1:16, Paul wrote:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone believing, both to Jew first, and to Greek;"

Have people ever refused to respond to the invitation?
Yes, they have! Let us hear the words of Jesus from Matthew 22:1-14:

"[1]And answering, Jesus again spoke to them in parables, saying: [2]The kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a king, who made a wedding feast for his son. [3]And he sent his slaves to call those being invited to the wedding feast, but they did not desire to come. [4]Again, he sent other slaves, saying, Tell the ones invited, Behold, I have prepared my supper; my oxen, and the fatlings are killed, and all things ready; come to the wedding feast. [5]But not caring they went away, one to his own field, and one to his trading. [6]And the rest, seizing his slaves, insulted and killed them. [7]And hearing, the king became angry. And sending his armies, he destroyed those murderers and burned their city. [8]Then he said to his slaves, Indeed, the wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. [9]Then go onto the exits of the highways and call to the wedding feast as many as you may find. [10]And going out into the highways, those slaves gathered all, as many as

they found, both evil and good. And the wedding feast was filled with reclining guests. [11]***And the king coming in to look over those reclining, he saw a man there not having been dressed in a wedding garment.*** [12]***And he said to him, Friend, how did you come in here, not having a wedding garment? But he was speechless.*** [13]***Then the king said to the servants, Binding his feet and hands, take him away and throw him out into the outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of the teeth.*** [14]***For many are called, but few chosen."***

Oh, it is so important to recognize and to honor that wedding and to wear the ***"fine linen"*** that is given to the saints (verse 8 above)! Those who do will be blessed! ***"These are the true words of God."***

Verse 10: ***"***[a]***And I fell before his feet to worship him, and he says to me: Look, don't; I am a fellow-slave of yours, and of your brothers, those who have the testimony of Jesus; worship God;*** [b]***because the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10[a]

"[a]***And I fell before his feet to worship him, and he says to me: Look, don't; I am a fellow-slave of yours, and of your brothers, those who have the testimony of Jesus; worship God;"***

Who is this angel? Have we met him before?
Yes, we have! This is the angel who was appointed to show John the revelation. In Revelation 1:1, we read:

"A Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to declare to His servants things which must shortly come to

pass. And He signified it by sending His angel to His servant John," (MKJV)

How is it that the angel did not allow John to worship him?
The angel knew his place before God! He told John to worship God because he knew that **God is against those who bow down in religious devotion before created beings or objects such as images and/or statues!** This statement, is supported by the following verses:

Exodus 20:2-6
"[2]I am Jehovah your God, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. [3]You shall have no other gods before Me. [4]You shall not make to yourselves any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heavens above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. [5]You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them. For I Jehovah your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons to the third and fourth generation of those that hate me, [6]and showing mercy to thousands of those that love Me and keep My commandments." (MKJV)

Isaiah 44:9-19
"[9]Those who make a graven image are all of them vanity; and the things in which they delight shall not help; and they are their own witnesses. They do not see nor know, that they may be ashamed. [10]Who has formed a god, or melted a graven image that is good for nothing? [11]Behold, all his companions shall be ashamed; and the craftsmen; they are from men. They shall assemble; all of them shall stand; they shall dread; they shall be ashamed together.

[12]***He engraves iron with a tool. He works in the coals, and forms it with hammers, and works it with the strength of his arms. Then, he is hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water, and is weak.*** [13]***He fashions wood, and stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil; he shapes it with carving tools, and he marks it out with the compass, and makes it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to sit in the house.*** [14]***He cuts down cedars, and takes cypress and oak, which he makes the trees of the forest strong for him; he plants a tree, and the rain makes it grow.*** [15]***And it shall be for a man to burn; for he will take some of it and warm himself. Yes, he kindles it and bakes bread; yes, he makes a god and worships; he makes it a graven image and falls down to it.*** [16]***He burns part of it in the fire; with part of it he eats flesh; he roasts roast and is satisfied; yea, he warms himself, and says, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire.*** [17]***And the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image; he falls down to it and worships, and prays to it, and says, Deliver me! for you are my god.*** [18]***They have not known nor understood; for He has shut their eyes so that they cannot see; and their hearts so that they cannot understand.*** [19]***And none thinks within his heart, nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread on the coals of it; I have roasted flesh and eaten; and shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?"*** (MKJV)

Today, there are millions of people who call themselves "Christian", but who ignore the above words of the word of God. They bow down before images and statues, they pray to them and **they kiss them**! And their religious leaders not only do not stop them, as the angel stopped John, but they give different excuses to justify and to promote this kind of

idolatry! And when they see born-again Christians who obey God and they do not bow down before these idols, neither do they pray to them because prayer is worship, **nor do they kiss them**, they do not consider them Christian! What darkness! What a perversion of truth!

The above form of idol-worship is nothing new! The Pagans of old were **kissing** their idols also! Let us read Hosea 13:2-4:

"2And now they sin more and more, and have made themselves a molten image of their silver, and idols according to their own understanding, all of it the work of the craftsmen. They say of them, Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves. 3Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud and as the early dew that passes away, as the chaff storm-driven out of the floor, and as the smoke out of the chimney. 4Yet I am Jehovah your God from the land of Egypt, and you shall know no God but Me. For there is no Savior besides Me."

Christians, it is time to be sober! **Stop worshipping idols!** You are God's temple! What connection is there between God's temple and idols? In 2 Corinthians 6:16-18, the apostle Paul wrote:

"16And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are a temple of the living God, even as God said, "I will" dwell in them and "walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." 17Because of this, "come out from among them" "and be separated," says the Lord, "and do not touch the unclean thing," and I will receive you. 18"And I will be a Father to you,

and you will be sons" and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty."

In 1 John 5:21, the apostle John said,

"Little children, guard yourselves from idols …."

And in 1 Corinthians 10:14, Paul commanded,

"On account of this, flee from idolatry, my beloved."

From all the above scriptures, truly born-again Christians must worship God alone. The very word ***"worship"*** should never be used by a true Christian in association with a created being, whether angelic or human. **It should be reserved and used for God alone because only He is Worthy to be worshipped!** Let us not be like those who ***"worshiped and served the created thing rather than the Creator who is blessed forever"*** (Romans 1:25). Let us not use names and titles which belong exclusively to the Eternal God to over-exalt mortal men who hold temporary positions of authority such as, ***"Your Worship"*** and ***"Worshipful Master"***. Let us not ignore the fact that there are names which God does not consider simply as titles of honor, but, as ***"names of blasphemy"***! (Revelation 13:1 and 17:3)

Should Jesus be worshiped?
Absolutely! Jesus is not a created being! **He is God in essence** because He is God's **only begotten** Son, and because only God comes out of God as only human comes out of a human! In Revelation 5:8, we see the four beasts and the twenty-four elders **falling before the Lamb** --- a classic form of worship that belongs to God alone! And, unlike the angel of the present chapter, **the Lamb accepts it!** Obvi-

ously, this action does not insult God the Father because it is His will for everyone **to honor the Son exactly the same as they honor Him** (John 5:23).

Explanation of verse 10[b]

"[b]because the testimony about Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

What did the angel mean with the above words?
He meant that **Jesus is the centre of attention here** --- not him! The **spirit** of prophecy, in other words, **the purpose** behind all prophecy is **to witness about Jesus!** The prophecies which were given to John concerning the coming of the kingdom of God (verse 6), and about the wedding of the Lamb (verses 7,8), are a small part of the overall testimony which the Scriptures give about Jesus (John 5:39)!

Can we refer to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit of prophecy"?
Yes, we can, because **He is the Author of all prophecy** (2 Peter 1:21). He always gives witness concerning Jesus because His work is to glorify Him (John 16:13-15). This work of the Holy Spirit, who is also known as ***"the Spirit of Christ"***, did not begin in the first century, but a long time **before** the Word became flesh (John 1:1,14)! This statement is supported by 1 Peter 1:10,11. There, it says:

"[10]About which salvation the prophets sought out and searched out, prophesying concerning the grace for you, [11]searching for what, or what sort of time the Spirit of Christ made clear within them; testifying beforehand of the sufferings belonging to Christ, and the glories after these."

Verse 11 ***"And I saw the heaven opened, and look, a white horse, and the One sitting on it was called Faithful and True, and He judges and wars in righteousness."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

Who is the Rider of the *"white horse"*?

The Rider of the ***"white horse"*** is no one else but the Lord Jesus Christ! He is the ***"Amen"*** of Revelation 3:14 where He appears as **the *"faithful"* and *"true"*** Witness.

Also, please read the explanation of Revelation 6:2[b] and 2[c].

Verse 12: ***"[a]His eyes were like a flame of fire, [b]and on His head many diadems, [c]having a name written, which no one knows except Himself,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 12[a]

"[a]His eyes were like a flame of fire,"

Please read the explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under the subtitle, **Description #4**.

Explanation of verse 12[b]

"[b]and on His head many diadems,"

What do the *"diadems"* signify?

"Diadems" (i.e., crowns) are signs of authority, and they are placed on the heads of ruling kings. Hence, the fact that Jesus has on His head many diadems, signifies that all kingdom authority is on Him, that He is the King of kings. This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Isaiah 9:6,7
"[6]For a Child is born; to us a Son is given; and the government is on His shoulder; and His name is called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. [7]There is no end to the increase of His government and of peace on the throne of David, and on His kingdom, to order it, and to sustain it with justice and with righteousness, from now and forever. The zeal of Jehovah of Hosts will do this."

Matthew 28:18
"And coming up Jesus talked with them, saying, All authority in Heaven and on earth was given to Me."

Revelation 19:6
"[6]And I heard as a voice of a great crowd, and as a sound of many waters, and as a sound of loud thunders saying: Hallelujah. Because the Lord, the Almighty God, reigned." (AT)

Revelation 19:16
"And on His garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords." (AT)

Explanation of verse 12[c]
"[c]having a name written, which no one knows except Himself,"

The above words are self-explanatory. In Revelation 3:12, the Lord Jesus had mentioned that **He will have a new name**. Let us read that verse:

"The one overcoming, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more. And I

will write the name of My God on him, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of Heaven from My God, and My new name."

Verse 13: ***"[a]and had been arrayed in a garment which had been dipped in blood; [b]and His name is called: The Word of God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13[a]

"[a]and had been arrayed in a garment which had been dipped in blood;"

Why is His garment dipped in blood?

Please read the explanation of Revelation 14:18,19,20, and the following verses:

Isaiah 63:1-6

"[1]Who is this who comes from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, this One adorned in His clothing, bending in His great power? It is I, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save! [2]Why is Your clothing red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? [3]I have trodden the winepress, I alone, and no man of the peoples was with Me. And I will tread them in My anger, and trample them in My fury; and their juice shall be spattered on My garments; and I will pollute all My clothes. [4]For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come. [5]And I looked, and no one was helping. And I wondered that no one was upholding. Then My own arm saved for Me, and My fury upheld Me. [6]And I tread down peoples in My anger, and made them drunk in My fury. And I poured their juice to the earth."

Explanation of verse 13[b]
"[b]and His name is called: The Word of God."

Who is *"The Word of God"*?
Please read the explanation of Revelation 2:12.

Verse 14: ***"And the armies which are in Heaven followed Him on white horses, being dressed in fine linen, white and clean."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14
The ***"fine linen"*** which is ***"white and clean"*** signifies that the armies which follow Him are the **holy** and **righteous** angels (Revelation 3:4; 19:8).

Verse 15: ***"[a]And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, in order to strike the nations with it. [b]And He will shepherd them with an iron rod. [c]And He treads the wine-press of the wine of the intensity of the wrath of the Almighty God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15[a]
"[a]And out of His mouth goes forth a sharp sword, in order to strike the nations with it."

What does the symbolic term, *"sharp sword"*, signify?
It refers to **the word of God** (Ephesians 6:17). For more information, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:16, under **Description #8**.

Explanation of verse 15[b]
"[b]And He will shepherd them with an iron rod."

Who will shepherd the nations with an *"iron rod"*?

Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:5.

Explanation of verse 15[c]

"[c]And He treads the winepress of the wine of the intensity of the wrath of the Almighty God."

What do the above words mean?
Please read the explanation of verse 13[a] above, and the explanation of Revelation 14:18,19 and 20.

Verse 16: ***"And on His garment and on His thigh He has a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16

The titles, ***"King of kings"*** and ***"Lord of lords"***, which belong to God alone, reveal the great authority of the Lord Jesus Christ and the fact that Jesus is One of the Godhead **YHWH** (Matthew 28:18; 1 Timothy 6:15,16; Deuteronomy 10:17).

Verses 17,18: ***"[17]And I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which are flying in mid-heaven: Come, be gathered to the supper of the great God, [18]in order to eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of chiliarchs, and the flesh of mighty ones, and the flesh of horses, and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all, and of freemen and of slaves, and of the small and of the great*** (ones)***."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 17 and 18

The above verses are simple; they do not need an explanation. The only symbolism here are the words, ***"I saw an angel standing in the sun"***, which was explained in the

explanation of Revelation 1:14-16, under **Description #9**. There, I wrote in part (in blue):

"Finally, as the ***"sun"*** represents the Triune God and His shining (sun like) glory, the words of Revelation 19:17, ***"And I saw an angel standing in the sun",*** do not mean that this angel stood literally on the actual Sun, neither do they mean that he stood literally on the actual Person of God. The fact that John saw this angel ***"standing in the sun"*** means that **this angel had received his authority to speak from God!"**

Verse 19: ***"And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies being gathered together to make war with the One sitting on the horse, and with His army."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 19

These words are the fulfilment of the prophecies found in Revelation 17:14 and 16:13-16. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 17:14

"They will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are called and chosen and faithful." (AT)

Revelation 16:13-16

"[13]***And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*** [14]***For they are spirits of demons doing signs, which go forth to the kings of the earth, even of the whole habitable world to assemble them to the war of that day, the great day of***

God Almighty. [15]***Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is the one watching and keeping his garments, that he does not walk naked, and they may see his shame.*** [16]***And He assembled them in the place having been called in Hebrew, Armageddon."***

Verse 20: ***"And the beast was seized, and the false prophet who was with it*** (was seized)***, the one who was doing the signs before it, by which he misled those who had received the mark of the beast, and those who were worshiping its image. The two were cast alive into the lake of fire which is burning with brimstone."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20

The above ***"beast"*** is the ***"beast"*** of Revelation 13:1, and the ***"false prophet"*** is the other ***"beast"*** of Revelation 13: 11. Please read the explanation of the entire chapter 13.

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for casting the ***"man of lawlessness"*** and his supporters, those who will make up the central authority of the government of the composite ***"beast"***, and the ***"false prophet"***, into the lake of fire!

Verse 21: ***"And the rest were killed by the sword of the One who sits on the horse, the one which was coming out of His mouth; and all the birds were filled from their flesh."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 21

In the above verse, we read again about **the sword which comes out of the mouth of Jesus**. For more information on this symbolic term, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:16, under the **Description #8**.

When all the above take place, the prophecy of Daniel 2:44 will be fulfilled. Let us read that verse:

"And in the days of these kings, the God of Heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. And the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

Thank You, Father!

Chapter Twenty

Verse 1: ***"And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key of the abyss, and a great chain in his hand."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1

Where is the *"abyss"*?

The ***"abyss"*** is the lowest part of **hades**. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 6:8[a] and 9:1, under the subtitle, **"What kind of place is the *"abyss"*?"**) Therefore, ***"the key of the abyss"*** is actually ***"the key of hades"***.

What do the symbolic terms, *"the key of the abyss"* or *"the key of hades"*, refer to?

They refer to one's **authority** over this domain.

An important point

Please note that the ***"key of the abyss"*** **was not given** to the above angel; verse 1 tells us that **He had it**!

Who then is this *"angel"* who has *"the key of the abyss"*?

This ***"Angel"*** (not an angel in essence), is the Lord Jesus Christ.

How can we prove this statement from the Scriptures?

Please read the following scriptures carefully as we will trace this ***"Angel"*** down from the Old Testament to the New:

Numbers 22:21-35

"[21]***And Balaam rose up in the morning and saddled his ass and went with the leaders of Moab.*** [22]***And the anger of God glowed because he went. And the Angel of Jehovah set Himself in the road, as a foe against him. And he was riding on his ass, and two of his young men with him.*** [23]***And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah standing in the road, and His sword was drawn in His hand. And the ass turned out of the road and went into a field. And Balaam struck the ass, to turn it back into the road.*** [24]***And the Angel of Jehovah stood in a narrow path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side and a wall on that.*** [25]***And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah, and she pushed herself to the wall and crushed the foot of Balaam against the wall. And again he struck her.*** [26]***And again the Angel of Jehovah passed on and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn, either to the right or to the left.*** [27]***And the ass saw the Angel of Jehovah, and she lay down under Balaam. And the anger of Balaam glowed, and he struck the ass with his staff.*** [28]***And Jehovah opened the mouth of the ass, and she said to Balaam, What have I done to you that you have struck me these three times?*** [29]***And Balaam said to the ass, Because you have insulted me. If only there were a sword in my hand now I would kill you.*** [30]***And the ass said to Balaam, Am I not your ass on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Was I ever known to do so to you? And he said, No.*** [31]***And Jehovah opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of Jehovah standing in the road with His sword drawn in His hand. And he bowed and fell on his face.*** [32]***And the Angel of Jehovah said to him, Why have you struck your ass these three times? Behold, I have come out as an enemy because your way is contrary to Me.*** [33]***And the ass saw Me and turned aside before Me these three times. If she had***

not turned aside surely now I would have killed you and saved her alive. [34]***And Balaam said to the Angel of Jehovah, I have sinned, for I did not know that You stood against me in the way. Now if evil is in Your eyes, I will turn back by myself.*** [35]***And the Angel of Jehovah said to Balaam, Go with the men. But only the word that I speak to you, it you shall speak. And Balaam went with the leaders of Balak."***

Isaiah 63:8-11
"[8]***For He said, Surely they are My people, sons that do not lie, and He is their Savior.*** [9]***In all their affliction, He was not a foe; and the Angel of his Face saved them. In His love and in His pity He redeemed them. And He bore them up, and lifted them up all the days of old.*** [10]***But they rebelled, and provoked His Holy Spirit, so He was turned to be their enemy; He fought against them.*** [11]***Then His people remembered the days past of Moses and His people, saying, Where is He who brought us up from the sea with the shepherd of His flock. Where is He who put His Holy Spirit within him;"***

Malachi 3:1
"Behold, I am sending My messenger, and He will clear the way before Me. And the Lord whom you are seeking shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Angel of the Covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He comes, says Jehovah of Hosts."

Acts 7:35
"This Moses, whom they denied, saying, Who appointed you a ruler and a judge, this one God has sent as ruler

and redeemer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the Bush."

Exodus 3:2-6
"[2]And the Angel of Jehovah appeared to him in a flame of fire from the middle of a thorn bush. And he looked, and behold, the thorn bush was burning with fire, and the thorn bush was not burned up! [3]And Moses said, I will turn aside now and see this great sight, why the thorn bush is not burned up. [4]And Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, and God called to him from the midst of the thorn bush, and said, Moses! Moses! And he said, Behold me. [5]And He said, Do not come near here. Pull off your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. [6]And He said, I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he feared to look upon God."

Exodus 13:21,22
"[21]And Jehovah was going before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give light to them, to go by day and by night. [22]The pillar of cloud did not cease by day, and the pillar of fire by night, before the people."

Exodus 14:19
"And the Angel of God withdrew, the One going before the camp of Israel. And He went behind them. And the pillar of cloud withdrew from before them, and it stood behind them."

1 Corinthians 10:2-4
"[2]***And all were baptized to Moses in the cloud, and in the Sea,*** [3]***and all ate the same spiritual food.*** [4]***And all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of the spiritual rock following, and that Rock was Christ."***

Revelation 1:17,18
"[17]***And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet, as dead. And He put His right hand on me, saying to me, Do not fear. I am the First and the Last,*** [18]***and the Living One; and I became dead; and, behold, I am living forever and ever. Amen. And I have the keys to hell*** (Greek text: ***"hades"), and of death."***

From all the above scriptures we realize that the ***"Angel"*** who **has** the ***"key of the abyss"*** is the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the God of Abraham, of Isaak, of Jacob and of Moses, the Redeemer of Israel, who died and was raised from the dead for the forgiveness of the sins of all those who will believe in Him (Matthew 1:21; John 3:16; 6:40; Romans 10: 9,13)!

Verses 2,3: ***"***[2]***And he held the dragon, the ancient serpent who is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him*** [for] ***a thousand years,*** [3]***and He threw him into the abyss, and shut*** (it)***, and sealed*** (it) ***over him, so that he will not mislead the nations any longer, until the end of the thousand years; and after these, he must be let loose for a short time."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 2 and 3
The above action shows the superiority Jesus has over Satan! Unlike the created archangel Michael, who had to fight a war to cast Satan out of heaven (Revelation 12:7-9), the

uncreated Jesus, who always existed ***"in the form of God"*** (Philippians 2:6), had the power to hold him and to tie him up with a big chain! I praise Your Name Lord Jesus!

Verse 4: ***"[a]And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them, [b]and the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast neither its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; [c]and they lived and reigned with Christ*** (for) ***a thousand years."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4[a]

"[a]And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them,"

The above words are the fulfillment of the prophecies found in Daniel 7:9,22 and Matthew 19:28. Let us read these verses:

Daniel 7:9,22

"[9]I was looking until the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days sat, whose robe was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was like flames of fire, its wheels like burning fire …. [22]until the Ancient of Days came. And judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom."

Matthew 19:28

"And Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you, You who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you also will sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Explanation of verse 4[b]

"[b]and the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast neither its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand;"

Please read the explanation of Revelation 6:9.

Explanation of verse 4[c]

"[c]and they lived and reigned with Christ (for) ***a thousand years."***

In the explanation of Revelation 1:6[a], I wrote (in blue):

From the above verse, and from **1 Peter 2:4,5,9, Revelation 5:10 and 20:6,** we learn that God makes all those who believe and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, **kings** and **priests**. As kings, **they will be ruling forever** (Revelation 22:5). As priests, **they will be worshipping God and Christ** (Revelation 20:6).

Please note

From Revelation 22:5, we realize that although they will be ruling as kings with Christ for this specific period of 1000 years, their position as kings will not end there; they will reign with Him **"*to the ages of the ages*"!** Let us read that verse:

"And night will not be there; and they have no need of a lamp or a light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them. And they shall reign to the ages of the ages."

Verse 5: ***"[a]The rest of the dead did not live*** (again) ***until the end of the thousand years. [b]This is the first resurrection."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]

"[a]The rest of the dead did not live (again) ***until the end of the thousand years."***

The resurrection of all humans (except of those who make up the Church), will take place at ***"the end of the thousand years"*** when God will **judge them according to their works**. Please read verses 12 and 13 of the present chapter.

Explanation of verse 5[b]

"[b]This is the first resurrection."

A clarification

The above sentence does not apply to the statement of verse 5[a], but to verse 4; it refers to the resurrection of those who will sit on the thrones. Because the above sentence and verse 6 (please take a moment to read verse 6) are a continuation of verse 4, the words, ***"The rest of the dead did not live*** (again) ***until the end of the thousand years"***, **should be in brackets**. The title, ***"the first resurrection"***, refers to the resurrection of all those who make up the Church of Jesus only.

When will *"the first resurrection"* take place?

In the explanation of Revelation 14:9-12, under the same subtitle, I wrote (in blue):

The ***"first resurrection"*** is completed in two parts:

a) The first Person who had ***"part in the first resurrection"*** (Revelation 20:6), was the man Jesus.

b) All those who belong to Him, in other words, His Church, will have ***"part in the first resurrection"*** at His second coming.

The above statements are supported by the following scriptures:

1 Corinthians 15:20-23
"[20]But now Christ has been raised from the dead; He became the firstfruit of those having fallen asleep. [21]For since death is through man, also through a Man is a resurrection of the dead; [22]for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. [23]But each in his own order: Christ, the firstfruit; afterward those of Christ at His coming."

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17
"[14]For if we have faith that Jesus underwent death and came back again, even so those who are sleeping will come again with him by God's power. [15]For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are still living at the coming of the Lord, will not go before those who are sleeping. [16]Because the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a word of authority, with the voice of the chief angel, with the sound of a horn: and the dead in Christ will come to life first; [17]Then we who are still living will be taken up (Greek text: ***"άμα"*** [***"at the same time"***]) ***together with them into the clouds to see the Lord in the***

air: and so will we be for ever with the Lord." (BBE; author's parenthesis)

2 Thessalonians 2:1
"But we beg you, brothers, concerning the presence (or coming)**** of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering upon Him,"***

***** Greek text: ***"παρουσία"*** (parousia [presence]); please check Strong's word #G3952.

Also, in the explanation of Revelation 11:12, under the subtitle **Point 3,** I wrote (in blue):

In Revelation 20:4-6, we read:

"[4]And I saw thrones, and they sat on them. And judgment was given to them, and the souls of the ones having been beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and because of the Word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast nor its image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand. And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. [5]But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. [6]Blessed and holy is the one having part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years."

In the above verses, we observe that **those who did not worship the *"beast"* and had not received its mark,** will:

a) **Have part in the first resurrection!!** Those who have part in the first resurrection are the Church

which will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Corinthians 15:23; Revelation 20:4-6)!

b) **Reign with Christ a thousand years**!! The promise to rule as kings with Christ was given to the Church only (Revelation 1:6; 5:10; Matthew 19:28)!

Consequently, the above words of Revelation 20:4-6 prove the fact that the Church of the last days will face the ***"beast"*** with all its fury! And Revelation 14:12 says ***"Here is the patience of the saints"***.

Verse 6: ***"Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with Him*** (for) ***a thousand years."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6

In the above verse, we read about the ***"second death"***. In the explanation of Revelation 2:11[b], I wrote (in blue):

Which is "the first" and which is *"the second death"*?

In the letter to the Hebrews, chapter 9 and verse 27 we read that, ***"… it is decided for men to die once, after this there is judgment;"***

From these words, we understand that it has been decided, by God, for all men to die once. **This is the first death** and no one can escape it because we have inherited it through the sin of our ancestors, Adam and Eve. The only ones who will not experience the first death are the faithful followers of the Lord Jesus who will still be alive when He will return to receive His Church (2 Thessalonians 2:1). On that day, the saints who have died will be raised from the dead

(this resurrection is called ***"the first resurrection"*****:** Revelation 20:6), and **at the same time** (Greek ***"ἅμα"*** = at the same time [1 Thessalonians 4:16,17]), the living saints **will be changed**, so that **all together, as one body**, will meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-54). However, when we read from the book of Revelation, we learn that there is also another death that the Lord calls ***"second"***. Let us examine two scriptures which refer to the ***"second death"***:

1) ***"Blessed and holy is the one who participates in the first resurrection; the second death does not have authority over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will rule with Him for a thousand years."*** (Revelation 20:6)

2) ***"But the cowards and the unbelievers and the filthy and the murderers and the fornicators and the witches and the idolaters, and all the liars, will have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; this is the second death."*** (Revelation 21:8)

From the above scriptures, we learn that ***"the second death"*** **is the lake which is burning with fire and brimstone!** Those who believe in the Lord Jesus and who are called ***"blessed"*** (happy) and ***"holy"*** (because their sins have been washed away by the blood of the Lamb), **do not risk being cast into the lake of fire**. They will be happy to be ***"priests of God and of Christ"***; this means that they will be worshiping God **and Christ** because according to John 20:28, Jesus is ***"Lord"*** and ***"God"***, and for this reason, He deserves to be worshipped!

Another thing we learn from the previous scriptures is that the ones who will be cast into the lake of fire, i.e., into ***"the second death"***, are all those who will die in their sins.

Who are those who will die in their sins?
All those who refuse to recognize the fact that Jesus Christ is God's **only begotten** Son (John 3:16; 8:24), and that for this reason He is, undoubtedly, **God** (YHWH) **by nature** (John 1:1). **These people do not have the required knowledge and faith** (Romans 10:14) **which will lead them to pray to Him, that is, to call on His Name to be saved** (Romans 10:9,13,14).

Revelation 21:8 presents a list of sinful practices which will cause those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to have part in the lake of fire. Let us read that verse:

"But for the cowardly and unbelieving, and those having become foul, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all the lying ones, their part will be in the Lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Verses 7,8: ***"[7]And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be let loose out of his prison, [8]and he will come out to mislead the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to war, whose number is as the sand of the sea."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7
"[7]And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be let loose out of his prison,"

These words repeat the truth of verse 3. These verses are two witnesses which testify that this event will truly take place (2 Corinthians 13:1).

Explanation of verse 8

"[8]and he will come out to mislead the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to war, whose number is as the sand of the sea."

The realization of the fact that Satan will mislead so many people again at the end of the thousand years is so appalling!

What do *"Gog and Magog"* represent?
They represent Satan and all those who Satan will mislead ***"in the four corners of the earth"***, and who will become **God's enemies**. To have a better perspective, please read Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39. Here are two verses from these chapters:

Ezekiel 38:2
"Son of man, set your face against Gog, the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him."

Ezekiel 39:1
"And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, So says the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal."

Verse 9: ***"[a]And they came up on the breadth of the earth and they surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. [b]And fire came down out of Heaven, from God, and devoured them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 9[a]
"[a]And they came up on the breadth of the earth and they surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city."

What is the name of the *"beloved city"*?
The name of the ***"beloved city"*** is ***"New Jerusalem"*** or ***"Jerusalem*** (from) ***above"***. In the explanation of Revelation 3:12[d], I wrote (in blue):

The fact that Jesus will also write on their foreheads the name of ***"the New Jerusalem"*** denotes that they will be the eternal citizens of this glorified **"Metropolis"** of God which, as Paul said, ***"is the Mother of us all"*** (Galatians 4: 26; also read Hebrews 12:22 and Revelation 21:2,10).

And in the explanation of Revelation 11:2[b], I wrote (in blue):

Do we know the name of the *"holy city"*?
Yes, we do! In Revelation 21:2, John wrote:

"And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, having been prepared as a bride, having been adorned for her Husband."

Who are the citizens of the *"holy city"*?
The citizens of the ***"holy city"*** are all those who believe in the True Jesus of the Bible, who is God in essence (John 1:1) because He is God's **only begotten** --- not only created --- **Son** (John 3:16). Because they have this faith, the Bible calls them ***"overcomers"*** (1 John 5:5). And in Revelation 3:12, Jesus said,

"The one overcoming, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall not go out any more. And I will write the name of My God on him, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem which comes down out of Heaven from My God, and My new name."

The writing of the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** on those **Christian saints** will identify them as citizens of that great Metropolis (Greek for 'Mother City')! The apostle Paul is in total agreement with this statement. In Galatians 4:26, he wrote,

"but the Jerusalem from above is free, who is the mother of us all;"

Who, then, is the *"Holy City"*?
As the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** is written on those Christian saints (whether they are Jews or Gentiles), we can call them: ***"The Holy City"*!**

For more information on this subject, whether the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** is the name of a literal city or whether it is one of the names which refer to the Church of the born-again, please read the explanation of Revelation 20:9[a] and 21:2,3,9,10.

Based on the above conclusion, can we say that the truly born-again Christians who make up the Bride of Christ are the *"New Jerusalem"*?
Yes, we can! In Revelation 21:9-11, we read:

"[9]And one of the seven angels came to me, he having the seven bowls being filled with the seven last plagues, and spoke with me, saying, Come, I will show you the bride,

the wife of the Lamb. [10]***And he carried me in spirit onto a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, holy Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God,*** [11]***having the glory of God. And its light was like a very precious stone, as a jasper stone, being clear as crystal,"***

From the above verses, we realize that the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** refers to all those who make up the ***"Bride"***, ***"the wife of the Lamb"***. This understanding will help us explain chapter 21.

When will the *"New Jerusalem"* come down? When Christ returns, or after the 1000 years are ended?
The fact that ***"the beloved city"*** will be surrounded by the armies of the misled ones at the end of the 1000 years proves that it has come down **before** that time! In fact, those who make up the ***"holy city"*** will come down with Christ after they meet Him in the air so they can **reign with Him on the earth during the 1000 years** (Revelation 5: 10; 20:4-6; 1 Thessalonian 4:16,17; Jude 1:14).

Explanation of verse 9[b]
"[b]***And fire came down out of Heaven, from God, and devoured them."***

This verse is simple; it does not need an explanation.

Verse 10: ***"And the Devil, the one who misled them, was cast into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet*** (were)***. And they will be tormented day and night to the ages of the ages."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10

When were the *"beast"* and the *"false prophet"* thrown into the *"lake of fire"*?

It took place when the ***"King of kings"*** returned to make war with them. Let us read Revelation 19:19,20:

"[19]And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies being assembled to make war with the One sitting on the horse, and with His army. [20]And the beast was seized, and with this one the false prophet doing signs before it, by which he led astray those having received the mark of the beast, and those worshiping its image. The two were thrown alive into the Lake of Fire burning with brimstone."

Thank You, Jesus, for throwing Satan and his agents into the ***"lake of fire"***. Thank You for making ***"a new heaven"*** and ***"a new earth"*** (Revelation 21:1); Your saints glorify Your Name Lord!

Verse 11: ***"[a]And I saw a great white throne, and the One who was sitting on it, [b]from whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and a place was not found for them."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11[a]

"[a]And I saw a great white throne, and the One who was sitting on it,"

The ***"great white throne"*** is the throne of the **righteous** God.

Explanation of verse 11[b]

"[b]from whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and a place was not found for them."

To have a new heaven and a new earth, the old (the first) heaven and the old (the first) earth must be taken out of the way. Scriptures which mention about a new heaven and a new earth are Revelation 21:1,5, Isaiah 65:17 and 2 Peter 3:13. Let us read these verses:

Revelation 21:1,5
"[1]***And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea no longer is …*** [5]***And the One sitting on the throne said, Behold! I make all things new. And He says to me, Write, because these Words are faithful and true."***

Isaiah 65:17
"For, behold, I create new heavens and new earth. And the former things shall not be recalled, and they shall not go up on the heart."

2 Peter 3:13
"But according to His promise, we look for "new heavens and a new earth," <u>in which righteousness dwells</u>."

For more information on this subject, please read the explanation of Revelation 6:14[a].

Verses 12-14: ***"***[12]***And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. And books were opened. And another Book was opened, which is of life. And the dead were judged out of the things that were written in the books, according to their works.*** [13]***And the sea gave up the dead who were in it. And death and hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one according to their works.*** [14]***And death and hades were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 12-14

A quick summary

So far, we have learned that after the end of the thousand years and after the final rebellion, Satan will be thrown into the ***"lake of fire"***. We also learned that the ***"beast"*** and the ***"false prophet"*** had already been thrown into that terrible place since **before** the beginning of the millennium, where they will be tormented forever and ever.

From verse 11, we learned that the first (the unrighteous) ***"heaven"*** and the first (the unrighteous) ***"earth"*** fled away from the face of God because ***"place was not found for them any longer"***.

From verses 12 and 13, we learn that **all the dead will be raised up** and that they will stand before the ***"great white throne"*** of God (verse 11) to be judged according to ***"the things that were written in the books, according to their works"*****!** Those who will be raised up are not only those who are in the grave, but also all those who are in the sea (verse 13). In fact, ***"death"*** (the condition of being dead) lost all its power and ***"hades"*** (the place where the souls of the dead people go), became empty! None of the dead remained there! According to verse 14, ***"death and hades were cast into the lake of fire"*****!**

Hallelujah! Thank You, Father! Thank You, Jesus! All our enemies, even the ***"last"*** one (1 Corinthians 15:26), are thrown into the ***"lake of fire"***: **Satan**, the **beast**, the **false prophet**, **death,** and **hades!** They are all gone **forever**! Thank You, Almighty God!

Which is the *"second death"*?

Please read the explanation of verse 6 above.

What is the *"book of life"*?
The ***"book of life"*** contains the names of all those who will enjoy everlasting life (Revelation 20:12,15). Other scriptures which refer to the ***"book of life"*** are Exodus 32:31-34; Psalms 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 21:27; 22:19. Let us read these verses:

Exodus 32:31-34
"[31]***And Moses went back to Jehovah and said, Oh, this people has sinned a great sin, and they have made for themselves gods of gold.*** [32]***And now if You will, lift up their sin. And if not, I pray, blot me out from Your book which You have written.*** [33]***And Jehovah said to Moses, Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him from My book.*** [34]***And now go, lead the people to that place which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before your face. And in the day of My visitation I will visit their sin on them."***

Psalms 69:28
"Blot them out from the Book of Life; yea, let them not be written with the righteous."

Daniel 12:1
"And at that time, Michael shall stand up, the great ruler who stands for the sons of your people. And there shall be a time of distress, such as has not been from the being of a nation until that time. And at that time, your people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the Book."

Philippians 4:3
"And I also ask you, true yoke-fellow, help those who struggled along with me and with Clement in the gospel,

and the rest, fellow-workers with me, whose names are in the Book of Life."

Revelation 3:5
"The one overcoming, this one shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not at all blot his name out of the Book of Life; and I will acknowledge his name before My Father, and before His angels."

Revelation 13:8
"And all those dwelling in the earth will worship it, those of whom the names had not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb having been slain from the foundation of the world."

Revelation 21:27
"And all profaning may not at all enter into it, or any making an abomination or a lie; but only the ones having been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb."

Revelation 22:19
"And if anyone takes away from the Words of the Book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and of the things having been written in this Book."

Verse 15: ***"And if anyone was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 15
This verse is self-explanatory.

Chapter Twenty-One

Verse 1: ***"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; because the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea no longer is."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1
The above words reveal that the time has come for God's promises about ***"a new heaven"*** and ***"a new earth"*** to materialize.

Are the expressions, *"a new heaven"*, *"a new earth"* and *"the sea"*, literal or symbolic?
These expressions are symbolic. In the explanation of Revelation 6:14[a], I wrote (in blue):

Explanation of verse 14[a]
"[a]and the heaven was separated like a book which is rolled up,"

The above verse speaks of a ***"separation"*****!**

How can *"heaven"* be separated from *"heaven"*? What does the term *"heaven"* symbolize?
In Isaiah 1:2, we read in part:

"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken".

In the above verse, who are the ***"heavens"*** that must hear the word of the Lord? Is it the actual galaxies? And who is the ***"earth"*** that must do the same? Is it the actual planet earth?

In Isaiah 49:13 it says,

"Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; …"

Again, who are the ***"heavens"*** that must sing? Is it the actual galaxies? And who is the ***"earth"*** that must be joyful? Is it the actual planet earth?

The obvious answer is **"No!"** It is not the actual galaxies or the actual planet earth that must hear the word of the Lord and must sing and be joyful. These words are directed to persons: **To the angels of God in heaven and to those who claim to know Him and believe in Him on the planet earth**.

Who make up *"the heaven"* which was *"separated"*?
From Revelation 12:7-12 we learn that those who were removed or ***"cast out"*** were Satan and his angels. Let us read these verses again:

"[7]And war occurred in Heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels made war, [8]but they did not have strength, nor yet was place found for them in Heaven. [9]And the great dragon was cast out, the old serpent being called devil, and, Satan; he deceiving the whole habitable world was cast out onto the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. [10]And I heard a great voice saying in Heaven, Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our

God, and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers is thrown down, the one accusing them before our God day and night. [11]***And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the Word of their testimony. And they did not love their soul even until death.*** [12]***Because of this, be glad, the heavens and those tabernacling in them. Woe to the ones dwelling on the earth, and in the sea, because the devil came down to you having great anger, knowing that he has a little time!"***

It was this ***"heaven"*** which, according to Revelation 20:11, ***"fled away"*** from the face of God. Let us read this verse:

"And I saw a Great White Throne, and the One sitting on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled; and a place was not found for them."

Without the presence of the **unrighteous** ***"heaven"*** in heaven and without the presence of the **unrighteous** ***"sea"*** of mankind on the planet earth**,** there is going to be ***"a new heaven"*** and ***"a new earth"*** in which ***"righteousness dwells"***. This is what the apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 3:10-13. Let us read his words:

"[10]***But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with rushing sound, and having burned the elements will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be burned up.*** [11]***Then all these being about to be dissolved, of what sort ought you to be in holy behavior and godliness,*** [12]***looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God, through which the heavens having been set afire will be dissolved; and burning, the elements will melt?*** [13]***But according to His***

promise, we look for "new heavens and a new earth," in which righteousness dwells."

Decoding the symbols ***"heaven"***, ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, helps us understand Revelation 21:1 where it says,

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and the sea is no more."

To sum up:
From all the above verses, we conclude that the ***"heaven"*** which ***"was separated like a book which is rolled up"*** (a scroll), was those who comprised **the unrighteous heaven**, in other words, **Satan and his angels!** They were separated from the **righteous** heaven, in other words, from God and His angels, when they were **"cast out onto the earth"**. This is the reason John heard the great voice in heaven saying:

"… Now has come the salvation and power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brothers is thrown down, the one accusing them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:10)

For more information on the symbolic terms ***"earth"*** and ***"sea"***, please read the **entire** explanation of Revelation 1:5[c] and of Revelation 7:1-3, under the subtitle, **"The *"sea"*"**.

Old Testament scriptures which talk about ***"a new heaven"*** and ***"a new earth"*** are Isaiah 65:16,17,22-25. Let us read these verses:

"[16]***He who blesses himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth. And he who swears in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former distresses are forgotten; and because they are hidden from My eyes.*** [17]***For, behold, I create new heavens and new earth. And the former things shall not be recalled, and they shall not go up on the heart ….*** [22]***They shall not build, and another live in them; they shall not plant, and another eat. For like the days of the tree are the days of My people; and My elect shall grow old to the work of their hands.*** [23]***They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for terror. For they are the seed of the beloved ones of Jehovah, and their offspring with them.*** [24]***And it will be, before they call, I will answer. While they are speaking, then I will hear.*** [25]***The wolf and the lamb shall feed as one; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And dust is the food of the snake. They shall not do evil nor destroy in all My holy mountain, says Jehovah."***

Verses 2,3: ***"***[2]***And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven, from God, having been prepared as a bride who had been decorated for her husband.*** [3]***And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Look, the tent of God with men! And He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 2 and 3

In the explanation of Revelation 20:9[a], we concluded that the names ***"Holy City"*** and ***"New Jerusalem"*** refer to the truly born-again believers in Christ. In the present chapter, we'll present more evidence to support this conclusion.

The truly born-again believers in Christ are also known as ***"the Church"*** (Colossians 1:24), ***"the Body of Christ"*** (1 Corinthians 12:27), ***"Royal Priesthood"*** (1 Peter 2:9), ***"the Bride"*** (John 3:29; 2 Corinthians 11:2) and ***"the temple of God"*** (2 Corinthians 6:16). Names such as ***"the Body"***, ***"the Bride"*** and ***"the temple"***, are symbolic terms --- not literal; **they refer to people!** And so are the names ***"Holy City"*** and ***"New Jerusalem"*****!**

When we read verses 9 and 10 of the present chapter and we hear the angel saying to John, ***"Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb"***, and he shows him the ***"New Jerusalem"*** coming down from heaven, we realize, at once, that the term ***"New Jerusalem"*** is symbolic and that it refers to the complete group of the truly born-again believers who will return with Christ to the planet earth! Jesus will not marry buildings, but **individuals who love Him** and who had been ***"prepared as a bride who had been decorated for her husband"***. (Please compare with Revelation 19:7.)

Now let us move on to another presentation which supports the conclusion that the term ***"New Jerusalem"*** refers to the complete group of the truly born-again believers in Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 6:16, the apostle Paul said to the Corinthian Christians:

"… you are the temple of the living God, as God said that, "I will" dwell in them and I will "walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people."" (AT)

The ***"temple of God"*** is also known as the ***"tent"*** [tabernacle] ***of God"***. It refers to the first temple or ***"tent"***, which Moses was instructed to make in the desert (Hebrews 8:2, 5). For this reason, as soon as John saw the ***"New Jerusalem"*** coming down from heaven, he ***"… heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Look, the tent of God with men! And He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God."*** (Verse 3)

The above words that were spoken about the ***"tent of God"*** are exactly the same as those used by Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:16 about the ***"temple"***.

What we must remember here, is the fact that the real ***"temple"*** of God, where God dwells, is not made from literal stones, but out of truly born-again Christians who are **symbolized** by stones. Such, the apostle Peter calls ***"living stones"*** just as he calls Jesus a ***"living Stone"***. Let us read some of his words:

1 Peter 2:1-5

"[1]Then laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil words, [2]as newborn babes desire the pure soul-nourishing milk, that you may grow by it; [3]if indeed you "tasted" "that the Lord is good;" [4]to whom having drawn near, a living Stone, indeed having been rejected by men, but chosen by God, precious; [5]you also as living stones are being built a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

In Ephesians 2:19-22, the apostle Paul wrote something similar. Let us read his words:

"[19]***So, then, you are no longer strangers and tenants, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and of the family of God,*** [20]***being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone,*** [21]***in whom all the building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*** [22]***in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."***

From the above verses, we realize that as all the symbolic ***"living stones"*** together make up a spiritual ***"temple"***, in the same manner they make up a spiritual ***"City"*** in which the Lord God dwells!

From 1 Peter 2:6-9, we learn that the symbolic ***"living stones"*** are very **precious** to God and that the Lord Jesus who is the ***"elect, precious Stone"*** became ***"the Head of the Corner"*** or **the Cornerstone** of the foundation of God's building. Let us read Peter's words:

"[6]***Because of this, it is also contained in the Scripture: "Behold," I lay in Zion" an elect, "precious Stone," "a Corner-foundation;" "and the one believing in Him shall not be ashamed, never!"*** [7]***Then to you who believe belongs the preciousness. But to disobeying ones, He is the "Stone which those building rejected; this One became the Head of the Corner,"*** [8]***and a Stone-of-stumbling, and a Rock-of-offense" to the ones stumbling, being disobedient to the Word, to which they were also appointed.*** [9]***But you are "an elect race," "a royal priesthood," "a holy***

nation," "a people for possession," so that "you may openly speak of the virtues" of the One who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;"

The above realization helps us understand the brilliant appearance, the great size, and the preciousness of the ***"New Jerusalem"*** which is built with all those **precious *"living"* stones**.

Verse 4: ***"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither mourning, nor outcry, nor will there be pain any longer because the first*** (things) ***passed away."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 4

Verse 4 presents more things which God will ***"make new"***. The removal of tears, of death, of mourning, of outcry, and of pain, will be something wonderful on our planet! Thank You, Jesus!

The words of verse 4 are the fulfillment of the following prophecies:

1 Corinthians 15:26
"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Isaiah 25:8
"He will swallow up death in victory! And the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from all faces. And He shall reprove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for Jehovah has spoken."

Isaiah 65:19
"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."

Verse 5: ***"[a]And the One who sits on the throne said: Look! I make all things new. [b]And He says to me: Write, because these words are faithful and true."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5[a]
"[a]And the One who sits on the throne said: Look! I make all things new."

God has already started making ***"new things"***. The apostle Paul agrees with this statement. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, he wrote:

"So that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!"

Explanation of verse 5[b]
"[b]And He says to me: Write, because these words are faithful and true."

The above words reassure the reader that God has decided to make all things new; and He will! That is His promise!

Verse 6: ***"[a]And He said to me, 'It is done!' [b]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. [c]To the one who thirsts I will give from the fountain of the water of life for free."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]

"[a]And He said to me, 'It is done!'"

'It is done!' In other words, **"It is finished!"** This is the end of the revelation that God the Father gave to Jesus who, in turn, gave it to John through His angel (Revelation 1:1)! What a sensation! What a journey that was! But there is no more! From now on, to the end of chapter 22, John is presented with a few final comments. These comments consist of a few directions, a reminder of who Jesus is and of His promises to those who believe in Him, a vision of the precious ***"New Jerusalem"***, who will be part of it (and who will not), and His promise to return quickly! Therefore, let us continue our study to hear all these precious things.

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"[b]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End."

Please read the explanation of Revelation 1:8[a].

Explanation of verse 6[c]

"[c]To the one who thirsts I will give from the fountain of the water of life for free."

The above promise of the Lord reminds us of His words in John 7:37-39. There, He said,

"[37]And in the last day of the great feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. [38]The one believing into Me, as the Scripture said, Out of his belly will flow rivers of living water. [39]But He said this concerning the Spirit, whom the ones believ-

ing into Him were about to receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

Verse 7: ***"The conqueror will inherit all things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

Who is the *"conqueror"* (overcomer)**?**

In 1 John 5:5, the apostle John gave us the answer. He wrote,

"Who is the one overcoming the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

What does it mean to believe that *"Jesus is the Son of God"*?

In the explanation of Revelation 4:4, I wrote (in blue):

It means to know from the Scriptures and to believe that Jesus is **the only begotten --- not the only created --- Son of God** (John 3:16). The title ***"Son of God"*** **necessitates Deity** (John 5:18). Therefore, the one who believes that Jesus is God's only begotten Son must, at once, believe that Jesus is **God by nature** (John 1:1,14)**! This faith overcomes the world** (1 John 5:5) **and generates in the believer everlasting life** (John 20:31). Those of the world who do not believe that Jesus is the Son of the True God will be convicted for sin (John 16:8,9) and **they will die in their sins** (John 8:24).

From the above we realize that one can become a son or a daughter of God only if he/she believes that Jesus is the only begotten --- not the only created --- Son of God, which denotes that Jesus is God in essence.

Verse 8: ***"But for the cowards and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all those who lie, their part*** (will be) ***in the lake which is burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 8

This verse reminds us of the words of the apostle Paul. Let us read his words from 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 5: 19-21 and 1 Timothy 1:9-13:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

"[9]Or do you not know that unjust ones will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be led astray, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor male prostitutes, nor homosexuals, [10]nor thieves, nor covetous ones, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor plunderers shall inherit the kingdom of God. [11]And some of you were these things, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in the Spirit of our God."

Galatians 5:19-21

"[19]Now the works of the flesh are clearly revealed, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lustfulness, [20]idolatry, sorcery, enmities, fightings, jealousies, angers, rivalries, divisions, heresies, [21]envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and things like these; of which I tell you beforehand, as I also said before, that the ones practicing such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

1 Timothy 1:9-13

"[9]knowing this, that Law is not laid down for a righteous one, but for lawless and undisciplined ones, for ungodly

and sinful ones, for unholy and profane ones, for slayers of fathers and slayers of mothers, for murderers, [10]***for fornicators, for homosexuals, for slave-traders, for liars, for perjurers, and if any other thing opposes sound doctrine,*** [11]***according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I was entrusted.*** [12]***And I have thanks to Him empowering me, our Lord Jesus Christ, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,*** [13]***the one who before was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and insolent; but I received mercy, because being ignorant I did it in unbelief."***

Who does the word *"cowards"* refer to?
The word ***"cowards"*** refers to those who are ashamed to confess Jesus (Marc 8:38; Luke 9:26)!

Verses 9,10: ***"***[9]***And one of the seven angels who have the seven bowls, those which are filled with the seven last plagues, came to me and spoke with me, saying, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.'*** [10]***And he brought me in*** (the) ***spirit on a great and high mountain, and he showed me the great city, holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 9 and 10
When we combine the words of the above verse with the words of verses 2 and 3, we realize that the ***"holy city"*** = the ***"New Jerusalem"*** = the ***"tabernacle*** (the temple) ***of God"*** = the ***"bride"*** = the ***"wife of the Lamb"*** = the ***"great city"*** = the ***"holy Jerusalem"***!!! Therefore, the definition ***"New Jerusalem"*** does not refer to buildings but to the Church of the born-again individuals who make up the ***"Bride"***, the ***"Wife of the Lamb"*** and the ***"Temple of***

God"!!! It refers to those who have the name ***"New Jerusalem"*** written on them (Revelation 3:12).

Verse 11: ***"and she had the glory of God; and the source of her light*** (was) ***like a very precious stone, as a jasper stone, which was as bright as crystal,"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 11

How beautiful and bright this symbolic ***"Holy City"*** (verse 2) is! ***"She"*** radiates ***"the glory of God"*** because He dwells in ***"her"*** (verse 3; John 14:23; Revelation 3:20)! And God, ***"the source of her light"*** (Greek text: ***"φωστήρ"*** [fosteer]) was ***"like a very precious stone, as a jasper stone"***! John had seen something similar before. In Revelation 4:2,3, he wrote:

"[2]And at once I became in spirit. And, behold, a throne was set in Heaven, and One sitting on the throne. [3]And the One sitting was in appearance like a jasper stone …."

Verses 12,13: ***"[12]she had a great and high wall; she had twelve gates, and on the gates twelve angels and names that had been written, which are*** (the names) ***of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. [13]From the east, three gates, from the north, three gates, and from the south, three gates, and from the west, three gates."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 12 and 13

The above description of the wall and of the gates of the symbolic ***"New Jerusalem"*** reminds us that of the **old Jerusalem**. Please read Ezekiel chapter 48.

The fact that the names of the 12 tribes of Israel were written on the gates, shows that the promise to enter the city,

which would be built by God, had been given to their patriarchs first. This statement is supported by Hebrews 11:8-10. Let us read these verses:

"[8]Having been called out by faith, Abraham obeyed to go forth to a place which he was going to receive for an inheritance; and he went out not understanding where he went. [9]By faith he resided as a foreigner in a land of promise, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the joint-heirs of the same promise; [10]for he looked forward to a city having the foundations of which the builder and maker is God."

Who do the 12 angels represent?
The 12 angels represent the 12 patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel who received the promises (Romans 9:4). For more information on this subject, please read the explanation of Revelation 1:14-6, under the subtitle **Description #7**, and the explanation of Revelation 2:1[b] and 12:1[c].

Does it mean that each one of them is a *"gate"* by which one can enter that *"City"* of God?
Absolutely not! There is only one ***"Gate"*** by which one can enter. The name of that ***"Door"*** is Jesus! This statement is supported by John 10:7-9. Let us read these verses:

"[7]Then Jesus again said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you that I am the door of the sheep. [8]All who came before Me are thieves and plunderers, but the sheep did not hear them. [9]I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in, and will go out, and will find pasture."

What do the words, *"From the east, three gates, from the north, three gates, and from the south, three gates, and from the west, three gates"*, mean?
They mean that people from all geographical locations, out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues, have easy access to God who dwells in her, because they believe in Christ (John 14:6).

Verse 14: ***"And the wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them twelve names*** (those) ***of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 14
Please read the explanation of verses 2 and 3. On this subject it is very important to remember the words of the apostle Paul from Ephesians 2:19-22. Let us read these verses again:

"[19]***So, then, you are no longer strangers and tenants, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and of the family of God,*** [20]***being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone,*** [21]***in whom all the building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*** [22]***in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."***

Verses 15-18: ***"***[15]***And the one who was speaking with me had a golden reed, in order to measure the city, and her gates, and her wall.*** [16]***And the city lays square and her length*** (is) ***as much as the width. And he measured the city with the reed at twelve thousand stadia; her length and width and height are equal.*** [17]***And he measured her wall, one hundred and forty-four cubits,*** (according to the) ***measure of a man, which is of an angel.*** [18]***And the inner***

structure of her wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like pure glass." (AT)

Explanation of verses 15-18

The dimensions of the ***"New Jerusalem"*** are awe inspiring! Truly, it is rather hard to conceive her greatness! Approximately 2,200 kilometers on each side and the same in height! If we compare it to the stratosphere, which is only between 10-50 kilometers high, that ***"City"*** is 44 times higher than the stratosphere!

When we consider the above facts, we realize, once more, that the ***"New Jerusalem"*** is a symbolic ***"City"***. Its incredible height alone points to her greatness! The saved individuals who will make up that symbolic ***"City"*** will be ***"a great crowd which no one was able to number them, out of every nation, even tribes and peoples and tongues"*** (Revelation 7:9). Thank You, Jesus, for saving such a great number of precious souls throughout the Christian era!

Verses 19-21: ***"***[19]***And the foundation stones of the wall of the city had been adorned with every precious stone: The first foundation stone, jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald;*** [20]***the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, hyacinth; the twelfth, amethyst.*** [21]***And the twelve gates*** (were) ***twelve pearls; each one of the gates was*** (made out) ***of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 19-21

Who do the twelve foundation stones represent?

Verse 14 is very clear: The ***"twelve foundation stones"*** represent the twelve apostles. Also, please read the explanation of verses 2 and 3.

God, who is ***"the Builder and Maker"*** of this spiritual ***"City"*** (Hebrews 11:10), decorated the twelve foundation stones with precious stones because they themselves are very precious in His eyes. In fact, the entire ***"City"***, its foundations, the walls, the gates, the buildings and even the streets, are very precious in the eyes of God! In other words, when ***"the bride, the wife of the Lamb"*** (verse 9) will be ***"conformed to the image of His Son"*** (Romans 8:29), she will be very-very beautiful! This will come to pass because they are ***"His workmanship"*** (Ephesians 2: 10)!

Verse 22: ***"And I saw no temple in her, because the Lord God Almighty is her temple, and the Lamb."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 22
In the explanation of Revelation 7:15, I wrote (in blue):

"For this reason, they are before the throne of God, and worship Him day and night in His temple. And the One who sits on the throne will set His tent on them."

The above verse is so mysterious! Please allow me to explain:

From Revelation 16:17 we learn that **the throne room of God is His temple**, where God dwells in heaven. Let us read this verse:

"And the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a great voice came from the throne from the temple of Heaven, saying, It has happened!"

From Revelation 21:22 we observe that **the Lord God and the Lamb are the temple** of the holy Jerusalem. Let us read that verse:

"And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty is its temple, and the Lamb".

From 2 Corinthians 6:16 we realize that **the believers in Jesus on earth are the temple of God and that He dwells in them**. Let us read this verse:

"And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are a temple of the living God, even as God said, "I will" dwell in them and "walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."" (LITV)

From Revelation 7:15 we see that **God, who sits on the throne, will spread His tabernacle** (His temple: Exodus 40:21,22) **over them**. Let us read that verse again:

"Because of this they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His sanctuary. And He sitting on the throne will spread His tabernacle over them."

All the above verses reveal a kind **of unity** that is hard to conceive:

1. **They are His temple** before they go to heaven.

2. **They are in His temple** when they are in heaven.

3. **God and the Lamb are the temple** of the New Jerusalem. And,

4. **God spreads His tent** (His temple) **over them**.

All the above verses remind me the words of Jesus from John 17:21-23. There, the Lord spoke of a glorious **unity**. He said to His Father:

"[21]that all may be one, as You are in Me, Father, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. [22]And I have given them the glory which You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are One: [23]I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected in one; and that the world may know that You sent Me and loved them, even as You loved Me."

I thank You Lord Jesus **for the glory** You have given to all those who believe in You and love You! **And that glory is the reality that You are in them as the Father is in You. Thank You for this glorious unity!** This unity with God will perfect them and make them be one as You and the Father are One! And I thank You Father for loving those who believe in Your only begotten Son **as much as You love Him!** Thank You for this honor and glory!

Truly, when I consider the foregoing thoughts, I appreciate more the words of Paul from 1 Corinthians 2:9. There, he wrote:

"according as it has been written, "Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard," nor has it risen up into the heart of

man, the things which God has prepared for those that love Him."

Verse 23: ***"And the city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, in order to shine in her, because the glory of God enlightened her, and her lamp*** (is) ***the Lamb."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 23

The above words go hand in hand with the words of verse 11. Also, the prophet Isaiah said something similar. Let us read his words:

Isaiah 60:19,20

"[19]The sun shall not still be your light by day, or the brightness of the moon give you light; but Jehovah shall be for everlasting light to you, and your God for your beauty. [20]Your sun shall not go in any more, and your moon shall not be removed; for Jehovah will become your everlasting light; and the days of your mourning shall end."

Verse 24: ***"And the nations will walk by her light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor to her."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 24

The nations, which once did not pay attention to her, did not honor her, despised her, looked down upon her and persecuted her, will, at that time, walk by her light, which, actually, will be the light of God who dwells in her midst, and they will honor her! Again, the prophet Isaiah had said something similar. Let us read his words from Isaiah 60:1-3,14:

"[1]Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of Jehovah has risen on you! [2]For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples. But Jehovah shall rise on you, and His glory shall be seen on you. [3]And nations shall walk to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawning …. [14]Also the sons of ones afflicting you shall come bowing to you. And all who despised you shall fall at the soles of your feet. And they shall call you, The City of Jehovah, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

Verses 25,26: ***"[25]And her gates will not at all be closed during the day, because there will be no night there. [26]And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 25 and 26

Let us read Isaiah 60:11:

"So your gates shall be always open; they shall not be shut day or night, so that men may bring to you the force of nations, and that their kings may be led."

Verse 27: ***"[a]And any common*** (defiling) ***thing will not at all enter into her, neither will anyone who makes*** (causes) ***an abomination and a lie, [b]but only those who have been written in the book of life of the Lamb."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 27[a]

"[a]And any common (defiling) ***thing will not at all enter into her, neither will anyone who makes*** (causes) ***an abomination and a lie,"***

This verse is like verse 8. Please read the explanation of that verse. And, again, Isaiah wrote something similar. Let us read Isaiah 60:21:

"And your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the earth forever, a branch of My planting, a work of My hands, to beautify Myself."

Explanation of verse 27[b]

"[b]but only those who have been written in the book of life of the Lamb."

Please read the explanation of Revelation 20:12.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Verse 1: ***"[a]And he showed me a clear river of water of life, which was bright like crystal, [b]coming forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 1[a]
"[a]And he showed me a clear river of water of life, which was bright like crystal,"

What does this *"river of water of life"* represent?
In the explanation of Revelation 7:17[b], I wrote (in blue):

In order to identify the ***"springs"*** of waters of life, first we must understand the ***"waters of life"***.

Please note: The Greek word **"υδάτων"** (ee-that-on), plural for ***"waters"***, refers to a large volume of water --- not to many different types of water. Therefore, the following question is correct:

What does the *"water of life"* symbolize?
In John 4:10-14 we read:

"Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God, and who is the One saying to you, Give Me to drink, you would have asked Him, and He would give you living water. The woman said to Him, Sir, You have no vessel,

and the well is deep. From where then do You have living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and he and his sons and his livestock drank out of it? Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone drinking of this water will thirst again; but whoever may drink of the water which I will give him will not thirst, never! But the water which I will give to him will become a fountain of water in him, springing up into everlasting life."

In John 7:38,39, Jesus said:

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified." (KJV)

From the above verses, we learn that the symbolic term ***"living water"*** refers to **the Holy Spirit!** This realization helps us understand Revelation 22:1. There it says,

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, bright as crystal, coming forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Explanation of verse 1[b]

"[b]coming forth out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

A peculiar singular case

In the above verse, we notice that the word ***"throne"*** is found in the singular case; it does not say **"thrones"**.

Shouldn't it have been in the plural case since it refers to *"God"* and to the *"Lamb"*?
If the Father and the Son were two different Gods, then yes, the above verse would have said, ***"out of the thrones of God and of the Lamb"***. However, the True Godhead of the Bible is comprised of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. As Godhood is theirs, they share all things, including the throne. Other things they share are: The Name, the blessing, the honor, the glory, the might and the worship. This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Matthew 28:19
"Then having gone, disciple all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"

In the above verse, we notice this peculiar singular case again. It does not say ***"names"***!

Revelation 5:13
"And every creature which is in Heaven, and in the earth, and underneath the earth, and the things that are on the sea, and the things in all of them, I heard saying: To Him sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever."

From the above verse, we see, one more time, that Jesus is One of the True Godhead **YHWH**. If He were not, God would not share His ***"glory"*** with Him because, in Isaiah 42:8, He said:

"I am Jehovah; that is My name; and I will not give My glory to another, …."

Revelation 20:6
"Blessed and holy is the one having part in the first resurrection. The second death has no authority over these, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him a thousand years."

From the above verse, we realize, once more, that Jesus is One of the True Godhead of the Bible. Please keep in mind that the function of the priests of God is to worship God. And yet, in the above verse, we observe that **the priests of God are <u>also priests of Christ</u>!** I praise You Jesus!

Verse 2: ***"In the midst of its square and of the river, from here and from there, there was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 2
Is the *"tree of life"* a literal tree or is it symbolic?
It is both, literal and symbolic.

How can it be literal?
From Genesis 2:9, we learn that among the trees which God created, there was one that was called ***"the tree of life"***. Let us read that verse:

Genesis 2:9
"And out of the ground Jehovah God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. The Tree of Life was also in the middle of the garden; …."

After Adam and Eve disobeyed God, He sent them away from the garden **so that they will not eat from the *"tree of***

life"* and live forever**. In fact, God placed His cherubs ***"to guard the way of the Tree of Life." Let us read these verses:

Genesis 3:22-24
" [22]***And Jehovah God said, Behold! The man has become as one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand and also take from the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever,*** [23]***Jehovah God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground out of which he was taken.*** [24]***And He drove the man out. And He lodged the cherubs at the east of the Garden of Eden, and the flaming sword whirling around to guard the way of the Tree of Life."***

From the above verses, we realize that God had created **a literal tree** which He called ***"the tree of life"***.

When all things become new, will God create the *"tree of life"* again?
My answer is **"Yes!"** The reason I give this answer is the fact that Acts 3:21 says that, in the future, there will be a ***"restoration of all things"***! And ***"all"*** means ***"all"***! Let us read that verse:

Acts 3:21
"whom Heaven truly needs to receive until the times of restoration of all things, of which God spoke through the mouth of all His holy prophets from the age past."

How can it be symbolic?
As a symbol, the ***"tree of life"*** refers to the One who is the eternal life (John 11:25) and who gives everlasting life to all those who believe and confess with their mouth that He

is the ***"Lord"*** of Romans 10:9,13 whose Name they must call upon in order to be saved.

In the explanation of Revelation 2:7[b], I wrote (in blue):

What did Jesus mean when He said, *"To the conqueror, I will give to him to eat from the tree of life."*?
As the ***"conqueror"*** is the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, the words, ***"I will give to him to eat from the tree of life, which is at the centre of the paradise of God",*** repeat **the promise of the gospel of salvation** which Jesus preached in John 3:16. There it says that whosoever believes in **God's only-begotten** (not created) **Son, has everlasting life.** And the fact that He refers to ***"the tree of life which is at the centre of paradise"***, reminds us of Genesis 2:9 and 3:22. Thus, ***"the tree of life"***, simply, represents Jesus who is **the Eternal Life** and who will give everlasting life to all those who will believe in Him. And let us not forget **that He has the power** to give eternal life to those who believe in Him because, according to 1 John 5:20, **He is the True God and the Eternal Life**.

The apostle John agrees with the above witness because he wrote, ***"The one who has the Son, has life; the one who does not have the Son of God, does not have life"*** (1 John 5:12).

Please note: The reader should always remember that the biblical title **"Son of God"**, necessitates **Deity** (John 5:18) and that this was the very reason they crucified Jesus for blasphemy (Matthew 26:63-66). Thus, the biblical gospel of salvation **demands that one believes that Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God**, a title that reveals that **He is God by nature,** that His substance is the same as His Fa-

ther's**, in order to have everlasting life** or, in other words, to be able ***"to eat from the tree of life"*****!**

What do the words, *"producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations"* mean?
They mean that this ***"tree"*** which will be in the middle of the square of the ***"City"*** of God, is not like the other trees which produce fruit only once a year. The fact that this symbolic ***"tree"*** will be producing twelve times a year signifies that in the ***"City"*** of God, there is going to be **abundance of life!** In John 10:10, the Lord Jesus said, ***"The thief does not come except that he may steal, and kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and may have it abundantly."***

From all the above, we realize that since the symbolic ***"tree of life"*** produces symbolic ***"fruit"*** which refers to eternal life and symbolic ***"leaves"*** which are for the healing of the nations, then, this tree is also a symbol of **life and healing**!

How will the nations be healed?
In the explanation of Revelation 21:24, I wrote (in blue):

The nations, who once did not pay attention to her, did not honor her, despised her, and persecuted her, will, at that time, walk by her light, which, actually, will be the light of God who dwells in her midst, and they will honor her!

As the nations will walk under the guidance of the Bride of Christ, they will be healed! And, oh my Lord, do they ever need healing!

Old Testament scriptures which are similar to the content of verses 1 and 2 of the present chapter are Ezekiel 47:1-12. Here, let us read verse 12:

"And all trees for food shall go up by the torrent, on its lip on this side and on that. Its leaf shall not fade, and its fruit shall not fail; it will bear by its months, because its waters come out from the sanctuary. And its fruit shall be for food, and its leaf for healing."

Verses 3,4: ***"[3]And there will be no curse there any longer. And the throne of God and the Lamb will be in her, and His slaves will worship Him. [4]And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 3 and 4

When God will make all things new and He and the Lamb will dwell with men, ***"there will be no curse there any longer"***. At that time, His servants who will worship Him will actually ***"see His face"*** and ***"His Name will be on their foreheads"*** as a sign that they are His people and ***"overcomers"***. (Please read the explanation of Revelation 14:1[b] and of Revelation 3:12[d].)

The promise to ***"see His face"*** is not something new. The Lord Jesus, the apostle Paul and the apostle John had talked about it. Let us read their words:

In Matthew 5:8, Jesus said,

"Blessed are the pure in heart! For they shall see God."

In 1 Corinthians 13:12, Paul wrote,

"For now we see through a mirror in dimness, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I will fully know even as I also was fully known."

In 1 John 3:2, John said,

"Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it was not yet revealed what we shall be. But we know that if He is revealed, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is."

Verse 5: ***"And there will be no night there; and they have no need of a lamp or of the light of the sun, because the Lord God illuminates them. And they will reign to the ages of the ages."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 5

This verse is simple. It does not need an explanation. It is similar to Revelation 21:23.

Verse 6: ***"[a]And he said to me; these words are faithful and true; [b]and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His slaves what must happen quickly."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 6[a]

"[a]And he said to me; these words are faithful and true;"

The above words are simple; they are similar to Revelation 19:9 and 21:5.

Explanation of verse 6[b]

"[b]and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His slaves what must happen quickly."

The words, ***"the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel"*** prove, one more time, that **Jesus is God**!

How so?
Please pay close attention to the following verses:

In Revelation 1:1, we read:

"Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to show His slaves the **[things]** ***which must soon take place, and He signified by sending His angel to His slave John,"*** (AT)

In the above verse, we observe that it was Jesus who sent His angel to John; however, verse 6[b] says that it was the ***"the Lord God of the holy prophets"*** who sent His angel! Hence, Jesus is ***"the Lord God of the holy prophets"***!

Is there another scripture that supports that teaching?
Yes, there is! In Revelation 22:16, we read the testimony of Jesus Himself. He said,

"I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches. I am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star."

How can there be a connection between Jesus and the Old Testament prophets?
The apostle Peter said that it was ***"the Spirit of Christ"*** that was working in the prophets! Let us read his words:

1 Peter 1:10,11
"[10]***About which salvation the prophets sought out and searched out, prophesying concerning the grace for you,***

[11]***searching for what, or what sort of time the Spirit of Christ made clear within them; testifying beforehand of the sufferings belonging to Christ, and the glories after these."***

With thεse words, Peter identified ***"the Spirit of Christ"*** with ***"the Holy Spirit"*** because, in 2 Peter 1:21, he wrote that the prophecies were given to the prophets ***"by the Holy Spirit"***! Let us read his words:

"for prophecy was not at any time borne by the will of man, but being borne along by the Holy Spirit, holy men of God spoke."

From all the above we conclude, one more time, that Jesus is God. Praise His Name!

Verse 7: ***"and look, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 7

This verse is simple. It does not need an explanation. Similar verses are:

Revelation 3:11
"Behold, I am coming quickly. Hold what you have that no one take your crown."

Revelation 22:12
"And, behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to each as his work is."

Revelation 22:20
"The One testifying these things says, Yes, I am coming quickly. Amen. Yes, come, Lord Jesus!"

Verses 8,9: ***"[8]And I, John, am the one who saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. [9]And he says to me, Look, don't! Because I am your fellow-slave, and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 8 and 9
These verses are identical to Revelation 19:10[a]. It is very important to read the explanation of that verse.

Verse 10: ***"And he says to me, Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 10
In Daniel 8:26, Daniel was told, ***"… seal up the vision, because it will be for many days."***

Here, the command is, ***"Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near."***

From the above comparison, we realize that the time is near indeed!

Verses 11,12: ***"[11]The one who is unjust, let him do unjust acts still; and the one who is filthy, let him be filthy still; and the one who is righteous, let him do righteous acts still; and the one who is holy, let him be holy still. [12]Look,***

I am coming quickly, and My wage is with Me, to give to each person as his work will be." (AT)

Explanation of verses 11 and 12

In verse 11, the words of the Lord Jesus point towards a personal responsibility and a freedom of choice. Let every man be what he/she wishes to be. When Jesus returns, He will pay each person according to his/her work (verse12).

A similar Old Testament verse is Isaiah 40:10. There, it says:

"Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come with strength, and His arm rules for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His wage before Him."

Verse 13: ***"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 13

In the explanation of Revelation 1:8[a], I wrote (in blue):

"I Am the Alpha and the Omega, (the) ***beginning and*** (the) ***end, says the Lord,"***

Here, the Speaker introduces Himself as ***"the Alpha and the Omega,*** (the) ***beginning and*** (the) ***end"***. As Alpha (A) is the first letter of the Greek Alphabet and Omega (Ω) is the last, the foregoing title reveals that the Lord God, the Godhead YHWH, is ***"the First and the Last"*** (Isaiah 41:4; 44:6).

Titles such as ***"the Alpha and the Omega", "the Beginning and the End"*** and ***"the First and the Last"*** are unique

because it is impossible to have two who are ***"the Alpha and the Omega"***, ***"the Beginning and the End"*** and ***"the First and the Last"***.

Is Jesus *"the Alpha and the Omega"*, *"the Beginning and the End"* and *"the First and the Last"*?
Yes, He is! Jesus claims these **unique and exclusive titles, which necessitate Deity, for Himself!** In Revelation 1:17 He said, ***"I am the First and the Last"*** and in Revelation 22:12-16 He said, ***"…[13]I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last … [16]I Jesus …."*** Therefore, it is absolutely clear that Jesus is One of the True Godhead **YHWH**!

Verses 14,15: ***"[14]Blessed are those who do His commandments, so that they will have authority on the tree of life, and to enter through the gates into the city. [15]But outside are the dogs and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and makes*** (practices) ***a lie."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 14 and 15
In verse14, the Lord Jesus tells us that those who keep His commandments will enter the ***"City"*** and they will enjoy everlasting life, while in verse 15, He tells us who will not! Please read the explanation of Revelation 21:8.

Do the words, *"Blessed are those who do His commandments"*, mean that the truly born-again Christians are obligated to keep the Old Testament Law?
No, they do not mean that! Please read the explanation of Revelation 12:17.

Verse 16: ***"[a]I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches. [b]I am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 16[a]

"[a]I, Jesus, sent My angel to testify these things to you in the churches."

Please read the explanation of verse 6[b].

Explanation of verse 16[b]

"[b]I am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright and morning Star."

Here, the Lord Jesus introduces Himself as ***"the Root and Offspring of David";*** (also, please read Revelation 5:5,6). This statement of the Lord is very important because, according to the prophecies, the True Messiah had to come from a specific lineage: He had to be a descendant of King David, **the son of Jesse**. And Jesus fulfilled this specific requirement! This statement is supported by the following scriptures:

Isaiah 11:1,2
"[1]And a Shoot goes out from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch will bear fruit out of his roots. [2]And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest on Him; He will have the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and power, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah."

Isaiah 11:10
"And it shall be in that day, the Root of Jesse stands as a banner of peoples; nations shall seek to Him; and His resting place shall be glory."

Matthew 1:6,16
"and Jesse fathered David the king. And David the king fathered Solomon out of her who had been the wife of Uriah … and Jacob fathered Joseph, the husband to be of Mary, out of whom Jesus was born, the One called Christ."

For a complete view of the genealogy of Christ, please read Matthew 1:1-16. Also, please read the words of Jesus from Mark 12:35-37.

How could the Messiah be called *"the Root of David"* and *"the Root of Jesse"* since He was their descendant?
Because Jesus pre-existed His humanity! He was the Eternal Word of God by whom God created all things, visible and invisible (Psalms 33:6; John 1:1-3,14), and He became flesh to save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). For this reason, He was in existence **before** David, **before** Jesse, and **before** Abraham (John 8:58).

Verse 17: ***"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And the one who hears, let him say, Come! And let the one who thirsts come, and the one who wants to receive the water of life for free."*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 17

In the above verse, we hear a double invitation: We hear the Spirit and the Bride saying to Jesus, ***"Come"***; and we hear Jesus saying to those who ***"thirst"*** and wish to have everlasting life and to be filed with the Holy Spirit, ***"come"***! This invitation is the same with the one Jesus extended to those who ***"thirst"*** in John 7:37-42. Let us read these verses:

"[37]***And in the last day of the great feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.*** [38]***The one believing into Me, as the Scripture said, Out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.*** [39]***But He said this concerning the Spirit, whom the ones believing into Him were about to receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*** [40]***Then hearing the Word, many of the crowd said, This is truly the Prophet.*** [41]***Others said, This is the Christ. But others said, No! For does the Christ come out of Galilee?*** [42]***Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"***

Verses 18,19: ***"***[18]***I bear testimony to all those who hear the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will place upon him the plagues which have been written in this book.*** [19]***And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life, and from the holy city, and from the things which have been written in this book."*** (AT)

Explanation of verses 18 and 19

The warning is strong: Do not add anything and do not take away anything from the book of this prophecy because the consequences will be horrendous! Those who love and appreciate the fact that God gave His beautiful family book to Jesus, **to show His children** the ***"things which must occur quickly"*** (Revelation 1:1), will not change it!

Verse 20: ***"The One who testifies these things says: Yes, I am coming quickly. Amen, yes, come, Lord Jesus!"*** (AT)

Explanation of verse 20

Jesus promises that **He will come quickly!** And John, and all the truly born-again Christians say, ***"Amen, yes, come, Lord Jesus!"***

Verse 21: **"**[May] ***the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints. Amen."*** (AT)