

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
BIBLE  
PROPHECY

*Focusing on the seventh world kingdom*

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## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

Focusing on the seventh world kingdom

Victor Hall

with David Falk and David Baker

September 2014

Scriptures are quoted from NASB, NKJV, KJV and LITV. Where italicised emphasis is used in Scripture references, this has been added and does not appear in the original translations.

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# Preface

God is the Creator of heaven and earth. He has created this present heavens and earth as the context for the fulfilment of His purpose. The purpose of God is to bring many sons to glory.<sup>1</sup> This has been His purpose from before the foundation of the world. He predestined the sons of men to become the sons of God with the glory of an eternal inheritance.<sup>2</sup> This present heavens and earth will pass away, but God has established an eternal kingdom which will endure into the new heavens and new earth.

## *The nations*

When God created Adam, He placed him in the garden of Eden and gave him dominion over the natural creation. He commanded him to be 'fruitful and multiply and fill the earth'.<sup>3</sup> It is apparent from this command that the descendants of Adam would become a multitude of nations in the earth. The appointed times and the boundaries of each nation were determined by God. He appointed when and where each nation would be placed, grow, and come to fullness.<sup>4</sup> God gave unique talents and capacities to each nation. He gave resources to each nation to steward on His behalf according to the 'predetermined boundaries of their habitation'.

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1 Heb 2:10

2 Rom 8:19

3 Gen 1:28

4 Act 17:26

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

As the helper to the Son of God, Adam was given the mandate of being the head of the nations. He was the father of the nations and was to be God's firstborn over the nations. God intended that this role would continue in Cain as Adam's firstborn. He was to be the king and the priest in the land of Eden. God intended Cain to bring forth a firstborn nation which would possess this mandate of kingship and priesthood in the midst of the whole earth. He intended that all the nations of the earth would live within their appointed boundaries and submit to this firstborn nation. God expected the kings of the earth to steward the resources they had received from Him, generate increase, and then bring their glory and honour into His firstborn nation as the head of the kingdom of God on earth.

### *Satan*

We recall that Satan was created as an anointed cherub who was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. His name was Lucifer and he was the priest of the angelic temple. He was the leader of the angelic host who were to become a servant order to the heirs of salvation. However, he corrupted his mandate and coveted the mandate which belonged to the Son of God, and also the predestination which belongs to man. He was corrupted by the abundance of his trading and cast as profane from heaven.<sup>5</sup> From that time forward, he has desired to corrupt the plan of God and usurp the authority of the Son of God and His administration in the world.

We know that Satan deceived Eve in the garden of Eden by proposing *another way*. He is called the 'serpent of old' for this reason. He led her to believe that there was an alternative to God's plan which would lead to life, knowing that any alternative would only lead to death. For this reason, Jesus called Satan the 'father of lies' and a 'murderer from the beginning'.<sup>6</sup>

### *Babylon*

Following the flood, God blessed Noah and re-established the mandate of the nations to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.<sup>7</sup> However, again, Satan deceived the nations into believing that there was *an alternative* to the order of the nations established by God. The fathers of the nations established the administration of Babylon *as an alternative* to the administration of the firstborn, which should have been the head over the nations and the centre of the kingdom of God on the earth. Babylon is a centralised administration which has usurped the mandate of the

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5 Eze 28:13-16

6 Joh 8:44

7 Gen 9:1

firstborn over the nations and kings of the earth. It was established by the nations as a protection against anarchy and the scattering of the nations of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

Even though the Lord scattered the people, the administration of Babylon has remained over the nations of the world since that time. It was formalised by king Nebuchadnezzar when he became the king of the nation of Babylon, and the 'king of kings' as the head of the administration of Babylon.<sup>9</sup> Nebuchadnezzar established the administration of Babylon over the nations that was later used by the Medo-Persians and the Greeks. In the book of Revelation, Babylon is depicted as a woman who sits as a harlot upon all the individual nations of the world. She is called 'Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth'.<sup>10</sup>

### *The little horn*

When the nation of Judah returned from exile from among the nation of Babylon, the Lord restored and upgraded His administration among His firstborn people. He restored Joshua to be the high priest with 'free access' to the sanctuary of God in the heavenly places.<sup>11</sup> He restored Zerubbabel to be the governor with the right to exercise the authority of the firstborn in the world. The remnant of Judah should have been recovered to be the head of the nations and a light to all nations. However, as the years progressed, the administration of offering among the nation was corrupted.

The book of Daniel identifies that the corruption of offering among the Jewish remnant became an 'abomination which makes desolate' and a 'transgression which causes horror'.<sup>12</sup> It enabled Satan to regain access into the heavenly places. Satan became the ruler of the world and could later say to Jesus, 'It has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish'.<sup>13</sup> He empowered a ruler from among the Greek empire to rise up as a little horn.<sup>14</sup> The little horn used deceit and diplomacy to usurp the administration of Babylon over the nations and become the predominant ruler of the world at that time.

The little horn rose to power 'according to the working of Satan'.<sup>15</sup> This was the first evidence of the spirit of antichrist in the world, which wars against the established order of the nations and the kingdom of God. The little horn grew up to the host of heaven and caused Michael and his angelic host to be cast down. The angelic messenger explained to Daniel that they would continue to be trampled

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8 Gen 11:4                      11 Zec 3:7                      14 Dan 7:8  
9 Dan 2:37                      12 Dan 9:27. Dan 8:13      15 2Th 2:9  
10 Rev 17:5                      13 Luk 4:6

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

for a period of 2300 years.<sup>16</sup> They were neutralised and trampled, and are unable to engage in spiritual warfare on behalf of the people of God until the end of this period. The little horn also caused some of the stars, the messengers of God, to fall to the earth and be trampled. This will be the plight of the messengers of God until the conclusion of the 2300 years. Some messengers will fall by sword, flame, captivity, or plunder. Others will be trampled when people join them in hypocrisy and exploit them for self-centered gain.<sup>17</sup>

### *The kingdom of God*

The significant point here is that God has established an administration which can overcome the power of the little horn and the spirit of antichrist. He has promised that every messenger who remains connected to His administration in the heavenly places will be helped with 'a little help', even though they will be subject to trampling for many days. They will be helped with the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God, through the Holy Spirit, to continue giving insight to the people of God and leading many to righteousness. It is the administration of the sevenfold Spirit of God which enables the messengers and people of God to overcome the spirit of antichrist by offering. The word of the Lord to every messenger is, 'Not by might, nor by power, but *by My Spirit*'.<sup>18</sup>

The Lord has always had an administration of *suffering messengers* who have maintained *His witness* in the earth. The apostle Paul declared, 'In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways; and yet He did not leave Himself without witness'.<sup>19</sup> We observe this principle in the world since the very beginning. Even though Cain rejected his predestination as the firstborn, and forfeited the kingship and the priesthood, God maintained His witness with Abel who was a prophet and a messenger. He was a faithful witness and even 'though he is dead, he still speaks'.<sup>20</sup> This principle has continued throughout history. Every time the nation of Israel corrupted the administration of God among them, the Lord raised up a prophet to call them to repentance. A prophet would address the elders and fathers, the kings, and the priests.

Further to this, the Lord has sent messengers to address Babylon and the nations. Daniel was the messenger who addressed king Nebuchadnezzar as the head of the administration of Babylon. Many messengers have been sent to address nations; for example, Jonah was sent to call the Assyrians to repentance.<sup>21</sup> Since the beginning

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16 Dan 8:14

19 Act 14:16-17

17 Dan 11:33-34

20 Heb 11:4

18 Zec 4:6

21 Jon 1:1-2



## Preface

of the 2300 year prophecy, the messengers of God have also had to contend with Satan in the heavenly places and the spirit of antichrist. We are reminded of the words of Paul, 'Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places'.<sup>22</sup>

We are simply highlighting that the Lord has always had an administration of *suffering messengers* who have proclaimed the word of God, by the Spirit of God, as a witness to all men. They have spoken to the Lord's firstborn people and the nations of the world. They have contended with Satan and the spirit of antichrist in the heavenly places. We know the messengers of God will be trampled until the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy. However, as they suffer as faithful witnesses, they overcome by the power of God. The Lord uses their suffering to refine them, purify them, and make them white until the time of the end.<sup>23</sup> We are reminded of the words of the Lord to the apostle Paul, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness'.<sup>24</sup>

When the fellowship of offering has been fully restored in the body of Christ, the 2300 year prophecy will be complete. The Lamb will stand to open the seven-sealed book and the time of the end will begin. The Lord will begin restoring His kingdom on this earth. At this time, the 'double portion' mandate of expressing both Christ's kingship and priesthood among the nations of the world will be given to His messengers. The messengers of Christ will be the weaponry in the hand of the white horse rider when the first seal is broken and they are sent to overcome the world and gather the fullness of the nations into the kingdom of God.

We will consider the integration of all these themes in detail in this book. Our purpose in this Preface is to simply introduce the five powers which have been competing with one another and competing for the hearts of men throughout history. This competition will intensify as the seventh world kingdom continues to emerge from the sea of the nations in the days ahead of us. However, we can be assured that God will establish a kingdom on this earth which will endure forever. He will bring many sons to glory for the new heavens and new earth.

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22 Eph 6:12

23 Dan 11:35

24 2Co 12:9



# CHAPTER 1

## Understanding the appointed times of the Lord

We will begin by considering an important discussion between Jesus and His disciples on the Mount of Olives. Shortly before this interaction, the Gospel of Matthew records that Jesus exposed the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, and then declared, ‘Your house is being left to you desolate!’<sup>1</sup> He told the disciples that the temple in Jerusalem would be completely destroyed. This prediction by Jesus provoked the disciples to ask three questions. Once they were in private on the Mount of Olives, they said, ‘Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?’<sup>2</sup>

We will not focus on the answer to the first question regarding the destruction of the temple because that has already been fulfilled. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the army of Prince Titus in AD70. It will never be rebuilt as a temple

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1 Mat 23:38

2 Mat 24:3

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

on earth again because Jesus Christ has become the chief cornerstone of the true temple.<sup>3</sup> The true temple is the body of Christ.<sup>4</sup> Our major interest, from the perspective of Bible prophecy, is the way Jesus answered the next two questions. In this strategic discussion with His disciples, Jesus clearly identified *two major signs*. He described the sign of His coming and the sign of the end of the age.

When we consider *the end of the age*, it is important to understand the distinction between the ‘fullness of times’, the ‘time of the end’, and ‘the end’. These are not interchangeable terms. The ‘fullness of times’ is the last period of the 2300 years’ prophecy in the book of Daniel.<sup>5</sup> It is the period leading up to the ‘time of the end’ when the corruption of offering within the church will reach its fullness. Jesus referred to the ‘fullness of times’ when He said, ‘Learn the parable of the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and put forth its leaves, you know that summer is near’.<sup>6</sup> The *sign of the end of the age* will occur in the period called ‘the fullness of times’ as the indicator that the ‘time of the end’ is about to commence.

The time of the end is a period of almost forty-two years in which the covenant purpose of God will be fulfilled in heaven and on earth. The *sign of His coming* will appear in heaven immediately before the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement, that is, the marriage of Jesus Christ to His church. This will occur *in the time of the end*. The time of the end will also be the period when the Father activates an administration to put all enemies under the feet of Christ.<sup>7</sup> The last enemy which will be destroyed is death.<sup>8</sup> The time of the end will conclude with the physical second coming of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of all believers. The end is when the ungodly are judged and this present heavens and earth are destroyed by fire.<sup>9</sup>

Understanding the distinction between the ‘fullness of times’, the ‘time of the end’, and ‘the end’ is essential before we can interpret the events that are beginning to unfold before us in the church and in the world. These distinctions are essential to understanding the framework in Matthew chapter twenty-four and the book of Revelation. Let us restate the key point. The ‘fullness of times’ is the period leading up to the ‘time of the end’. The ‘time of the end’ is the consummation of God’s will and purpose in heaven and on earth, and then ‘the end’ will come. We will continue to expand the detail of this framework in this first chapter.

Returning to the words of Jesus, He identified the *sign of the end of the age* by saying, ‘When you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the

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3 Act 4:11-12

6 Mar 13:28

9 2Pe 3:7

4 Joh 2:19-21

7 Eph 1:9-10.

1Co 15:25

5 Dan 8:13-14

8 1Co 15:26

## Understanding the appointed times of the Lord

prophet, standing in the holy place (the one reading, let him understand), then let those in Judea flee into the mountains'.<sup>10</sup> Jesus encouraged every person who reads the Scriptures to understand the meaning of this prophecy. The book of Daniel reveals that there will be an 'abomination which makes desolate' standing in the holy place for 2300 years. The significant point concerning the 2300 year prophecy is that it began during the reign of the Greek empire and will conclude at the beginning of the time of the end. The angel Gabriel declared to Daniel, 'Son of man, understand that the vision pertains to the time of the end'.<sup>11</sup>

The 'abomination of desolation' is more accurately translated as 'the abomination which makes desolate'. It is the corruption of offering and the violation of fellowship and first love among God's people. This corruption of offering is also called the 'transgression which causes horror'.<sup>12</sup> For 2300 years, messengers will be trampled because of the corruption of offering among God's people. They will fall by sword, by flame, by captivity, and by plunder. They will also fall when people cleave to them with flattery and hypocrisy for self-centred gain. The Scriptures clearly show that this trampling will continue until the time of the end.<sup>13</sup>

If the desolating abomination is 2300 years' long, how does it become the sign of the end of the age? Jesus identified that the transgression which causes horror will increase within the church as we approach the end of the 2300 years. He said, 'Lawlessness will abound and the love of most people will grow cold'.<sup>14</sup> Christians will hate and betray one another. Lawlessness in the church, and the opposition of the spirit of antichrist in the world, will reach its climax. The transgression which causes horror will reach its fullness! In this context, Jesus said, 'Learn the parable of the fig tree'.<sup>15</sup> When the transgression reaches its fullness, we will know that we are in the fullness of times and the time of the end is near.

There will be a great falling away in the days ahead of us, but at the same time, the fellowship of first love will be fully restored within lampstand churches. There will be lampstand churches in every nation, connected to the throne of God in one administration which is suitable for the fullness of times.<sup>16</sup> When offering has been fully restored, the 2300 years will be complete and the time of the end will begin. The Lamb will stand and begin to open the seven-sealed book.<sup>17</sup> We are reminded that the prophet Daniel was told to seal up the book until the time of the end.<sup>18</sup> When the first seal is opened, the white horse rider will go forth 'overcoming and to overcome'.<sup>19</sup> The gospel of the kingdom will be preached as a testimony in all

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10 Mat 24:15-16

13 Dan 11:35

16 Eph 1:10

19 Rev 6:2

11 Dan 8:17

14 Mat 24:12

17 Rev 5:5

12 Dan 8:13

15 Mat 24:32

18 Dan 12:4

nations.<sup>20</sup> However, when the second seal is opened, there will be a time of great tribulation upon the church.<sup>21</sup>

This brings us to the *sign of His coming*. Jesus said, ‘Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven will be shaken. Then the *sign of the Son of Man* will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.’<sup>22</sup> The sign of the Son of Man will include the gathering and sealing of the 144,000. The Lord will come with His holy ones, with ten thousands of His saints. This will be followed by the perfection and protection of a numberless multitude in the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement.

### The appointed times of the Lord

The first thing Jesus said to His disciples on this important subject was, ‘See to it that no one misleads you’.<sup>23</sup> Throughout the course of church history, there have been many predictions about the end of the age that have proven to be false and misleading. The Scripture does not predict a date for the second coming and it would be foolish to speculate on this. However, God does have a prophetic timetable for the fulfilment of His covenant purpose. The Scripture does identify specific waypoints and time periods in His prophetic timetable.<sup>24</sup> These waypoints and time periods are called ‘appointed times’. The Lord declared through Habakkuk the prophet, ‘The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.’<sup>25</sup>

One of the most important verses regarding the ‘appointed times’ of the Lord is found in Peter’s second letter. He declared, ‘Do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day’.<sup>26</sup> We must consider this principle if we desire to understand God’s prophetic timetable. We know that God is not bound by time, but His covenant will and purpose is fulfilled in time. It is fulfilled in the spiritual heavens and on earth. We are reminded that Jesus taught the disciples to pray, ‘Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven’.<sup>27</sup> The administration which is suitable for the fullness of times will gather all things in one, things in heaven and things on earth. When God created the spiritual heavens, He established ‘time in heaven’.

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20 Mat 24:14

21 Rev 6:4

22 Mat 24:29-30

23 Mat 24:4

24 Gal 4:4

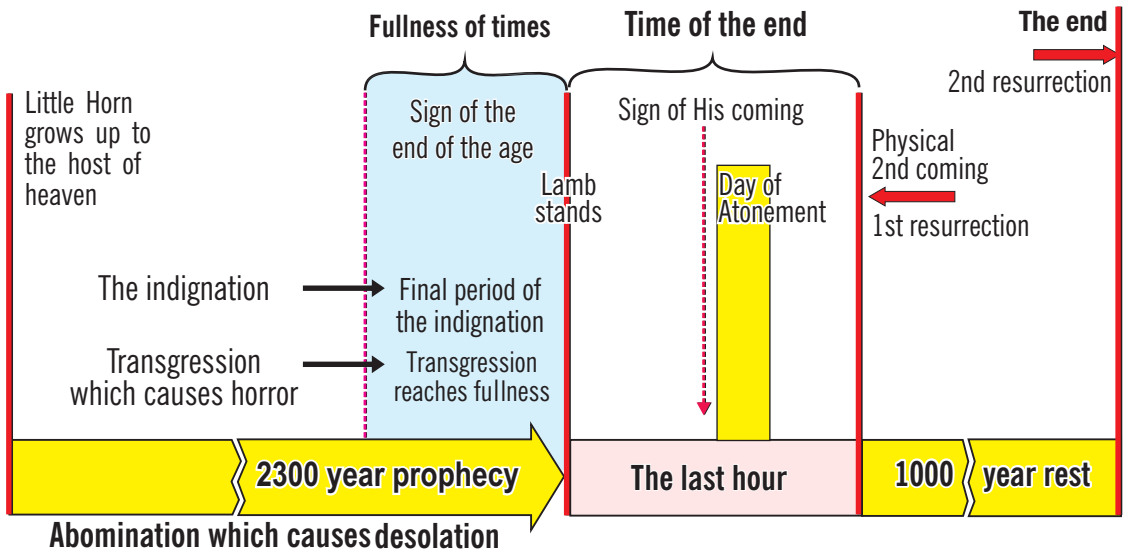
25 Hab 2:3

26 2Pe 3:8

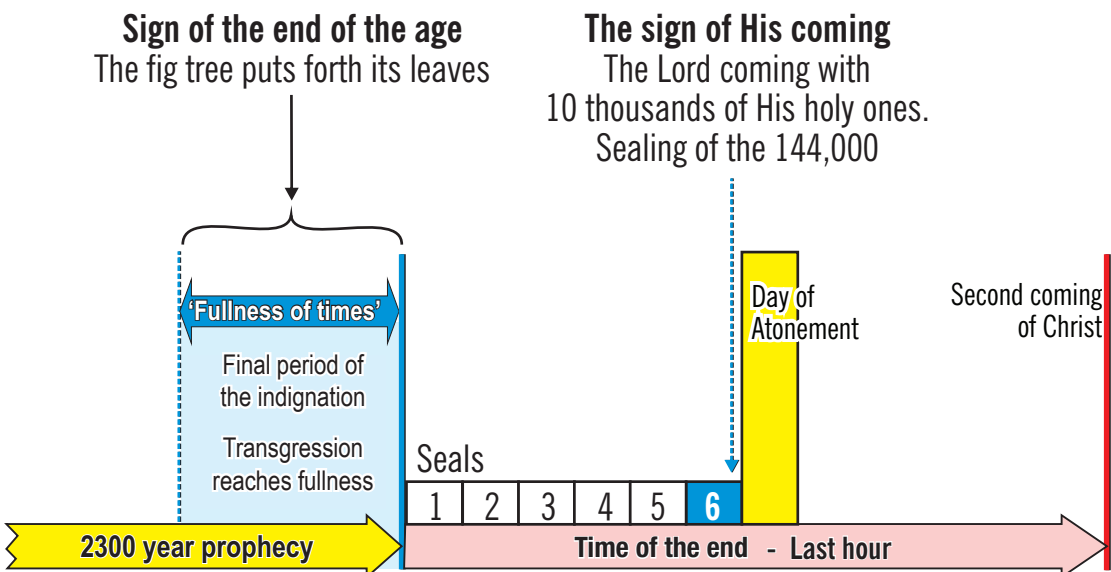
27 Mat 6:10

# Understanding the appointed times

Fullness of times - time of the end - the end



## Two signs in Matthew 24



## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

Likewise, when God created the earth, He established 'time on earth'. Peter clearly identified that there is a direct relationship between time in heaven and time on earth. One day in heaven is the same as a thousand years on earth.

Further to this, God revealed the 'structure of His days' in His prophetic timetable when He instructed Moses and the children of Israel to maintain a seven-day week. We know that days, months, seasons and years on earth are governed by the sun and the moon. They have been fixed by the rotation of the earth on its axis, the rotation of the moon around the earth, the tilt of the earth, and then the rotation of the earth around the sun. However, in contrast to this, there is no natural or scientific explanation for a seven-day week. It is not governed by the natural creation. The seven-day week is the order that God has established to reveal the structure of His 'appointed times'. The Lord declared to Moses, 'My *appointed times* are these', and then He immediately continued by saying, 'For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, a holy convocation'.<sup>28</sup>

The first and most obvious example of this 'seven-day cycle' is the creation of the world. We know that God created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested from all His labour.<sup>29</sup> God created this present heavens and the earth to be the context in which He would bring forth the new creation for the age to come. There were six days' work in bringing forth the first creation, and God has also ordained six days before the new creation is fully revealed in a multitude of sons on the day of resurrection. Each of these days in heaven will be one thousand years on earth. The resurrection of all believers will occur at the beginning of the seventh day, which is the day of rest. Jesus called this 'the last day'. He said, 'This is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the *last day*'.<sup>30</sup> Likewise, He said, 'He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the *last day*'.<sup>31</sup>

The book of Revelation clearly identifies that the 'last day' is a literal thousand-year period on the earth. All believers will be raised with an incorruptible and immortal resurrection body at the beginning of the thousand years. Our resurrection body will be composed by the word of Jesus Christ when He returns with a shout from heaven. The dead in Christ will rise first, and then those who are alive and remaining will be caught up to meet Him in the air. Paul declared, 'We shall all be

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28 Lev 23:3

31 Joh 6:54

29 Gen 2:2

30 Joh 6:44



# A day with the Lord is as a thousand years

The seven day cycle

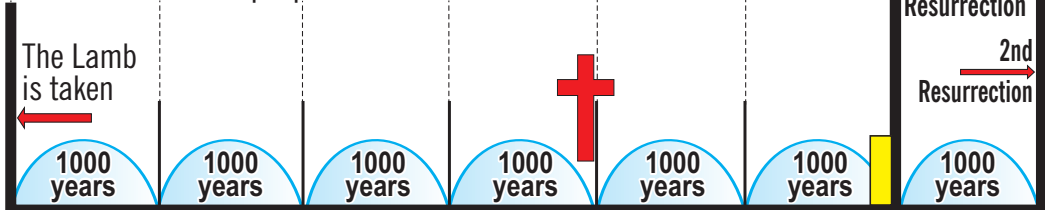
## TIME in HEAVEN



## TIME on EARTH - creative week



## TIME on EARTH - prophetic week



2300 year prophecy

## The last hour

An hour in heaven - approx 42 years on earth

24 thrones  
Lamb  
stands

Physical  
return  
of Christ

6 Seals

Day of Atonement  
Half an hour in heaven  
approx 21 years on earth

**The last hour**  
**The last generation**  
**The time of the end**

changed for this corruptible must put on incorruptible and this mortal must put on immortality'.<sup>32</sup>

This will be the first resurrection at the beginning of the 'last day'. It will be the resurrection to eternal life. Death will be swallowed up in victory and the saints from all ages will reign with Christ on this earth for a thousand years. At the end of this thousand year period, the ungodly will be raised, judged, and cast into the lake of fire. This will be the second resurrection at the end of the 'last day'. It will be the resurrection to damnation and is also called 'the second death'. At this time, the present heavens and earth will be destroyed by fire and the Son of God will hand the kingdom back to the Father for all eternity. Paul declared that this is 'the end'.<sup>33</sup>

### The end of all flesh

The most important statement about 'the end' was made by the Lord in the days of Noah. In those days, the wickedness of man was great on the earth. The thoughts and intentions of every man's heart were continually evil.<sup>34</sup> The Lord saw this great wickedness and was grieved in His heart. He repented that He had made man. The Lord declared to Noah, '*The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold I am about to destroy them with the earth.*'<sup>35</sup> This is an absolute statement. There will be an end of all flesh. God has pronounced judgement on the entire old creation.

The apostle Peter said that in the last days there will be many mockers who say, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' They will declare that all things continue just as they have since the beginning of creation.<sup>36</sup> The mockers will refuse to believe that God created the present heavens and earth by His word. And further to this, they will refuse to believe that God destroyed the world by a flood in the days of Noah. We can expect that the subject of Noah and the world-wide flood will become the subject of derision and ridicule in the days ahead of us. Men will seek to discredit the account of Noah's flood so they can ignore the fact that God has pronounced judgement upon all flesh. Peter declared that the flood which destroyed the world in the days of Noah is a forerunner, or harbinger, of the destruction which will occur at the end of the age.<sup>37</sup>

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32 1Co 15:52-53

35 Gen 6:13

33 1Co 15:24

36 2Pe 3:4

34 Gen 6:5

37 2Pe 3:5-7

The present heavens and earth are reserved for judgement by fire. The heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat.<sup>38</sup> The earth and its works will be burned up. This does not mean that the ungodly will cease to exist. The destruction of God will not be annihilation. The old creation will become the lake of fire. In this way, the destruction of the ungodly will be much worse than annihilation; it will be eternal judgement! In the end, the ungodly will be raised from their graves in mortal, corruptible bodies. Jesus said they will be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness.<sup>39</sup> They will be alive, but their bodies will not be able to move; like a corpse. Nor will they have any capacity to communicate. The ungodly will be preserved forever in a state of continual decay and corruption that never ceases. Speaking of this corruption, the prophet Isaiah declared, 'Their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched; and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind'.<sup>40</sup>

When the apostle Paul said that there is no longer any condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, he meant that we are no longer under the judgement of God's wrath. It means that we are part of a 'new creation' and, therefore, no longer destined to be cast into the lake of fire. The apostle Paul declared, 'If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!'<sup>41</sup> This is better translated, 'If any man is in Christ, behold, new creation!' The new creation is the only thing which will endure into the new heavens and new earth. In the days of Noah, the ark was a type of Jesus Christ. Noah and his family were saved from the judgement of God because they entered the ark. In the same way, everyone who comes into Jesus Christ to be part of the new creation will escape the judgement of God in the end of the age and enter the new heavens and new earth. Peter tells us that the ark was a type, and the antitype which now saves us is baptism into the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>42</sup>

## **The time of the end – the last hour**

The 'time of the end' is an extensive theme in the Scriptures. There are many references to the 'time of the end' in the book of Daniel. It is also called the '*appointed* time of the end'. The 'time of the end' is the specific period of time when the seven-sealed book is opened, which reveals the fulfilment of God's covenant purpose in the world. The beginning of the time of the end is a major waypoint in the book of Revelation. It commences when the Lamb stands to begin opening the

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38 2Pe 3:10

41 2Co 5:17

39 Mat 22:13

42 1Pe 3:21

40 Isa 66:24

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seven-sealed book. The Lord instructed Daniel to 'seal up the book until the time of the end'.<sup>43</sup>

In the time of the end, the Father will activate an administration which will abolish 'all rule and all authority and all power' that is antagonistic to Christ.<sup>44</sup> This will include the judgement of the little horn, the destruction of the Gog and Magog army, the judgement of Satan when he is cast from the heavens, the destruction of Babylon, and the final judgement of the beast and the false prophet. We will consider all these things in detail in this book. In the time of the end, the Father will put all His enemies under the feet of Jesus Christ. Paul tells us that the last enemy that will be destroyed is death itself. The time of the end will conclude with the resurrection of the righteous. As we have already considered, this will be followed by one thousand years of rest and then 'the end'.

In the Scriptures, the time of the end is also called the 'last hour'. Like the time of the end, there are many references to the 'last hour', particularly in the book of Revelation. Jesus said to the church in Philadelphia that if they kept the word of His perseverance, then He would keep them from '*the hour of trial* which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth'.<sup>45</sup> The last hour is the hour of judgement. It is the hour when all rule, all authority and all power which opposes the kingdom of God is destroyed. Part of the everlasting gospel that will be preached in the time of the end will be to 'fear God and give glory to Him, for the *hour of His judgement* has come'.<sup>46</sup> The kings of the earth and the merchants will lament over Babylon, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in *one hour* your judgement has come.'<sup>47</sup>

How long is the last hour? We know that the judgement of the little horn, Gog and Magog, Satan, Babylon, and the final Antichrist, will not happen in 'one hour on earth'. For example, after the destruction of the Gog and Magog army at the opening of the sixth seal, the book of Ezekiel tells us that it will take seven months to bury all the dead bodies and seven years to destroy all the weapons.<sup>48</sup> The book of Revelation also nominates a number of specific periods of time which occur during the last hour. During the first woe, men will be tormented on the earth for a period of five months.<sup>49</sup> During the second woe, the two witnesses will prophesy in Jerusalem and invoke judgement upon Babylon for 1260 days, or three and a half years.<sup>50</sup> And finally, during the third woe, authority will be given to the beast to rule for a further forty-two months, or three and a half years.<sup>51</sup> All of these time

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43 Dan 12:4

46 Rev 14:7

49 Rev 9:5

44 1Co 15:24

47 Rev 18:10

50 Rev 11:3

45 Rev 3:10

48 Eze 39:9, 14

51 Rev 13:5

periods are part of 'one hour in heaven'. If one day is a thousand years, then one hour in heaven will be almost forty-two years on earth. This is also the time period of one generation. Speaking of the time of the end, Jesus said, 'This generation will by no means pass away until all these things take place'.<sup>52</sup>

This brings us to an important verse in the book of Revelation. We read, 'When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about *half an hour*'.<sup>53</sup> The 'half an hour' is evidently referring to 'time in heaven'. This will be a period of almost twenty-one years on the earth. The context of this verse is the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement, the consummation of the marriage between Christ and His church. This period will be a time of reaping. For twenty-one years, the nations of the world will keep the fulfilment of the Feast of Tabernacles. The prophet Zechariah declared, 'It shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up *from year to year* to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles'.<sup>54</sup>

## The beginning of birth pains

With these definitions in view, we will now return to the words of Jesus. He said to His disciples, 'You will be hearing of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that *is not yet the end*'.<sup>55</sup> This gives us a clear marker. There will be wars and rumours of wars, but that is not a sign of the time of the end. Jesus continued by saying that nation will rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom. Nations will jostle one another as they seek to establish a hierarchy. And there will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places. This period is called the 'beginning of birth pains'. Jesus used the analogy of birth pains because of the way these events progressively become more frequent and intense. There is little doubt that tensions between nations and the frequency of natural disasters have increased in recent years. This indicates that the seventh world kingdom is fast emerging from the sea of the nations.

Our major proposition in this book is that there will be three distinct phases of the seventh world kingdom. We will refer to the first as the 'little horn phase', the second as the 'red horse and Gog and Magog phase', and the third as the 'red dragon phase'. In the period before the time of the end (that is, in the fullness of times), the 'little horn phase' will be the most relevant for the church and the

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52 Mat 24:34

55 Mat 24:6

53 Rev 8:1

54 Zec 14:16

world. The little horn, which is empowered by Satan from the heavenly places because of the corruption of offering in the church, will be the predominant power in the first phase of the seventh world kingdom.

### The little horn phase - lawlessness and opposition

Jesus referred to the little horn phase when He said, 'They will deliver you up to tribulation'. He continued, 'Many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another'.<sup>56</sup> It is frightening to consider that this period of tribulation will be caused by Christians betraying one another. When a Christian becomes offended and they allow bitterness to take root in their heart, this produces a hatred that is worse than anything that is seen in the world. It has the potential to become 'ancient hatred', in the same spirit of Esau's hatred toward his brother Jacob.<sup>57</sup> Many Christians will experience this kind of hatred and betrayal in their own families. Jesus said, 'You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death'.<sup>58</sup>

It is difficult to comprehend how such great betrayal could ever happen among family members and fellow Christians. Jesus clearly identified the cause by saying, 'Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold'.<sup>59</sup> The word translated 'lawlessness' can also be translated 'iniquity'. The fullness of times is a period when iniquity abounds. It is important to recognise that there is a difference between iniquity and sin. The apostle Paul declared that where 'sin increases, grace abounds all the more'.<sup>60</sup> However, in stark contrast to this, where iniquity abounds, most people's love will grow cold. Iniquity leads to the wilful and culpable violation of fellowship. Some translations say 'the love of *the many* will grow cold'. When the transgression reaches its fullness, the love of the 'majority of Christians' will grow cold! This is most certainly a sobering reality. It will only be a 'minority of Christians', or a 'remnant', who will be committed to the fellowship of first love and offering as we approach the time of the end.

We can be encouraged that the size of the remnant church will grow to be a significant number. The book of Revelation reveals that there will be at least 200,000,000 gathered in the heavenly places when the 2300 year prophecy concludes and the time of the end commences. This will grow to become a great multitude which no man can number before the Lord returns for the fulfilment of the Day of Atonement.<sup>61</sup> However, the Scripture is clear. The remnant church

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56 Mat 24:10

57 Eze 35:5

58 Luk 21:16

59 Mat 24:12

60 Rom 5:20

61 Rev 7:9

must first overcome a 'great falling away'. This falling away has already begun in our day, and it will only get worse in the years just ahead of us.

In his second letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul spoke of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our gathering together to Him. He did not want the Thessalonians to be quickly shaken from their composure, or to be disturbed by any kind of false gospel saying that the day of the Lord had already come. Paul continued, 'Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the great falling away comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God'.<sup>62</sup> In this passage, Paul identified that there will be two phases of overcoming for the church in relation to the spirit of antichrist. The first will be 'lawlessness' and the second will be 'opposition'.

As we have already considered, lawlessness is the abomination which makes desolate. It causes the love of 'the many' to grow cold and, therefore, precipitates the great falling away. The falling away occurs throughout the period of the 2300 years and culminates in the period immediately before the beginning of the time of the end, which is called the 'fullness of times'. It is during this period that the transgression reaches its fullness. In the second phase, the little horn becomes the 'opposer'. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship. We read in the book of Daniel that 'he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished'.<sup>63</sup> He will oppose the need for any religion in the world, but the Christian church will be the main object of his fury.

## **The one who endures to the end**

In the face of this great falling away and opposition, Jesus said, 'The one who endures to the end, he will be saved'.<sup>64</sup> He was referring to those who persevere and endure through until the time of the end. Jesus said to the lampstand church of Philadelphia, 'Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth'.<sup>65</sup> As we have considered, the 'hour of temptation' which will come upon the whole world is the 'last hour', the

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62 2Th 2:3-4

65 Rev 3:10

63 Dan 11:36

64 Mat 24:13

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duration of the time of the end. No one who dwells upon the face of the earth will escape this hour.

If we keep the word of present truth, which is called the 'word of His perseverance', then we know that He will keep us from the hour of temptation. This does not mean that we will avoid tribulation and persecution, but it does mean that the Lord will preserve and protect us so that we do not fall away in the midst of the trial. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that enables us to persevere. The word 'perseverance' means 'bearing evil and suffering it with a tranquil mind', that is, without anxiety and fear. No one will be able to endure until the end without the help of the God of perseverance.

We will need the help of the Holy Spirit to persevere through two distinct phases of tribulation. The first will occur during 'the little horn phase' of the seventh world kingdom *before* the beginning of the time of the end. This will be a period of tribulation caused by lawlessness within the church and the opposition of the little horn. It is the trampling of the heavenly host and the sanctuary because of the transgression of offering. The second will occur during the 'fiery red horse phase' which commences with the opening of the second seal. It will be precipitated by the rise of Gog and Magog from the far north at the time of the end. This will be a period of '*great tribulation*, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will'.<sup>66</sup> For the sake of the elect, these days will be cut short; otherwise, no life would be saved.<sup>67</sup>

During the great tribulation of the church, many false Christs and false prophets will arise. They will use great signs and wonders to deceive and mislead, if possible, even the elect.<sup>68</sup> Jesus has warned us in advance for this reason. He will not be in the wilderness. Nor will He be in the inner rooms. At all times, He will continue to be found in the midst of His body, in the fellowship of the daily Lamb. He is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. He declared, 'Wherever the dead body may be, there the eagles will be gathered'.<sup>69</sup> Jesus was referring to the communion where we wait for one another and wait eagerly for Him. When we eat and drink the communion, we are proclaiming 'His death until He comes'.<sup>70</sup>

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66 Mat 24:21

69 Mat 24:28 LITV

67 Mat 24:22

70 1Co 11:26

68 Mat 24:24



## The sign of the Son of Man

Jesus said, 'Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the *sign of the Son of Man* will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.'<sup>71</sup> Jesus was quoting from the book of Joel. These events signify the coming of the 'great and terrible day of the Lord'.<sup>72</sup> The book of Revelation clearly shows us the timing of these things. They will occur at the opening of the sixth seal. The apostle John testified, 'I looked when He opened the *sixth seal*, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.'<sup>73</sup>

The opening of the sixth seal will be the great day of the Lord's wrath on all the godless nations who will gather themselves against Jerusalem at this time. At this time, the seventh world kingdom will be led by the king of the North, who is Gog from the land of Magog. We read in the book of Ezekiel, "It will come about *in that day*, when Gog comes against the land of Israel", declares the Lord God, "that My fury will mount up in My anger. In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare *on that day* there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel".<sup>74</sup> This will be the end of the second phase of the seventh world kingdom. The Lord declares, 'I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord'.<sup>75</sup>

The prophet Zechariah identified the primary cause of this great earthquake in the land of Israel. He declared, 'In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in the middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south'.<sup>76</sup> This will be a great day of deliverance for those in the land of Israel at this time, and will herald the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement. Zechariah triumphantly proclaimed, 'Then the Lord, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord,

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71 Mat 24:29-30

72 Joe 2:31

73 Rev 6:12-13.  
Isa 2:19-21.

Isa 13:9-10.

Isa 24:21-23

74 Eze 38:18-19

75 Eze 38:23

76 Zec 14:4

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neither day or night, but it will come about at the evening time that there will be light.<sup>77</sup>

Who are the holy ones who will come with the Lord at this time? Jesus said that 'He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other'.<sup>78</sup> All of these events are recorded in Revelation chapter seven, which follows the events of the sixth seal. John beheld four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth. He then saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God. This great messenger who comes from the east will bring the sign of the coming of the Son of Man. This angel will bring with him the seal of the living God. This sealing work will be the first manifestation of Christ's coming. The 144,000 messengers will be sealed for their particular ministry in judging the eighth world kingdom. We will consider the ministry and mandate of the 144,000 later in this book.

It is important to recognise that Jesus Christ will come 'with the clouds of heaven' for the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement *before* He will physically return at the consummation of the time of the end for the general resurrection.<sup>79</sup> These are two separate events. Immediately following the sealing of the 144,000, the apostle John beheld a great multitude which no man can number, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues. They were standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands. This is the great multitude who will come out of the great tribulation which occurs from the second seal to the sixth seal. They will have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>80</sup> This great multitude, from every nation of the world, will be ready for the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement. They will be serving before the throne of God, both day and night. The Father will spread the tabernacle of His house over them, and the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to the springs of the water of life.<sup>81</sup> This will be the marriage between Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb, and His church.

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77 Zec 14:5-7

80 Rev 7:14

78 Mat 24:31

81 Rev 7:15-17

79 Mat 26:64

## CHAPTER 2

# Babylon and the beast with seven heads and ten horns

We read in chapter seventeen of the book of Revelation that John was invited to witness the judgement of Babylon. One of the angels who had the seven vials said, 'Come, I will show you the judgement of the great harlot who sits on many waters'.<sup>1</sup> John was carried away in the Spirit into a wilderness. He saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. There are two major components in this vision which we will consider in this chapter. The first is Babylon, and the second is the beast with the seven heads and ten horns. This vision covers the entire history of mankind, from the tower of Babel after the flood, all the way through to the emergence of the eighth world kingdom.

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1 Rev 17:1

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It is important to note that this chapter in the book of Revelation is not a continuation of the narrative from the previous chapter. The first sixteen chapters of the book of Revelation are largely a sequential narrative. They cover the 'fullness of times', which includes the restoration and overcoming of lampstand churches in every nation. And they cover all the events which will occur in the 'time of the end'. This will include the judgement of all three phases of the seventh world kingdom, along with the rise and judgement of the eighth world kingdom.

The judgement of the eighth world kingdom is recorded in chapter sixteen of the book of Revelation. The seven vials of the wrath of God will be poured out upon the throne of the beast and his kingdom, that is, all those who have the mark of the beast. This judgement will reach a climax when the dragon, the beast and the false prophet gather together all the kings of the earth and the ungodly from all nations for 'the battle of the great day of God Almighty'. They will be gathered together to the place which is called 'Armageddon'. Immediately following this, the seventh angel will pour out his vial and a loud voice will declare from the throne, 'It is done'.<sup>2</sup> This is the culmination of the history of rebellious mankind.

As we have already mentioned, chapter seventeen does not continue the narrative. It starts again with a history of mankind from the beginning. There are many common waypoints within this summary and the first sixteen chapters of the book of Revelation. For example, the proclamation of the angel in chapter eighteen who says, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen', is the parallel verse to the proclamation of the angel in chapter fourteen who says, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen'.<sup>3</sup>

The summary continues all the way to the end of chapter nineteen, which concludes at the same point as chapter sixteen. The beast, the kings of the earth and their armies will be gathered together to make war against Jesus Christ and His saints. This will be the great battle of Armageddon. In chapter nineteen, we are given more detail concerning the outcome. The beast and the false prophet will be captured and cast alive into the lake of fire. The rest of their army will be killed by the sword which proceeds from the mouth of Jesus Christ, who will come seated on a white horse.<sup>4</sup>

Chapter twenty effectively begins the 'epilogue' to the book of Revelation. It describes the beginning and end of the millennium and the judgement of the great white throne. Chapters twenty-one and twenty-two describe the bride city and the new heavens and the new earth.

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2 Rev 16:17

3 Rev 18:2. Rev 14:8

4 Rev 19:20-21

## **The meaning of Babylon**

With this structure of the book of Revelation in view, we will consider the summary which begins in chapter seventeen. John saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns. The name of the woman is 'Babylon the great'.<sup>5</sup> She has risen up from the 'sea of the peoples' to rule over the nations of the earth. She is clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls. She is called the 'mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth'.

Over the course of church history, there have been many theories concerning the meaning and identity of Babylon the great. Since the Reformation, many have assumed that Babylon is the Roman Catholic church. The Catholic church has sat on top of the kings of the earth and the nations of the world since the fourth century. Even though the Catholic church may continue to have significant influence and power, the religious head of Babylon in the seventh world kingdom will include all of the world's religions. And more than this, world religion will only be one of seven heads of Babylon. It quickly becomes apparent that the principle of Babylon is much broader than religion.

Babylon is a centralised administration over the nations and kings of the earth. It has been established by the nations as a protection against anarchy and the scattering of the nations of mankind upon the earth. This administration was first established by the nations of the world at the tower of Babel. They said to one another, 'Come let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth'.<sup>6</sup> When the nations established such an administration, they rejected the right of God's firstborn to be His administration over the nations, and replaced it with their own administration. This administration is likened in Scripture to a harlot that sits as a mother upon the individual nations of the world. This misappropriated administration is called 'Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots'.

## **The source of the nations**

To understand the principle of Babylon, we need to firstly consider the source of the nations and the mandate given to them by God. All the nations of the world

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5 Rev 17:5

6 Gen 11:4

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

have been predestined to become the inheritance of Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God. Before the foundation of the world, the Father declared, 'I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain ... You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession.'<sup>7</sup> The administration of Jesus Christ, the Firstborn over all creation, was to be God's administration over the nations as they grew and multiplied and came to full power and expression. In the beginning, Adam was created to be the helper to the Son and given the mandate to be the head of all nations. God gave him 'dominion' over all flesh and the natural creation. Adam was called to be the father of all mankind. God said to him, 'Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it'.<sup>8</sup>

We recall that God placed Adam in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.<sup>9</sup> We know that He placed the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden, but God also caused *every tree* that is pleasing to the sight and good for food to grow.<sup>10</sup> These trees were 'prophetic types' of the nations and kingdoms of the world, with their own unique characteristics. All the nations of the earth had their source in Eden. They did not just arise as a consequence of the fall. For example, the Lord declared concerning Assyria, 'The cedars in God's garden could not match it, the cypresses could not compare with its boughs, and the plane trees could not match its branches. No tree in God's garden could compare with it in its beauty.'<sup>11</sup> In a similar way, king Nebuchadnezzar had a prophetic dream in which he was likened to a tree that 'grew large and became strong and its height reached to the sky, and it was visible to the end of the whole earth'.<sup>12</sup>

The Scripture records that a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden. From Eden, it divided into four rivers that watered the four regions of the ancient world. In the type, the river from Eden was watering the four corners of the known earth. The life for the whole world was coming out of Eden. It represented the unique grace and provision of God for every nation. We also read that the region of Havilah, watered by the Pishon River, was known for its gold, bdellium and onyx stone.<sup>13</sup> The precious stones and minerals represent the capacity given by God to each nation, according to His grace and provision and their predestination and name. In a similar way, we recall that twelve precious stones set in the breast piece of the high priest were inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.<sup>14</sup>

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7 Psa 2:6-8

10 Gen 2:9

13 Gen 2:10-14

8 Gen 1:28

11 Eze 31:8

14 Exo 28:21

9 Gen 2:15

12 Dan 4:11-12

We read in the book of Acts that God has ‘made from one blood every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation’.<sup>15</sup> He has ordained when and how each nation will be established, blossom and come to full fruit and power. He has determined to give unique abilities and capacities to the people in each nation. And He has entrusted each nation with specific resources according to the ‘boundaries of their habitation’. The prophet Ezekiel used the symbolism of precious stones and minerals to describe the capacity of each nation to trade and generate increase.<sup>16</sup> Nations are able to use the capacities and resources which they have received from God to generate increase for the kingdom of God. Or they can use these very same capacities and resources to generate increase and wealth within the administration of Babylon. We are reminded that the apostle John saw the woman, Babylon, adorned with ‘gold and precious stones and pearls’.<sup>17</sup>

### **The mandate of the firstborn**

In the beginning, the mandate of being the head of the nations belonged to Adam. He was given this mandate as the helper to the Son who is the Firstborn over all creation.<sup>18</sup> When Adam fell, he lost his dominion over the natural creation, but the mandate of the firstborn to be the head of the nations remained. The command of God to be ‘fruitful and multiply and fill the earth’ remained, and the mandate of being the head of the nations was given to Cain as Adam’s firstborn son. When Cain rejected his predestination, he lost this mandate and proceeded to establish an administration among the nations of the world in the land of Nod.<sup>19</sup>

After the Lord brought the corruption of mankind to a complete end with the judgement of the flood, He re-established the command given to Adam with Noah. He commanded him to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.<sup>20</sup> The nations corrupted this mandate when they joined together to build the tower of Babel in the days of Nimrod.<sup>21</sup> At this time, the administration of Babylon was first established over the nations of the world. It was established by the nations of the world as *their alternative* to the administration of God over the nations.

The blessing of the firstborn was recovered by Abraham when he was blessed by Melchizedek.<sup>22</sup> We recall that Abraham received this blessing when he was returning from the defeat of the kings. He had become the ‘king of kings’. However, Abraham did not want to be joined with the spirit of Babylon in any way. He refused

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15 Act 17:26

18 Col 1:15

21 Gen 11:3-4

16 Eze 27

19 Gen 4:16

22 Gen 14:19

17 Rev 17:4

20 Gen 9:1

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to be enriched by the king of Sodom and the nations of the world. Rather, he paid a tithe of all to Melchizedek, recognising that God is the possessor of heaven and earth.<sup>23</sup> From this point forward, the blessing of the firstborn and the mandate of being the head of the nations belonged to Abraham and his descendants.

The Lord revealed to Abraham that his descendants would be subject to bondage in Egypt for four hundred years, but afterwards, they would be delivered as the Lord's firstborn people.<sup>24</sup> We are reminded that the Lord instructed Moses to say to Pharaoh, 'Israel is My son, My firstborn'.<sup>25</sup> The Lord delivered the nation of Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. He had chosen them to be a 'special treasure *above all* the peoples who are on the face of the earth'.<sup>26</sup> The nation of Israel should have become the 'head of the nations'. Moses declared, 'The Lord will make you the head and not the tail, and you only will be above and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully'.<sup>27</sup>

When the whole house of Israel was united and ruled by king Saul, and then king David, it was the head of the nations. David sat upon the throne of Israel as the 'king' over all the kings of the earth at that time. However, he evidently understood that this throne and authority belonged to Jesus Christ. It was David who beheld, by revelation, the Father say to the Son, 'Sit at My right hand until I make all Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'.<sup>28</sup> The nation of Israel remained as the head of the nations during most of the reign of king Solomon. Many of the surrounding nations contributed towards the building of the temple. Jesus said that even the queen of Egypt came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon.<sup>29</sup> However, as soon as the administration of God was corrupted among the nation, this mandate was lost again. The ten northern tribes were conquered and scattered by the Assyrians, and Judah was later taken captive to Babylon.

When Judah returned to Palestine after the seventy years of desolation, the mandate of being the head of the nations was restored and given to Zerubbabel. The Lord declared, 'Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land. I will shake all the nations and they will come with the wealth of the nations, and I will fill this house with glory. The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine'.<sup>30</sup> Joshua was restored to the office of the priesthood, and Zerubbabel was restored to the office of the kingship as the governor of the nation.<sup>31</sup> Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the Jews

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23	Gen 14:20-24	26	Exo 19:5. Deu 7:6.	29	Mat 12:24
24	Gen 15:13		Deu 14:2	30	Hag 2:6-8
25	Exo 4:22	27	Deu 28:13	31	Zec 3:4-7.
		28	Psa 110:1		Zec 4:6-9



should have become the head of the nations again and delivered this mandate to Christ when He came in the flesh. However, they allowed the horns of the nations to scatter them and this mandate was lost once more. The Jews became subject to the Greek empire and later the Roman empire.

The principle we observe throughout history is that whenever God's firstborn people corrupt His administration, they forfeit their mandate as the head of the nations and become subservient to the kingdoms of this world. Seven times throughout history, God has determined to raise up a world kingdom to be the head of the nations for a certain period of time. They have all been instruments of judgement in the Lord's hand for the purpose of judging and chastening His firstborn people. It has been incumbent upon the leaders of each world kingdom to recognise that they have received this mandate from God. Every ruler must recognise that the Most High God rules in the affairs of men and He sets over it the lowest of men. This was the lesson which king Nebuchadnezzar learned personally when 'seven times' passed over him.<sup>32</sup>

It is important to note that even though God has subjected His firstborn people to various Gentile kingdoms throughout history, He still used the ministry of the prophet to exercise His authority over the nations of the world. For example, the Lord used Moses to invoke His judgement upon the kingdom of Egypt.<sup>33</sup> He used the prophet Isaiah to invoke judgement upon the kingdom of Assyria.<sup>34</sup> The prophet Daniel invoked the judgement of God upon the kingdom of Babylon.<sup>35</sup>

We know the blessing of the firstborn now belongs to the church. The 'church of the firstborn' has been established on Mount Zion.<sup>36</sup> Jesus Christ has made us to be a 'kingdom of priests' to His God and Father.<sup>37</sup> However, the mandate of being the head of the nations will not be recovered by the church until the time of the end. In the Scriptures, the 'rod of iron' is the symbol of the authority of the firstborn over the nations. Jesus Christ said to the overseeing messengers of the lampstand church in Thyatira, 'He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds *until the end*, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron'.<sup>38</sup>

The church will be subject to the kingdoms of this world until the conclusion of the seven times prophecy. In the time of the end, God will establish the eternal kingdom to replace the seven preceding kingdoms. This kingdom will gather all nations into one and endure forever. In the book of Daniel, this kingdom is likened

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32 Dan 4:17

35 Dan 4:25

38 Rev 2:26-27

33 Exo 15:9-10

36 Heb 12:22-23

34 Isa 10:24-26

37 Rev 1:6

to a 'stone cut without hands' which will grow into 'a great mountain which fills the whole earth'.<sup>39</sup> This kingdom will be established by offering and it will become the head of the nations in the time of the end. This brings us to a key point. We can readily identify the spirit of Babylon among the nations of the world today as the seventh world kingdom emerges. The church must remain sanctified to the Lord and remain separate from the world. If the church joins itself to the seventh world kingdom, to regain headship over the nations before the end, it will have joined itself to the harlot. This will produce the worst possible manifestation of Babylon in the earth.

### **The principle of Babylon before the flood**

We will now illustrate the principle of Babylon in much more detail. The administration of Babylon was not established until after the flood in the days of Nimrod, but we can identify the principle of Babylon among the nations of the world before the flood. As we have considered, the right to be the 'head of the nations' belonged to Cain as the firstborn son of Adam and Eve. Even though he was conceived after the fall, he was still predestined to receive the blessing and mandate of the firstborn. The blessing of the firstborn included the dual mandate of kingship and priesthood. As mankind multiplied on the earth, Cain was predestined to be the priest at the gate of the garden of Eden to receive the offerings of those who came to call upon the name of the Lord. He was, likewise, predestined to be the 'king of kings', the head over all the nations of the earth.

When Cain came of age, we know that he rejected his predestination. He forfeited the blessing of the firstborn and the right to be the head over the nations. Cain went away from the presence of God and settled in the land of Nod, which means the 'land of vagrant wandering'.<sup>40</sup> He took all of the natural ability and grace which had been given to him by God, according to his identity and predestination as a son of God, and went out to make a name for himself in the wilderness of the world. Instead of being the head of the nations in the land of Eden, he went out from the presence of God and tried to be the head of the nations in the land of Nod. He built the first city of mankind and named it after his firstborn son.<sup>41</sup> He evidently presumed to still possess the mandate of the firstborn and the capacity to give it to his son. We could say that the building of this city was the very earliest manifestation of the spirit of Babylon in the earth.

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39 Dan 2:34-35

40 Gen 4:16

41 Gen 4:17

The descendants of Cain continued to have this presumption, and it reached a climax in the sixth generation. Lamech declared, 'I have killed a man for wounding me; and a boy for striking me'.<sup>42</sup> He had evidently taken upon himself the right to be the judge, jury and executioner. This is the self-righteous nature of the spirit of Babylon. It proclaims itself to be the guardian of civilisation for the common good of all. The Scripture records that Lamech had three sons and one daughter. His first son was the father of all those who dwelt in tents and kept livestock. His second son was the father of all those who played the lyre and the harp. His third son was the father of all those who made implements of bronze and iron.<sup>43</sup> These were the great farmers, the great entertainers, and the great craftsmen of the ancient world.

In the days of Lamech, the Lord established a new lineage when He gave Adam and Eve another son. His name was Seth. Eve rejoiced at this time and testified, 'God has appointed me another seed in the place of Abel, for Cain killed him'.<sup>44</sup> The fact that Seth was born in the place of Abel, and not in the place of Cain, is significant. God did not give the mandate of being the head of the nations to Seth. He and his descendants were required to walk in the stead of Abel as a faithful remnant in the earth. They faithfully called on the name of the Lord by bringing offering to the gate of the garden of Eden. For this reason, the descendants of Seth were called the 'sons of God'. In contrast to this, the descendants of Cain were called the 'sons of men'.

As time progressed, and the sons of men began to multiply on the face of the earth, we read that the sons of God (the descendants of Seth) saw that the daughters of men (the descendants of Cain) were beautiful.<sup>45</sup> The principle of Babylon in the world had built a highly sophisticated and attractive civilisation by this time. The sons of God decided to take wives for themselves from among these women. Instead of living in the faith of Abel, the sons of God decided to go 'the way of Cain'. They forsook the fellowship of offering in the land of Eden and decided to join the principle of Babylon that had been established in the wilderness of the world. The fruit of these marriages produced what the Scripture calls 'the mighty men of renown'.

The principle of Babylon before the flood reached its peak at this time. The mighty men of renown were the most influential and notable of all those who lived in the ancient world. They would have been the great thinkers, the great innovators, and

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42 Gen 4:23

45 Gen 6:1-2

43 Gen 4:20-22

44 Gen 4:25

the great leaders. The mighty men of renown had no interest in making offering to apprehend their name and predestination from God. They were preoccupied with making their own name in the world. For this reason, God looked down and saw that the thoughts and intentions of the heart of all men were evil continually.<sup>46</sup> This means every person was motivated by their own conscience according to their own knowledge of good and evil. Their preoccupation was their 'own good' and working together for the 'collective good of man'. These are the defining characteristics of Babylon.

It was this great wickedness that precipitated the Lord to pronounce the end of all flesh.<sup>47</sup> He declared that His Spirit would not strive with man forever.<sup>48</sup> The world was judged by water in the days of Noah, and it is reserved for judgement by fire in the end of the age.<sup>49</sup> It is significant that Jesus said, 'Just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will also be in the days of the Son of Man'.<sup>50</sup> He was saying more than the fact that the judgement at the end of the age will be unexpected. Jesus was identifying that the characteristic of the world in the fullness of times will be the same as it was in the days of Noah. Specifically, He drew our attention to the fact that in the days of Noah, they were 'marrying and being given in marriage'.<sup>51</sup> As we have discussed, the fruit of these marriages were the 'mighty men of renown', and this will be one of the major characteristics of the seventh world kingdom.<sup>52</sup> We can certainly identify this principle in the world today.

## The tower of Babel

Immediately after the flood, God restated the mandate which He had given to Adam in the beginning. He blessed Noah and his sons and said, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth'.<sup>53</sup> All of the descendants of Noah, who are recorded in Genesis chapter ten, are the fathers of the nations of the world. The chapter concludes with the words, 'They are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and out of these the nations were separated on the earth after the flood'.<sup>54</sup> For this reason, this chapter is often called 'the table of the nations'. It would appear that there are seventy nations in all. These seventy nations have been sown into all the earth to become a great multitude of nations.

In the time of the end, God will gather a great multitude from every nation and give them an inheritance as part of the twelve tribes of Israel. It has always been God's intention to give the multitude of nations an inheritance among the twelve

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46 Gen 6:5

49 2Pe 3:5-7

52 Gen 6:4

47 Gen 6:13

50 Luk 17:26

53 Gen 9:1

48 Gen 6:3

51 Luk 17:27

54 Gen 10:32

tribes of Israel when He gathers Jew and Gentile in one body.<sup>55</sup> Moses declared, 'When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel'.<sup>56</sup>

In the years following the flood, there is little doubt that the descendants of Noah knew that they needed to spread out and fill the earth. God had commanded Noah to do this. However, there was evidently some resistance among the people to this command. In the same way that Cain travelled toward the east and settled in the land of Nod, the descendants of Noah travelled toward the east and settled in the plain of Shinar. In the plain of Shinar, the nations of the world conspired together to establish the administration of Babylon in the earth. The people said to one another, 'Come let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the earth'.<sup>57</sup>

In this statement, we observe the four major reasons why the nations of the world establish the administration of Babylon. Firstly, the administration of Babylon is established because the nations do not recognise the sovereignty of God. They do not want to submit to the order of authority that He has established in the earth. The nations of the world build a city to be the headquarters of an alternate administration. Secondly, the administration of Babylon is established with the goal of reaching the heavenly places. The nations want an administration which can recover the dominion lost by Adam in the beginning. They want an administration which can control our natural environment and control the fate of mankind on this earth. Thirdly, the administration of Babylon is established by the nations who want the prerogative to use the resources they have received from God to define their own name and build their own legacy. Finally, the administration of Babylon is established to guard against anarchy and to maintain unity and peace among the nations of the world.

How successful can this administration of Babylon over the nations and kings of the earth be? Let's imagine for a moment that it was possible to coordinate all the strength and wisdom of mankind into one cohesive effort. Let's say that all the greatest thinkers, innovators and leaders in the world worked together for one common outcome. Let's say all the resources of the world were used with maximum efficiency. How much could mankind achieve if all this could be done?

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55 1Co 12:13

56 Deu 32:8

57 Gen 11:1-4

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We are reminded that the Lord looked at the tower of Babel and exclaimed, 'Behold they are one people, and they all have the same language. This is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.'<sup>58</sup> Babylon is able to achieve any goal from an earthly perspective, but despite its most valiant attempts, it can never reach the heavenly places. The pinnacle of human achievement has been frustrated by God. He has put a limit upon the administration of Babylon.

In this regard, we can contrast the tower of Babel with the vision of Jacob's ladder. Jacob saw a ladder set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven. The messengers of God were ascending and descending upon it.<sup>59</sup> We are reminded of the words of Jesus, 'You will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man'.<sup>60</sup> There is an administration which connects heaven and earth. It is the administration of the true tabernacle, which is the house of God. When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he declared, 'This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven'. He called the name of the place 'Bethel', meaning the 'house of God'.<sup>61</sup>

The nations presumed to establish an alternate 'gate of God' by building the tower of Babel. At this time, the Scriptures record that Nimrod became a 'mighty one' on the earth. He became an influential leader among the people with the mandate of implementing the consensus of all the nations of the world. Nimrod became the first ruler in Babylon; but the Lord came down and confused the languages of the people so that they were scattered over the face of the whole earth.<sup>62</sup> Nimrod then proceeded to establish other cities in the land of the Babylonians and the land of the Assyrians, which belonged to the inheritance of the families of Shem. Some historians suggest that he may have also been the first pharaoh in Egypt. If this is so, Nimrod established the beginnings of the first Hamitic kingdom of the world; that is, the Egyptians.

Even though the Lord scattered the people, the administration of Babylon has remained over the nations of the world since the time of Nimrod. It was formalised by king Nebuchadnezzar when he became the king of the nation of Babylon, and the 'king of kings' as the head of the administration of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar established the administration of Babylon over the nations that was later used by the Medo-Persians and the Greeks. In our day, the administration of Babylon still rules over the nations of the world. The nations submit to this administration for

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58 Gen 11:6

61 Gen 28:17-19

59 Gen 28:12

62 Gen 11:7-8

60 Joh 1:51

the same reasons that they conspired together to build the tower of Babel in the days of Nimrod.

## The dream of king Nebuchadnezzar

As we have already considered, a 'tree' in the prophetic Scriptures is often used to represent a kingdom. The nations that submit to a kingdom, and are supported by it, are likened to those who live 'under its shade'.<sup>63</sup> We recall that the kingdom of Assyria was also likened to a beautiful tree in the garden of Eden. The Lord 'made it beautiful with the multitude of its branches, and all the trees of Eden which were in the garden of God, were jealous of it'.<sup>64</sup> This clearly shows that the nations of the world were established and given a mandate by God in the beginning of the creation. They did not simply arise by virtue of their own strength as the history of the world unfolded. However, when the rulers of these kingdoms became arrogant and misappropriated the mandate given to them by God, they were judged. The passage in the book of Ezekiel regarding the Assyrians continues, 'Because it is high in stature and has set its top among the clouds, and its heart is haughty in its loftiness, therefore I will give it into the hand of a *despot of the nations*; he will thoroughly deal with it. According to its wickedness I have driven it away.'<sup>65</sup>

The Lord humbled the kingdom of Assyria at the hand of a 'despot of the nations'. This despot of the nations was king Nebuchadnezzar. The Lord took the 'lowest of men' and made him the king over the nation of Babylon, and the 'king of kings' over the administration of Babylon in the whole earth. Nebuchadnezzar was unique in this regard. He was the only king of a nation who was also the 'king of kings' as the head of the administration of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar set up the administration over the nations, which the Scripture describes as a 'misappropriating harlot'. As we said earlier, she is likened to a harlot that sits as a mother upon the individual administrations of the nations. In the book of Revelation, she is called 'Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth'.<sup>66</sup>

At the height of his power, king Nebuchadnezzar had two dreams. We will consider his first dream in our next chapter. In his second dream, he saw a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. The tree grew large, became strong, and its height reached to the sky. It was visible to the end of the whole earth. Its leaves were beautiful and its fruit was plentiful. However, in this prophetic dream, the king beheld an angel descend from heaven and command that the tree

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63 Eze 31:6

66 Rev 17:5

64 Eze 31:9

65 Eze 31:11

be cut down. He heard the command, 'Let his heart be changed from man's and let the heart of the beasts be given to him and let *seven times pass over him*'.<sup>67</sup> When Daniel interpreted this dream, he declared that the great tree represented king Nebuchadnezzar. The dream was fulfilled twelve months later when the king declared, 'Is this not *Babylon the great*, which I have built myself as a royal residence by *the might of my power* and for the *glory of my majesty*?'<sup>68</sup> While this word was still in his mouth, a voice from heaven declared that his sovereignty had been removed from him. He was driven away from mankind to dwell with the beasts of the field for a period of seven years.

'Seven periods of time' passed over king Nebuchadnezzar to teach him that the Most High rules in the affairs of men and gives it to whomever He chooses.<sup>69</sup> In fact, He sets over it the 'lowest of men'.<sup>70</sup> The 'seven times' signify that God has ordained seven world kingdoms throughout history to achieve His purpose and teach the nations and kings of the earth this lesson. When king Nebuchadnezzar regained his senses, he honoured the 'King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride'.<sup>71</sup> The rulers of the world who are 'humble in heart' will recognise that the Most High rules in the affairs of men. However, the 'arrogant in heart' will presume that they have risen to power by their own strength; and furthermore, they are free to devour the inhabitants of the earth in any way they choose. For this reason, each world kingdom has been revealed as a beast. The rulers of these kingdoms have had an appetite for power which cannot be satisfied. They have refused to abide within the limit that God has placed upon them. This has precipitated their judgement at the hands of the next world kingdom.

### The first interpretation of seven heads

The apostle John saw the woman, Babylon, sitting on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns.<sup>72</sup> The seven heads are the administration of Babylon over the nations. The ten horns are the kings who will emerge from the ten groups of nations in the seventh world kingdom. They will give their authority and power to the beast when the eighth world kingdom emerges.<sup>73</sup> When he was explaining these things to John, the angel said, 'Here is the mind which has wisdom'.<sup>74</sup> The implication is clear. We need heavenly wisdom so that we can properly discern the difference between the heads and the horns. Further to this, there are two distinct interpretations of the seven heads.

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67 Dan 4:16

70 Dan 4:17

73 Rev 17:12-13

68 Dan 4:30

71 Dan 4:37

74 Rev 17:9

69 Dan 4:25

72 Rev 17:3



In the first case, we know there will be seven times throughout history when a certain kingdom emerges to become the 'head' of the nations of the world. These kingdoms are what we would call the seven heads of the 'historical beast'. Since the days of Nimrod, the administration of Babylon has always ruled over these kingdoms of the earth. In this way, the seven heads are also likened to seven mountains upon which Babylon sits. They are also seven kings. John was told that 'five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while'.<sup>75</sup>

The Scriptures reveal that these seven kingdoms are Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and a seventh world kingdom. When the apostle John received this revelation, five of these historical kingdoms had already risen and fallen. Hence he was told, 'Five have fallen'. John lived during the reign of the Roman empire. For this reason, he was told that 'one is'. The seventh world kingdom had not yet come. It is emerging in our day from the sea of the nations. It will be a divided kingdom and will only remain for 'a little while' in comparison with all the kingdoms that have gone before it.

The apostle John received the revelation during the reign of the sixth world kingdom, but he was primarily looking at the beast in the transition from the seventh to the eighth world kingdom. We know this because he was told that the beast is just about to come up out of the abyss and go to destruction. It is only the eighth world kingdom which will ascend from the abyss.<sup>76</sup>

## **The second interpretation of seven heads**

The seventh world kingdom will be the seventh head of the historical beast, but it will also have seven heads.<sup>77</sup> This is the second interpretation of the seven heads.

It is important that we make a distinction between the meaning of 'a head' and 'a horn'. 'A head' is not the same as 'a horn', and vice versa. 'A head' is an administrative headquarters. 'A horn' is a king or a leader of a nation or group of nations. The critical point in the seventh world kingdom is that there will be seven crowns on the seven heads, but the ten horns will be uncrowned. We observe this principle in many of the democratic nations of the world today. In Australia, we vote for members of parliament. The party that holds the majority in the House of Representatives forms the government and then elects the prime minister. We

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75 Rev 17:10

76 Rev 17:8

77 Rev 17:3

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could liken the prime minister to 'a horn' and the parliament to 'a head'. The prime minister is the leader, but the primary power resides in the parliament. The crown is on 'the head', not on 'the horn'.

In the United Kingdom, even though each new monarch is crowned during their coronation ceremony, they are no longer 'a horn' with a crown from a scriptural perspective. We could say that the crown has been progressively removed from the English monarchy since the signing of the Magna Carta. The president of the United States has much more power than the English monarch in real terms. The president is elected directly by the people. This means they have a certain mandate and authority that is not possessed by many other heads of state. We could almost say that the president of the United States is 'a horn' with a crown. A president does possess executive powers, but this power is still limited by the Constitution. A president can be impeached and removed from office if they act beyond their authority. In this regard, they do not have a crown in the truest sense.

When the seventh world kingdom has emerged, 'the horns' will be uncrowned. The nations of the world will be dominated by democratic republics. There are very few dictators left in the world today, and we would expect that any who still remain will fall in the years ahead. The nations of the world will be grouped into ten geographical or trading blocks. There will most likely be ten common markets. Each common market may have the same common currency. The European Union with its 'common market' is the best example of what each of these ten groups of nations will look like. Each of these groups of nations will elect a president. These ten presidents will be the ten kings of the seventh world kingdom. They will not have crowns because they will not have any power beyond the mandate they have received from the sea of the nations.

The primary authority of the seventh world kingdom will be expressed through seven administrative headquarters of seven international bodies. Each international body will have an administrative headquarters in a particular city. We are reminded that Babylon is the great city which rules over the kings of the earth.<sup>78</sup> The 'great city' of Babylon will be manifest in 'seven cities' in the earth. Babylon will exercise power over the nations through the headquarters which are located in these seven cities.

Can we identify these seven heads in the world today? There are many international bodies which have emerged in the world since the inception of the United

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78 Rev 17:18

Nations in 1945. The exact shape and name of many of these organisations is still evolving. However, the seven heads may cover the following areas in some form: international law and human rights, international peace-keeping, international religion, international sport and culture, international education, international health and science, and international finance. There are some obvious examples of international organisations in each of these areas. For instance, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are international financial organisations.

We would liken the media to ‘a mouth’, rather than one of the heads. Each head will use the media as a mouthpiece to promote its agenda. However, the media itself will not be aligned to any one of the heads. There are some countries today which still control the media. In this case, the mouth belongs to the administrative head of the nation. This is not the case in Australia. The government is able to use the media to promote its agenda, but the media is an independent voice. More often than not, it will be critical of the government, rather than supportive. The trend which we observe in many countries today is that the media is progressively becoming the mouthpiece of a little horn. This trend will continue as the seventh world kingdom fully emerges. The media will be the mouthpiece of many minority and special interest groups. It will progressively undermine the authority of Babylon in the seven heads and the authority of national governments.

### **The first phase – the little horn**

One of the major propositions in this book is that there will be four distinct phases of seven heads and ten horns. The first three of these phases will belong to the seventh world kingdom, and the fourth phase will belong to the eighth world kingdom. In the remainder of this chapter, we will consider a very brief overview of these four phases and then we will consider them in more detail in the chapters that follow.

As we have already discussed, the birth pains of the nations in our day will bring forth the first phase of the seventh world kingdom. This kingdom will be characterised by seven administrative headquarters and ten groups of nations. The nations of the world will be organised into ten common markets. Each of these common markets will include many ethnic groups as multicultural societies. We know that the seventh world kingdom has not fully emerged until we see this definitive shape of seven heads and ten horns. In this phase, the crowns will be on

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the seven heads and the ten kings will be uncrowned. When the seventh world kingdom first emerges, Babylon will exercise rulership over all the nations of the world through the seven heads. The ten presidents who lead the ten common markets will be completely aligned with the seven heads of Babylon.

The book of Daniel reveals that a little horn will rise up and replace three of the ten horns.<sup>79</sup> He will take control of the economic power and resources of three major trading alliances or common markets in the world. This will not be a military action. The little horn will use deceit and diplomacy to achieve his goals on the world stage. His mode will be 'after the working of Satan' who has been a liar from the beginning.<sup>80</sup> The little horn will be able to ascend to such prominence on the world stage because he will be empowered by Satan from the heavenly places.<sup>81</sup> At this time, the little horn will become the predominant power in the seventh world kingdom. During this phase, he will realign national boundaries and reallocate the control of national resources among those who acknowledge his rulership. We will consider this in more detail in later chapters.

The first phase of the seventh world kingdom will be a time of trampling for the messengers of Christ and the church.<sup>82</sup> The little horn will oppose all the world's religions, but he will particularly persecute the lampstand churches in every nation. It will be his goal to destroy the Christian faith. Until the end of the 2300 year prophecy, he will appear to be successful in this regard. This will be a time of great falling away for the church, but it will also be a time of great restoration. The fellowship of offering will be restored in lampstand churches across the world.

There will be three stages in the judgement of the little horn which will bring the first phase of the seventh world kingdom to an end. The first will occur when the court in the heavenly places sits for judgement. The twenty-four elders will take their seat for the time of the end and the dominion of the little horn will be removed. In the same way that the little horn received dominion when the fellowship of offering was corrupted in the nation of Judah, his dominion will be removed when the fellowship of offering is restored in the church. When the fellowship of the daily Lamb, which is the communion, is fully restored in the church, then the dominion of the little horn will be removed from the heavenly places.

The second stage of the judgement on the little horn will be initiated in the heavenly places when the first seal is broken. The outcome of this will be clearly apparent

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79 Dan 7:8

82 Dan 8:13

80 2Th 2:9, Joh 8:44

81 Rev 13:4

on the earth. The white horse rider will go forth 'overcoming and to overcome'.<sup>83</sup> The church will overcome the little horn in the world. The truth will no longer be flung to the ground.<sup>84</sup> The gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed as a testimony to all nations.<sup>85</sup> At this time, the little horn will be overcome in the heavenly places and in the world, by the church led by the twenty-four elders.

The final stage of judgement on the little horn will be initiated in the heavenly places when the second seal is broken.<sup>86</sup> From the world's perspective, this will be the most obvious judgement of the little horn. The king of the South will collide with him and the king of the North will storm against him with a mighty army.<sup>87</sup> The rulership and authority of the little horn will be destroyed at this time by the king of the North, the Gog and Magog army. This explains when and how the little horn will receive his 'fatal wound'. He will be slain from a *heavenly perspective* at the opening of the first seal. He will be slain by the word which is the weaponry belonging to the white horse rider. In the book of Revelation, this weaponry is described as 'a bow'.<sup>88</sup> He will be slain from an *earthly perspective* at the opening of the second seal, when the king of the North storms against him.

## **The second phase – the fiery red horse**

We will refer to the second phase of the seventh world kingdom as the 'fiery red horse' and the 'Gog and Magog phase'. This phase will commence when the second seal is broken. It will be granted to the one who sits on the fiery red horse to 'take peace from the earth'.<sup>89</sup> At this time, the king of the South will collide with the little horn. The king of the North will storm against him with a great and mighty army. This is the Gog and Magog army which will come from the far north.<sup>90</sup> It is apparent that there will be a great military conflict at this time.

We have already considered that the little horn will realign national boundaries and reallocate the control of resources among various nations when he comes to power. The historically powerful nations will be enraged by this. This will be one of the major reasons why the king of the North will storm against the little horn. Once he has destroyed the rulership of the little horn, the king of the North will become the new head of the seventh world kingdom. He will reinstate the seven heads and ten horns. However, this will not be a time of peace. His rulership will be challenged by those in the east and the north, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.<sup>91</sup>

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83 Rev 6:1-2

86 Rev 6:3

89 Rev 6:4

84 Dan 8:12

87 Dan 11:40

90 Rev 20:8

85 Mat 24:14

88 Rev 6:2

91 Dan 11:44

Jesus said that this will be a time of 'great tribulation' for the church. It will be greater than anything that has occurred since the beginning of the world. In fact, the conflict will be so severe that nobody would survive if the Lord did not cut the time short. We know that He will cut the time short for the sake of the elect. There will be a great martyrdom of believers during this phase. The shedding of innocent blood will incur the wrath and judgement of God upon the Gog and Magog army. It will be destroyed on the mountains of Israel by the Lord Himself. The book of Daniel records that 'he will come to his end, and no one will help him'.<sup>92</sup>

The judgement of the Gog and Magog army will occur at the opening of the sixth seal.<sup>93</sup> It will immediately precede the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement. The apostle John beheld a great multitude coming out of the 'great tribulation', which will occur during this second phase of the seventh world kingdom. They will have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>94</sup>

### The third phase – the great red dragon

In chapter twelve of the book of Revelation, we read that John beheld a sign in heaven. He saw a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns. There was a crown on each one of his seven heads.<sup>95</sup> The great red dragon is Satan. He is also called the devil and the serpent of old.<sup>96</sup>

We will discuss how Satan gained access into the heavenly places during the time of the Greek empire, in chapter four of this book. When the Lamb stands up, Satan will no longer have any advantage in heaven. The church will no longer be trampled by the little horn. However, the stars of heaven will be shaken at the opening of the sixth seal when the sign of the Son of Man appears in heaven. This will signify that Jesus Christ is coming with the clouds of heaven for the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement.<sup>97</sup> The Day of Atonement will be a major transition for the church as it becomes the bride of Christ. In the period of the seventh seal, which includes the blowing of the seven trumpets, the serpent of old will manage to deceive a third of the stars of heaven. He will deceive a third of the stars in the same way that he deceived Eve in the beginning. This group of stars will be messengers who do not proceed to be rightly connected to the church as it proceeds forward to become the bride of Christ and bring forth the manchild.<sup>98</sup> The falling of the stars will begin to be seen when a great star falls from heaven burning like a lamp.<sup>99</sup>

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92 Dan 11:45

95 Rev 12:3

98 Rev 12:4

93 Rev 6:12

96 Rev 12:9

99 Rev 8:10

94 Rev 7:14

97 Mat 24:30

During this phase, Satan will rule from heaven and he will have the whole world under his control. He will not set up an alternate administration. He will rule over the existing administration of Babylon with its seven heads and ten horns. In contrast to the little horn phase, and the fiery red horse phase, the rule of Satan from heaven will be highly religious. When the Day of Atonement is fulfilled for twenty-one years in the time of the end, the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.<sup>100</sup> However, as in the days of Jesus, there will be many who will refuse to be gathered. We are reminded of the words of Jesus to the religious leaders in Jerusalem, 'How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling'.<sup>101</sup>

The Lord will pronounce judgement upon this phase of the seventh world kingdom when the two witnesses prophesy in Jerusalem for 1260 days, or three and a half years.<sup>102</sup> This will occur during the second woe. The two witnesses will be killed in Jerusalem, which will have regressed to be the centre of all religious harlotry again. It will be the city which is mystically called 'Sodom and Egypt'.<sup>103</sup>

The saints will overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and by loving not their lives to the death.<sup>104</sup> Michael and his angels will cast Satan and his angels to the earth.<sup>105</sup> When Satan is cast down, it will be the end of the third phase of the seventh world kingdom.

### **The fourth phase – the beast**

From the time of the seventh seal, which contains the seven trumpets, the serpent of old will deceive a third of the stars of heaven. The dragon will cast a third of the stars of the church to the earth with his tail. This will give Satan unprecedented power in the heavenly places during the 'dragon phase' of the seventh world kingdom, but it will also enable the eighth world kingdom to begin emerging. A great star will fall from heaven and open the bottomless pit.<sup>106</sup> This will release the powers of the abyss. Further to this, when Satan is cast to the ground and loses his kingdom, he will give his power, his throne, and his great authority to the beast. The 'deadly wound' received by the little horn in the first phase of the seventh world kingdom, under the judgement of the twenty-four elders, will be healed.<sup>107</sup> The beast, which is the eighth world kingdom, will receive power from

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100 Isa 11:9. Hab 2:14

103 Rev 11:8

106 Rev 9:1-2

101 Mat 23:37

104 Rev 12:11

107 Rev 13:2-3

102 Rev 11:3

105 Rev 12:7-8

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

the principalities that rule from the abyss, the dragon, and the nations of the world under the rulership of the ten kings.

In chapter thirteen of the book of Revelation, John recounts that he saw this beast emerging from the sea of the nations. It will finally receive a mandate from the nations and be able to claim legitimacy from them. It will have ten horns and seven heads. Each one of its ten horns will be crowned.<sup>108</sup> This is the first major difference between the seventh world kingdom and the eighth world kingdom. In the seventh world kingdom, the seven heads are listed first and they are crowned. The heads have the priority and the authority.<sup>109</sup> In the eighth world kingdom, the horns are listed first and they are crowned. The crowns upon the seven heads of the seventh world kingdom will have been removed. The only thing remaining on the heads will be 'blasphemous names'. We note that the beast in Revelation chapter seventeen, which becomes the eighth world kingdom, is 'full of blasphemy'.<sup>110</sup> 'Blasphemy' is a false claim of authority. The heads of Babylon will no longer have any authority at this time.

In the eighth world kingdom, the Lord will put it into the heart of the ten kings to have a 'common purpose' with the beast.<sup>111</sup> Together, the ten kings and the beast will fulfil the purpose of God by destroying Babylon. They will hate the harlot and 'make her desolate'.<sup>112</sup> After the ten kings have received authority as kings with the beast, they will give their power and authority to the beast.<sup>113</sup> For the final three and half years of history, the Antichrist will be the sole dictator of the world. Everything will be centrally controlled by him. No one will be able to buy and sell or participate in the economy of the eighth world kingdom without the mark of the beast, that is, the name of the beast or the number of his name.<sup>114</sup>

In the same way that the seventh world kingdom was judged by the twenty four elders, the eighth world kingdom will be judged by the 144,000. This will be the group of overseeing messengers who will receive a 'double portion' anointing as firstfruits, just before the fulfilment of the Day of Atonement. At this time, they will be sealed for their unique ministry in judging the eighth world kingdom.

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108 Rev 13:1

111 Rev 17:17

114 Rev 13:16-17

109 Rev 12:3

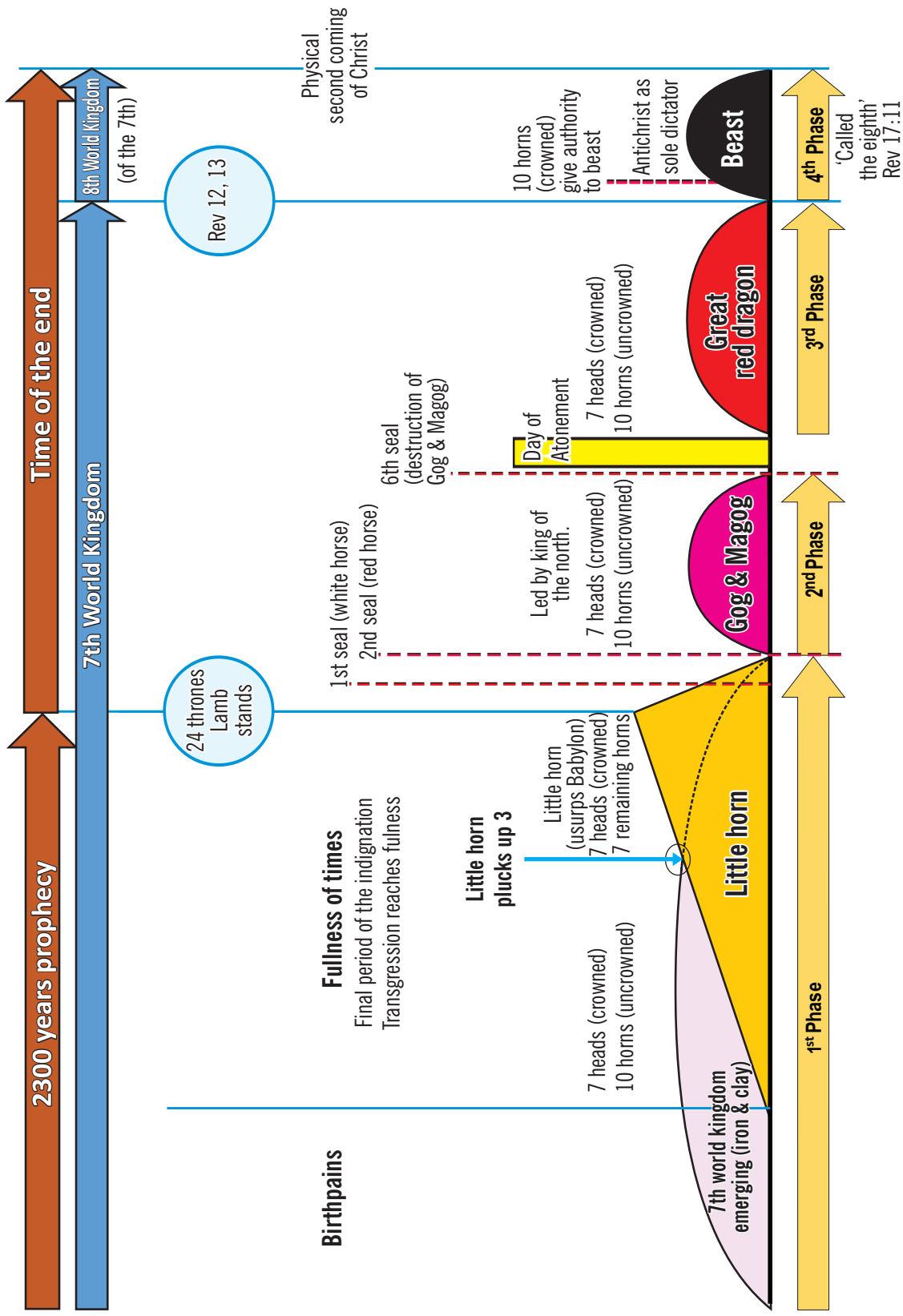
112 Rev 17:16

110 Rev 17:3

113 Rev 17:12-13



# Four phases of the seventh world kingdom





# CHAPTER 3

## Daniel and the kingdoms of the world

The prophet Daniel was among the first group of exiles taken into captivity in Babylon. The Scripture records that God gave him, along with his three friends, knowledge and intelligence in every branch of literature and wisdom. And most importantly, God gave Daniel the unique grace to understand all kinds of visions and dreams.<sup>1</sup> The book of Daniel is largely a record of dreams and visions with their prophetic interpretation. His prophetic visions focus on the kingdoms of the world from Babylon to the time of the end. They do not refer to Egypt and Assyria because those two world kingdoms had already fallen.

Further to this, the book of Daniel does not address the rise and fall of the eighth world kingdom, which is 'of the seventh'.<sup>2</sup> A further three and a half years is mentioned in Daniel chapter twelve, but the prophet did not receive any insight

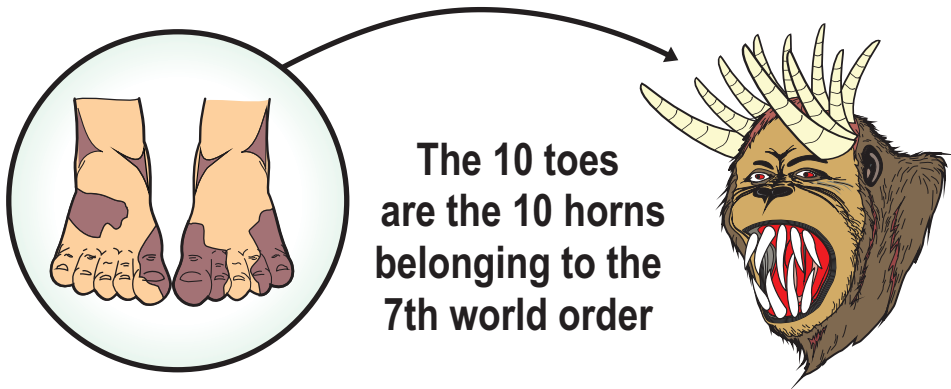
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1 Dan 1:17

2 Rev 17:10-11

## Five kingdoms in the book of Daniel

	Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8	
Egypt				
Assyria				
Babylon		Lion		1 head, 1 horn
Medo-Persia		Bear	Ram	1 head, 2 horns
Greece		Leopard	Male Goat	4 heads, 4 horns (usurped by little horn)
Rome		Dreadful Beast		? heads, ? horns (usurped by little horn)
7th Kingdom		Iron & Clay	Ten Horns	



into this kingdom.<sup>3</sup> Many Bible teachers have assumed that Daniel describes the antichrist of the eighth world kingdom. However, his preoccupation was the little horn and the spirit of antichrist in the seventh world kingdom. This simple point makes a huge difference in the way we approach the book of Daniel and the subject of Bible prophecy.

The prophecy concerning the eighth world kingdom was given to the apostle John. When John took the little book from the strong angel in Revelation chapter ten, he was told, 'You must prophesy again concerning many peoples and nations and tongues and kings'.<sup>4</sup> This final prophecy contains all the events that will occur in the 'days of the voice of the seventh angel' when the mystery of God will be finished, through until the new heavens and new earth.<sup>5</sup> With this in view, we can consider the book of Daniel to be 'the prelude' to the book of Revelation. They are effectively one prophetic book and need to be considered together.

## **The kingdoms of the world**

King Nebuchadnezzar was the king who carried the Jews into captivity. He was the first and most powerful ruler of Babylon. In the second year of his reign, he had a dream which greatly troubled him. This dream is recorded in Daniel chapter two. The prophet Daniel was able to recount the dream to the king and give its interpretation. The king had seen a single great statue. The head of the statue was made of fine gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, and its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. Further to this, the king beheld a stone 'cut without hands' strike the statue on its feet and smash the entire statue all at once. No trace of the statue was found, but the stone grew into a great mountain and filled the entire earth.

Daniel explained to the king that the statue represented the five kingdoms of the world, from Babylon until the time of the end. We will consider the interpretation of this vision in conjunction with the vision of Daniel during the first year of Belshazzar. This vision is recorded in Daniel chapter seven. Nebuchadnezzar's dream (in chapter two) and Daniel's vision (in chapter seven) need to be considered together. In a night vision, Daniel saw the four winds of heaven stirring up the great sea. 'The great sea' is all the nations of the world. He saw four beasts coming up out of the nations of the earth. Each beast had different characteristics. The particular focus was the fourth beast. This fourth beast was diverse and different

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3 Dan 12:7-9

4 Rev 10:10-11

5 Rev 10:7

from all the other kingdoms before it.<sup>6</sup> It was unique because it included the sixth kingdom *and* the seventh kingdom.

### *The first world kingdom - Egypt*

Before we consider the five kingdoms in the book of Daniel, we will make a brief comment on the first two world kingdoms. The first world kingdom was the Egyptians. They were descendants of Ham. There are some historians who suggest that Nimrod may have been the first pharaoh. The Egyptian empire was composed of three major groupings of people. It included the Egyptians who were kings and farmers. They settled along the Nile River. It also included the Libyans who were renowned businessmen, and the Ethiopians who were renowned warriors.

The Lord declared to Abraham that his descendants would be strangers in a land that did not belong to them. They would be enslaved and oppressed in Egypt for four hundred years.<sup>7</sup> In the Scriptures, the land of Egypt is a symbol of the world and it is likened to 'an iron furnace'.<sup>8</sup> The Israelites were afflicted in the land of Egypt, 'but the more they afflicted them, the more they grew and multiplied'.<sup>9</sup> The family of Jacob went down into Egypt as seventy people in all, and came up as a great multitude.<sup>10</sup> The Lord delivered them by the word of Moses and the blood of the Passover Lamb. In this regard, there is a striking parallel between the first world kingdom and the seventh world kingdom. Under the great tribulation which will occur during the second phase of the seventh world kingdom, the church will grow from a remnant of lampstand churches to a multitude which no man can number.

### *The second world kingdom - Assyria*

The second world kingdom was the Assyrians. The capital city was Nineveh. The Assyrians are highly significant from a prophetic perspective, because they were the kingdom that conquered and scattered the ten northern tribes of Israel. We recall that David reigned as the king over the 'whole house of Israel'. However, in the days of his grandson, Rehoboam, the kingdom was divided and the ten northern tribes were given to Jeroboam. The ten northern tribes split from Judah and became known as 'Israel' under the leadership of the tribe of Ephraim. When they split from Judah, Jeroboam made two golden calves and said to the people, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold your gods'.<sup>11</sup> He made houses

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6 Dan 7:7

9 Exo 1:12

7 Gen 15:13

10 Deu 10:22

8 Jer 11:4

11 IKi 12:28

on the high places and made priests from among the people who were not from the tribe of Levi. Every sacrifice that was made and all the incense that was burnt on these high places was an abomination to the Lord. This was called the ‘sin of the high place’. The Lord’s anger was kindled against them and He delivered them into the hands of the Assyrians.<sup>12</sup>

When the Assyrians conquered the house of Israel, they completely assimilated them among the nations and replaced them in the land of Samaria with people from many foreign lands.<sup>13</sup> This was a deliberate strategy employed by the Assyrians to avoid any future uprisings. They scattered the nations they conquered so that the people lost all sense of ‘national identity’. The Lord allowed this to happen to the ten northern tribes with a particular goal in view. The prophet Amos declared, ‘The eyes of the Lord God are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob ... for I will shake the house of Israel among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground’.<sup>14</sup>

When the house of Israel was scattered among the nations, it fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that he would only speak to them ‘through stammering lips and a foreign tongue’.<sup>15</sup> The northern tribes will never again be regathered as a definable national grouping of people, but they are regathered as the ‘fullness of the Gentiles’ in fulfilment of the prophecy to Ephraim. We are reminded that Jacob prophesied over Ephraim saying, ‘His seed shall become the fullness of the nations’.<sup>16</sup> This is an important point because all the prophecies concerning the restoration of the northern tribes of Israel will be fulfilled in the gathering of the Gentiles. ‘In the place where it was said to them “You are not My people”, there they shall be called sons of the living God.’<sup>17</sup> The prophet Isaiah declared that the Lord will ‘recover the second time with His hand, the remnant of His people’.<sup>18</sup> He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel and the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.<sup>19</sup>

Isaiah proclaimed, ‘And there will be a *highway* from Assyria for the remnant of His people who will be left, just as there was for Israel in the day that they came up out of the land of Egypt’.<sup>20</sup> This highway will be called the ‘Highway of Holiness’, or literally, the ‘Way of Holiness’.<sup>21</sup> This verse draws together the prophetic significance of the first two world kingdoms. The highway is ‘from Assyria’ because it was Assyria that scattered the ten northern tribes. This is not referring

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12 2Ki 18:11-12

15 Isa 28:11

18 Isa 11:11

21 Isa 35:8

13 2Ki 17:24

16 Gen 48:19

19 Isa 11:12

14 Amo 9:8-9

17 Rom 9:26

20 Isa 11:16

to the geographical location of the ancient kingdom. It means that the remnant of His people will be gathered as the fullness of the nations from every nation where they have been scattered. And the highway of holiness from every nation of the world will be 'as it was for Israel in the day that they came up out of the land of Egypt'. We remember that the Israelites were delivered from Egypt by the blood of the Passover Lamb. The word of a messenger and the blood of the Passover Lamb establishes the beginning of the highway of holiness for every nation.

### *The third world kingdom - Babylon*

This brings us to the time of Daniel and the kingdom of Babylon. The head of fine gold in Nebuchadnezzar's dream was Babylon. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that God had made him to be a king of kings. The Lord had delivered the nations into his hand and he ruled over them all.<sup>22</sup> In this regard, king Nebuchadnezzar was the head of Babylon and its horn. He was the supreme ruler. He was wearing 'two crowns', so to speak. He was the king of the nation of Babylon and, as the head of all nations, he was the 'king of kings'.

In Daniel's vision, the kingdom of Babylon was likened to a lion with eagle's wings. Its wings were plucked off and it was lifted up from the earth and stood on two feet, like a man. This statement connects this vision to Nebuchadnezzar's *first dream*. Babylon was the head of the entire statue which stood on two feet, like a man. Further to this, a 'human mind' was given to it.<sup>23</sup> Another translation says 'a man's heart' was given to it. This is a significant statement which connects this vision to Nebuchadnezzar's *second dream*. When Nebuchadnezzar 'magnified himself' in his heart, presuming that he had built Babylon by his own power and for his own glory, he immediately lost his senses. He was driven from the face of men to live with the beasts of the field for a period of 'seven times'. At the end of this period, he lifted his eyes to heaven and his understanding returned to him. He had learned that the Most High God rules in the affairs of men.<sup>24</sup>

As we have already mentioned, it was the Babylonians who captured Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and carried many of the Jews away into exile. It was the prophet Ezekiel who retrospectively identified the corruption within the Jewish nation which caused them to be taken captive to Babylon. While he was among the exiles in Babylon, the Spirit lifted him up between heaven and earth and brought him back to Jerusalem in the 'visions of God'. In prophetic vision, he

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22 Dan 2:37-38

23 Dan 7:4

24 Dan 4:32



beheld the corruption of the four administrations of Christ that provoked the Lord to 'go far away' from His sanctuary. He saw the great abominations that had been committed by the kings, the priests, the prophets, and finally, the elders.<sup>25</sup> As a consequence of these abominations, he beheld the *Shekinah* glory of the Lord of hosts leave the ark of the covenant where it had resided since the days of Moses. The *Shekinah* went up from the ark to the threshold of the temple, then to the east gate, and finally departed from the temple.<sup>26</sup>

The kingdom of Babylon was used as a tool in God's hand to judge the nation of Judah. According to the word of the prophet Jeremiah, the Jews were carried away into captivity for seventy years. During the seventy years of captivity, the judgement upon Babylon was invoked by Daniel when he interpreted the 'writing on the wall' at Belshazzar's feast. The words were written by the finger of God and illuminated by the lampstand. Daniel interpreted the message to the king, saying, 'God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it ... you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient ... your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians'.<sup>27</sup>

#### *The fourth world kingdom - Medo-Persia*

The breast and arms of silver in the statue was Medo-Persia. This was an inferior kingdom to Babylon. In Daniel's vision, the second beast (which is the fourth world kingdom) was likened to a bear which was 'raised up on one side'.<sup>28</sup> The significance of this is that the Persians were mightier than the Medes. In a later vision, this kingdom was likened to a ram with two horns. One horn was longer than the other, and the longer one came up last.<sup>29</sup> History tells us that the Medes ruled this empire and then the Persians rose up and became more powerful.

The Medes and the Persians introduced a different structure of government to perpetuate the administration of Babylon over the nations. Darius the Mede appointed one hundred and twenty satraps over the nations that were governed by this empire. And he appointed three commissioners to oversee the satraps. The satraps were responsible for the kingdom and accountable to the commissioners. We know that Daniel was one of these three commissioners.<sup>30</sup> When the satraps and commissioners became jealous of Daniel, they recommended that the king sign a royal statute which they could use to accuse him. Once this statute was signed, it became an irrevocable law. Even the king himself was subject to it. When the

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25 Eze 8

28 Dan 7:5

26 Eze 9-11

29 Dan 8:3

27 Dan 5:26-28

30 Dan 6:1-2

statute was used to convict Daniel and have him thrown into the lion's den, the king was powerless to change it. The satraps said, 'You know O king, that it is the law of the Medes and Persians that no decree or statute which the king establishes may be changed'.<sup>31</sup> Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the nation of Babylon and the head of the international administration of Babylon over the nations. The Medes and Persians introduced the 'rule of law'. The law was binding on the king, which demonstrates how the administration of Babylon still ruled over the kingdom of the Medes and Persians.

It was Cyrus, the king of Persia, who allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. He sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom and also put it in writing, saying, 'The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all His people, may the Lord God be with him, and let him go up!'<sup>32</sup> Of all the Jews in Babylon at this time, only about 42,000 people returned to rebuild the temple. This was a small remnant. Most of the Jews chose to remain in Babylon. They had established synagogues and were comfortably settled. Some notable Jewish families became successful traders and bankers. In many ways, the Jews in Babylon became the earliest 'merchants of the earth'. They joined themselves to the harlot who rules over the kings of the earth.

### *The fifth world kingdom – Greece*

The belly and thighs of bronze in the statue was Greece. The kingdom of Greece ruled over the whole earth. In Daniel's vision, the third beast (which is the fifth world kingdom) was like a leopard with four wings. This beast had four heads.<sup>33</sup> The four heads signified that this empire split into four kingdoms after the death of Alexander the Great. Most importantly, we read that 'dominion' was given to this kingdom.

The time which elapsed between the prophecy of Malachi and the coming of John the Baptist, has often been referred to as the 'silent years'. However, when we consider the prophecies of Daniel, the Scripture contains more detail about world events during this time than almost any other time in history. The revelation that Daniel received about the Greek empire, which is recorded in chapter eight and chapter eleven, is so detailed that it has led some skeptical scholars to suggest that it must have been written at a later date and retrospectively inserted into the book

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31 Dan 6:15

32 2Ch 36:23.  
Ezr 1:2-3

33 Dan 7:6

of Daniel. Of course, what it really demonstrates is how accurately the prophecies of Scripture have been fulfilled in history and will be fulfilled in the future.

The vision of Daniel, which is recorded in chapter eight, began when the prophet was taken in the Spirit to the citadel of Susa to witness the rise of the Medes and the Persians. In this vision, the Medes and Persians were likened to a ram with two horns. Once this kingdom had magnified itself, Daniel saw a male goat coming from the west with a conspicuous horn between its eyes.<sup>34</sup> This represented the kingdom of Greece, and the conspicuous horn was Alexander the Great. The vision revealed that the Greeks would destroy the Medes and the Persians and then the conspicuous horn would 'magnify itself exceedingly'.<sup>35</sup> Alexander the Great reinvigorated the administration of Babylon, the harlot, over the nations. History records that he did not change the administrative structure of Babylon which had been established by the Medes and Persians. He merely replaced all of their functionaries with his own people from Greece.

The vision revealed that, as soon as the Greek empire had become mighty, the large horn would be broken. History records that Alexander the Great died at the age of thirty-two in Babylon. Alexander died without an appointed successor, and a lengthy and complex power struggle followed. This power struggle is often called the 'wars of the Diadochi'. The term 'Diadochi' means 'the successors'. Daniel saw that four conspicuous horns would grow up towards the four winds of heaven. These four conspicuous horns represent four of Alexander's former generals who fought one another for control of the empire. However, most significantly, Daniel saw that a 'little horn' would grow out of one of them. We read in Daniel chapter eleven, 'The king of the South will grow strong, as well as *one of his princes*, and he shall gain power over him and have dominion'.<sup>36</sup> The king of the South was Ptolemy who ruled from Egypt. The prince who gained power over him was Seleucus.

History records that Seleucus fought as an admiral under Ptolemy for a short period while he was in exile from Babylon. However, once he regained a foothold in Babylon, he set about establishing a kingdom which soon ruled over eighty per cent of the former Greek empire. Seleucus was the little horn who 'grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land'.<sup>37</sup> The 'Beautiful Land' in the book of Daniel refers to the promised land, the inheritance of the nation of Israel. The Seleucid empire received 'dominion' because it was empowered by Satan from the heavenly places. We will suggest

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34 Dan 8:5

37 Dan 8:9

35 Dan 8:8

36 Dan 11:5

that this dominion was established over a period of time. Sometime during the early reign of the Seleucid empire, it reached its climax and a little horn grew up to the host of heaven. This may have occurred during the reign of his son, Antiochus.

### *The sixth world kingdom - Rome*

The legs of iron represented the kingdom of Rome. This kingdom was as strong as iron, crushing and shattering all things. In Daniel's vision, the fourth beast was dreadful, terrifying, and extremely strong. It had large iron teeth.<sup>38</sup> Daniel identified that it was different from all the beasts before it. As we have already mentioned, it was different because it included the sixth world kingdom, Rome, and the seventh world kingdom.

In the truest sense, the philosophy of democracy began with the Greeks in the city state of Athens. This was genuine democracy, where any citizen could come to the public place and be involved in governmental affairs. This form of government did not survive once Philip of Macedon, and later his son, Alexander the Great, rose to power and unified the Greek empire. However, the philosophy of democracy survived, and it was modified by the Romans to become the foundation of modern democracy today. The Romans introduced the concept of elected representatives.

We have already considered the way a little horn rose up to become the predominant ruler during the reign of the Greeks. This principle repeated itself in the time of the Romans. It is important to remember that the Roman republic existed long before the Roman empire. The citizens of Rome would gather at an assembly to elect their own officials. Julius Caesar was an elected official, but he increased his power by making strategic alliances and eventually defied the demands of the Roman senate. He was extremely popular with the lower and middle class citizens of Rome. Eventually, he had amassed so much power that he was proclaimed to be the 'dictator for life'. This was a recurrence of the principle of the little horn. Julius Caesar was famously assassinated by a group of Roman senators, but this marked the end of the Roman republic and the beginning of the reign of the Caesars. The Roman empire was now governed by a little horn principle.

The timing of all of this is significant from our perspective. The Roman empire was ruled by a little horn when Jesus Christ was crucified. This fulfilled the vision of Daniel that the little horn would 'fling truth to the ground'.<sup>39</sup> The little horn was also the major persecutor of the early church.

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38 Dan 7:7

39 Dan 8:12

### *The seventh world kingdom*

The feet of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream represent the seventh world kingdom. In slight contrast to this, the feet of the fourth beast in Daniel's vision belong to both the sixth and the seventh world kingdom. Daniel witnessed that the fourth beast would 'trample' the 'remnant' with its feet. This is a significant statement. Since the days of the apostle Paul, the church has been a 'remnant' in the earth. There is no doubt that the early church was trampled by the Romans, the sixth world kingdom. Likewise, this trampling has continued throughout the church age under various nations. It will intensify in the days just ahead of us when the first phase of the seventh world kingdom emerges. The remnant church will be trampled until the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy.<sup>40</sup>

The ten horns on the fourth beast do not belong to the sixth world kingdom. They belong exclusively to the seventh world kingdom. They are the equivalent of the ten toes on the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's statue. The ten horns represent the regrouping of the nations of the world into ten multicultural nations. As we considered in our previous chapter, these groups of nations will function as common markets. In Daniel chapter eleven, these ten common markets are called 'fortresses'.<sup>41</sup> They are fortresses which will be created among the nations of the world by agreements and alliances. We observe the beginning of this in the world today with many of the free trade agreements which already exist between nations. The strength of the ten political 'fortresses' will be their control over economic power and resources.

### **Iron and clay**

In the vision of king Nebuchadnezzar, the feet and the toes of the statue were made 'partly of iron and partly of clay'.<sup>42</sup> This reveals that it will be a divided kingdom. The strength of iron will be mixed with common clay. The different metals in the statue seen by king Nebuchadnezzar represented the strength and glory of mankind in each kingdom. They also represent the various 'governmental principles' employed by each kingdom. For example, the governing principle of the Babylonians was an 'absolute monarchy', whereas the governing principle of the Medo-Persians was the 'rule of law'. The seventh world kingdom will be unique because it will be the mixture of iron and clay. Daniel declared, 'It will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, in as much as you

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40 Dan 8:14

41 Dan 11:38

42 Dan 2:33

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saw the iron mixed with common clay'.<sup>43</sup> And he continued, 'They will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery'.<sup>44</sup>

The strength of iron was the primary characteristic of the sixth world kingdom. The strength of the Roman republic was its democratic form of government. In the same way, the seventh world kingdom will be composed of democratic republics. Leaders and heads of state will have legitimacy as democratically elected representatives of the people. However, the strength of this iron will be mixed with the weakness of clay. The clay represents the weakening impact of the principle of the little horn among the nations. The principle by which the little horn works is 'according to the working of Satan'.<sup>45</sup> We are reminded that Satan is the one who has 'weakened the nations'.<sup>46</sup> The emergence of the seventh world kingdom will be characterised by an uneasy alliance and then a power struggle between Babylon, the kings of the earth, and the principle of the little horn.

When we consider the feet and the toes of the statue, the little horn is a principle long before it is revealed as a person. This is the significance of the clay. The clay is the *governing principle* of the little horn before it becomes the mode of any one individual. Let us say again that the principle of the little horn is 'after the working of Satan'. Satan has been a liar and a deceiver since the very beginning. The spirit of antichrist is, likewise, a deceiving influence in the church and in the world. We read in the book of Daniel that the little horn 'will cause deceit to succeed by his influence'.<sup>47</sup> The principle of the little horn uses the deceit of diplomacy to weaken, undermine and usurp the strength of Babylon and the nations of the world.

We'll make two very brief comments on the conflict between the principle of Babylon and the principle of the little horn in the world today. Firstly, the strength of Babylon is the 'common good' of the majority of people. This is the philosophy behind democracy. It is the rule of the majority, for the sake of the majority. In complete contrast to this, the principle of the little horn is the fierce advocate for minority and special interest groups. The principle of the little horn progressively erodes and removes the rights of the majority for the sake of the minority.

Secondly, the strength of Babylon is based on formulating and then upholding a 'common law' for the sake of the 'common good'. The philosophy of Babylon is that the common good is more important than any one individual's good. The philosophy of the little horn is the promotion of individual rights above all else.

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43 Dan 2:41

46 Isa 14:12

44 Dan 2:43

47 Dan 8:25

45 2Th 2:9

This is progressively becoming the philosophy of our education system. Of course, ultimately, this principle manifests itself as 'lawlessness'.

### **The little horn – eyes like a man and a mouth uttering great boasts**

The principle of the little horn has existed in the world and exercised itself in various forms since the days of the Greeks. However, after the fall of the Roman empire, Babylon, in conjunction with various nations and kingdoms, has held sway over a divided world. This divided world has been designated as east and west. This is the meaning of the two legs of iron in king Nebuchadnezzar's statue. As the seventh world kingdom is emerging, we are also seeing the re-emergence of the principle of the little horn which will undermine and usurp the ruling principles of the seventh world order. This is the meaning of the iron and clay in the feet and toes of the statue.

There will soon come a time when this principle will be personified in a leader who will arise as a little horn. While Daniel was contemplating the meaning of the ten horns, he saw 'another horn, a little one, come up among them'.<sup>48</sup> The little horn will not rise up as an elected representative of the people. He will rise to political and economic prominence by the 'deceit of diplomacy'. He will not have a legitimate mandate from the sea of the nations. It is only in the eighth world kingdom that the little horn arises out of the sea of the nations as a 'grass roots movement' and receives its power and legitimacy from them.<sup>49</sup>

Daniel described the little horn as having 'eyes like a man' and a 'mouth speaking great boasts'.<sup>50</sup> The 'eyes like a man' signify that he is human and represents the special interest groups and philosophies of the world. The little horn will be empowered from the heavenly places because of the corruption of offering in the church. However, the little horn will arise from the political environment of the world. In the first phase of the seventh world kingdom, the little horn will be completely secular. This was likewise the case in the time of the Greek empire and the time of the Roman empire. The Seleucids and the Caesars were both secular dynasties. Even though the little horn is empowered from heavenly places, his wisdom is from beneath. It is completely earthly and sensual.<sup>51</sup> He does not have any spiritual insight. The apostle John said that the spirit of antichrist does not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. The principle of the little horn does

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48 Dan 7:8

51 Jas 3:15-16

49 Rev 13:1

50 Dan 7:8

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not recognise any authority that is from above. It is humanistic, repudiating all other gods, and demands only the worship of man and human achievement.

Further to this, the little horn will possess a mouth speaking 'pompous words' or 'great boasts'. We have already identified that the primary mouth of the little horn will be the media. We are not saying that the media is the little horn. Nor are we saying that the little horn is behind everything that is portrayed in the media. The media is still the mouthpiece of many things. It is the mouthpiece of the little horn, Babylon, and the governments of the world. Its particular bias in each nation will be determined by which of these elements has the most control. However, in the seventh world kingdom the media will have a progressive alliance with the little horn.

The media will articulate the view of the little horn and promote his agenda. It will ridicule any alternate view. We observe this trend already emerging in the media today. We are already hearing the philosophy and religion of the little horn from science and the media as they call all nations to join the 'brave new world'. With little or no regard for what is true, the media is able to undermine governments, sway public opinion, build up the reputation of someone one day and then turn around and destroy it the next day. The little horn will use the media to target 'mighty men' who belong to Babylon, and messengers of Jesus Christ who belong to the church.

The book of Daniel clearly identifies what the political agenda of the little horn will be in the world. He will have no regard for 'any god'.<sup>52</sup> He will be completely secular and atheistic in his philosophy and world view. The apostle Paul said that he will 'exalt himself above every so-called god or object of worship'.<sup>53</sup> The little horn will be opposed to all religions, but his most vehement opposition will be reserved for the Christian church. He will speak monstrous things against the 'God of gods'. He will make it his goal to destroy the credibility of the Bible and the credibility of the Christian faith. One of the reasons for this will be the fact that the little horn will have no 'desire of women'. As it was in the days of the Greek and Roman empires, the rise of the little horn will be characterised by the prominence of homosexuality and bestiality.

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52 Dan 11:37

53 2Th 2:4



## Replacing three horns

The little horn will only acknowledge one type of god – the ‘god of fortresses’. He will acknowledge the need and importance of making political and economic alliances. We are told that this will be a god ‘whom his fathers did not know’. In the seventh world kingdom, the ten common markets will be formed by alliances and agreements that have not existed in the world in previous generations. The little horn will not only acknowledge the need for these kinds of alliances, he will covet their economic and political power. He will use the deceit of diplomacy to progressively gain economic and political influence until he is strong enough to ‘take action’ against three of the ‘strongest fortresses’; that is, three of the common markets in the world. This will not be military action. It will be political and economic action. This will be the fulfilment of Daniel’s vision when he saw the little horn pluck up three horns by the roots and then become the predominant ruler in the seventh world kingdom.<sup>54</sup>

When will this occur? In years gone by, it has been assumed that the little horn replaces three of the ten horns when the eighth world kingdom emerges. However, there does not appear to be any evidence in the book of Revelation to support this conclusion. In fact, it clearly shows that the ten kings will receive authority to reign *with the beast* for one hour. They have one purpose, and they will give their power and authority *to the beast*.<sup>55</sup> Why would the little horn, when he emerges as the beast in the eighth world kingdom, destroy three of the kings that will reign with him and then give their power to him?

We will conclude that the little horn replaces three kings in the first phase of the seventh world kingdom *before* the time of the end. The sequence of Daniel’s vision clearly supports this conclusion. He saw the little horn pull three horns out by the roots, and then he *kept looking* until thrones were set up and the Ancient of Days took His seat. Thousands upon thousands ministered to Him and myriads upon myriads stood before Him. The court was seated and books were opened.<sup>56</sup> The fulfillment of this is recorded in Revelation chapters four and five. This clearly shows that the little horn replaces three of the ten horns during the restoration of the lampstand phase of the church, *before* the twenty-four elders are seated and the Lamb stands to open the seven-sealed book.

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54 Dan 7:8

55 Rev 17:12-13

56 Dan 7:9-10

## The stone becomes a great mountain

Daniel declared that in the days of the seventh world kingdom, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed. It will crush and put an end to the lies and principles by which the former world kingdoms functioned, and then endure forever. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream, the kingdom of God was likened to a 'stone cut without hands' which will hit the feet of the statue and grow into a great mountain which fills the whole earth. The stone 'cut without hands' will be the administration of twenty-four elders who will be seated with Christ in heavenly places and facilitate His rule in the time of the end. In Revelation chapter four, we read that the apostle John beheld a door open in heaven, and he was compelled to come up to the top of Mount Zion to behold the administration of the throne for the kingdom age.<sup>57</sup>

In the Spirit, John beheld a throne standing in heaven and One sitting on the throne. Around the throne were twenty-four elders, seated upon twenty-four thrones and clothed in white robes with crowns of gold upon their heads. We will connect this to Daniel's vision. He saw a 'throne set in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated'.<sup>58</sup> The Father is the Ancient of Days seated upon the throne, and the Son of Man, the Lamb, is brought near before Him. The administration of Christ for the end of the age will be activated by God the Father. The Father will give Him dominion, glory, and a kingdom. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away, and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed.<sup>59</sup>

In his prophetic vision, John heard a strong angel cry out with a great voice, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?'<sup>60</sup> We will suggest that this strong angel is Michael. He will be active again because the administration of offering will have been fully restored within the body of Christ. The Lion of the tribe of Judah will have overcome to open the seals as the outcome of the 'seven overcomings' of the lampstand church.<sup>61</sup> It is the overcoming of the lampstand church which allows the twenty-four elders to take their seat and judgement to begin. Daniel records that the court was seated and books were opened. We are reminded of the words of the psalmist, 'For thrones are set there for judgement, the thrones of the house of David'.<sup>62</sup>

Why did the apostle John see twenty-four elders? We know the early church was established upon the foundation of the twelve apostles and the 'apostles' doctrine'. In the time of the end, the church will likewise be led by twelve apostles. The bride

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57 Rev 4:1-4

60 Rev 5:2

58 Dan 7:9

61 Rev 5:5

59 Dan 7:14

62 Psa 122:5

of Christ will have a crown of twelve stars upon her head.<sup>63</sup> This means that there will be two groups of twelve. The symbolism of the table of shewbread clearly identifies this principle. There were twelve loaves which represent the apostles' doctrine, or the word of the apostles. However, there were also two crowns around the rim of the table of shewbread. The administration which is suitable for the fullness of times will gather all things together in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.<sup>64</sup> John saw the first twelve apostles and the last twelve apostles gathered together in one administration of the Lamb in the heavenly places. The meaning of 'heavenly places' is the spiritual things in heaven that are among us on earth. We recall Jesus said, 'The kingdom of God is in your midst'.<sup>65</sup>

The twenty-four elders will each have a throne, a crown, and a white robe.<sup>66</sup> They will cast down their crowns before the Lamb because they will be completely joined to Him in a fellowship of offering. It is interesting that the twenty-four elders will be seated and share authority over the kingdom of God with Christ. They will remain seated throughout the course of the book of Revelation. However, they will have a golden bowl full of incense and a harp.<sup>67</sup> This signifies that they will be engaged in an active ministry of prayer and worship. As the twenty-four elders sing in the Spirit, the command will be given which removes the dominion of the little horn. We are reminded that the principle of the little horn received dominion in the time of the Greek empire. It will be broken by the twenty-four elders immediately before the beginning of the time of the end. As the twenty-four elders worship the Lamb, the word of judgement will be empowered through them to remove the dominion of the little horn.

When the Lamb takes the book from the hand of the One sitting on the throne, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him. They will declare a new song, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God, and they will reign upon the earth.'<sup>68</sup> This is the parallel to the statement in the book of Daniel, 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him'.<sup>69</sup>

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63 Rev 12:1

66 Rev 4:4

69 Dan 7:27

64 Eph 1:10

67 Rev 5:8

65 Luk 17:21

68 Rev 5:10

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

The second phase of the seventh world kingdom, when the nations are led by Gog and Magog, will be destroyed by the song of the twenty-four and the blood of the martyr shed during the opening of the seals. This will be a period of great tribulation for the church. The church will be 'hated of all nations'.<sup>70</sup> However, we are reminded of the prophecy, 'It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; and all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.'<sup>71</sup> As the seventh world kingdom, led by Gog and Magog, persecutes the church in the time of the end, it will be the means by which it judges and destroys itself.

When the seals are being opened, the stone 'cut without hands' will be destroying the second phase of the seventh world kingdom, and at the same time, it will be growing into a great mountain which fills the whole earth. This is the mountain of the house of the Lord. The prophet Isaiah declared, 'In the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream into it'.<sup>72</sup> The nations will stream into it for the fulfillment of the great Day of Atonement.

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70 Mat 24:9

71 Zec 12:3

72 Isa 2:2

# CHAPTER 4

## The rise and fall of the little horn

Daniel received another vision regarding the rise and the fall of the little horn during the reign of Belshazzar. This vision is recorded in Daniel chapter eight. He testified, 'A vision appeared to me, *subsequent* to the one which appeared to me previously'.<sup>1</sup> We need to consider the vision in chapter seven and the vision in chapter eight as one prophetic package. The vision in chapter seven reveals that the little horn will rise to unprecedented power in the seventh world kingdom. However, the vision in chapter eight reveals how the little horn began to receive power from the heavenly places in the time of the Greeks. Most importantly, this vision reveals *why* the little horn is receiving power from the heavenly places. And it reveals *how long* the little horn will be allowed to trample the messengers of God and the church.

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1 Dan 8:1

Some years after Daniel received this vision, the angel of the Lord visited him again in response to his prayer and fasting, to further explain the meaning of the little horn and how it would rule among the nations. This amplification is recorded in Daniel chapter eleven and is part of the interpretation of the *same prophecy*. Gabriel explained to Daniel the things which have been inscribed in the Scripture of Truth concerning the little horn. In the days ahead of us, the little horn will rise up and speak monstrous things against the God of gods, but we can be assured that the Lord is still sovereign in all of these matters.<sup>2</sup> The rise and fall of the little horn has been inscribed in the Scripture of Truth, which is the word that has been settled in the heavens from before the foundation of the world.

### How did the little horn ascend into the heavenly places?

We discussed the first part of Daniel's vision in our previous chapter. Daniel saw a male goat coming from the west with a large conspicuous horn between its eyes. The male goat was the Greek empire and the conspicuous horn was Alexander the Great. When the conspicuous horn was broken, four horns rose up in its place towards the four winds of heaven. This described the split of the Greek empire after the death of Alexander. The vision continued, 'Out of one of them came forth a rather small horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land.'<sup>3</sup> This 'rather small horn', or 'little horn', was Seleucus who founded the Seleucid empire.

Our primary interest in this chapter is the next verse, which says that the little horn 'grew up to the host of heaven'.<sup>4</sup> We need to remember that this is a spiritual reality and may not coincide with the height of the Seleucid empire on earth. It may not have occurred while Seleucus was still alive, but it did occur sometime during the early reign of the Seleucid empire. The big question is: how did this happen? How did a little horn ascend all the way into the heavenly places? The Seleucid empire was established in the city of Babylon, which was the seat of the administration of spiritual Babylon over the nations of the world at that time. However, we have already considered that spiritual Babylon, despite its constant striving, is never able to reach the heavens. The administration of Babylon is limited by the capacity of man. It cannot ascend beyond the capacity of human strength and wisdom. Babylon sits only as a harlot on top of the kingdoms of mankind.

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2 Dan 11:36

3 Dan 8:9

4 Dan 8:10

## *The rise and fall of the little horn*

In terms of appearance, the little horn was far weaker than Babylon or any of the kingdoms of the world. It was not a great king, like Nebuchadnezzar. It was not a conspicuous horn, like Alexander the Great. In comparison, it was a 'rather small horn' with very little human power. However, somehow, the little horn was able to ascend into the heavenly places during the reign of the Greeks. The little horn was empowered by Satan from the heavens, and ascended to exercise dominion 'according to the working of Satan'.<sup>5</sup> The little horn was able to ascend to the heavenly host because Satan had regained access to the heavenly places.

In the beginning of the creation, Satan was corrupted by the abundance of his trade and cast profane from the heavens.<sup>6</sup> He was cast down to the ground and laid before kings so that they could look upon him. The fall of Satan should have been a testimony to every king that they could not ascend beyond the mandate given to them by God. However, Satan deceived the nations into believing that they did not need to submit to God's administration on earth and they could set up an alternative to God's firstborn administration. As we have considered, the nations established the administration of Babylon to rule over the nations of the world. This administration sits on top of the nations as the 'mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth', but it does not have access to the heavenly places. We conclude that it was not Babylon that opened the door for Satan to regain access into heaven.

It was the corruption of the priests after the Jews returned from Babylon that gave Satan the 'advantage' he needed to regain access into the sanctuary of God. When Joshua the high priest was restored in the days of Zechariah, the administration of God was significantly upgraded. The Lord of hosts promised Joshua, 'If you walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you *free access* among these who are standing here'.<sup>7</sup> The priests were given charge of the altar (in the court) and free access into the holy place. They were no longer limited by the direction of Michael and his angelic host as they functioned under their mandate. The Lord connected Joshua the high priest, and Zerubbabel the governor, directly to the administration of the heavenly places in which the *Shekinah* glory of God now resided within the throne of God as the Ark of the Covenant. In the New Covenant, this throne is called 'the throne of grace'.<sup>8</sup>

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5 2Th 2:9

8 Heb 4:16

6 Eze 28:16

7 Zec 3:7

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

We considered this principle in detail in the book 'The Pattern of Perfection'. If the guardianship of the angels had been a limit and a protection, then this 'free access' was both a privilege and a risk for the holy people. The sanctification of the holy place was now completely dependent upon the accountability and stewardship of the priests toward the altar. Likewise, Michael and his angelic host were tied to the plight of the sanctuary under the custody of the priests. In the days of the prophet Malachi, the priests became corrupt but the angels were not able to intervene. Hence, the Lord cried out when the priests began to profane the sanctuary, 'Oh that there were one among you who would shut the gates'.<sup>9</sup> The corruption of the priests, who had 'free access' into the holy place, left the gate open, so to speak, for Satan to regain access into heavenly places. When Satan regained access into the heavenly places, he empowered the little horn to rise up to the host of heaven. This explains why Satan could show Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and say, 'It has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish'.<sup>10</sup>

### **The transgression which causes horror – six outcomes**

In the prophetic vision, Daniel heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one asked the angel who was speaking, 'How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while the transgression causes horror, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?'<sup>11</sup> This verse clearly identifies what is causing the trampling of the messengers of Christ and the church today. The primary cause of the trampling is not the little horn. It is not the media or science. It is not the governments of the world. It is the corruption of the fellowship of offering within the church. It is the violation of the communion. This is the transgression which causes horror. As long as the communion of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the daily Lamb, is being violated by Christians, then the 'horror' of trampling will continue.

We will consider six major outcomes of the transgression which causes horror. These outcomes will continue until the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy, when offering is fully restored within the body of Christ.<sup>12</sup>

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9 Mal 1:10

12 Dan 8:14

10 Luk 4:5-6

11 Dan 8:13



### *The little horn tramples Michael and his host of angels*

The little horn magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host. The Commander of the host is Michael who stands guard over the covenant people of God. We recall that it was the Commander of the host who met Joshua as soon as they had crossed the Jordan River and had come into the promised land.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, it was Michael and his angelic host who went before the nation of Israel, fighting on their behalf during the conquest of the promised land.<sup>14</sup>

Since the days of Zechariah, the strength of Michael and his angels has been implicitly tied to the plight of the altar and the holy place in the true tabernacle. When offering has been fully restored within the body of Christ, Michael and his host of angels will stand up again. Michael is the strong angel who will proclaim with a loud voice, 'Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?'<sup>15</sup> We read in the book of Revelation that there will be myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands of angels around the throne at this time.<sup>16</sup> A myriad is ten thousand. Ten thousand by ten thousand is 100 million. The myriads are plural so this would indicate that there will be at least 200 million angels around the throne.

We expect this will also be the number of the remnant church across the world at the beginning of the time of the end. The angels and the believers in every nation will join together in one almighty chorus in the heavenly places, saying, 'Worthy is the Lamb having been slain to receive the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing'.<sup>17</sup> When the little horn magnified itself to be equal with the Prince of the host in the time of the Greeks, it was able to remove the regular sacrifice from Him and cast down the place of His sanctuary. However, in the time of the end, when the little horn opposes the Prince of princes, 'he will be broken without human agency'.<sup>18</sup>

### *The little horn tramples the star-messengers*

The trampling of the angelic host is one issue; but further to this, the little horn causes the star-messengers to be cast to the earth and trampled. The stars are the messengers with insight into the mystery, who are able to give understanding to many and lead them to righteousness. In chapter eleven of the book of Daniel, it tells us *how* the stars fall, *how long* they will fall, and *why* they fall.

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13 Jos 5:13-15

16 Rev 5:11

14 Exo 23:20-23

17 Rev 5:12

15 Rev 5:2

18 Dan 8:25

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

There are some messengers with insight who will fall into sin and not find recovery. However, in many cases, the stars fall because the Lord allows them to be trampled; but not because of sin. Some will fall by sword, some will fall by flame, some will fall by captivity, and some will fall by plunder.<sup>19</sup> And finally, some will be trampled as people cleave to them by intrigue and hypocrisy.<sup>20</sup>

Daniel was told that the stars will be trampled for 'many days'. The 'many days' refers to the entire duration of the 2300 evenings and mornings, which is complete when the Lamb stands immediately before the opening of the seals and the beginning of the time of the end. This trampling will be the plight of the messenger until that time. We are reminded that the seven letters in the book of Revelation are addressed to the overseeing messengers of lampstand churches who have 'fallen' from heavenly places.<sup>21</sup>

Every messenger who is willing to join the fellowship of Christ's sufferings in weakness will be helped with a little help.<sup>22</sup> This is the help brought to us by the Holy Spirit who is the Helper. Jesus said, 'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever'.<sup>23</sup> The Holy Spirit brings the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God. We are reminded that Christ was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God.<sup>24</sup> In this same way, every messenger is able to 'overcome' this trampling by the power of God. His power is made perfect in weakness.<sup>25</sup> The Lord allows the stars to be trampled because He is refining, purging, and making them white.<sup>26</sup> Messengers are being joined to the sufferings of Christ so that their priestly robes are made white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>27</sup> They are able to walk with Christ in white.<sup>28</sup>

### *The little horn removes the regular sacrifice*

In the tabernacle of old, the regular sacrifice was the daily lamb which was offered every morning and every evening. This was the foundation of all offering upon the altar. It included the daily meal offering and drink offering. It was a symbol of Jesus Christ who is the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.<sup>29</sup> In the New Covenant, the substance of the morning and evening sacrifice is the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices within the fellowship of the body of Christ.<sup>30</sup> This is our reasonable priestly service and our participation in the fellowship of the altar. It is the substance of the communion. The apostle Paul tells us that we are participating in the body and blood of the Lamb of God as we eat the bread and drink the wine of the communion meal.<sup>31</sup>

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19 Dan 11:32-33

20 Dan 11:34

21 Rev 2:5

22 Dan 11:34

23 Joh 14:16

24 2Co 13:4

25 2Co 12:9

26 Dan 11:35

27 Rev 7:14

28 Rev 3:4

29 Rev 13:8

30 Rom 12:1-2

31 1Co 10:16

As we have already stated, the 'transgression which causes horror' was the failure of the priests to guard and maintain the regular sacrifice. The reality of the corruption of the regular sacrifice was described in great detail by the prophet Malachi. The priests were presenting defiled food upon the altar when they accepted the blind, the lame, and the sick as offerings.<sup>32</sup> It was this corruption which allowed the 'horror' of trampling to occur. The apostle Paul used the language of being 'blind, lame, and sick' to describe the corruption of the communion in the church. Concerning the need for spiritual sight, he wrote to the Corinthians, 'A man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgement to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.'<sup>33</sup> He then continued, 'For this reason many among you are weak and sick'. He even said that many have died.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps the greatest corruption of offering is caused by Christians who refuse to accept the name and work that God has given them. They refuse to recognise where God has placed them in His many-membered body. They will not submit to any kind of authority, and nor will they lay down their life in offering for their brethren. This is the spirit of lawlessness at work in the church. And for this reason, many are weak and sick. A person who does not 'judge the body rightly' will not be able to receive the life and blessing of the communion. They will have no 'grace for life'. If they demand that God receive them in this 'weak and sick' state, they will be offended when they are not accepted. If they cannot humble themselves and deal with this offence, then a root of bitterness will spring up which leads to hatred and betrayal. Bitterness and hatred toward the body of Christ is the evidence that a person is spiritually dead. This is what Paul meant when he said, 'A number sleep', meaning that many have died.

The corruption of the communion in the church empowers the little horn in the world. And then, in turn, the principle of the little horn in the world endeavours to *remove the regular sacrifice*, or destroy the substance of offering in the church.<sup>35</sup> This becomes a self-perpetuating cycle. There are many churches who no longer celebrate communion for the sake of being relevant to a world that is becoming more and more influenced by the philosophy of a little horn, which is the spirit of antichrist. The meaning of the communion is no longer understood and preached by many leaders. The word of the cross is no longer preached because of the fear that it will cause offence.<sup>36</sup> People are no longer admonished to join a fellowship of offering. The principle of the little horn in the world exerts significant pressure on

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32 Mal 1:7-8

35 Dan 8:11

33 1Co 11:29

36 1Co 1:18

34 1Co 11:30

churches to remove any vestige of the 'regular sacrifice'. The pressure on churches everywhere is to cease being a context of fellowship and offering and become an organisation which meets the needs of minority groups in society.

### *The little horn tramples the holy place*

The transgression which causes horror, which is the corruption of the daily sacrifice, allows both the host *and the holy place* to be trampled. We have considered the trampling of the angelic host and the star-messengers. However, the trampling by the little horn also extends beyond this to the trampling of the holy place. The meaning of 'the holy place' is much more than the precincts of an earthly temple. Having dwelt in an earthly tabernacle since the days of Moses, it has always been the Lord's intention to dwell *in His people*.<sup>37</sup> This began to be fulfilled in the days of Zechariah and Haggai. The Lord declared through Zechariah, 'Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst'.<sup>38</sup>

In our day, the holy place is the corporate body of Christ. We are reminded of the words of Jesus to His disciples, 'Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up'.<sup>39</sup> He was talking about the temple of His body. We are living stones who are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood.<sup>40</sup> We are being built together as a dwelling of God in the Spirit.<sup>41</sup> With this in view, we can understand what it means for the holy place to be trampled. Even though there was a time when the temple buildings were trampled by the Greeks, and again by the Romans, it was the trampling of the people themselves which fulfilled the prophecy. It is the same in our day. The little horn will trample both the messengers and the church itself. The star-messengers will fall in unique ways, as we have already discussed, but the church itself will also be drawn into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. The nature of this suffering will be unique for each lampstand church.

### *The little horn flings truth to the ground*

In the first case, the little horn flung truth to the ground when Jesus Christ was crucified at the hands of the Romans.<sup>42</sup> The apostle Paul declared that Jesus 'testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate'.<sup>43</sup> He declared, 'I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice'.<sup>44</sup> Pilate responded by asking rhetorically, 'What is truth?' Jesus Christ is the truth, and throughout His

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37 Rev 21:3

40 1Pe 2:5

43 1Ti 6:13

38 Zec 2:10. Hag 2:5

41 Eph 2:22

44 Joh 18:37

39 Joh 2:19

42 Dan 8:12

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ministry He bore witness to the truth. He declared to His disciples, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life'.<sup>45</sup>

In stark contrast to this, Jesus said concerning the devil, 'He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.'<sup>46</sup> Let us say again, the mode of the little horn is 'according to the working of Satan'. He will cause 'deceit to succeed by his influence'.<sup>47</sup> We do not need to be concerned when we observe that 'the lie' is prospering in the world today. This will be the case until the conclusion of the 2300 years. The testimony of the truth will be declared in every place when the first seal is opened and the white horse rider goes forth overcoming and to overcome.<sup>48</sup> At that time, the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a 'testimony' to all nations.<sup>49</sup>

### *The little horn performs its will and prospers*

The little horn is able to perform its will and prosper because it is empowered from the heavenly places. Daniel was told that 'his power will be mighty, but *not by his own power*'.<sup>50</sup> Unlike Babylon, the power of the little horn is not sourced within itself. It is empowered by Satan from heaven.

In the first case, 'the will' of the little horn is to rise up and usurp the order of the nations that has been ordained and established by God. In this way, the Seleucid empire was successful in rising above the Greek empire, and the Caesars were successful in rising above the Roman empire. The principle of the little horn will again be successful during the reign of the seventh world kingdom. As we approach the beginning of the time of the end, the little horn will 'exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods, and he will *prosper* until the indignation is finished'.<sup>51</sup>

In the second case, 'the will' of the little horn is to destroy the people of God. It was revealed to Daniel that the little horn will destroy to an extraordinary degree. He will destroy many while they are at ease. The little horn will destroy mighty men and the holy people.<sup>52</sup> As we have already considered, the twenty-four elders will take their seat and the 'court will sit for judgement' at the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy. At that time, the dominion of the little horn will be removed. Every activity of the little horn after the conclusion of the 2300 year prophecy,

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45 Joh 14:6

48 Rev 6:2

51 Dan 11:36

46 Joh 8:44

49 Mat 24:14

52 Dan 8:24-25

47 Dan 8:25

50 Dan 8:24

will invoke the judgement of God upon it. The little horn will be broken without human agency by the twenty-four elders, and it will only rise again as the beast of the eighth world kingdom to 'go to destruction'.<sup>53</sup>

### How long will the transgression cause horror?

Having considered the six outcomes of the little horn being empowered by Satan from the heavenly places, we'll now return to the issue of 'how long' God allows this to happen. The angel who was speaking to Daniel answered this question when he said, 'For 2300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored'.<sup>54</sup> We know that this does not refer to 24-hour days because the prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Gabriel declared to Daniel, 'Son of Man, understand that the vision pertains to *the time of the end*'.<sup>55</sup>

We know the '2300 evenings and mornings' are 2300 years, for a number of reasons. There are only two prophetic formulas that are used in the Scripture to interpret the length of a symbolic 'evening and morning'. The 'thousand years for one day' is used exclusively for the overall creative and redemptive purpose of God.<sup>56</sup> The 2300 'evenings and mornings' is not a period of creation or redemption; it is a period of judgement and restoration. The prophetic formula which the Scripture uses in this case is 'a year for a day'. Concerning the desolation and the restoration of the land, the prophet Isaiah declared, 'For the Lord has a *day* of vengeance, a *year* of recompense for the cause of Zion'.<sup>57</sup> We recall that Zion is the city of the living God. It is the heavenly Jerusalem at the top of the mountain of the Lord.

The best example of this prophetic formula being applied is the judgement upon the nation of Israel in the wilderness. When Moses sent the spies into the land of Canaan, they spent forty days and forty nights walking throughout the land. Only Joshua and Caleb brought back a positive report.<sup>58</sup> The rest persuaded the congregation to disobey the Lord and not enter and possess the land. As a result, the Lord said, 'According to the number of days which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition'.<sup>59</sup> This judgement had one outcome for the older generation and another outcome for the younger generation. The older generation was condemned to forty years of aimless wandering until their bodies were strewn throughout the wilderness.<sup>60</sup> However, the younger generation were taught to be

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53 Rev 17:11

56 2Pe 3:5-8

59 Num 14:34

54 Dan 8:14

57 Isa 34:8

60 Num 14:32

55 Dan 8:17

58 Num 14:6-9

shepherds for forty years. It was a discipline upon them, training and preparing them to enter and possess the land.<sup>61</sup>

We observe the same principle with the judgement of the 2300 years. The Lord has subjected His covenant people to 2300 years in the wilderness before they are able to serve the Lord in His holy mountain in the time of the end. The prophet Ezekiel called this the 'wilderness of the peoples'. Ezekiel clearly connected the judgement of the Lord in the 'wilderness of the peoples', with the judgement of the nation of Israel in the wilderness in the days of Moses. The Lord declared, 'I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will enter into judgement with you face to face. As I entered into judgement with your fathers in the wilderness in the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgement with you.'<sup>62</sup>

We also observe that the book of Daniel is consistent with itself and this formula is used repeatedly throughout the book. The first occurrence of the 'year for a day' principle is seen with the judgement upon king Nebuchadnezzar. It was revealed to Daniel that his mind would be changed from the mind of a man to the mind of a beast, and 'seven times' would pass over him.<sup>63</sup> The literal meaning of 'a time' in this situation was 'one year'. An even more definitive example of the 'year for a day' principle in the book of Daniel is the 'seventy weeks' prophecy which is clearly seventy 'weeks of years'.<sup>64</sup> The Lord first spoke of 'weeks of years' when He said to Moses, 'You shall count seven *Sabbaths of years* for yourself, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be to you forty-nine years'.<sup>65</sup>

## The appointed time of the end

Gabriel declared to Daniel that the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end. This has two meanings. The first meaning is that the 2300 year prophecy will conclude immediately before the time of the end commences. We have considered this in some detail. However, the second meaning is that the prophecy identifies a principle which repeats itself before the end of each world kingdom. There was an 'appointed time' for the end of the Greek empire, and an 'appointed time' for the end of the Roman empire. The principle will repeat itself again before the 'appointed time' for the end of the seventh world kingdom.

In Daniel chapter eleven, the transition from the Greek empire to the Roman empire is identified in verse 29. We read, '*At the appointed time* he will return

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61 Num 14:33

64 Dan 9:24

62 Eze 20:35-36

65 Lev 25:8

63 Dan 4:23

and come into the South, but this last time it will not turn out the way it did before'.<sup>66</sup> It is called the 'appointed time' and the 'last time' because it is the last time for the Greek empire. The ships of Kittim were envoys of Rome. Antiochus Epiphanes was confronted by an ambassador of the Roman republic who drew a circle in the sand around him. He was told to choose whether he would leave Egypt immediately or be at war with Rome. In response to this, the little horn was enraged against the holy covenant and showed regard for those who forsook the holy covenant. He turned those who acted wickedly toward the covenant to godlessness. The forces of the little horn desecrated the sanctuary fortress, did away with the regular sacrifice and set up the abomination of desolation.<sup>67</sup> This was fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes in the time of the Greek empire.

We can identify the transgression which causes horror for the duration of the 2300 year prophecy. This is the corruption of offering and the lawlessness which exists within the community of the people of God. It is this corruption of offering which gives Satan an advantage and access into the heavenly places. The transgression causes horror because it enables Satan to empower the little horn, who tramples the heavenly host and the holy place. When this transgression has reached its fullness, it allows the little horn to 'set up' his abomination which makes desolate in the sanctuary. This is a further step.

The transgression which causes horror is the corruption of the things which 'should be in the holy place'. The little horn 'sets up' the abomination which makes desolate, to stand 'where it should not be'.<sup>68</sup> This happens when the little horn presumes to set up some kind of *alternate administration* in the sanctuary. The little horn can only do this because the corruption of the sanctuary has reached its fullness. It is the alternate administration, proactively set up by the initiative of the little horn, which is the sign of the impending judgement of God upon the sanctuary and the relevant world kingdom. For example, when Antiochus Epiphanes set up the abomination which makes desolate in the holy place, it was the sign of the impending judgement of the sanctuary and it was also the sign of the impending judgement of the Greek empire.

### **Those who know their God will display strength and take action**

As we continue in Daniel chapter eleven we read, 'By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people

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66 Dan 11:29

67 Dan 11:30-32

68 Mar 13:14



## *The rise and fall of the little horn*

who know their God will display strength and take action'.<sup>69</sup> If we forsake the fellowship of offering within the body of Christ, then we are among those who 'act wickedly toward the covenant'. We are reminded of the words of the wise man, 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord'.<sup>70</sup> The little horn targets those who are forsaking the fellowship of first love and offering. His goal is to turn them to godlessness. We need to be clear that once Christians begin hating one another and betraying one another, such behaviour is completely 'godless'. This is the way of Esau who became godless and profane.<sup>71</sup>

In the face of fierce opposition from the little horn in the world, Daniel was told that 'those who know their God will display strength and take action'.<sup>72</sup> What kind of strength and action is this? Firstly, the strength that is needed is not the outcome of self-righteous reaction and justification. It is the strength to go the 'way of the Lamb'. We are reminded that Jesus Christ did not open His mouth when He was reviled. He did not revile in return. He simply entrusted Himself to the Father who judges righteously.<sup>73</sup> The Holy Spirit strengthens us with the power of God so that we can follow Christ in this way. Our strength is not our capacity to *overpower* the little horn in the world. It is our capacity to endure in weakness and *overcome* the principle of lawlessness in the church.

Following on from this, the 'action' that is needed is certainly not social action or political action. The power of the little horn will never be overcome by these means because it is empowered from the heavenly places. In the political environment of the world, the little horn will perform its will and prosper for the duration of the 2300 year prophecy. There are many leaders who presume to be fighting the principle of the little horn in the world, by political means, believing that this is the will of God. However, they fail to understand that the root cause of the problem is not in the world at all. The root cause is the corruption of offering in the church. It is lawlessness in the church which empowers the little horn. Those who know their God, display strength, and take action, are those believers who commit themselves to the restoration of offering. Everything that will be overcome in the world, in the time of the end, must first be overcome in the church.

On this point, Daniel was told that there would be messengers with insight who would give 'understanding to the many'.<sup>74</sup> Throughout the course of the church age, there have always been messengers of Christ who have compelled the church toward the restoration of offering and, at the same time, been trampled because of

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69 Dan 11:32

72 Dan 11:32

70 Pro 15:8

73 1Pe 2:23

71 Heb 12:15-17

74 Dan 11:33

the abuse of offering. They have fallen and been trampled by sword, by flame, by captivity, and by plunder. They have also been trampled by those who have joined with them in hypocrisy, that is, by those who have exploited them. The Scripture is clear. This will be the plight of the messenger for 2300 years until the time of the end. 'Some of those with understanding will fall, to refine them, purify them, and make them white until the time of the end, for it is still to come at the appointed time.'<sup>75</sup>

### The final period of the indignation

In Daniel's earlier vision, recorded in chapter eight, Gabriel explained the things which will happen 'at the final period of the indignation'.<sup>76</sup> The word 'indignation' means 'wrath or fury'. In the first case, the period of indignation is the duration of God's righteous judgement upon His people on account of the transgression which causes horror. Even though Satan regained access to the heavenly places and empowered the little horn, it was God who delivered the angelic host, the stars, the sanctuary, and the daily sacrifice to the little horn to be trampled.<sup>77</sup> In the second case, the period of indignation is the wrath or fury of the little horn against the holy covenant and the holy people.<sup>78</sup>

The little horn will perform its will and prosper 'until the indignation is finished'. It is clear that the indignation continues until the 2300 year prophecy is complete. When Gabriel explained to Daniel what will happen 'at the final period of the indignation', he was evidently referring to the time immediately preceding the time of the end. The description of the little horn at the end of Daniel chapter eight, is referring to the little horn that will emerge during the seventh world kingdom. It is the emergence of the little horn 'at the end of their rule' when 'the transgressors have reached their fullness'.<sup>79</sup> The 'transgression which causes horror' began during the Greek empire, but it does not reach its fullness until the 'final period of the indignation'.

In the final period of the indignation, the little horn will destroy to an extraordinary degree, perform his will and prosper. He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.<sup>80</sup> The fact that 'mighty men' are mentioned as distinct from the 'holy people' demonstrates that the wrath of the little horn will be directed toward Babylon as well as the saints of the Most High. The 'mighty men' are 'men of renown', just like those who inhabited the earth in the days of Noah before the flood. The little horn

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75 Dan 11:35

78 Dan 11:30

76 Dan 8:19

79 Dan 8:23

77 Dan 8:12

80 Dan 8:24

will replace three kings and destroy many 'mighty men of renown' as it rises to power. We recall that it will rise to power by the 'deceit of diplomacy'. The little horn will cause deceit to succeed by its influence.<sup>81</sup>

The 'final period of the indignation' is likewise described in Daniel chapter eleven. We read, '*Then the king shall do according to his own will; he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done*'.<sup>82</sup> The verses which follow in chapter eleven describe the agenda of the little horn in the world during this time. We have already considered this in our previous chapter. He will show no regard for any religion and speak monstrous things against the God of heaven. The little horn will promote homosexuality and the agenda of many other special interest groups. He will use the media as his mouthpiece so that his propaganda reaches every corner of the world. We do not need to identify which nationality the little horn will be from, but we do know that he will not honour the God of his fathers. This may suggest that he will come from somewhere that has a Jewish or Christian heritage.

The little horn will honour a 'god of fortresses'. This is the god of political and economic alliances. He will honour this god by making alliances with 'gold, silver, costly stones and treasures'.<sup>83</sup> This is more than a reference to money, which is simply a measure of wealth or a currency of exchange. Precious metals, stones and treasures are symbolic of the capacities that God has given to specific nations since the beginning of creation. They represent the principles of government, the capacities of the people, and the resources which are available for them to generate wealth and increase. In a similar way to the parable of the talents, these resources have been given to each nation as a stewardship from God. The principle of Babylon promotes the misappropriation of these governmental principles, capacities, and resources by the nations. However, as a different principle, the little horn will use deceit and diplomacy to usurp the sovereignty of nations and progressively gain control of vast amounts of 'gold, silver, costly stones and treasures'.

In the period leading up to the time of the end, the little horn will have enough economic and political influence to take action 'against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god'.<sup>84</sup> As we have discussed, this is the fulfilment of Daniel's earlier vision when he saw the little horn replace three of the ten horns which belong to the seventh world kingdom. The three horns replaced by the little

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81 Dan 8:25

84 Dan 11:39

82 Dan 11:36

83 Dan 11:38

horn are three of the ten common markets, the 'strong fortresses' at this time. When this is complete, the little horn will have unprecedented power in world affairs. He will honour those who acknowledge his ascendancy and cause them to rule over the many. He will 'parcel out land for a price', which means he will redefine national boundaries in exchange for further economic power and influence.<sup>85</sup> This all happens in the period called 'the final period of the indignation'.

### The destruction of the little horn by Gog and Magog

When offering is restored within the body of Christ, the administration of the Lamb will be activated by the Father for the time of the end. The twenty-four elders will take their seat and the 'court will sit for judgement'.<sup>86</sup> At this time, the dominion of the little horn will be removed. Following this, the lies and deceit of the little horn will be overcome in the world when the first seal is opened and the white horse goes forth 'overcoming and to overcome'. At this time, the gospel of the kingdom will be preached as a testimony to all nations. The little horn will be slain from a heavenly perspective by the word of the messengers who are sent as the 'arrows from the bow' in the hand of the white horse rider. However, the actual destruction of the little horn, from an earthly perspective, will occur at the hand of the Gog and Magog army.<sup>87</sup>

The redistribution of wealth, power, and national sovereignty will enrage many nations, and particularly the king of the North and the king of the South. In the time of the end, the king of the South will collide with the little horn. Likewise, the king of the North will storm against the little horn with chariots, with ships, and with many horsemen.<sup>88</sup> This great confrontation will occur at the opening of the second seal when peace is taken from the earth.<sup>89</sup> The king of the North will come with a great army. This is the army of Gog and Magog. The prophet Ezekiel declared that this army will be summoned by the Lord in the latter years. They will come from the far north like a 'storm' with many horsemen and with a great company and a mighty army.<sup>90</sup> This will be the first evidence of the 'fiery red horse' in the earth.

During this time, the king of the North will enter the Beautiful Land, and the land of Egypt (the king of the South) will not escape from his hand. We read that he will 'gain control over the treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt'.<sup>91</sup> In the first case, the king of the North will 'regain control' of the

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85 Dan 7:25

88 Dan 11:40

91 Dan 11:43

86 Dan 7:26

89 Rev 6:4

87 Rev 20:8-9

90 Eze 38:15

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‘treasures of gold and silver’ from the little horn. He will then gain control over all the precious things that belong to the king of the South. He will become the most powerful leader during the second phase of the seventh world kingdom, from both an economic and military perspective. When rumours from the east and the north disturb him, he will go forth with great wrath and destroy many. Finally, he will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain. However, the Scripture declares that ‘he will come to his end’. The judgement of the Gog and Magog army occurs at the opening of the sixth seal and is described in great detail in the book of Ezekiel.<sup>92</sup>

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92 Dan 11. Eze 38.  
Eze 39



# CHAPTER 5

## The kingdom of God in the time of the end

In the time of the end, the book of Daniel records that the king of the South will collide with the little horn. And the king of the North will storm against the little horn with chariots, with horsemen, and with many ships.<sup>1</sup> He will come from the far north with a great and mighty army. At this time, the king of the North will rise to become the predominant leader in the second phase of the seventh world kingdom. The prophet Ezekiel identifies this king from the North as ‘Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal’. The last verse in Daniel chapter eleven says that he will ‘pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain, *yet he will come to his end*, and no one will help him’.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Dan 11:40

2 Dan 11:45

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

The first verse in Daniel chapter twelve is not a continuation of the narrative. It describes what will be happening *concurrently* with the rise and fall of the king of the North from the perspective of the people of God. ‘Now *at that time* Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people will arise. And there will be *a time of distress* such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued.’<sup>3</sup> Michael will stand up at the beginning of the time of the end and the seals will begin to open. The period between the opening of the second seal and the opening of the sixth will be a time of great distress for the church.

Jesus quoted this passage when He said, ‘Then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, or ever will.’<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, we will consider the two things happening concurrently during this early period of the time of the end. The first will be the emergence, and then the judgement, of Gog and Magog. The second will be the growth of the kingdom of God into a great mountain which fills the whole earth. We are reminded that the apostle John beheld a great multitude which no man can number coming out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.<sup>5</sup>

### Restoring the kingdom

We know that we are currently in a phase of restoration. The Lord is restoring lampstand churches in every nation. He is standing in the middle of His lampstand churches as our great High Priest with seven stars in His right hand.<sup>6</sup> Christ is calling the overseeing messengers in every place to return to first love and the heavenly places. It is the administration of lampstand churches which is suitable for the fullness of times.<sup>7</sup> It is ‘suitable’ for the fullness of times because this administration is able to restore the fellowship of offering in the body of Christ. It is able to overcome lawlessness within the church and the opposition of the little horn in the world.

When the administration of lampstand churches has been fully restored, it will be revealed in heaven as the seven Spirits of God burning before the face of the throne.<sup>8</sup> At this time, the focus of God’s administration will shift from restoring lampstand churches to restoring the kingdom. We are reminded of the way the

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3	Dan 12:1	6	Rev 1:16
4	Mat 24:21	7	Eph 1:10
5	Rev 7:14	8	Rev 4:5



disciples asked Jesus, 'Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?'<sup>9</sup> Jesus replied, 'It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority'.<sup>10</sup> It is the time of the end when the Father will activate an administration to restore the kingdom of God so that His will is done in heaven and on earth.

The kingdom phase will begin when the twenty-four thrones are set in heaven. As we have already considered in previous chapters, these twenty-four thrones represent the authority of the twenty-four elders in the time of the end. We read in the book of Daniel that the 'court will sit for judgement'.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, the psalmist proclaimed, 'The thrones were set for judgement, the thrones of the house of David'.<sup>12</sup> The twenty-four elders will receive the authority to judge the seventh world kingdom. However, more than this, these thrones represent the authority of the twenty-four elders to shepherd and judge the whole house of Israel and to render decisions on behalf of the nations of the world.<sup>13</sup> We recall the words of Jesus to His disciples, 'Just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel'.<sup>14</sup>

When the kingdom is restored, the authority of the house of David will be restored over the whole house of Israel as 'one flock'. At that time, the prophecies of Ezekiel will be fulfilled. The whole house of Israel will have 'one Shepherd'.<sup>15</sup> The Lord declared, 'I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them, he will feed them himself and be their shepherd'. And likewise, 'My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd, and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them'.<sup>16</sup> Of course, Jesus Christ is the great Shepherd in the lineage of king David. However, in the time of the end, He will shepherd the whole house of Israel under the administration of the twenty-four elders.

We read in the book of Jeremiah, 'Return, O faithless sons ... for I am a master to you, and I will take you one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding'.<sup>17</sup> We recall that David was a man after God's own heart.<sup>18</sup> The twenty-four elders will sit on the thrones of the house of David. The twelve apostles who will lead the church in the time of the end will walk in the same spirit as David who shepherded the whole house of Israel.

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9 Act 1:6

12 Psa 122:5

15 Eze 34:23

18 1Sa 13:14.

10 Act 1:7

13 Isa 2:4

16 Eze 37:24

Act 13:22

11 Dan 7:26

14 Luk 22:30

17 Jer 3:14-15

We are reminded that king David served the purpose of God in his generation.<sup>19</sup> In the last generation, the twelve apostles, who will be the twelve stars on the head of the church, will represent the order of twenty-four on earth and lead an administration which will feed the entire kingdom as one flock throughout the world on 'knowledge and understanding'.<sup>20</sup> In the age to come, we note that they will be the twelve angels at the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem who will have authority to grant access into the city.<sup>21</sup>

## Jew and Gentile in one body

When the kingdom of God is restored in the time of the end, it will include both Jew and Gentile in one body.<sup>22</sup> Before we consider the opening of the first seal and the meaning of the white horse, we need to be clear that Jews and Gentiles do not have separate prophetic destinies. Jesus Christ has broken down the middle wall of separation and made the Jews and Gentiles one in His body. He has reconciled them both to God in His body through the cross.<sup>23</sup> The apostle Paul was clear. Christ came 'to preach peace to you who were afar off [Gentiles] and to those who were near [Jews]. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.'<sup>24</sup> He declared, 'There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him'.<sup>25</sup>

The apostle Paul did not want any believer to be uninformed about this mystery, which is the gathering of Jew and Gentile in one body, the church, for the culmination of the covenant purpose of God in the time of the end. He proclaimed that 'all Israel will be saved'.<sup>26</sup> Even though the modern Jewish state is called 'Israel', they are not what Paul calls 'all Israel'. It is important to remember that the kingdom of Israel split in the days of king David's grandson.<sup>27</sup> The ten northern tribes became known as the house of Jacob, the house of Israel, the house of Joseph, or the house of Ephraim. The southern tribes were known as the house of Judah. They included the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of Benjamin, and the half-tribe of Simeon. The Jews in the world today will be the descendants of one of these tribes.

As we mentioned in a previous chapter, the ten northern tribes were conquered by the Assyrians and have been scattered throughout the nations of the world. They are no longer a definable group of people in the world today. The Lord has shaken the house of Israel among all the nations as 'grain is shaken in a sieve'.<sup>28</sup> When

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19 Act 13:36

22 1Co 12:13

25 Rom 10:12

28 Amo 9:9

20 Jer 3:15

23 Eph 2:14-16

26 Rom 11:26

21 Rev 21:12

24 Eph 2:17-18

27 1Ki 11:31

the Lord regathers them, they will be the 'fullness of the nations'. This will be the fulfilment of the prophecy which Jacob made concerning Ephraim. We recall that Joseph had two sons while he was in Egypt. The elder son was Manasseh and the younger son was Ephraim. When Jacob blessed these two sons, he gave Joseph a 'double portion' by including his two sons among the tribes of Israel. He laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim and his left hand on the head of Manasseh. In this way, he imparted the blessing of the firstborn to Ephraim. He said that Manasseh would become a great people, but Ephraim would be greater than he, and his descendants would become the 'fullness of the nations'.<sup>29</sup>

### **The first seal – the white horse**

When the Lamb breaks the first seal, the voice of Christ's kingship will activate the white horse and rider. The apostle John testified that he saw 'a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer'.<sup>30</sup> This is better translated 'overcoming and to overcome'.

There has been much confusion regarding the identity of this white horse and rider. Some have mistakenly assumed that this is the antichrist. Such an assumption would be inconsistent with the symbolism of the white horse throughout the Scriptures. The white horse is never associated with the principle of antichrist. In fact, the opposite is true. The white horse is part of the administration which *judges* antichrist. The great fulfilment of this is recorded in Revelation chapter nineteen. John declared, 'I saw heaven opened, and behold, a *white horse*, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war'.<sup>31</sup> The beast and the kings of the earth and their armies will assemble to make war 'against Him who sat on the horse and against His army'.<sup>32</sup> Jesus Christ will cast the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire and slay the rest of their armies with the sharp sword which comes from His mouth.<sup>33</sup>

When the first seal is broken, the white horse will not be overcoming the final Antichrist. It will be going forth to overcome the little horn in the seventh world kingdom. And more than this, it will be going forth to overcome the nations of the world, led by Gog and Magog, and to gather Jew and Gentile into one body. The Jews have always considered that the white horse will ride for the deliverance of Judah. The prophet Zechariah declared, 'For the Lord has visited His flock, the

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29 Gen 48:19

32 Rev 19:19

30 Rev 6:1-2

33 Rev 19:20

31 Rev 19:11

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

house of Judah, and will make them like His majestic horse in battle'.<sup>34</sup> This is the significance of the white horse. It is the Lord's majestic horse in battle to overcome the nations of the world.

John saw that the white horse rider will have a bow, and a crown will be given to Him. The prophet Zechariah continued to say that the cornerstone, the tent peg, the 'bow of battle', and every ruler will come forth together from the house of Judah.<sup>35</sup> We will make a brief comment on the cornerstone and the tent peg. Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the true temple. We are familiar with the prophecy of Isaiah, 'Behold I lay in Zion a stone, a tested stone, a costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in Him will not be disturbed.'<sup>36</sup> Both Paul and Peter develop this theme to show that we are living stones in the true temple as members of the body of Christ.<sup>37</sup>

Further to this, Jesus Christ is the 'peg in the holy place' as our great High Priest in the true temple. In the days when the Jewish nation returned from exile in Babylon, Ezra said, 'For a brief moment grace has been shown from the Lord to leave us an escaped remnant and to give us a peg in His holy place'.<sup>38</sup> The nation had a peg in the holy place for a 'brief moment' when the priesthood was restored. However, we know that Jesus Christ has been made to be a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.<sup>39</sup> He holds His priesthood permanently.<sup>40</sup> And more than this, He has made us to be a kingdom of priests to His God and Father.<sup>41</sup> When we are baptised into Christ, we are clothed with His priestly garments and we become part of a *corporate priesthood*.

The significance of the 'cornerstone' and the 'tent peg' is clear, but what is the significance of the 'bow of battle'? To answer this question, we need to consider an earlier passage in the book of Zechariah. The Lord said, 'Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope; this very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you. For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and I will make you like a warrior's sword.'<sup>42</sup> The 'stronghold' referred to here is the 'stronghold of Zion'. It is Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.<sup>43</sup> This is the mountain of the house of the Lord which will be raised up to become the chief mountain over all the nations of the world in the time of the end.<sup>44</sup> The apostle John described the 'stronghold of Zion' in the heavenly places in Revelation chapter four and five.

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34 Zec 10:3

35 Zec 10:4

36 Isa 28:16

37 1Pe 2:6.  
Eph 2:20-22

38 Ezr 9:8

39 Heb 7:17

40 Heb 7:24

41 Rev 1:6

42 Zec 9:12-13

43 Heb 12:22

44 Isa 2:2

The key here is that when the Lord begins to restore the kingdom of God in the time of the end, He will firstly 'restore double' to the 'prisoners who have the hope'.<sup>45</sup> We are reminded that the apostle Paul was a prisoner of Jesus Christ for the sake of the Gentiles. He wrote to Timothy, 'Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God who saved us and called us with a holy calling'.<sup>46</sup> In the first case, the 'prisoners who have the hope' are the messengers of Jesus Christ who have been entrusted with the mandate of proclaiming the hope of sonship in every nation. When the Lord activates the administration in the time of the end to restore the kingdom, the work and ministry of Christ's ascension-gift messengers will upgrade from the order of seventy-two to the order of 144,000.

### **The order of seventy-two**

The number which represents Christ's ascension-gift messengers in the lampstand phase is seventy-two. We are reminded that there were seventy people from the house of Jacob that went down into Egypt.<sup>47</sup> The two sons of Joseph who became part of the house of Jacob were already in Egypt, which makes seventy-two in all. The nation went into Egypt as seventy-two and came out of Egypt as a great multitude, as numerous as the stars of heaven. This is the same principle as Christ's messengers being sent into the world today to deliver a great multitude which no man can number, out of the world.

The next example of seventy-two in the Scripture is when the Lord instructed Moses to bring 'Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel' up to Mount Sinai. There were *seventy-two elders* in all, including Nadab and Abihu, consisting of six elders from each tribe. We surmise that Nadab and Abihu were mentioned specifically because they were ordained as priests in the house of Aaron and numbered among the elders from the tribe of Levi. These seventy-two elders saw the God of Israel and the pavement of sapphire, as clear as the heavens itself, under His feet. In His great mercy, the Lord did not stretch out His hand against these elders. Rather, they saw God and they ate and drank in His presence.<sup>48</sup>

These were the same elders who took their stand with Moses to 'bear the burden of the people' with him. The Lord anointed them with some of the Spirit that had been given to Moses and they were able to prophesy.<sup>49</sup> When Nadab and Abihu died for offering strange fire before the Lord, this number was reduced to seventy.<sup>50</sup>

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45 Zec 9:12

48 Exo 24:9-11

46 2Ti 1:8

49 Num 11:24-25

47 Gen 46:27.

50 Lev 10:1-2

Exo 1:5. Deu 10:22

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

The Jewish Sanhedrin was established on this reduced number of seventy. However, it is important to recognise that God originally anointed seventy-two elders with Moses. These men were part of the shepherding administration that God had established over the nation.

In a similar way, Jesus appointed the twelve disciples and then He appointed another seventy-two disciples. The seventy-two disciples were anointed with the Spirit and sent as messengers before the face of Christ. He sent the seventy-two disciples before His face into all the places where He was about to go.<sup>51</sup> They were sent as lambs amidst wolves to look for worthy houses who would become labourers in the harvest field of the kingdom.

We know that Jesus delivered the mandate of taking the gospel into all the nations of the world to the twelve apostles, but they were not the ones who fulfilled this mandate. When the church in Jerusalem fell under severe persecution, the believers were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.<sup>52</sup> They continued to give themselves to the ministry of the word and to prayer.<sup>53</sup> When the twelve apostles sat together, the word grew and multiplied. However, it was proclaimed as a testimony in all nations by an ascension-gift administration. The apostle Paul was part of this administration. The Lord sent him to establish lampstand churches among all the Gentile nations.

The apostle Paul was a man of revelation but he did not go beyond the word of the apostles and prophets, that is, the things written in the Scriptures. In this way, the apostle Paul was in the order of 'seventy-two'. He described himself as an 'under-oarsman' of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God.<sup>54</sup> An 'under-oarsman' is someone who is 'under the one rowing'. This is the administration of the church which is revealed in the first chapter of the book of Revelation. Jesus Christ is standing among His lampstand churches with seven stars in His right hand. The messengers of Christ, who comprise the star for each lampstand church, are 'after the order of seventy-two'.

Throughout the church age, the primary mandate of the messengers of Christ is to be priests of the gospel of God. In his letter to the Romans, Paul described himself as a priest of Jesus Christ 'ministering as a priest the gospel of God' so that his offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable before God.<sup>55</sup> As we have said many times in this book, the focus of the lampstand phase of the church is the restoration of offering. This is a priestly mandate. The messengers of Jesus Christ

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51 Luk 10:1-3

54 1Co 4:1

52 Act 8:1

55 Rom 15:16

53 Act 6:4

have authority in the church, but they do not express any kind of kingship toward the world. When the kingdom phase of the church begins in the time of the end, the Lord will restore a further mandate of kingship in His administration. This is the significance of His promise, 'I will restore double to you'.<sup>56</sup> It means that messengers of Christ will have a mandate of priesthood and kingship in the church and in the world.

The restoration of this double portion will give the messengers of Christ an added spiritual capacity for warfare in the world. In the lampstand phase of the church, the overseeing messengers of each lampstand church are likened to stars in the right hand of Christ. The symbolism of stars is used to describe the primary nature of their ministry at this time. They are messengers who are giving insight to the church and leading many to righteousness.<sup>57</sup> Of course, this ministry will continue into the kingdom phase. However, in the kingdom phase, the messengers of Christ are likened to the 'arrows of Ephraim' in the 'bow of Judah'.<sup>58</sup> This symbolism emphasises the extra portion of their mandate in the time of the end. The messengers of Christ will receive a new mandate for spiritual warfare under the authority of the twenty-four elders.

Looking ahead to this day, the apostle Paul declared, 'For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war in the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.'<sup>59</sup> As we have considered, the little horn will magnify himself above all religions and speak monstrous things against the God of heaven. When the first seal is broken, the messengers of Christ will have the mandate, under the authority of the twenty-four, to destroy all of the speculations of the little horn. However, more than this, they will have the mandate under the authority of the twenty-four to destroy the fortress of Gog and Magog and reclaim the mountains of Israel for the kingdom of God.

## **The ten thousands of Ephraim**

We read in the book of Jude that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied that the Lord would come with ten thousand of his holy ones.<sup>60</sup> To understand the meaning of this, we need to consider the words of the song of Moses before the nation of Israel entered the promised land. He said concerning the sons of Joseph,

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56 Zec 9:12

59 2Co 10:4-5

57 Dan 12:3

60 Jud 1:14

58 Zec 9:13

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

'Blessed of the Lord is *his land*, with the precious things of heaven, with the dew ... with the best things of the ancient mountains, with the precious things of the everlasting hills, with the precious things of the earth and its fullness'.<sup>61</sup> In the book of Ezekiel, these mountains are called 'the mountains of Israel'. They are the inheritance of Ephraim as the fullness of the nations. These are the mountains upon which the Lord will judge the army of Gog and Magog at the opening of the sixth seal.<sup>62</sup>

Moses continued by likening the sons of Joseph to a firstborn ox with glory and majesty. He recognised that the blessing of the firstborn had been given to Joseph as a double portion. However, more than this, he said that the sons of Joseph would have the horns of a 'wild ox' and they would 'push the peoples to the ends of the earth'. This could equally be translated that they will 'push the people together from the ends of the earth'.<sup>63</sup> Both of these things will be true. Moses declared that the horns of the 'wild ox' are the 'ten thousands of Ephraim' and the 'thousands of Manasseh'. The 'ten thousands of Ephraim' will be the messengers who will gather the fullness of the nations into the body of Christ in the time of the end.

There will be no principality or power, in heaven or on the earth, which will be able to hinder the mandate of the 'ten thousands of Ephraim' to gather the nations and take possession of the 'mountains of Israel'. This point is clearly illustrated by the account of Balak and Balaam. We recall that Balak was the king of Moab, one of the nations descended from Lot. He hired Balaam to curse the nation of Israel as they made their way to the promised land. However, the Lord used Balaam as a tool in His hand to bless the nation of Israel. He turned the curse into a blessing.<sup>64</sup> Balaam prophesied, 'God brings them out of Egypt, He is for them *like the horns of the wild ox*. For there is no omen against Jacob, nor is there any divination against Israel.'<sup>65</sup> Likewise, he declared, 'God brings him out of Egypt, He is for him *like the horns of the wild ox*. He will devour the nations who are his adversaries, and will crush their bones in pieces, and shatter them with his arrows.'<sup>66</sup>

The symbolism of the Lord's 'arrows' is important. It connects this principle with the verse we have already considered in the book of Zechariah; that is, 'I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim'. The bow will be filled with the 'ten thousands of Ephraim'. These holy ones will be the arrows of the Almighty who will shatter the adversaries of the kingdom of God. Moses likened the 'ten thousands of holy ones' to the 'fiery law' or 'flashes of lightning' that come from the

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61 Deu 33:13-16

64 Deu 23:5

62 Eze 39:4

65 Num 23:22-23

63 Deu 33:17

66 Num 24:8



right hand of the Lord for the sake of the people whom He loves.<sup>67</sup> When the Lord appears with ten thousands of His saints, His arrow will go forth like lightning.<sup>68</sup> This will begin when the Lamb stands to open the first seal.

The prophet Zechariah continued, 'The Lord will blow the trumpet, and will march in the storm winds of the south. The Lord of hosts will defend them.' They will be defended from the army of Gog and Magog that will be coming upon them like a storm from the north at this time. The Lord will 'save them in that day as the flock of His people, for they are the stones of a crown, sparkling in His land'. The New King James translation says that they will be 'lifted up like a banner over His land'.<sup>69</sup> The Lord will use the 'ten thousands of Ephraim' to recover and reclaim the land of Israel. They will be His army standing on the mountains of Israel. We are reminded that there were 'ten thousand' mighty men from each tribe of Israel which led the conquest of the promised land in the days of Joshua and the judges.<sup>70</sup>

## The covenant of the land

The Lord made an Everlasting Covenant with Abraham saying, 'In your Seed, all the nations of the earth will be blessed'.<sup>71</sup> The Gentiles have received the blessing of Abraham in Jesus Christ according to this promise. And according to this promise, the fullness of the nations will be gathered into the kingdom of God, which is in Christ, in the time of the end. The Lord has scattered the house of Ephraim among the nations so that this promise will be fulfilled. However, we shouldn't overlook the other promise which the Lord made to Abraham concerning the inheritance and possession of the land. The Lord said to him, 'I will give it to you and to your descendants forever ... arise, walk about the land through its length and breadth, for I will give it to you'.<sup>72</sup>

The Lord made this promise a 'covenant' when He passed between the pieces of Abraham's offering with the smoking oven and the burning torch.<sup>73</sup> The Scriptures record, 'On that day the Lord *made a covenant* with Abram saying, "To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river Euphrates".<sup>74</sup> This was not an Everlasting Covenant in the same way as the covenant of sonship, but the land was part of the inheritance of the nation of Israel.<sup>75</sup> And likewise, the land is part of the inheritance of the church, the true Israel of God, in the time of the end. It is a shadow of the inheritance of the nations in the new heavens and new earth. When the white horse rider goes forth

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67 Deu 33:2-3

68 Zec 9:14

69 Zec 9:16

70 Jdg 4:6, 10.

Jdg 20:34

71 Gen 22:18

72 Gen 13:15-17

73 Gen 15:17

74 Gen 15:18

75 Num 34:2

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

'overcoming and to overcome', the Lord will begin to reclaim and recover the land. He will remember His Covenant with Abraham, but He will also remember the 'covenant of the land'.

The Lord gave the land to the nation of Israel to become their inheritance, but He still retained ownership and possession of it. He called it, 'My land'. The Lord said to the people, 'The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, *for the land is Mine*; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me'.<sup>76</sup> Further to this, the Lord required the land to enjoy a 'sabbath rest' every seven years. In the seventh year, the Israelites were not allowed to sow their fields, prune their vineyards, or gather any kind of harvest. The Lord warned them that if they did not live appropriately in His land, or honour this principle of the sabbath, then the land itself would spew them out.<sup>77</sup>

We note that a failure to honour this principle was one of the major reasons why the nation of Judah was taken captive into Babylon. It was also the major factor which determined the length of their captivity. This judgement was invoked upon the nation by the prophet Jeremiah. The land had evidently missed seventy years of sabbath rest. While the Jews were in exile, the land became desolate. The Scriptures record that 'all the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete'. The Jews remained in exile 'until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths'.<sup>78</sup>

The prophet Ezekiel identified the great presumption of the Jews toward the land. They presumed upon the right to possess the land because of the promise made to Abraham, without honouring any of the conditions of the covenant. The people said, 'Abraham was only one, yet he possessed the land; so to us who are many the land has been given as a possession'.<sup>79</sup> However, the Lord identified all of the abominations which they were committing and then asked the rhetorical question, 'Should you then possess the land?'<sup>80</sup> He declared, 'I will make the land a desolation and a waste, and the pride of her power will cease, and the mountains of Israel will be desolate so that no one will pass through'.<sup>81</sup>

We know the Jews returned to the land of Palestine under the leadership of Zerubbabel and rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem. However, the land was not fully recovered at this time. The men from the town of Bethel sent messengers to seek the favour of the Lord and to speak with the priests and prophets in Jerusalem on this matter. They wanted to know whether they should continue to fast in

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76 Lev 25:23

79 Eze 33:24

77 Lev 20:22.  
Lev 26:34-35

80 Eze 33:25-26

81 Eze 33:28

78 2Ch 36:21

the fifth month, as they had done during the seventy years of captivity. However, the Lord had little interest in their fasting. Rather, He addressed ‘all the people of the land’ and the priests, by restating why the land had previously spewed them out. He summarised the relational obligations of the covenant of the land upon them.<sup>82</sup> The implication for the people was simple. If they continued to violate the covenant of the land, then it would spew them out again.

We have considered all of the various outcomes of the ‘transgression which causes horror’ in our previous chapter. However, a further outcome of this transgression, which we haven’t yet considered, is the desolation of the land. The corruption of the daily sacrifice, which caused the trampling of the heavenly host and the sanctuary, was representative of many widespread problems among the nation. The people were offering the blind, lame and sick as offerings on the altar, but they were also dealing treacherously with one another. They were profaning the covenant of their fathers and violating the covenant of the land. As a consequence, the Lord has made the ‘mountains of Israel’ like a desolate wilderness, to be trodden under foot by foreign nations for the full duration of the 2300 year prophecy. When the 2300 years are complete, the Lord will begin to recover and restore the land. He will remember His Covenant with Abraham and He will remember the land.<sup>83</sup>

The prophet Jeremiah declared, “Behold days are coming”, says the Lord, “that I will bring back from captivity My people Israel and Judah. And I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers and they shall possess it”.<sup>84</sup> Speaking of this same time, Ezekiel prophesied to the mountains of Israel saying, ‘Yes, I will cause men, My people Israel, to walk on you and possess you, so that you will become their inheritance and never again bereave them of children’.<sup>85</sup> The Lord promised the whole house of Israel, ‘I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land’.<sup>86</sup> However, in the first case, He will not do this for the sake of His people. The Lord will recover the land for the sake of His name which has been profaned among the nations for the duration of the 2300 years.<sup>87</sup> When He recovers and restores the land, His name will be magnified before the eyes of all nations.

We have considered that the land will be reclaimed by the ‘ten thousands of Ephraim’ as the arrows in the bow of Judah. We read in the book of Zechariah that the house of Judah will be like ‘mighty men, treading down the enemy in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they will fight, for the Lord will be with them’.<sup>88</sup>

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82 Zec 7:9-10

85 Eze 36:12

88 Zec 10:5

83 Lev 26:42

86 Eze 36:24

84 Jer 30:3

87 Eze 36:22-24

And likewise, we read, 'Ephraim will be a mighty man'.<sup>89</sup> The 'ten thousands of Ephraim' will be like the horns of the wild ox pushing the fullness of the nations into the mountain of the house of the Lord at this time. The Lord declared concerning the 'ten thousands of Ephraim' and the fullness of the nations, 'I will whistle for them to gather them together, for I have redeemed them; and they will be as numerous as they were before. When I scatter them among the peoples, they will remember Me in far countries, and they with their children will live and come back.'<sup>90</sup>

When the land is recovered, it will be the inheritance of the whole house of Israel, but it will be possessed by the 144,000 as the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel in all the earth. The Lord will bring His elect back to the land 'until no room can be found for them'.<sup>91</sup> There is no way possible that a great multitude which no man can number would be able to fit in the land given to Abraham as his inheritance. The great multitude of the saints in the kingdom of God at this time will spill all the way to the ends of the earth. The land itself will be given to the 144,000, according to the inheritance of the twelve tribes of Israel. The various portions of land which become the possession of each tribe are discussed in the end of the book of Ezekiel.

It is important to note that the land will be repossessed and Jerusalem will be called the 'City of Truth', but there will be no physical temple.<sup>92</sup> The Lord will never again dwell in a temple made with hands. Let us say again, the true temple is the body of Christ. In Ezekiel's vision, the true temple is the entire top of the mountain of the house of the Lord.<sup>93</sup> It is the city of the living God. It is the heavenly Jerusalem.

### Three manifestations of Gog and Magog

We will now turn our attention to the emergence and destruction of Gog and Magog. The principle of 'Gog and Magog' in the Scriptures is the gathering of the godless nations for judgement. This will be repeated three times in the end of the age. The first will occur from the opening of the second seal, when the king of the North will lead a group of nations against the little horn, the kingdom of God, and the land of Israel. The Lord declared, 'It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified

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89 Zec 10:7

92 Zec 8:3

90 Zec 10:8-9

93 Eze 43:12

91 Zec 10:10

through you before their eyes, O Gog'.<sup>94</sup> The judgement of Gog and Magog at the opening of the sixth seal is described in great detail in the book of Ezekiel.

The second manifestation of this principle will occur immediately prior to the physical second coming of Christ. The apostle John saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, coming out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.<sup>95</sup> They are the spirits of demons who will go out to the kings of the earth and the whole world, to gather them for the battle of the great day of God Almighty. This will be 'Armageddon'.<sup>96</sup> Jesus Christ will return with the armies from heaven. He will capture the beast and false prophet and cast them alive into the lake of fire.<sup>97</sup> The rest of the beast's army will be killed with the sword which proceeds from the mouth of Jesus Christ.

The third will occur at the end of the millennial rest. We recall that all believers will be raised in *immortality* when Christ returns, to reign with Him for one thousand years on the earth. During this time, Satan will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. At the end of the thousand years, the ungodly will be raised in *mortality* for the judgement of the great white throne. Satan will be released from his prison for a little while to deceive all the ungodly from the four corners of the earth. He will gather them for one final assault on the beloved city and the camp of the saints. The book of Revelation calls this great gathering of all the ungodly from all ages, 'Gog and Magog'. Fire will come down from heaven and consume them. Satan and all the ungodly will be cast into the lake of fire.<sup>98</sup> As we have considered, this is 'the end', when this present heavens and earth are destroyed by fire.

## **The rise of the king of the North – Gog and Magog**

The book of Daniel reveals five major stages to the rise of the king of the North, who is Gog from the land of Magog. In the first phase, he will storm against the little horn with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships. We have already considered that the little horn will realign national boundaries and reallocate control of resources among the kings of the earth when he comes to power. In defiance of these boundaries, the king of the North will 'enter countries, overflow them and pass through'.<sup>99</sup> He will do this with a large and mighty army. This period of military aggression by the king of the North will dramatically change the balance of power within the world.

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94 Eze 38:16

97 Rev 19:20

95 Rev 16:13

98 Rev 20:7-10

96 Rev 16:16

99 Dan 11:40

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

In the second phase, the king of the North will enter the Beautiful Land. As we have discussed, this is the land of Israel after God has remembered and reactivated the 'covenant of the land'. We expect the little horn will have established the seat of his power in Jerusalem. The king of the North will enter the Beautiful Land to remove the little horn from power over the nations of the world. When the little horn is removed from power, the countries which were elevated by him, because they acknowledged his rulership, will also fall. The book of Daniel simply records that 'many countries will fall' at this time.<sup>100</sup> This conquest by the king of the North will restore the equilibrium of the nations within the seventh world kingdom. He will reinstate the ten horns under the rulership of the seven heads of Babylon.

In the third phase, the king of the North will become the predominant ruler of the seventh world kingdom. Having already re-established the equilibrium of the nations, he will move beyond this and 'stretch out his hand against other countries'.<sup>101</sup> Specifically, we read that the land of Egypt will not escape. The land of Egypt symbolises the dominion of the king of the South. The king of the North will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt'.<sup>102</sup> As we have already discussed, the 'precious things' and the 'hidden treasures' represent the capacities of national groupings of people and their resources.

We recall that the king of the South will collide with the little horn. This will occur *before* the king of the North storms against the little horn. We do not know what the outcome of this collision will be for the king of the South. Perhaps it will leave the king of the South in a weakened state. What we do know is that once the king of the North has removed the little horn, he will subdue the king of the South and take control over his vast resources. Having previously been one of the strongest fortresses in the seventh world kingdom, the king of the South will clearly become subservient to the king of the North. The king of the North will become the predominant ruler among the ten kings, and the Libyans and the Ethiopians, representing all of the African nations, will follow at his heels.

In the fourth phase, the dominion of the king of the North will be challenged, or will appear to be challenged. We read that 'rumours from the east and the north will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many'.<sup>103</sup> We can only imagine what this will mean for the nations of the world when the predominant superpower at this time decides to 'annihilate many'. We

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100 Dan 11:41

103 Dan 11:44

101 Dan 11:42

102 Dan 11:43

are reminded of the words of Jesus, 'Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short'.<sup>104</sup>

In the fifth and final phase, the king of the North will enter the Beautiful Land for a 'second time'. He will pitch the tents of His royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain. This is the context of Gog and Magog in the book of Ezekiel. The Lord declared, 'I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out'.<sup>105</sup> And likewise, He said, 'I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel'.<sup>106</sup> The phrase 'I will turn you about or around' shows that God will cause Gog and Magog to completely change their focus at this time. Rather than continuing to destroy and annihilate many throughout the nations of the world, God will summon them specifically to focus on the kingdom of God. The king of the North will devise an evil plan and determine to come against those who are living securely in the land. He will set his heart toward capturing the spoil and seizing the plunder which belongs to the kingdom of God.

The detail of this phase is significantly expanded in the book of Zechariah. It will be a time of great duress for Christians in every place, but particularly for those in the restored land of Israel. The Lord declared, 'I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around, and when the siege is against Jerusalem it will also be against Judah'.<sup>107</sup> The assault against those who are in the restored land of Israel at this time will be greater than anything that has happened before in the history of the world. Two-thirds of the people who are in the land will be cut off and perish. Some will die as martyrs, and others will die under the judgement of God as He purges the land. God will bring the remaining third through fire, refining them as silver is refined and testing them as gold is tested.<sup>108</sup> They will call on the name of the Lord and He will answer.

This phase will come to a climax when all the nations, under the leadership of Gog and Magog, will be gathered against Jerusalem. The city will be captured and plundered. Half of the city will go into captivity, but the 'remnant' will be preserved.<sup>109</sup> At this time, the Lord Himself will go forth and fight against all the nations that will be gathered.

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104 Mat 24:22

107 Zec 12:2

105 Eze 38:4

108 Zec 13:9

106 Eze 39:2

109 Zec 14:2

## Judgement on Gog and Magog

The judgement of Gog and Magog is further expounded in the book of Ezekiel. The Lord declared, 'It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel, that My fury will mount up in My anger. In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.'<sup>110</sup> The Lord will strike the nations with pestilence and cause them to turn on one another so that 'every man's sword will be against his brother'.<sup>111</sup> He will rain on them with hailstones, fire and brimstone.<sup>112</sup> Gog will fall on the mountains of Israel and the Lord will send fire upon Magog.

The Lord will give Gog a burial ground in the land of Israel. It will be called 'the valley of Haman Gog'. The slaughter will be so great that those who live in the restored land of Israel will spend seven months burying the bodies of those slain by the Lord.<sup>113</sup> And further to this, they will spend seven years burning all of the weapons. At this time, the judgement of God will be manifest before the eyes of all men. The Lord declared, 'Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.'<sup>114</sup> And likewise, 'I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.'<sup>115</sup>

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110 Eze 38:18-19

111 Eze 38:21

112 Eze 38:22

113 Eze 39:12

114 Eze 38:23

115 Eze 39:7



# CHAPTER 6

## The great red dragon

Following the judgement of Gog and Magog on the mountains of Israel, the kingdom of God will be fully established on the earth. The mountain of the Lord's house will be established on the top of the mountains.<sup>1</sup> It will be raised up above all the kingdoms of the world. This glorious mountain will fill the whole earth. The nations of the world will stream to it to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. They will worship the King, the Lord of hosts, for a period of almost twenty-one years. This will be a tremendous highpoint in the fulfilment of the covenant purpose of God.

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. 'Many people will come and say, "Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths". For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.'<sup>2</sup> Judgements will be made between nations and they will

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1 Isa 2:2

2 Isa 2:3

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live in peace together. As the prophet Isaiah said, 'They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks'.<sup>3</sup>

The book of Ezekiel concludes on this highpoint. The land of Israel will be recovered, restored, and apportioned among the 144,000 on behalf of the true Israel of God. The heavenly Jerusalem will be God's throne. The earthly Jerusalem will be His footstool. It will be called the 'City of Truth'. The will of God will be done on earth as it is in heaven. However, this is certainly not the end. There will be a ferment brewing among the nations. The book of Zechariah identifies that there will be families and nations who will not want to submit to the rulership of Christ in the earth. They will not want to bring their honour and glory into the kingdom of God.

What will be the consequence for these nations who do not worship the King, the Lord of hosts? In a similar way to the days of Elijah the prophet, the Lord will close up the heavens and withhold the rain from their land. The Lord will smite the nations who do not keep the Feast of Tabernacles with this plague. When the Lord begins to judge and make distinctions between the nations in this way, many will become angry. We could liken this to Cain in the beginning. His countenance fell and he became very angry when the Lord showed no regard for his offering.<sup>4</sup> The anger of the nations will be exacerbated once the seven trumpets begin to blow. At this time, the Lord's righteous judgement on all ungodliness will begin to be manifest in the earth. We read in the book of Revelation that 'the nations were enraged, and Your wrath has come'.<sup>5</sup>

Let's ask some obvious questions. When the world is enjoying peace and prosperity under the rulership of the kingdom of God, why would any nation be unhappy with this? And further to this, after witnessing the devastating judgement of Gog and Magog at the opening of the sixth seal, why would any nation decide to rebel against the Lord again? We find the answer to these questions in the book of Revelation. Satan will be fully active in the heavenly places. He is the one who 'deceives the whole world'.<sup>6</sup> Satan will be telling the nations at this time that they do not need to accept God's appointed boundaries, they would be more prosperous under the administration of Babylon, and the judgement of God upon them for not keeping the Feast of Tabernacles is unreasonable and unjust.

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3 Isa 2:4

6 Rev 12:9

4 Gen 4:5

5 Rev 11:18

## The great red dragon in heaven

We read in chapter twelve of the book of Revelation that a great sign will appear in heaven. John beheld a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars upon her head.<sup>7</sup> This will be the perfected bride of Christ after the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement. She will be with child and in labour, ready to give birth. However, John also beheld another sign in heaven. He saw a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns. There were seven crowns upon his seven heads.<sup>8</sup> As we have discussed, this is the third phase of the seventh world kingdom which will be personally ruled by the dragon. He is also called the 'serpent of old', 'the devil', and 'Satan'.<sup>9</sup>

Each of these names is significant. The name 'Satan' signifies that he is the accuser of the brethren. Since regaining access into heaven in the time of the Greek empire, Satan has stood before the throne of God accusing the brethren both day and night. The name 'the devil' describes his work and activity as the tempter and the devourer. We know the devil roams about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.<sup>10</sup> When the perfected bride of Christ is in labour, he will stand ready, thinking that he may be able to devour her child as soon as it is born.<sup>11</sup> In the context of our present study, the name 'serpent of old' is perhaps the most significant of all. It immediately draws our attention to his activity in the garden of Eden in the beginning. The 'serpent of old' is the deceiver! We will consider this in detail in this chapter.

The symbolism of the 'great red dragon' reveals Satan as the ruler of this world. He will personally use the administration of Babylon, which has been established by the nations, to rule over the world at this time. We recall that the administration of Babylon was the initiative of the nations. It was never Satan's initiative. However, it was the fruit of Satan's deception among the nations. Satan deceived the nations into believing that they could set up an alternative to the administration of God and be successful and, believing this lie, the nations proceeded to establish Babylon. Babylon is not Satan's administration and, as we have discussed, he has sought to undermine and usurp it since the days of the Greek empire, with a little horn. However, in the third phase of the seventh world kingdom, Satan will use the administration of Babylon to rule over the nations. He does not possess the initiative to set up an alternate administration. He will simply use the administration which has already been established by the nations. However,

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7 Rev 12:1

10 1Pe 5:8

8 Rev 12:3

11 Rev 12:4

9 Rev 12:9

unlike the previous two phases of the seventh world kingdom, the phase of the dragon's administration among the nations will be highly religious.

In the context of the events following the Day of Atonement and the beginning of the righteous judgements of the Lord in the earth, the prophet Isaiah proclaimed, 'In that day the Lord will punish Leviathan the *fleeing serpent*, with His fierce and great and mighty sword, even Leviathan the *twisted serpent*, and He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea'.<sup>12</sup> We recall that 'the sea' is symbolic of the nations of the world. Recognising the activity of Satan as the deceiver of the whole world since the beginning, Isaiah also declared, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not You who cut Rahab [Egypt] in pieces, who *pierced the dragon*?'<sup>13</sup> The psalmist proclaimed, 'You divided the sea by Your strength; You broke the heads [plural] of the sea monsters in the waters; You crushed the heads [plural] of Leviathan; You gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness'.<sup>14</sup>

### As the serpent deceived Eve

In the time of the end, Satan will be successful in deceiving the nations in the same way that he has been able to deceive the nations throughout history. However, this will not give him any power in the heavenly places. He will regain an advantage in heaven when he deceives a third of the stars of the church in the same way that he deceived Eve in the garden of Eden. He is called the 'serpent of old' for this reason. The apostle Paul evidently understood this principle. He said to the Corinthian church, 'I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, *as the serpent deceived Eve* by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ'.<sup>15</sup>

We recall that God took a rib from Adam's side and fashioned the woman to be his comparable helper. The important point to note is that the serpent deceived the woman *just before* she received the word of motherhood and her name was changed to Eve. We could say that the serpent of old *targeted* the woman just before she became the mother of all living. As a parallel to the way that the woman was formed from Adam's rib, the church has been taken from the side of Christ and is currently being formed and fashioned to become His comparable helper.<sup>16</sup> The church has been 'betrothed' to Christ as a chaste virgin, but she has not yet

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12 Isa 27:1

15 2Co 11:2-3

13 Isa 51:9

16 Joh 19:34

14 Psa 74:12-14

## The great red dragon

been married to Him. We read in the book of Revelation, 'Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has *made herself ready*'.<sup>17</sup> As we have discussed, the fulfilment of the great Day of Atonement will be the marriage of Christ and the church.

The critical point here is that Satan will *target* the church in the transition from being the body of Christ to becoming the bride of Christ with the mandate of bringing forth the manchild as the first fruits of the new heavens and new earth. It is evident that a third of the stars will not embrace the fellowship of offering which will be necessary to make this transition. We could compare this with the way Lucifer and a third of the angels fell in the beginning, when they would not make the transition to become servants to the heirs of salvation, that is, to mankind. In the same way, a third of the stars of the church will not be willing to be redefined by God according to the order of the new heavens and new earth. We know that the manchild will rule all the nations in the new heavens and new earth with a rod of iron.<sup>18</sup>

When we begin discussing the manchild and the 'multiplication of new creation' in the new heavens and new earth, we need to be clear that marriage and procreation will no longer exist. It will not be the means by which new creation will be multiplied for eternity. The transition from the natural to the spiritual is also the transition from that which is *least* and *temporal* to that which is *much* and *eternal*. The church, as the bride of Christ, will fulfil the work of bringing forth the manchild by *spiritual means*, which is still kept secret as part of the mystery of God. In chapter ten of the book of Revelation, we read that this mystery will be finished in the days of the voice of the seventh angel.<sup>19</sup>

In chapter twelve of the book of Revelation, we see the firstfruits of this mystery completed in the birth of the manchild as the fruit of the marriage of Christ and the church. Satan will stand before the woman in the hope that he will be able to devour the manchild in the same way that he devoured Cain in the beginning. However, the manchild will be caught up immediately to God and His throne because it belongs to the new heavens and new earth. The fruit of the marriage between Christ and the church will be instantly mature and complete and able to rule with a rod of iron. The prophet Isaiah declared, 'Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons.'<sup>20</sup>

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17 Rev 19:7

20 Isa 66:8

18 Rev 12:5

19 Rev 10:7

Within the new heavens and new earth, the administration of the bride city will be multiplying new creation forever by the power of God. Christ will be called 'Everlasting Father' and there will be no end to the increase of His kingdom.<sup>21</sup> Righteousness will increase forever and ever.

### One third of the stars will fall

One of the major themes throughout this book has been the way Satan has gained power in the heavenly places 'by advantage' because of the corruption of offering among God's people. He has used this advantage to usurp the power of Babylon over the nations during the Greek empire, the Roman empire, and the first phase of the seventh world kingdom. When the fellowship of offering has been fully restored in the body of Christ at the conclusion of the 2300 day prophecy, Satan will no longer have any advantage in the heavenly places. As we have considered, the dominion of the little horn will be removed by the twenty-four elders and he will be destroyed by Gog and Magog. When this happens, Satan will no longer have any capacity to exercise rulership over the nations of the world. He will only *regain this power* when there is *another corruption of offering* within the church.

We read in the book of Revelation that the tail of the dragon 'swept a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth'.<sup>22</sup> The stars are the messengers of Christ who will lead many to righteousness in the time of the end. In our previous chapter, we considered that the 'ten thousands of Ephraim' will be the messengers who bring the fullness of the nations into the body of Christ for the fulfillment of the great Day of Atonement. This will be an incredibly large group of messengers. In Revelation chapter five, they are seen gathered around the throne as part of the 'ten thousands upon ten thousands' and 'thousands upon thousands'.<sup>23</sup> We don't know how many stars there will be as the church approaches the Day of Atonement; we only know that *one third* of them will fall.

We know that at least 144,000 stars *do not fall*, because that is the number of stars who will be sealed immediately before the Day of Atonement. This will fulfill the prophecy, 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints'.<sup>24</sup> As we have discussed, the 144,000 will be sealed for their particular and unique ministry which is the judgement of the eighth world kingdom. They will stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion 'without guile' and 'without fault'. Satan will not be able to find any advantage in the lives of these faithful messengers. Nor will he be able

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21 Isa 9:6-7

24 Jud 1:14

22 Rev 12:4

23 Rev 5:11

## *The great red dragon*

to find any reason to accuse them before God. They will be following the Lamb wherever He goes. When the 144,000 are sealed before the Day of Atonement, they will have the same testimony as Christ, 'The ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me'.<sup>25</sup> This will, likewise, be the testimony of the great multitude which no man can number who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The 144,000 will be the firstfruits of the elect, and the multitude which no man can number will be established with them.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, 'May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another ... so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints'.<sup>26</sup>

The stars that do fall will be swept from heaven by the tail of the dragon. In the first case, the tail of the dragon will be the teaching and lies of many false prophets. We recall the words of Isaiah, 'The elder and the honourable man, he is the head, the prophet who teaches lies, he is the tail'.<sup>27</sup> We can identify the tail of the dragon throughout history. However, Jesus warned us that it will become more active in the fullness of times and the time of the end. Speaking of the fullness of times, Jesus said, 'Many false prophets will rise up and deceive many'.<sup>28</sup> Then, speaking of the great tribulation of the church during the opening of the seals, Jesus said, 'False Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect'.<sup>29</sup> These false prophets will be saying of Christ, 'Behold, He is in the wilderness' and 'Behold, He is in the inner rooms'.<sup>30</sup> Jesus has warned us in advance so that we do not believe them.

When the tail of the dragon causes a star to fall, that star will then become part of the tail which causes other stars to fall. In this way, the strength and ferocity of the dragon's tail will increase as the church approaches the Day of Atonement. A star who falls will be a messenger who has been taken captive by Satan to do his will.<sup>31</sup> The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about those 'who have already turned aside to follow Satan'.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, he wrote to the Corinthians, 'For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds'.<sup>33</sup>

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25 Joh 14:30

28 Mat 24:11

31 2Ti 2:26

26 1Th 3:12-13

29 Mat 24:24

32 1Ti 5:15

27 Isa 9:15

30 Mat 24:26

33 2Co 11:13-15

The church has been beset by these ministers of Satan in every generation. However, there will be a much greater impact when a third of the stars fall in the time of the end. The repercussions of this falling away will be so great because of the mandate that these stars will have received from God, and then misappropriated to do Satan's will. We considered in our last chapter that the Lord will 'restore double' to the messengers of Christ in the time of the end so that they possess the mandate of kingship over the nations. They will receive this mandate as 'prisoners' or 'captives' of Christ who are properly connected to His ascension-gift administration. However, when they fall, they will be taken captive by Satan to do his will. The misappropriation of their grace and authority will enable Satan to rule over the nations of the world.

### **The Scribes and Pharisees – a brood of vipers**

In the days of Jesus, it was the Scribes and Pharisees who belonged to the dragon, the serpent of old. Jesus said to them, 'You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?'<sup>34</sup> The Scribes and Pharisees presumed to sit in the seat of Moses as teachers and interpreters of the law, but they were full of hypocrisy. They laid heavy burdens upon the shoulders of the people, but they were not willing to lift a finger themselves. They loved the prestige and recognition of their ministry positions, but they did not shepherd the people. Jesus said, 'Woe to you', eight times as He described a group of men who had been taken captive by Satan to do his will. It is helpful to consider these words of Jesus as we consider what the messengers of Satan may look like in the church today, and take heed to ourselves on these matters.

Jesus began by pronouncing 'woe' upon the Scribes and Pharisees because they were shutting off the kingdom of heaven from the people and not entering the kingdom themselves. We could liken this to a messenger who establishes and maintains a church program which is worldly and carnal. It has no capacity to establish people on the highway of holiness which leads to the mountain of the house of the Lord. There is no administration of the Spirit. It does not give people any access to the heavenly places. Jesus pronounced the second 'woe' upon the Scribes and Pharisees who were devouring widows' houses and making long prayers. This is the messenger who portrays himself to be highly spiritual, but in reality, he is exploiting the Lord's flock for his own personal gain.

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34 Mat 23:33



## *The great red dragon*

Jesus pronounced the third 'woe' upon those who travelled around on the sea and the land to make one proselyte. In our day, this is the messenger who travels from place to place with his own itinerant ministry, promising salvation without the need for fellowship and the community of the body of Christ. The fourth 'woe' was pronounced on the fools and blind men who told people that it did not matter if they swore by the temple, but if they swore by the gold of the temple they were obligated. Likewise, they told the people that it didn't matter if they swore by the altar, but if they swore by the offering on the altar they were obligated. We could say that this describes the messengers who do not understand the covenant purpose of God to dwell among His people and bring many sons to glory. They do not understand the fellowship of offering within the body of Christ. They will place obligations and burdens on people to fulfill certain outcomes without any thought to the person's name and work within the kingdom of God.

The fifth woe was pronounced upon those who tithed mint and dill, but neglected the weightier provisions of the law, such as justice, mercy and faithfulness. These are the messengers who are highly religious and judgemental, with no perspective on the priorities of God in His kingdom. They will emphasise the need for religious observance and judge those who do not conform to their expectations, while at the same time, neglecting the need for genuine love, care and fellowship.

The sixth woe was pronounced on those who clean the outside of the cup, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. This describes the messenger who endeavours to maintain their public ministry profile while they are living in uncleanness. They are not willing to engage the process of the trespass offering or the waters of purification to be cleansed.

The seventh woe was pronounced on those who were 'whitewashed tombs full of dead men's bones'. This is simply a further development on the previous woe. If uncleanness is not dealt with by the trespass offering or with the waters of purification, then it will become a leprous condition. When a messenger has spiritual leprosy, it means that the Lord has invoked the judgement of their uncleanness upon them. They will be dead in sin and a slave of their own corruption. A messenger who continues to minister in such a state is full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Jesus pronounced the eighth woe on the Scribes and Pharisees who built the tombs of the prophets and adorned the monuments of the righteous. Instead of

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mourning the atrocities perpetrated by their fathers, they denied their guilt by saying they would not have been partners in the shedding of blood.<sup>35</sup> This describes the messengers who stand aloof from all the corruption of church history, while at the same time, perpetuating this very same corruption by refusing to receive the word of present truth.

### **The tribe of Dan – a serpent in the way**

Returning to our consideration of the stars who fall in the time of the end, it is important to mention the prophecy of Jacob regarding the tribe of Dan. He said, 'Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel'.<sup>36</sup> This certainly suggests that there will be stars from the tribe of Dan who will be part of the administration of Christ which shepherds the 'true Israel of God'. However, he also said that Dan would be 'a serpent in the way, a horned snake in the path, that bites the horse's heels, so that his rider falls backward'.<sup>37</sup> This statement indicates that the tribe of Dan will become part of the tail of the dragon. They will be taken captive by the 'serpent of old' to do his will so that they become serpents in the way. We will suggest that the 'way' refers to the Highway of Holiness by which the church goes on to perfection in the Day of Atonement to become the bride of Christ.

Jacob prophesied that the tribe of Dan would cause the horse's rider to fall backwards. When the first seal is opened, the white horse and rider will go forth 'overcoming and to overcome'. We considered the meaning and significance of this in our previous chapter. The 'ten thousands of Ephraim' will be the arrows in the bow of Judah, in the hand of the white horse rider. They will gather the fullness of the nations into the kingdom of God. We know this purpose will be accomplished. However, as 'a serpent in the way', the tribe of Dan will cause some stars, who are part of the administration to gather all nations, to fall backwards. The stars who fall will stumble backwards because they will not embrace the word regarding the mandate of the perfected bride of Christ. We are reminded of the words of Isaiah, 'That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared and taken captive'.<sup>38</sup> When a messenger who is part of the administration belonging to the white horse rider falls, they will be snared and taken captive by Satan to do his will.

We know that the tribe of Dan was numbered among the ten northern tribes of Israel under the leadership of Ephraim. There is little doubt that stars from this tribe will be among the 'ten thousands of Ephraim'. However, when the 144,000

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35 Mat 23:13-29

38 Isa 28:13

36 Gen 49:16

37 Gen 49:17

are sealed before the Day of Atonement, they are the only tribe that is not listed. We note that there are still twelve tribes listed because a double portion has been given to Joseph.

## **The great star which falls from heaven**

Following the Day of Atonement, the seven angels will prepare themselves to blow the seven trumpets. When the third trumpet is blown, a great star will fall from heaven, burning like a lamp. Its name is 'Wormwood', which means 'bitterness'.<sup>39</sup> The tail of the dragon will cause this great star to fall. It is possible that this star will be one of the twelve apostles of the church in the time of the end. If this is the case, then it will be a parallel to the fall of Judas Iscariot who was numbered among the first twelve. The Gospel of Luke records that Satan entered Judas on the night that he betrayed Jesus. He was evidently taken captive to do Satan's will when he conspired with the chief priests and Pharisees about putting Jesus to death. In a similar way, the great star which falls at the third trumpet will become a minister of Satan. If this star is one of the twelve apostles of the church in the time of the end, he will evidently be replaced in the same way that Judas was replaced among the first twelve. When the woman, the church, is revealed in the Ark of the Covenant, she still has a crown of twelve stars on her head.

When the fifth trumpet is blown, the key to the bottomless pit will be given to the great star. He will open the bottomless pit and release its demonic hordes. Their power will be like the scorpions of the earth. The symbolism of the scorpions is important. We are reminded that Jesus gave the seventy-two disciples authority to tread on serpents and scorpions. The 'serpents' describe the warfare that the messengers of Christ will encounter in the seventh world kingdom. They are the servants of the dragon. The 'scorpions' describe the warfare that will be encountered by the 144,000 when the eighth world kingdom emerges. They are the powers of the abyss.

The angelic powers in the abyss are those angels who have been 'reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgement of the great day'.<sup>40</sup> Their king is the 'angel of the abyss'. His name in Hebrew is 'Abaddon' and in Greek it is 'Apollyon'. He is the destroying angel. When these powers from the abyss are released, they will not be permitted to kill anyone, but they will torment the ungodly who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads for a period of five

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39 Rev 8:11

40 Jud 1:6

months. During this period, men will seek death but they will not be able to find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them. This will be the 'first woe' and a foretaste of the eternal judgement of the lake of fire where the worm of corruption never dies.<sup>41</sup>

### **The second woe – the testimony of the two witnesses**

When we are considering the sequence of events in the book of Revelation, it is important to recognise the events which belong to each of the 'three woes'. The three woes will coincide with the last three trumpets. After the conclusion of the events of the fourth trumpet, John heard an angel proclaim with a loud voice, 'Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound'.<sup>42</sup> When the fifth trumpet is blown in heaven, the first woe will be experienced on earth. We read in chapter nine of the book of Revelation, 'The first woe is past, behold two woes are still coming after these things'.<sup>43</sup> This statement is recorded as a necessary waypoint.

When the sixth trumpet is blown, the second woe will be experienced on earth. It is not until chapter eleven that we read, 'The second woe is past, behold the third woe is coming quickly'.<sup>44</sup> It would seem apparent that all of the events which are recorded between these two waypoints are part of the second woe. This is a simple observation but it has significant implications for the way we understand the sequence of events in the book of Revelation. In the beginning of chapter eleven, we read that John was given a measuring rod like a staff and told to 'measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there, but leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.'<sup>45</sup>

It is clear that the altar is in the sanctuary of the true tabernacle, not in the outer court as it was in the tabernacle of Moses. The true tabernacle in the heavenly places, which John described in Revelation chapters four and five, is 'in and around' the throne. John beheld the Lamb standing as if slain in the midst of the throne, signifying that the altar is in the throne. The earthly Jerusalem, which is referred to here as the 'holy city', will evidently be part of the outer court which will be trampled by the Gentiles for a period of forty-two months. The fact that it is called the 'holy city' shows that Jerusalem will be restored to be the centre of God's administration on earth in the time of the end. However, during the dragon

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41 Rev 9

44 Rev 11:14

42 Rev 8:13

45 Rev 11:1-2

43 Rev 9:12

phase of the seventh world kingdom, it will be polluted and corrupted again to become the city which is spiritually called 'Sodom and Egypt'.<sup>46</sup> For this reason, it will be handed over to be trampled by the Gentiles for forty-two months.

During this period of trampling, the Lord will give authority to His two witnesses to prophesy in Jerusalem. These two witnesses are called 'the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth'. The mandate of producing fresh oil, and manifesting this oil as light by the fire of the Holy Spirit, will be given to them. These two witnesses will have the power to withhold rain from the earth and to strike the earth with plagues as often as they desire.<sup>47</sup> This would suggest that they will be Moses and Elijah. We are reminded that Moses and Elijah are both nominated by name as the two witnesses who talked with Jesus when He was transfigured on the mountain.<sup>48</sup>

The two witnesses will invoke the judgement of the law and the prophets upon Babylon. We have considered that it will be the mandate of the twenty-four elders to judge the seventh world kingdom. And it will be the mandate of the 144,000 to judge the eighth world kingdom. In the same way, it will be the mandate of the two witnesses to judge Babylon. The judgement of Babylon will be executed by the beast and the ten horns when the eighth world kingdom emerges, but it will be invoked by the two witnesses when they prophesy in the streets of Jerusalem.

When the two witnesses have finished their testimony, they will be killed by the beast who ascends from the bottomless pit. This will mark the end of the torment for those who dwell on the earth at the hands of the two witnesses, and the end of the second woe. Their dead bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem, which is spiritually called 'Sodom and Egypt', for three and a half days. All of the people, tribes, tongues, and nations which belong to the eighth world kingdom will rejoice over their death. However, at the end of three and a half days, the breath of God will enter the two witnesses. They will be resurrected to immortality and ascend to heaven in a cloud. This will be in the time when the seventh angel with the seventh trumpet is sounding in heaven.<sup>49</sup>

The key point here, with respect to the timing and sequence of the book of Revelation, is that the ministry of the two witnesses occurs during the period called 'the second woe', *not* the third woe which includes the final reign of Antichrist and the eighth world kingdom for a further three and a half years. The book of Revelation clearly identifies *two separate periods* of forty-two months,

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46 Rev 11:8

49 Rev 11

47 Rev 11:6

48 Mat 17:3

twelve hundred and sixty days, or three and a half years. The beast will kill the two witnesses when he is emerging to reign in the earth, not at the end of his reign. This means that the resurrection of the two witnesses will not coincide with the general resurrection. The important point to remember is that resurrection to immortality will be available as soon as the seventh trumpet, which is the last trumpet, begins to sound *in heaven*. The two witnesses will be resurrected at this time. However, the general resurrection will not occur until Jesus Christ descends *from heaven*, with a shout from heaven and with the trumpet of God.

### **The transition from the seventh to the eighth world kingdom**

Once the manchild has been born and immediately caught up to God and to His throne, a war will break out in heaven. Michael and his angels will wage war against the dragon and his angels. There will no longer be any place found for the dragon and his angels in heaven.<sup>50</sup> Once the bride of Christ has brought forth the manchild as the firstfruits of the new heavens and new earth, the mystery of God will be finished and Satan will no longer have any advantage or opportunity to deceive in heaven. He will be cast down to the earth along with his angels. This will be the end of the third phase of the seventh world kingdom. The apostle John heard a loud voice in heaven saying, 'Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down'.<sup>51</sup>

When the dragon is cast down to the earth, he will persecute the church, the bride of Christ. However, the bride will be given the two wings of a great eagle so that she can fly into the wilderness to her place. Her place will be under the shadow of the tabernacle of the house of God where she will be protected and nourished by the Lamb. The dragon will then make war with the 'remnant of her seed'. This will be the 144,000 who will remain behind for a short period until they have fulfilled their mandate of judging the eighth world kingdom. They are the 'remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus'.<sup>52</sup>

At this time, the beast will be seen emerging from the sea of the nations. The beast itself will be like a leopard; its feet will be like those of a bear, and its mouth will be like the mouth of a lion.<sup>53</sup> This shows that the eighth world kingdom will include various characteristics from the previous world kingdoms. It will have ten horns and seven heads. There will be a crown on each one of the ten horns. As we

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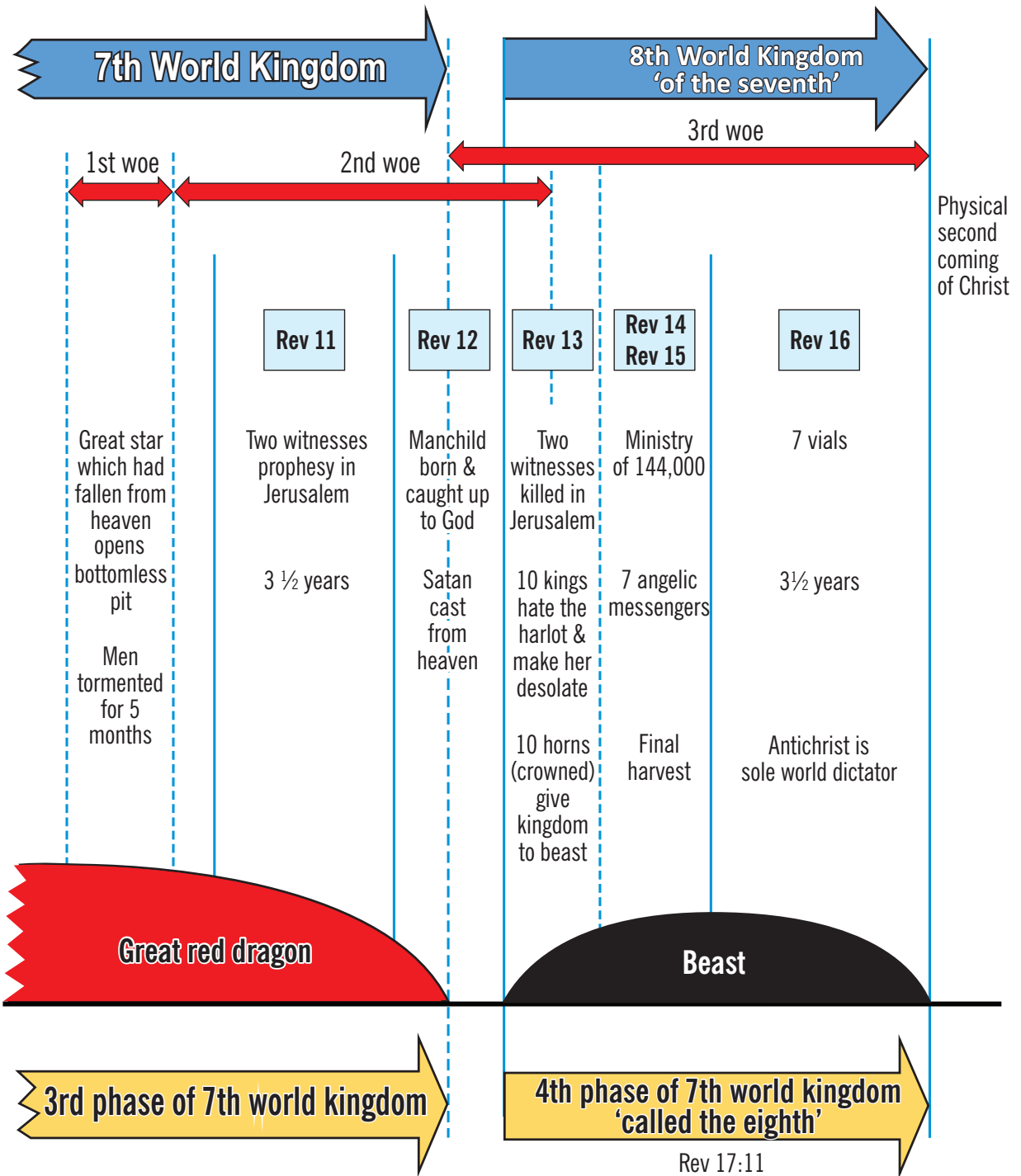
50 Rev 12:5-8

53 Rev 13:2

51 Rev 12:10

52 Rev 12:17

# Transition from 7th to 8th world kingdom



## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

have considered, this will be one of the major differences between the seventh and the eighth world kingdom. The crowns will shift from the heads to the horns. The only thing left on the seven heads of the beast will be blasphemous names.<sup>54</sup>

We can identify four different sources of power which will contribute to the emergence of the beast as the final Antichrist and ruler of the eighth world kingdom. The first will be the misappropriated power of the stars of heaven. This will be the result of another transgression which causes horror in the heavenly places. We recall that the corruption of offering within the church will empower the little horn in the world for 2300 years. We know that the little horn will receive a mortal wound at the beginning of the time of the end.<sup>55</sup> However, the corruption of offering among the stars of heaven in the time of the end will allow the principle of the little horn to recover itself from this mortal wound and emerge as the final Antichrist of the eighth world kingdom.

The second source of power which will contribute to the emergence of the Antichrist will be the powers of the abyss. The great star that falls under the third trumpet will be given the key to the bottomless pit under the fifth trumpet. He will open the bottomless pit and release the powers of the abyss.<sup>56</sup> From this point, the eighth world kingdom will begin to emerge from the abyss. The third source of power will be the great red dragon.<sup>57</sup> Satan will give his power and his throne and his great authority to the beast.<sup>58</sup> The fourth source of power will be the ten kings or presidents of the ten groups of nations in the world. The ten presidents will receive authority as kings with the beast.<sup>59</sup> In the seventh world kingdom, the ten kings will be subservient to the administration of Babylon over the nations. However, in the eighth world kingdom, they will receive absolute power over the nations for one hour. The ten kings will be in conflict with the little horn in the seventh world kingdom, whereas, in the eighth world kingdom, they will have 'one common purpose' with the beast.<sup>60</sup> They will give their power and authority to him so that the final Antichrist will rule as the sole dictator of the eighth world kingdom.

The Lord will put it in the hearts of the ten kings to hate Babylon, the mother of harlots, who has reigned over the kings and nations of the earth since the tower of Babel.<sup>61</sup> The ten kings will have a common purpose with the beast. They will be the instrument of judgement which God will use to bring an end to the administration of Babylon and make her desolate. The harlot will be beset by

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54 Rev 13:1

57 Rev 12:3

60 Rev 17:13

55 Rev 13:3

58 Rev 13:2

61 Rev 17:16-17

56 Rev 9:1-2

59 Rev 17:12



## *The great red dragon*

plagues, pestilence and mourning. She will be burned up with fire. The kings of the earth who have committed acts of immorality with her and lived sensuously because of her will mourn and lament when they see the smoke of her burning.<sup>62</sup> Likewise, the merchants of the earth will weep and lament because no one will buy their produce anymore. They will stand at a distance and say, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste'.<sup>63</sup>

The economy of the world, with all its various structures of trade and commerce, will collapse when Babylon falls. The beast will replace it with his own economic system. He will demand that all men receive a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. No one will be able to buy or sell in the economic system of the eighth world kingdom if they do not have this mark which will be the 'name of the beast' or the 'number of his name'.<sup>64</sup>

### **The 144,000 will judge the eighth world kingdom**

We are reminded that the Lord will come with 'ten thousands of His holy ones' immediately before the fulfillment of the great Day of Atonement.<sup>65</sup> He will gather together 'His elect' from the four winds of heaven. The 144,000 will be gathered together from the four winds of heaven as the 'firstfruits' of the great multitude of the Lord's elect which no man can number.<sup>66</sup> At this time, the 144,000 will be sealed for their particular work in judging the eighth world kingdom. Once the eighth world kingdom has emerged, these messengers will be revealed standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, ready to fulfill this mandate. They will have the name of the Lamb and the name of the Father written on their foreheads.<sup>67</sup>

The voice of the 144,000 is the voice from heaven and it is like the sound of many waters. It is the sound of many messengers. It is also like the sound of loud thunder. The word of the 144,000 will carry the authority of Christ's kingship to judge the eighth world kingdom. Further to this, their voice will be like the sound of harpists and they will sing a 'new song' before the throne and before the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders. No one else will be able to learn the song apart from the 144,000.<sup>68</sup> It will be a unique song that only they will know, because it will express their unique mandate to judge the eighth world kingdom. We are reminded that the judgement of the seventh world kingdom will

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62 Rev 18:8-9

65 Jud 1:14

68 Rev 14:2-3

63 Rev 18:16

66 Rev 14:4

64 Rev 14:9

67 Rev 14:1

## AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLE PROPHECY

be initiated by the song of the twenty-four elders. In the same way, the judgement of the eighth world kingdom will be initiated by the song of the 144,000.

The first message of the 144,000 will be to preach the eternal gospel to all those who live on the earth. This will be the final proclamation of the gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue and people.<sup>69</sup> They will declare that the hour of God's judgement has come, and beseech all men and women to worship God who is the Creator of heaven and earth. The second message of the 144,000 will be to announce the fall of Babylon. They will declare, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality'.<sup>70</sup> All of the detail concerning the fall of Babylon is recorded in Revelation chapters 17 and 18.

The third message of the 144,000 will be to warn every person in the earth that if they receive the mark of the beast then they will drink of the wine of the wrath of God. The final 'abomination which makes desolate' will be accepting the mark of the beast. If a person receives this mark, which is the 'mark of his name' or the 'number of his name', they will join themselves to him and become a partaker in his judgement. The full strength of the wrath of God will be poured out upon them by the seven angels with the seven vials, and then they will be tormented forever with fire and brimstone.<sup>71</sup> This refers to the judgement of the lake of fire. As soon as a person receives the mark of the beast, their name will be erased from the book of life. They will be eternally dead, even though they will continue to live in this present world for a short while.

Those who respond to the preaching of the 144,000 and refuse to receive the mark of the beast will be martyred. Antichrist will kill those who refuse his mark and participation in his new world order. For this reason, John heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'<sup>72</sup> We are reminded that when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, the apostle John beheld the souls of all those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they had maintained. The souls of the martyrs were seen under the altar because that is where the remainder of the blood of the sin offering was poured out once its propitiatory work was complete.<sup>73</sup>

There will always be two things happening when the blood of a martyr is shed. Having resisted to the point of shedding blood in their striving against sin, the martyr will be joined to Christ's sufferings and overcome by the blood of the Lamb. However, their blood will also be crying out for the judgement of the one who

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69 Rev 14:6

72 Rev 14:13

70 Rev 14:8

73 Exo 29:12.

71 Rev 14:11

Lev 4:25, 30, 34.  
Lev 5:9

## *The great red dragon*

perpetrated their death. This has been the principle since the beginning. We recall the Lord said to Cain, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground'.<sup>74</sup> This principle of judgement is the significance of the blood which was poured out at the base of the altar.

The outcome of the mighty proclamation of the 144,000 will be two final harvests. The first will be the final great harvest for the kingdom of God. John beheld one like the Son of Man with a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand.<sup>75</sup> This is the administration of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sharp sickle is the 144,000. They are the messengers in His right hand who He will use to reap the final harvest of the earth. At this time, an angel will cry out with a great voice, 'Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe'.<sup>76</sup>

Further to this, John beheld another angel with a sharp sickle. The messenger who has power over the fire of the altar will proclaim, 'Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe'.<sup>77</sup> This is a direct quote from the book of Joel. It is evident that the vine of the earth is all the nations of the earth, beginning with the nations surrounding Jerusalem. The angel will gather the clusters of the vine and throw them into the great winepress of the wrath of God.<sup>78</sup> The seven vials will be poured out by seven angels as the fullness of the wrath of God upon Babylon, the beast and his kingdom, and all the ungodly nations of the world.

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74 Gen 4:10

78 Rev 14:19-20

75 Rev 14:14

76 Rev 14:15

77 Rev 14:18



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