

Understanding
DANIEL and
REVELATION

New Hope Baptist Church
A Tyndale Learning Center
Dr. Paul Benware
April 27-29, 2017

APPROACHING BIBLICAL PROPHECY

THE PURPOSES OF BIBLICAL PROPHECY

So much of the Bible, including the prophetic portions, has been given to assist the believer in living a godly life in a world that is clearly ungodly and unrighteous. The purpose of prophecy is not to satisfy one's curiosity about the future but to change the way life is lived right now. Bible prophecy assists in this by giving the believer a much-needed perspective on this world and the world to come. It helps to develop and maintain a "two world" view; that is, focusing on the world to come which then enables us to live more authentically for Christ in this present world. There are many reasons why biblical prophecy is significant in the life of the believer and the following are several of the more basic reasons.

(1) BIBLE PROPHECY REVEALS THE WISDOM, SOVEREIGNTY AND GRACE OF GOD. – Isaiah 40:13-26; Revelation 4:11; 5:9-13; 11:15-17

(2) BIBLE PROPHECY CHANGES THE WAY BELIEVERS LIVE RIGHT NOW. – Revelation 1:3; 2 Peter 1:19; 3:11-14; Titus 2:11-13; 1 John 2:28-3:3

(3) BIBLE PROPHECY GIVES A CLEAR WARNING TO THE UNBELIEVER. –John 5:19-29; Revelation 6:16-17; 14:8-20; 16:9-11; 20:11-15

INTERPRETING BIBLICAL PROPHECY

It is true that Bible prophecy presents some challenges to the interpreter. But when we approach the prophetic Scriptures we need to remember several basic truths. **First**, prophecy was given by God to be understood. It may take diligent effort on our part to come to an understanding, but God wants us to know certain realities. **Second**, the Holy Spirit has been given to us to help us understand God's truth. We have been given divine assistance in order that the truth might be grasped. And **third**, the very words of Scripture (including prophecy) are inspired by God and are therefore important. We must never dismiss some detail or imagery as silly, incomprehensible or without any real value. The Spirit apparently did not think these matters as silly or incomprehensible when guiding the authors of Scripture. So, as we come to biblical prophecy some very basic rules of interpretation need to be remembered.

RULE #1

RULE #2

RULE #3

RULE #4

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Rarely in the Bible are we given a close and revealing look at the life of an individual whose personal history is free from major sins much less minor blunders and blemishes. Rarely are we given the word from heaven that we are looking at a person who is considered very special by the Lord God Himself. Rarely does a man prosper materially and have great political power and yet remain authentically righteous in his life as well as consistently loyal to his God. And rarely does a man who does possess power, prestige and wealth become a primary channel for critical revelation from God. But such a man is Daniel. He uniquely is a man of God with a message from God. And, though rare it is, we have been given an opportunity to look at a man who honored the Lord wonderfully and to whom was given revelatory truth to benefit others throughout the ages. We will observe that this Book of Daniel contains both powerful prophetic revelations as well as crucial information about a life that pleases the Lord.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Certainly every book in the Bible has an important contribution to make to our understanding of God and His ways. Daniel makes its important contribution in a number of ways.

First, the Book of Daniel provides a comprehensive view of the movement of the history of gentile nations through the lens of the nation of Israel. After the fall of man (Genesis 3), instead of destroying man and the universe and starting over again, God chose to embark on the course of reconciliation and restoration. The key to this reconciliation would be the “seed of the woman”. This broad concept was later narrowed down to the “seed of Abraham”; that is, the nation of Israel. It would be through the nation of Israel that God would accomplish His purposes. And the Book of Daniel makes a major contribution to understanding the course of Israel’s history as it relates to gentile nations.

Second, the Book of Daniel gives many key elements essential to an understanding of prophecy in both the Old and New Testaments. Daniel’s revelations of the coming kingdom, of the future tribulation, of the “abomination of desolation” and of the coming Antichrist are built upon by the Apostles and Jesus Himself. And Daniel’s

“seventy weeks” prophecy is the foundation for Revelation 6-19 and other prophetic portions of scripture.

Third, the Book of Daniel gives some insight into the Israelites’ experience during their captivity in Babylon. While this is not a book of history per se, it does give some snapshots of the nation in that land in the years between the Old Testament books of 2 Kings and Ezra. The book does make it clear that God is not done with His disobedient nation and that there is hope and that they do have a future.

Fourth, in a practical way, the book shows that God does honor those who honor Him (1 Sam. 2:30). Daniel is an example of such a person. The book reveals many of the ways that Daniel honored God and how God, in turn, honored Daniel. God declares that Daniel was a “highly esteemed” man (cf. 9:23; 10:11, 19). The book provides us with an outstanding model of living godly and righteously in a world that is not conducive to such a lifestyle.

BACKGROUND TO THE BOOK OF DANIEL

AUTHORSHIP AND DATE OF WRITING

Taken at face value, the statements within the book itself make it abundantly clear that the author was Daniel, a man who lived throughout the Babylonian captivity of Judah. Daniel was about 15 years old when the captivity began in 605 BC and he lived throughout the entire period with the last time notation in the book being 536 BC (10:1). The time notations given throughout the book leave no doubt that the visions and events come out of the sixth century BC, specifically that time between 605 BC and 536 BC (1:1; 2:1; 5:31; 6:28; 7:1; 8:1; 9:1; 10:1; 11:1). The book declares that the author did experience life during the reigns of several kings of Babylon and Medo-Persia who reigned in the sixth century BC.

Although the use of the first person in this book does not begin until chapter 7, the statement that Daniel was to “conceal these words and seal up the book” (12:4) tells us that he is being presented as the author of the entire book. He certainly knew well the

people mentioned in the book as well as being knowledgeable of the customs and events surrounding the times of the Babylonians and the Persians. All of this points to the author living and writing in the sixth century BC and not to someone living many centuries later.

We conclude that Daniel lived and wrote this book during the sixth century BC. This has been the consistent viewpoint of the Church and the scholars of Israel. The Lord Jesus Himself pronounced the book as a genuine work of Daniel when He specifically referred to “Daniel the prophet” (Matt. 24:15) and Daniel’s word about the “abomination of desolation.” Jesus, who only quoted from canonical writings, put His stamp of canonicity on this book. Also Ezekiel, a contemporary of Daniel in the captivity period, speaks of the godliness and wisdom of Daniel (Ezek. 14:14, 20; 28:3). He places Daniel squarely in the time frame claimed by the book and its author. So in declaring that Daniel wrote this book in the sixth century BC, we are on solid ground, joining with those who for millennia have proclaimed the same thing.

The above position was held for many centuries (with only few exceptions in the ranks of heretics) until questions were raised by theological liberals. It has become the position of modern liberal criticism that the book of Daniel was actually written by an anonymous author about 167 BC during the Maccabean period. It was during the Maccabean period that the Jews were revolting against the wicked king Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) and fighting against the terrible atrocities of his rule. They needed a hero. This document (the book of ‘Daniel’) was intended to encourage these righteous Jewish rebels in their struggle against this extremely wicked king. It is said that Daniel’s name was invoked to give credibility to the document. One author holding to this position puts it this way.

“Daniel is a non-historical personage modeled by the author(s) of the book ⁱafter the ancient worthy who is linked in Ezekiel 14:14, 20 with righteous Noah and righteous Job, and who is described (Ezek. 28:3) as a wise man. As is the case with other Jewish apocalyptic writings, an ancient saint and sage has been selected to be the bearer of a message to an audience living in a totally different era.”ⁱⁱ

He then goes on to say that the author, or authors, spoke of loyalty to the Lord in the midst of difficult times, emphasizing “the people who are wise” and “those who are wise.” He explains that this kind of emphasis points to some sectarian group in second century BC Judaism. (A conclusion that is not at all compelling or logical). He concludes that the writers were likely “*hasidim*, spiritual ancestors of the Qumran community.”ⁱⁱⁱ

The case presented for this late date by an anonymous author, however, is not at all strong. Why then would these scholars go against thousands of years of scholarship? First, it must be understood that those holding to this late date for Daniel do not do so because of overwhelming evidence that compels them to take that position. They have established this view and tenaciously hold to this position because of a strong bias against the possibility of predictive prophecy and their resistance to anything miraculous. They are committed to an anti-supernatural position because of their commitment to a rationalistic philosophy. As one has observed, “Naturalism and rationalism are ultimately based on faith rather than on evidence; therefore, this faith will not allow them to accept supernatural predictions.”^{iv} And no amount of evidence seems to affect this “faith” position of theirs.

This “faith” colors their approach to the events and prophecies of the book of Daniel. For example, in Daniel 11, there are dozens and dozens of specific persons and events referred to. These statements are so clear in what they refer to that all, whether liberal or conservative, agree on what king or what event is being spoken about in any given verse. Many of these events took place during the fourth and third centuries BC and all took place after the sixth century BC. Since Daniel wrote in the sixth century BC, all of these would be prophetic statements. But if there is no such thing as predictive prophecy, as the critical scholars claim, then they must be written after the events themselves. Thus, the liberals assign a date of around 167 BC for the writing of this book in order to make these events in Daniel 11 historical and not prophetic. To move even a few years back towards the orthodox view cannot be done without a number of statements immediately becoming prophetic in nature. And their bias against predictive prophecy will not allow this. It is interesting to observe that what they seemingly have failed to appreciate is that even assigning a date of 167 BC to this book does not totally deal with the issue. There remains many more of Daniel’s prophecies related to the

Messiah's comings as predictive in nature. For example, Daniel 9:24-27 with great accuracy predicts the exact time of the Messiah's death.

One claim of support that is consistently made by the liberal critics for their late date is the presence of three Greek and a few Persian words in the book of Daniel. According to their position, this forces the interpreter to a late date. This view was enshrined as absolute truth in S. R. Driver's oft quoted phrase (the italics are his).

The Persian words *presuppose* a period after the Persian empire had been established; the Greek words *demand*...a date *after the conquest of Palestine by Alexander the Great* (332 B.C.)^v

This idea, that the presence of these loan words requires the conclusion that Daniel was written after the Persian period and after the conquests of Alexander the Great, is an assumed fact by critical scholars. However, such a conclusion is not at all accurate much less required.

These words simply reflect an interchange between cultures that had been going on for centuries. It is known that Greek mercenaries served in the armies of Assyria long before the sixth century; that Greek artisans were employed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; and that Greek pottery and musical instruments had wide distribution long before Daniel lived.^{vi} So to say that the presence of a few Persian and Greek words demands a late date is overlooking the usual interchange of cultures that has always existed. It would be like someone saying that because "Toyota" and "Honda" are part of the vocabulary of Americans, this presents positive proof that Japan conquered the United States sometime in the past. No one would say such a thing because they recognize the interchange between cultures brought the words (and the cars) to America. In a concluding thought to his scholarly analysis of the problem of Greek loan words, Dr. K. A. Kitchen states that "the idea that Greek words and influence *could not* affect the Near East or appear in Aramaic before Alexander the Great *must* be given up."^{vii}

Furthermore, a number of conservative scholars have made the observation that we would actually expect to find many more Greek and Persian words in Daniel if, in fact, the book was written after the Persian period and after the conquest by Alexander and the armies of Greece.

Perhaps the most important point to consider in this great controversy is that the book of Daniel would have been saturated with Greek terms if it were written as late as 167 B.C. in Palestine, where Greek-speaking (Hellenistic) governments had controlled the entire region for more than 160 years. Instead of this, we find just two or three technical terms referring to obviously foreign cultural objects.^{viii}

Another line of evidence that is made by those who insist on a 167 BC date is the point that the book of Daniel was placed by the Jews in the third section of their canon, the Writings. The point being made is that the book of Daniel was not placed in the second, prophetic section (which was allegedly closed between 300-200 BC). They argue that if Daniel had been written in the sixth century then the Jews would have put Daniel in with the prophets. But since that section of the canon was already closed, the book was placed in the third section with later writings. In response it is helpful to make certain basic observations. First, the divisions within the Hebrew Scriptures are not necessarily chronologically based. As Dr. John Walvoord states on this matter,

Further, the Writings were not so classified because they were late in date, inasmuch as they included such works as Job and 1 and 2 Chronicles, but the division was on the classification of the material in the volumes. More important, the Writings were considered just as inspired and just as much the Word of God as the Law and the Prophets. This is brought out by the fact that Daniel is included in the Septuagint along with other inspired works, which would indicate that it was regarded as a genuine work of inspiration.^{ix}

It is worth observing that Daniel was different from the writing prophets in a number of ways. Since the content of Daniel included much historical information and since the prophetic portions were as much directed to the gentiles as to Israel, Daniel was somewhat different than Ezekiel or Jeremiah. And this may have been a factor in the placement of this book. Second, it is believed by many that Daniel was actually listed with the prophets but was “only shifted to another category of canonical books by Hebrew scribes in the fourth century AD.”^x Third, and of particular significance is the point that it was the status of the writer that caused the Jews to place books into certain divisions of the Scriptures and not the order of writing. Daniel is presented as a

government official (a godly one, of course). We know of no place where he was commissioned by God to enter the specific office of prophet. There is no evidence that Daniel received a definite call or was appointed by God to the office of prophet. Daniel was not like Isaiah or Jeremiah who were raised up to be prophets of God. The Jews recognized that Daniel's status was that of a government official and not that of a prophet and so put his work alongside of Ezra and Nehemiah. So the placing of Daniel in The Writings does not at all mean it was written late in the time of the Maccabees.

Those who insist on a late date for Daniel have raised numerous other issues as well. It is said that the Aramaic found in the book of Daniel is more like the Aramaic from the first or second centuries. If this is true, of course, then a sixth century date for the writing of Daniel is highly unlikely. But this position has been refuted by Kenneth A. Kitchen who, in great detail, notes that the Aramaic of Daniel is consistent with Aramaic texts from the 5th to the 9th centuries BC, clearly opening the way for a 6th century date for the book of Daniel.^{xi}

Furthermore it is claimed by critical scholars that the book contains a number of historical errors such as calling Nebuchadnezzar the father of Belshazzar; the mention of 'Darius the Mede'; the apparent inaccuracies in dating; and the identity of Belshazzar. But these have been dealt with quite adequately by conservative scholars and will be discussed in the appropriate sections of this commentary.

There is much more that could be said here, but there is no real need to do so since there are excellent books on introduction and background that deal with these matters in great detail. However, one final point should at least be noted here concerning the Dead Sea scrolls. The scrolls have provided an interesting refutation to the critical late date of Daniel. Portions of the book of Daniel were discovered at Qumran along with those of other Old Testament books. These scrolls were probably copied in the second century BC by those living in the Qumran community. Since the Qumran scrolls are copies and not the original writings, this has forced many critical scholars to reconsider their views on the late dating of such books as Psalm and Chronicles. They correctly reason that if the copies are dated from the Maccabean period then the originals were not written in that period. This would mean that the originals were written before the Maccabean period. The result has been to give earlier dates to a number of books. This, of course, makes a

great deal of sense. “But critical scholars have refused to draw the same conclusion in the case of Daniel even though the evidence is identical.”^{xii} It is obvious that such reasoning is not applied to the book of Daniel because to do so would place Daniel long before 167 BC and predictive prophecy would become a key element in the book of Daniel. The bias against predictive prophecy is so clearly evident on this point.

So we conclude that the evidence is strong and it is compelling for this book being written by the godly man Daniel in the sixth century BC. This has been the consensus for thousands of years and there is nothing in the critical approach which causes us to change.

THE PURPOSES OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

When looking at the contents of the book of Daniel as well as observing the historical setting in which this book was written, there are a number of likely reasons why Daniel was guided by the Holy Spirit to write this book. **First**, the book certainly must have been written *to encourage the nation of Israel*. In their Babylonian captivity the great question that weighed heavily on the hearts of these Israelite captives was “is God through with us?” Israel’s disobedience and unbelief had brought the severe discipline of the Lord God on them and it was natural to wonder if God was finished with them. But Daniel, along with his contemporary Ezekiel, was quite clear that God had not set them aside. Because of the grace and faithfulness of God, they did have an amazing future as the events of the future recorded in this book made clear. What an encouragement this would be to the Jews of that time.

A **second** purpose was *to provide a prophetic framework* that would be important to the understanding of other prophecies given before Daniel’s time as well as prophecies given centuries later. Daniel’s prophecies would particularly give a framework for that era known as “the times of the gentiles” (cf. Luke 21:24). During this period gentile nations would exercise dominance over Israel culminating in the final seven years of human history commonly known as The Tribulation. Without Daniel, many prophecies would be quite obscure and we would be forced to speculate about them.

A **third** purpose for Daniel's book is *to reveal with absolute clarity the sovereignty of God over men and nations*. The Lord God of Israel is not simply the God of Israel. He is the sovereign God of all the earth. Several of the Old Testament prophets have sections in their writings where gentile nations are addressed (e.g. Isaiah 13ff.; Amos 1). Although the messages to those gentile nations may not have actually been delivered to them, these messages let Israel know that in spite of the power of these gentile nations, it is the sovereign Lord who has absolute power and authority. So, in spite of the authority and power of Satan and the armament of nations, the Lord God of Israel is the One who sets kings up and takes them down. Eventually every nation of men as well as the forces of the devil will be forever destroyed. All authority resides in the Lord God of Israel, as Nebuchadnezzar learned firsthand. Every knee will indeed bow before the God of Israel.

A **fourth** purpose of the book of Daniel is *to provide another illustration of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises made with Abraham*. In the Abrahamic covenant, God had committed Himself to bring blessing to both Israel and the nations. And the Scriptures proclaim that reconciliation and restoration would occur through "the seed of Abraham"; that is, the Messiah. The fulfilling of these covenant promises ultimately depended on God's faithfulness and not on the faithfulness and obedience of Israel. Daniel joins with many other voices in the Old and New Testament in declaring that God will do what He said He would do in and through Israel. God will be absolutely faithful to His covenant commitments.

THE LANGUAGES USED IN THE BOOK OF DANIEL

The Book of Daniel is somewhat unique in that it was written in two languages, Hebrew (the language of the Jews) and Aramaic (the standard official language of that day). Similarly, the book of Ezra was written mainly in Hebrew, but it also contained an Aramaic portion (cf. Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26). Why the Holy Spirit led Daniel to do so is somewhat of a mystery to us. However, our best guess is that it has to do with the subjects of the various sections of the book of Daniel. The use of the Aramaic is in the section (2:4-7:28) that focuses on the domination of the gentiles over Israel and the rise

and fall of several gentile nations. It would be logical that the section concerning the gentiles would be written in a language they could understand. The remainder of the book is written in Hebrew with a Jewish audience in view as the emphasis is on Israel, Jerusalem and the relationship between Israel and gentile nations.

THE HISTORIC SETTING OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel lived in Jerusalem during the last days of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. His life intersected a number of kings and prophets during those critical last days in the national life of God's people. Some understanding of the events that took place in Daniel's nation as well as among the gentile nations is helpful to our understanding of the man Daniel and his book.

During the eighty years before the Babylonian captivity, Judah's spiritual situation was primarily characterized by religious defection. After the reign of the godly king Hezekiah (728-686 BC), Judah endured the long evil rule of Hezekiah's son Manasseh. Unfortunately for the nation, Manasseh followed in the footsteps of his wicked grandfather, Ahaz, rather than in the steps of his righteous father, Hezekiah. The testimony of scripture is that Manasseh did everything in his power to destroy the true worship of the Lord and to establish idolatry throughout the land. He excelled in evil.

He restored the offensive cultic objects which Hezekiah had destroyed, placed altars of Baal throughout the land and even in the Temple, and recognized the Ammonite deity, Molech, by sacrificing children in the Valley of Hinnom. He approved various forms of pagan divination, and even erected an image of the Canaanite goddess, Asherah, in the Temple. Those who protested, he killed, thus shedding much innocent blood.^{xiii}

He killed untold numbers of godly people as well as prophets and priests of the Lord thus effectively removing any righteous influence from Judah's national life. Manasseh's actions were so evil that it was declared that he was just like the wicked Canaanites, yet worse, because he sinned in the light of the knowledge of God. In all of the 450 year monarchy period in Israel there was no one who rivaled him in evil. And for

this, God pronounced irreversible judgment on Judah. Judah was doomed and headed for captivity (2 Kings 21).

After a very brief reign by Manasseh's wicked son, Amon, the Lord blessed Judah by establishing Josiah as king (640-609 BC). As it turned out, Josiah was the last godly king in the monarchy period. He brought a revival to Judah, but unfortunately it was basically external. There were activities such as the tearing down of images and burning objects of idolatry and observing biblical feasts. But the hearts of the people were generally untouched. Josiah himself was a truly godly man but the hearts of the people were far from the Lord and their turning back to the Lord was simply outward. The reality, of this superficial revival, was noted by Jeremiah the prophet (Jer. 3:10). And so, even though revival had come, the clouds of judgment began to gather on the horizon. The Lord did declare that because of Josiah's righteousness, he would not personally see the captivity of Judah. But the captivity would eventually come because of the sins of Manasseh (cf. 2 Kings 23:26; 24:3).

It was during the rule of Josiah that Daniel was born (c. 620 BC). So Daniel was born during that one brief period of time in Judah's latter history where the Word of God and the God of the Word were exalted in Judah. This, no doubt, greatly influenced the spiritual life and character of the boy Daniel growing up in Jerusalem. During those years in Judah, young Daniel benefited from the godly leadership of both king and priests and from the prophetic ministries of men like Jeremiah, Zephaniah and Habakkuk.

On the world scene, the Assyrian empire had dominated the ancient near east for centuries. But their power was declining and other forces were at work. The Median peoples gained their independence from Assyria (c.650 BC) and the Chaldeans (Babylonians) revolted throwing off the yoke of Assyria (c.625 BC). Kyaxares of Media and Nabopolassar of Babylon joined forces to attack Ninevah, the capital city of Assyria in 612 BC.

“Nabopolassar, instead of holding Babylonia for Assyria, had turned against it, and made common cause with the enemy, cementing the new alliance by the marriage of his son, Nebuchadnezzar, with Amytis, the daughter of Kyaxares. The two armies now marched against Ninevah, which made brave resistance.”^{xiv}

In spite of this brave resistance, Nineveh fell under the combined assault. This victory took place in 612 BC and fulfilled the prophecy of Nahum. A remnant of the Assyrian army, under Ashur-uballit II, fled westward to temporary safety in the ancient city of Haran. Pharaoh Necho of Egypt, fearing the rising power of Babylon, went to the aid of the Assyrians. But in spite of his support, in 609 BC, Haran fell to Nabopolassar, king of Babylon. It should be observed here that in his march northward to Haran to help the Assyrians, Pharaoh Necho was challenged by King Josiah of Judah, who for reasons that are not entirely clear, tried to keep the Egyptians from helping the Assyrians. In that confrontation, King Josiah was killed and Judah lost their last good and godly king. This was a tragedy of monumental proportions since King Josiah was the one barrier to Judah's captivity. And now that that barrier was removed by the death of the godly Josiah, captivity was only four years away.

In the year 605 BC, Nebuchadnezzar replaced his aged father Nabopolassar at the head of the armies of Babylon and led them against the weakened Assyrians who were again joined by the Egyptians. This battle took place at Carchemish on the Euphrates River. From the Babylonian Chronicles it can be ascertained that this battle took place in May-June of 605 BC.^{xv} The Babylonians completely destroyed their enemies and established themselves as the power in the world. After the battle of Carchemish, Nebuchadnezzar moved quickly to control all the land of Syria and Israel. He marched south and arrived at Jerusalem and brought about its submission. While the Babylonian Chronicles do not specifically say that Jerusalem was besieged in the year 605 BC (as stated in Daniel 1:1), it certainly allows for it when it declares that all of Hatti-land (i.e. Syria-Palestine) was defeated by the Babylonian armies. At this point the Babylonian Chronicles are focused on the primary matter of the major defeat of the Egyptians and does not go into how Jerusalem and other places met their fate. Furthermore, instead of Jerusalem being "besieged", the text of Daniel 1:1 could be translated "cut it off" or even "showed hostility towards it."^{xvi} The main point is that in August of 605 BC Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians and it is at this time that the lives of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar intersect for the first time.

As Nebuchadnezzar moved through the newly-won country, he desired not only the submission of leading cities but also the procurement of able young men, whom he might relocate in Babylon as prospective government personnel. It is likely that each city was forced to give him their finest. Among those from Jerusalem were Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.^{xvii}

The book of Daniel opens with the statement that Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem in the third year of King Jehoiakim’s reign over Judah; that is, the year 605 BC.

YEAR B.C.	EVENT	DANIEL’S AGE	KING OF JUDAH	KING OF BABYLON
620	Birth of Daniel	-----	Josiah	Nabopolassar
609	Josiah killed by Pharoah Necho. Battle at Haran.	11	Jehoahaz, second son of Josiah	Nabopolassar
609	Pharoah Necho in control in Judah replaces Jehoahaz	11	Jehoiakim (i.e. Eliakim) oldest son of Josiah.	Nabopolassar
605	Jerusalem falls to Babylon. Daniel taken captive.	15	Jehoiakim (who swears loyalty to Nebuchadnezzar)	Nabopolassar/ Nebuchadnezzar
603	In Babylon, Daniel finishes training	17	Jehoiakim	Nebuchadnezzar

A Basic Outline of the Book of Daniel

- I. INTRODUCTION TO DANIEL, 1:21
- II. THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES, 2:1-7:28
 - A. THE DREAM OF THE GREAT STATUE, 2:1-49
 - B. THE GOLDEN IMAGE AND FURNACE OF FIRE, 3:1-30
 - C. THE DREAM OF THE GREAT TREE, 4:1-37
 - D. THE FEAST AND THE WRITING ON THE WALL, 5:1-31
 - E. THE DECREE AND THE DEN OF LIONS, 6:1-28
 - F. THE VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS, 7:1-28
- III. ISRAEL AND THE GENTILE NATIONS, 8:1-12:13
 - A. THE VISION OF THE RAM AND THE GOAT, 8:1-27
 - B. THE VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS, 9:1-27
 - C. THE FINAL VISION OF DANIEL, 10:1-12:13

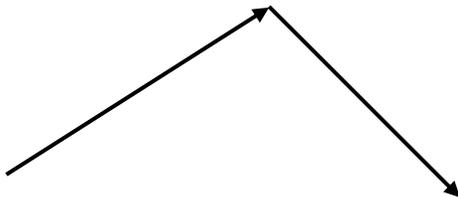
The Theme of Daniel

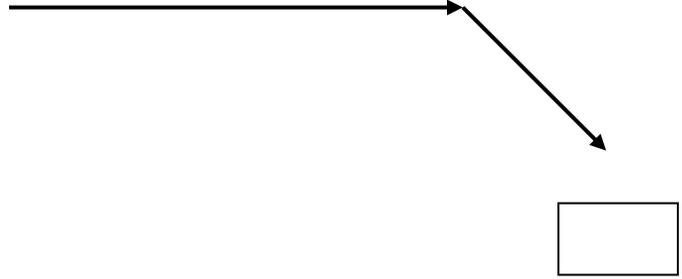
THE SETTING OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Daniel lived in Jerusalem during the last days of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. His life intersected a number of kings and prophets during those critical days in the national life of Israel.

➤ THE SPIRITUAL SITUATION OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

*KEY SCRIPTURES: 2 Kings 22-25; 2 Chronicles 35-36; Ezekiel 1; 14; 20
Jeremiah 40-44; 52



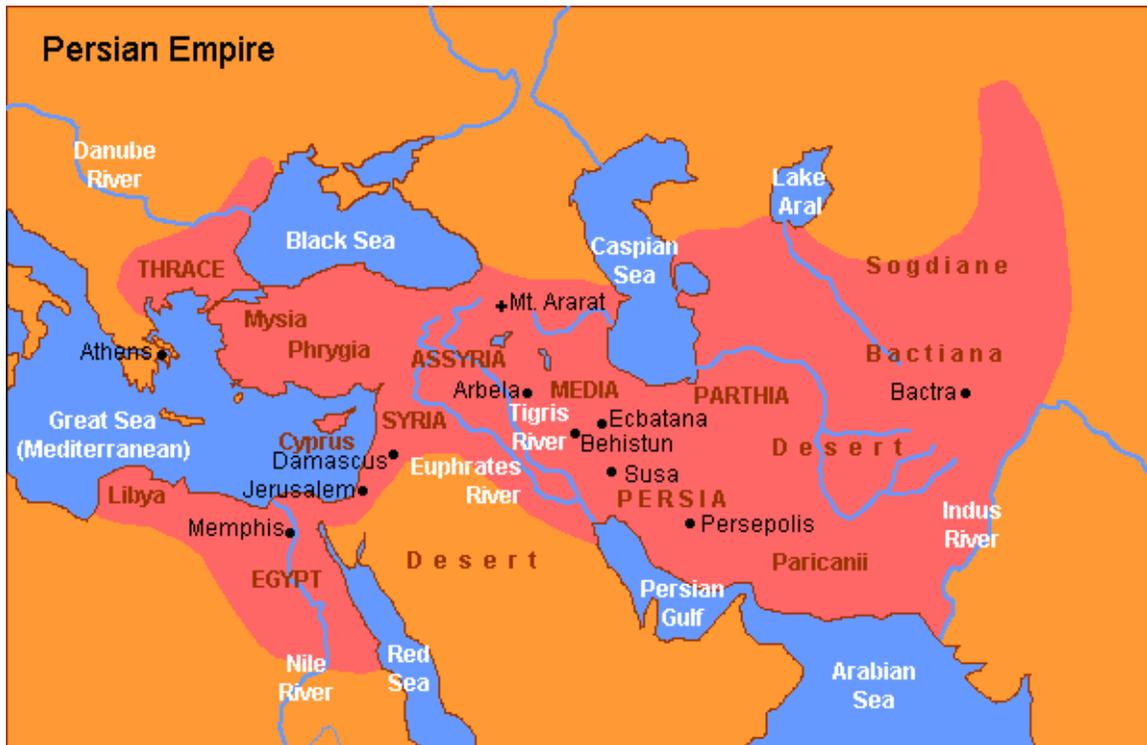


➤ **THE WORLD SITUATION IN THE DAYS OF DANIEL**

There was a struggle for world domination which involved Assyria, Egypt and Babylon. (see maps on page 17)

➤ **THE BIBLICAL CONTEMPORARIES OF DANIEL**

(See chart on page 18)



DANIEL: AN IMPORTANT LINK IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY

BEFORE THE CAPTIVITY

JEREMIAH
HABAKKUK
ZEPHANIAH
JOSIAH
ZEDEKIAH
HILKIAH

DANIEL
 (EZEKIEL)

AFTER THE CAPTIVITY

ZERUBBABEL
HAGGAI
ZECHARIAH
JOSHUA (the High priest)
EZRA/NEH.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS IN DANIEL

DATE	SCRIPTURE	EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF DANIEL
605	DANIEL 1:1-21	AFTER A FAILED ATTEMPT BY AN ASSYRIAN-EGYPTIAN ALLIANCE TO PUSH BACK THE ARMIES OF BABYLON FROM HARAN (in 609), THE BABYLONIANS COMPLETELY DEFEATED THESE TWO FOES AT THE BATTLE OF CARCHEMISH (605). THE BABYLONIANS THEN CAME SOUTH AND SUBJEGATED JUDAH. CAPTIVES WERE TAKEN BACK TO BABYLON. DANIEL WAS AMONG THEM.
603	DANIEL 2:1-49	NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAD A DREAM OF A GREAT STATUE AND THIS DREAM WAS INTERPRETED BY DANIEL. THIS RESULTED IN PROMOTION AND HONOR FOR DANIEL. IT WAS AFTER THIS THAT NEBUCHADNEZZAR ERECTED HIS

		GOLDEN IMAGE AND DEMANDED THAT ALL BOW AND WORSHIP IT (Daniel 3:1-30)
597	2 KINGS 24	NEBUCHADNEZZAR CAME A SECOND TIME TO THE CITY OF JERUSALEM BECAUSE OF JEWISH INSUBORDINATION. HE TOOK MORE TREASURE AND OTHER CAPTIVES (including Ezekiel).
586	2 KINGS 25	NEBUCHADNEZZAR CAME A THIRD AND FINAL TIME TO JERUSALEM BECAUSE OF KING ZEDEKIAH'S REBELLION. HE ACTUALLY CAME IN 588 BC AND SET UP A TERRIBLE 18 MONTH (some say 30 month) SEIGE. THIS SEIGE IS SPOKEN OF BY JEREMIAH IN THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS. FINALLY THE CITY AND THE TEMPLE WERE TOTALLY DESTROYED BY THE BABYLONIANS.
571	EZEKIEL 29	A PROPHECY CONCERNING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S CONQUEST OF EGYPT WAS GIVEN. GOD GAVE EGYPT TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR AS A REWARD FOR HIS EFFORTS AGAINST THE WICKED CITY OF TYRE.
568	DANIEL 4:1-37	BECAUSE OF HIS PRIDE, NEBUCHADNEZZAR WAS STRUCK BY GOD WITH A FORM OF INSANITY. THIS CONDITION LASTED FOR 7 YEARS BUT HE CAME OUT OF THIS CONDITION LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE PRAISE TO DANIEL'S GOD.
553	DANIEL 7:1-28	AS THE BABYLONIAN EMPIRE BEGAN TO DISINTEGRATE, DANIEL SAW A VISION OF THE COMING WORLD EMPIRES.
551	DANIEL 8:1-27	DANIEL HAD A VISION OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE'S RISE TO POWER. A YEAR LATER UNDER CYRUS THE GREAT, THE PERSIAN RISE TO POWER BEGAN.
539	DANIEL 5:1-31	IN OCTOBER OF 539 BELSHAZZAR HELD A GREAT FEAST DURING WHICH HE DEFIED THE GOD OF ISRAEL. AND BABYLON FELL THAT VERY NIGHT.
538	DANIEL 6 and 9	DANIEL WAS PLACED INTO THE DEN OF LIONS. EITHER IMMEDIATELY BEFORE OR AFTER HE HAD THE GREAT VISION OF THE "70 WEEKS".
536	DANIEL 10-12	DANIEL'S FINAL VISION WHICH FOCUSED ON THE ANTICHRIST, THE COMING TRIBULATION. RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

I. INTRODUCTION TO DANIEL, 1:1-21

A. THE HISTORICAL SETTING, 1:1-2

FACTORS IN THE DATING OF THE REIGNS OF THE KINGS

(1)

(2)

B. THE SELECTION OF THE TRAINEES, 1:3-7

JEWISH	BABYLONIAN
DANIEL “God is my judge”	BELTESHAZZAR “Bel’s prince”
HANAHIAH “The Lord is gracious”	SHADRACH “Illumined by Aku?”
MISHAEL “Who is He that is God”?	MESHACH “Who/what is Aku?”

AZARIAH “The Lord is my help”	ABEDNEGO “Servant of Nebo”
---	--------------------------------------

C. THE TEST OF FAITH, 1:8-16

D. THE EXAM AND “GRADUATION”, 1:17-21

II. THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES, 2:1-7:28

A. NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S DREAM OF THE GREAT STATUE, 2:1-49

1. THE KING AND HIS DREAM, 2:1-3

2. THE WISEMEN AND THEIR DILEMMA, 2:4-13

□ Magicians

□ Astrologers

- Sorcerers

- Chaldeans

3. THE MAN DANIEL AND HIS INTERVENTION, 2:14-16

4. THE FRIENDS AND THE PRAYER, 2:17-23

5. THE MAN DANIEL AND HIS HONORING OF GOD, 2:24-30

6. THE CONTENT OF THE DREAM, 2:31-35

7. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE DREAM, 2:36-45

----- ----**GOLD**

----- ----**SILVER**

----- ----**BRONZE**

----- ----**IRON**

----- ----**IRON +
CLAY**

BABYLON	MEDO- PERSIA	GREECE	ROME		MESSIAH'S KINGDOM
1	2	3	4		5
			I	II	

B. THE GOLDEN IMAGE AND THE FURNACE OF FIRE, 3:1-30

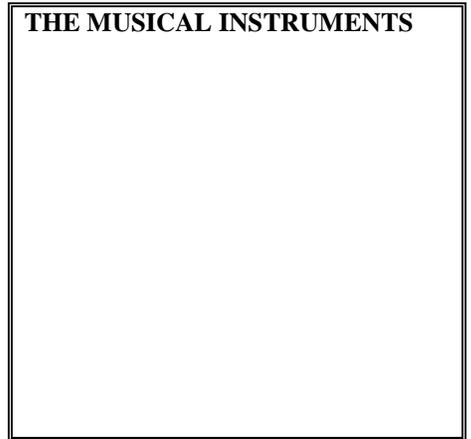
1. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S PRIDE, 3:1-7

2. THE REBEL FRIENDS, 3:8-12

3. THE SECOND CHANCE, 3:13-18

4. THE FIERY FURNACE, 3:19-23

5. THE DIVINE RESCUE, 3:24-27



6. THE GREAT REWARD, 3:28-30

C. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM OF THE GREAT TREE, 4:1-37

1. THE EPILOGUE OF PRAISE, 4:1-3

2. THE GREAT TREE DREAM, 4:4-17

3. THE INTERPRETATION BY DANIEL, 4:18-27

4. THE FULFILLMENT OF THE DREAM, 4:28-37

BETWEEN CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE

D. THE FEAST AND THE WRITING, 5:1-31

1. THE WICKEDNESS OF BELSHAZZAR, 5:1-4

2. THE FINGER OF GOD, 5:5-9

3. THE RETURN OF DANIEL, 5:10-16

4. THE INTERPRETATION BY DANIEL AND THE RESULTS, 5:17-31

THE IDENTIFICATION OF “DARIUS THE MEDE”

(1)

(2)

(3)

E. THE DECREE AND THE DEN OF LIONS, 6:1-28

1. THE NEW ADMINISTRATION, 6:1-3

2. THE ENEMIES OF DANIEL, 6:4-5

3. THE PLOT TO ELIMINATE DANIEL, 6:6-9

4. THE PLOT DEFIED, 6:10-13

5. THE ATTEMPT TO RESCUE, 6:14-15

6. THE NIGHT IN THE DEN, 6:16-24

7. THE GLORY TO GOD, 6:25-28

F. DANIEL'S VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS, 7:1-28

1. THE SUMMARY OF THE VISION, 7:1-14

❖ **PART 1 – The Three Beasts, 7:1-6**

❖ **PART 2 – The Terrible Fourth Beast, 7:7-8**

❖ **PART 3 – The Scene of Coming Judgment, 7:9-12**

❖ **PART 4 – The Appearance of the Son of Man, 7:13-14**

2. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VISION, 7:15-28

❖ Daniel's Response to the Vision, 7:15-16, 28

❖ The General Interpretation by the Angel, 7:17-18

❖ The Specific Interpretation of the 4th Beast, 7:19-27

	CHAPTER 2 THE STATUE	CHAPTER 7 THE BEASTS
BABYLON	The head of GOLD	
MEDO-PERSIA	The arms/chest of SILVER	
GREECE	The belly/thighs of BRONZE	
ROME I	The legs of IRON	
ROME II	The feet of IRON and CLAY	
THE “ANTICHRIST”	(Not mentioned)	
MESSIAH’S KINGDOM	The STONE that became a mountain	

III. ISRAEL IN RELATION TO THE GENTILES, 8:1-12:13

A. THE RAM-GOAT VISION, 8:1-27

1. THE SETTING OF DANIEL'S VISION, 8:1-2

2. THE RAM AND THE GOAT AT WAR, 8:3-8

3. THE SMALL HORN, 8:9-14

LARGE HORN-----

FOUR HORNS-----

SMALL HORN-----

4. THE FUTURE REVEALED, 8:15-27

B. THE VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS, 9:1-27

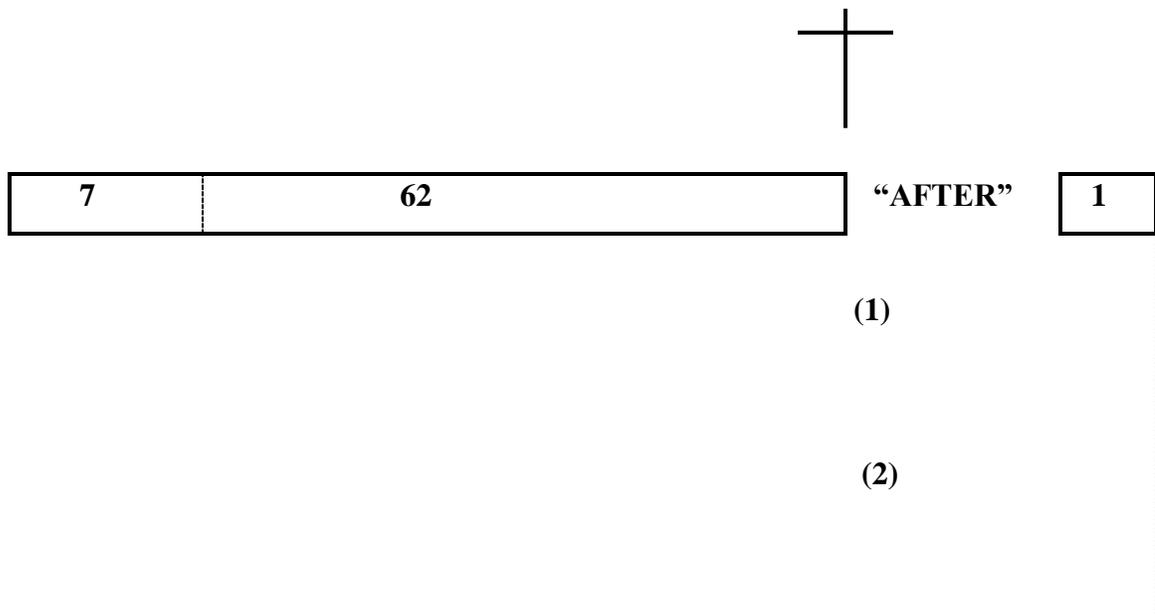
1. THE SETTING, 9:1-2

2. THE PRAYER OF DANIEL, 9:3-19

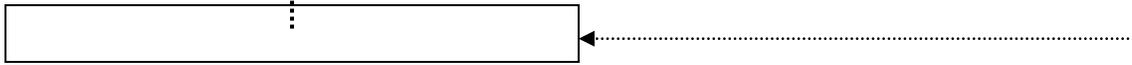
3. THE COMING OF GABRIEL, 9:20-23

4. THE PROPHECY OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS, 9:24-27

See Appendix #1 in these notes on the 70 weeks prophecy



THE 70TH WEEK



➤ **IN THE “SEVENTY WEEKS” GOD WILL ACCOMPLISH SIX SIGNIFICANT THINGS IN HIS DEALINGS WITH THE NATION OF ISRAEL.**

(1) FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION

(2) MAKE AN END OF SIN

(3) MAKE ATONEMENT FOR INIQUITY

(4) BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS

(5) SEAL UP VISION AND PROPHECY

(6) ANOINT THE MOST HOLY

C. THE FINAL VISION OF DANIEL, 10:1-12:13

1. DANIEL'S TERRIFYING VISION, 10:1-9

a. The Setting of the Vision, 10:1-3

b. The Glorious Person, 10:4-9

DANIEL 10:5-8, 12	REVELATION 1:13-17
<p>I LIFTED UP MY EYES AND LOOKED, AND BEHOLD, THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN DRESSED IN LINEN, WHOSE WAISTE WAS GIRDED WITH A BELT OF PURE GOLD OF UPHAZ. HIS BODY ALSO WAS LIKE BERYL, HIS FACE HAD THE APPEARANCE OF LIGHTENING, HIS EYES WERE LIKE FLAMING TORCHES, HIS ARMS AND FEET LIKE THE GLEAM OF POLISHED BRONZE, AND THE SOUND OF HIS WORDS LIKE THE SOUND OF A TUMULT. NOW I, DANIEL, ALONE SAW THIS VISION, WHILE THE MEN WHO WERE WITH ME DID NOT SEE THE VISION; NEVERTHELESS, A GREAT DREAD FELL ON THEM, AND THEY RAN AWAY TO HIDE THEMSELVES. SO I WAS LEFT ALONE AND SAW THIS GREAT VISION; YET NO STRENGTH WAS LEFT IN ME, FOR MY NATURAL COLOR TURNED TO A DEATHLY PALLOR, AND I RETAINED NO STRENGTH..., THEN HE SAID TO ME, 'DO NOT BE AFRAID DANIEL.'</p>	<p>...AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAMPSTANDS ONE LIKE A SON OF MAN, CLOTHED IN A ROBE REACHING TO THE FEET AND GIRDED ACROSS HIS BREAST WITH A GOLDEN GIRDLE. AND HIS HEAD AND HIS HAIR WERE WHITE LIKE WHITE WOOL, LIKE SNOW; AND HIS EYES WERE LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE; AND HIS FEET WERE LIKE BURNISHED BRONZE WHEN IT HAS BEEN CAUSED TO GLOW IN A FURNACE, AND HIS VOICE WAS LIKE THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS. AND IN HIS RIGHT HAND HE HELD SEVEN STARS; AND OUT HIS MOUTH CAME A SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD; AND HIS FACE WAS LIKE THE SUN SHINING IN ITS STRENGTH. AND WHEN I SAW HIM, I FELL AT HIS FEET AS A DEAD MAN. AND HE LAID HIS RIGHT HAND UPON ME SAYING, DO NOT BE AFRAID; I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST.</p>

2. THE MINISTRY OF AN ANGEL, 10:10-14

3. A FURTHER MINISTRY TO DANIEL, 10:15-18

4. THE PROPHECY INTRODUCED, 10:19-21

5. THE PROPHECIES OF PERSIA, 11:1-2

VERSE	DATE	PERSON
2		
3-4		
5-20		

21-35		
-------	--	--

6. THE PROPHECIES OF GREECE, 11:3-4

7. THE PROPHECIES OF SYRIA AND EGYPT, 11:5-20

(Remember that the Kings of the **North** refer to the Seleucid dynasty of Syria while the Kings of the **South** refer to the dynasty of the Ptolemies of Egypt.)

8. PROPHECIES OF THE NORTHERN KING ANTIOCHUS IV, 11:21-35

9. PROPHECIES OF ANTICHRIST AND THE END TIMES, 11:36-45

ANTICHRIST IS NOW THE SUBJECT

- (1) 11:36-45 is not true of Antiochus IV
- (2) There are 3 kings in this section, not 2
- (3) 10:14 -- "latter days" is the subject
- (4) 11:35 -- "end times" is the focus
- (5) 12:1-- "at that time" puts these events
in the time of tribulation.

10. PROPHECY OF COMING TRIBULATION, 12:1

11. PROPHECY OF COMING RESURRECTION, 12:2-3

12. CONCLUSION TO THE PROPHECY OF DANIEL

a. The Command to Daniel, 12:4

b. The Time of the End, 12:5-7

c. Sealed Until the End, 12:8-12

APPENDIX #1 - THE PROPHECY OF THE 70 WEEKS

The following information concerning Daniel's Seventy Weeks prophecy is from Dr. Alva McClain's book, "Daniel's Prophecy of the **Seventy** Weeks". (pages 5-7). It helps to summarize a few of the key points in this important prophecy.

In the predictions of the Seventy Weeks, we have the indispensable chronological key to all New Testament prophecy. Our Lord's great prophetic discourse recorded in Matthew and Mark fixes the time of Israel's final and greatest trouble definitely within the days of the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15-22; Mark

13:14-20). And the greater part of the Book of Revelation is simply an expansion of Daniel's prophecy within the chronological framework as outlined by the same seventieth week, which is divided into two equal periods, each extending for 1260 days, or 42 months, or 3 ½ years (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). Therefore, apart from an understanding of the details of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, all attempts to interpret New Testament prophecy, must fail in large measure.

(1) The entire prophecy has to do with Daniel's "people" and Daniel's "city"; that is, the nation of **Israel** and the city of **Jerusalem**.

(2) Two different princes are mentioned, who should not be confused; the first is named **Messiah the prince** (vs. 25); and the second is described as the **Prince who is to come** (vs. 26).

(3) The entire time period involved is exactly specified as Seventy Weeks; and these seventy weeks are further divided into three lesser periods; the first a period of **7 weeks**; after that a period of **62 weeks**; and finally a period of **1 week**.

(4) The beginning of the whole period of the seventy weeks is definitely fixed as "the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem." That is the starting point.

(5) The end of the 69 weeks will be marked by the appearance of Messiah as the Prince of Israel. "AFTER" THE 69TH WEEK messiah the Prince will be cut off and Jerusalem will again be destroyed by the people of another prince who is yet to come.

(6) After these two important events, we come to the last, or 70th week, the beginning of which will be marked by the establishment of a firm covenant or treaty between the Coming Prince and the Jewish nation for a period of one week. This treaty will be broken in the middle of the week, precipitating a time of wrath lasting to the full end of the week.

APPENDIX #2 – FOREIGN RULERS AND OF ISRAEL

I. MEDO-PERSIAN RULERS

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| 1. CYRUS THE GREAT | 539-530 |
| 2. CAMBYSIS | 530-522 |
| 3. PSEUDO-SMERDIS | 522-521 |
| 4. DARIUS I | 521-486 |
| 5. XERXES (Ahasuerus) | 486-465 |
| 6. ARTAXERXES I | 465-423 |

-----END OF OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY-----

- | | |
|-------------------|---------|
| 7. DARIUS II | 423-404 |
| 8. ARTAXERXES II | 404-359 |
| 9. ARTAXERXES III | 359-338 |
| 10. ARSES | 338-336 |
| 11. DARIUS III | 336-333 |

II. MACEDONIAN RULERS

**ALEXANDER THE GREAT 333-323*

THE PTOLEMY RULERS (Those who ruled Israel)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------|
| 1. PTOLEMY I (Soter) | 323-285 |
| 2. PTOLEMY II (Philadelphus) | 285-247 |
| 3. PTOLEMY III (Euergetes) | 247-221 |
| 4. PTOLEMY IV (Philopater) | 221-203 |
| 5. PTOLEMY V (Epiphanes) | 203-198 |

THE SELEUCID RULERS (Those who ruled Israel)

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. ANTIOCHUS III | 198-187 |
| 2. SELEUCUS IV | 187-175 |
| 3. ANTIOCHUS IV | 175-164 |

APPENDIX #3 – A SUMMARY OF DANIEL

CHAP.	EVENT	YEAR	AGE OF DANIEL	RULING NATION	RULING KING
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					

12					
----	--	--	--	--	--

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I. THE PURPOSES OF BIBLE PROPHECY

A. TO REVEAL THE WISDOM, GRACE AND SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

-Isaiah 40:13-26; Revelation 4:11; 5:9-13; 11:15-17

B. TO CHANGE THE WAY BELIEVERS LIVE RIGHT NOW

-Revelation 1:3; 1 John 2:28-3:3; Titus 2:11-13; 2 Peter 3:11-14

C. TO GIVE CLEAR WARNING TO THE UNBELIEVER

-Revelation 6:16-17; 14:8-20; 16:9-11; 20:11-15;

John 5:19-29

II. THE AUTHOR AND THE DATE OF WRITING

The Book of Revelation was written by JOHN THE APOSTLE of the Lord Jesus Christ around 95 A.D.

The Book states that John wrote it (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). The name is genuine and not some later addition and the name has no further identification attached to it. This fact assumes a familiarity with the name “John” on the part of the readers. It was the almost universal belief of the early church that the Apostle John wrote the book. In the second and third centuries Justin, Irenaeus, Clement, Origen, Tertullian and Hippolytus all bore witness to John the Apostle of Christ as the author of Revelation. In their writings there is no evidence of discussion or debate about the matter clearly indicating that they assumed the point. Furthermore, there are numerous grammatical similarities between Revelation and the other Johannine books.

The late date of the book (95 A.D.) has been held since the earliest days of the church. Irenaeus (c. 170 A.D.) who was a pupil of Polycarp (who was a disciple of the Apostle John himself) says that John the Apostle wrote the Apocalypse “towards the end of Domitian’s reign” (Domitian reigned from AD 81-96). Irenaeus’ close relationship with Polycarp/John and his reputation as a careful historian give great weight to his testimony about the author and date of Revelation. Other early writers also point to this date as the time when John wrote the book. Furthermore, there are many traditions that refer to the fact that John the Apostle was exiled on the island of Patmos as a very old man. These traditions further declare that the Revelation is one of the latest (or the latest book) book in the New Testament. These many ancient traditions support the late date for Revelation and stand against a pre-70 AD dating of the book.

In this discussion of the dating of the book, it is also worth noting that the “seven churches in Asia” (Revelation 2 and 3) were not only in existence but were in greatly varying spiritual conditions. Some of the churches had clearly degenerated spiritually and had moved away from their apostolic moorings. If these churches were founded in the late 50s or even in the early 60s, then it seems

highly unlikely that they would have strayed so far in just a few short years---if Revelation was written prior to the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70.

III. THE PURPOSES OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

1. To unite and clarify the prophetic truth of the Bible.

It would be hard to imagine what our understanding of biblical prophecy would be like if we did not have Revelation to put many of the pieces of the prophetic puzzle together.

2. To encourage the believers of John's day (and all those who experience persecution. Revelation makes it clear that even the severest persecution will not thwart God's great and glorious purposes.

3. To motivate believers to live godly lives.

Knowledge of the future has an important role to play in living in this present world system. Revelation helps remind the believer that the greater and more significant world is yet to come and to live in accordance with that.

IV. VARIOUS APPROACHES TO INTERPRETING REVELATION

1. **IDEALISM.** It is "timeless"; that is, it does not see Revelation as past, present or future. Revelation is simply giving principles for living that are valid in any age. The symbols of Revelation are not to be applied to anything specific.

2. **HISTORICISM.** Sees Revelation 4-19 as a symbolic presentation of the course of church history. Since it is seen as a symbolic presentation of church history, it relies heavily on allegorizing in its interpretations. Historicism was the dominant view from the time of the Reformation until the end of the 19th century.

3. **PRETERISM.** This view believes that most, if not all prophecy, has already been fulfilled in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 by the Romans. There are three kinds of preterism.

- MILD

- MODERATE

- EXTREME

4. **FUTURISM.** This is the view that sees Revelation 4-22 as speaking of things yet to come with chapters 6-19 being fulfilled in the coming seven years of tribulation. This is the approach taken in this course.

V. SOME BASIC GUIDELINES TO INTERPRETING REVELATION

Interpreting the Revelation is done according to the basic guidelines of prophetic literature. Revelation contains the final prophecies of the Bible and because of that there is an additional and unique element that needs to be understood.

- (1) INTERPRET THE TEXT OF REVELATION LITERALLY
(normally).

(2) INTERPRET FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE SCRIPTURALLY.

(3) INTERPRET BY COMPARING PROPHECY WITH
PROPHECY.

(4) INTERPRET REVELATION WITH GENESIS 1-11 IN MIND.

(5) INTERPRET REVELATION FROM THE FUTURISTIC
PERSPECTIVE.

(6) INTERPRET REVELATION CHRONOLOGICALLY.

OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS AND ALLUSIONS IN REVELATION

(From Interpreting Revelation by Merrill Tenney)

VI. BASIC OUTLINE OF REVELATION

“WRITE THEREFORE THE THINGS WHICH YOU **HAVE SEEN**, AND THE THINGS WHICH **ARE**, AND THE THINGS WHICH **SHALL TAKE PLACE AFTER THESE THINGS**.” -Revelation 1:19

I. THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN---THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST, 1:1-20

A. THE INTRODUCTION, 1:1-8

B. THE VISION OF CHRIST, 1:9-20

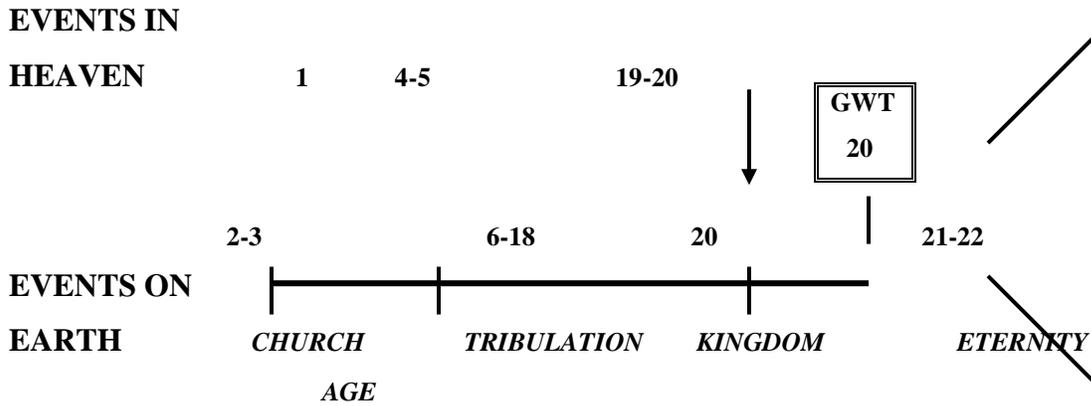
**II. THE THINGS WHICH ARE---THE POSSESSIONS OF JESUS CHRIST,
2:1-3:22**

- A. THE LETTER TO EPHESUS, 2:1-7**
- B. THE LETTER TO SMYRNA, 2:8-11**
- C. THE LETTER TO PERGAMUM, 2:12-17**
- D. THE LETTER TO THYATIRA, 2:18-29**
- E. THE LETTER TO SARDIS, 3:1-6**
- F. THE LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA, 3:7-13**
- G. THE LETTER TO LAODICEA, 3:14-22**

**III. THE THINGS WHICH SHALL TAKE PLACE---THE PROGRAM OF
JESUS CHRIST, 4:1-22:21**

- A. THE SCENE AROUND THE THRONE, 4:1-5:14**
- B. THE SEVEN SEALS, 6:1-8:1**
- C. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS, 8:2-9:21**
- D. THE PROPHECIES ON THE NEW SCROLL, 10:1-14:20**
- E. THE SEVEN BOWLS, 15:1-16:21**
- F. THE JUDGMENT OF THE TWO BABYLONS, 17:1-18:24**
- G. THE FINAL VISIONS OF JOHN, 19:1-22:5**
- H. THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK, 22:6-21**

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION



ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION

I. THE THINGS WHICH YOU HAVE SEEN---THE PERSON OF JESUS

CHRIST, 1:1-20

A. THE INTRODUCTION, 1:1-8

1. THE PREFACE, 1:1-3

**“SHORTLY” and “QUICKLY” IN
REVELATION**

**Scriptures: 1:1; 1:3; 2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:6; 22:7; 22:10;
22:20**

DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST	SCRIPTURE	MEANING OF SYMBOL
-----------------------	-----------	-------------------

2. THE SALUTATION, 1:4-8

SON OF MAN		
Clothed in a ROBE reaching to the feet and girded across His breast with a golden GIRDLE		
His HEAD and His HAIR were WHITE like WHITE wool.		
His EYES were like a FLAME of FIRE		
His FEET were like BURNISHED BRONZE		
His VOICE was like THE SOUND OF MANY WATERS		
In His RIGHT HAND He held SEVEN STARS		
Out of His MOUTH came a SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD		
His FACE was like the SUN SHINING in its strength		

B. THE VISION OF CHRIST, 1:9-20

1. THE INSTRUCTION TO WRITE, 1:9-11

2. THE REVELATION OF THE GLORIFIED CHRIST, 1:12-16

3. THE RESPONSE AND THE INTERPRETATION, 1:17-20

➤ **The Response (vss. 17-18)**

➤ **The Outline (vs. 19)**

➤ **The Symbols (vs. 20)**

II. THE THINGS WHICH ARE---JESUS' POSSESSIONS, 2:1-3:22

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

QUESTION: Why is Revelation addressed to “the seven churches that are in Asia” when it is well known that there were more than seven churches in Asia at that time?

(1) THE HISTORICAL-PROPHETICAL VIEW

(2) THE HISTORICAL-REPRESENTATIVE VIEW

SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE LETTERS TO THESE CHURCHES

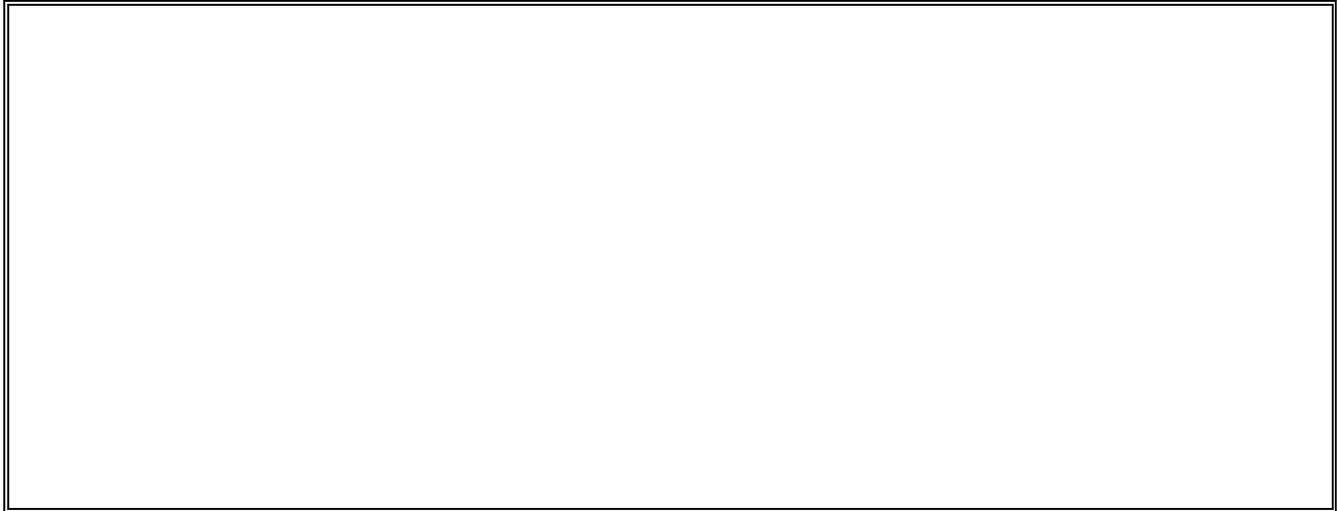
(1) THE BASIC FORMAT OF THE LETTERS

(2) THE “SPIRIT AND THE CHURCHES”

(3) IDENTIFICATION OF THE “OVERCOMERS”

➤ **A CHRISTIAN**

➤ **A VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN**



LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA

CHURCH	TEXT	SPEAKER	PRAISE	CENSURED BY CHRIST	EXHORTED BY CHRIST	POSSIBLE JUDGMENT	PROMISE TO OVER- COMER
EPHESUS	2:1-7						
SMYRNA	2:8-11						
PERGAMUM	2:12-17						
THYATIRA	2:18-29						
SARDIS	3:1-6						
PHILADEL.	3:7-13						
LAODICEA	3:14-22						

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

ANGELS (□□□□□□) IN REVELATION 2 and 3

Rev. 1:20 – “the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches” (cf. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14)

The use of “angel” in the Bible and in the Book of Revelation

Human messengers:

“However, the majority of the commentators seem to favor the position that this is John’s reference to the pastor of the congregation.” –Paige Patterson in “Who Runs the Church”, p. 151

“It is properly understood here as referring to human messengers to these seven churches...probably the pastors of these churches or prophets through whom the message was delivered...” –Walvoord (Revelation,p.53)

“It was concluded that the seven were men who represented the churches, but not in the sense of being sole leaders of individual churches. These were representatives...” –Thomas (Revelation, p. 127)

Angelic beings:

“STARS” in the Bible

A. THE LETTER TO EPHESUS, 2:1-7

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO EPHEBUS

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

B. THE LETTER TO SMYRNA, 2:8-11

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO SMYRNA

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

C. THE LETTER TO PERGAMUM, 2:12-17

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO PERGAMUM

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

D. THE LETTER TO THYATIRA, 2:18-29

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO THYATIRA

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

E. THE LETTER TO SARDIS, 3:1-6

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO SARDIS

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

F. THE LETTER TO PHILADELPHIA, 3:7-13

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO PHILADELPHIA

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

G. THE LETTER TO LAODICEA, 3:14-22

1. BACKGROUND

2. DESCRIPTION OF CHRIST

3. PRAISE GIVEN TO LAODICEA

4. A WORD OF CONDEMNATION

5. A WORD OF EXHORTATION

6. POSSIBLE DISCIPLINE

7. PROMISE TO THE OVERCOMER

**III. THE THINGS WHICH SHALL TAKE PLACE---THE PROGRAM OF JESUS
CHRIST, 4:1-22:21**

A. THE SCENE AROUND THE THRONE, 4:1-5:14

1. THE THRONE OF THE LORD GOD, 4:1-3

❖ “AFTER THESE THINGS”

❖ **“THE THRONE OF GOD”**

“THRONE” IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION
“Throne” =

2. THE TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS, 4:4-5

NOTE: The 24 Elders are referred to several times in Revelation which shows them to be key players in the drama. (cf. 4:4, 10; 5:5, 6, 8, 11, 14: 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4). WHO DO THE ELDERS REPRESENT?

3. THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES, 4:6-11 (4:6-11; 5:6; 6:1, 6; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4)

4. THE SCROLL WITH THE SEVEN SEALS, 5:1-4

(CF. John 5:22, 27; Luke 19:11-27; Daniel 2:35, 44; 7:26-27)

5. THE LION-LAMB, 5:5-7

6. THE WORSHIP OF THE LAMB, 5:8-14 (cf. Daniel 7:13-14)

B. THE SEVEN SEALS, 6:1-8:1

At this point the Lord Jesus, who has been given all authority to judge, breaks the first seal and begins the judgments of Daniel's Seventieth Week ("the tribulation"). According to Jesus Himself (cf. Matt. 24:21) there has never been anything like these judgments in all of man's history. But when the judgments are over, the Lord Jesus Christ will have fully accomplished His purposes of taking back planet earth and restoring what was lost in Eden.

THE PRIMARY PURPOSES FOR THE TRIBULATION

(1) TO PREPARE THE NATION OF ISRAEL FOR HER MESSIAH.

(Dan. 9:24; 12:7; Zech. 12:10; Matt. 23:39; Rom. 11:25-29; Rev. 7:4)

(2) TO BRING JUDGMENT ON UNBELIEVING MEN AND NATIONS

(Zech. 12:1-3; 14:1-4; Jer. 30:7-8; Joel 3:1-16; Rev. 6:4, 8, 12-17; 8:7-12)

ISSUES IN UNDERSTANDING THE TRIBULATION

(1) THE CONCEPT OF “BIRTH PANGS” - Matthew 24:8

(Isaiah 13:8-9; 26:17-19; 66:7-9; Jeremiah 30:7-8; Micah 4:9-10)

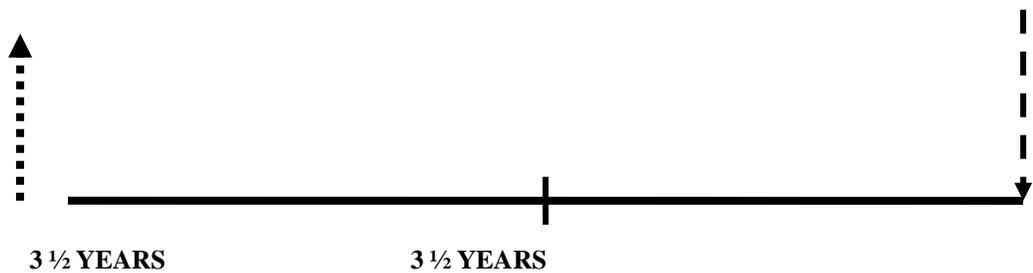
(2) THE THREE SERIES OF JUDGMENTS IN REVELATION

(1) SEALS

(2) TRUMPETS

(3) BOWLS

Are these series of judgments successive or contemporaneous?



“...for then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days shall be cut short.” Jesus in Matthew 24:21-22

B. THE SEVEN SEALS, 6:1-8:1

1. THE **FIRST** SEAL --- VICTORIES OF THE ANTICHRIST, 6:1-2



2. THE **SECOND** SEAL --- GREAT WARFARE, 6:3-4

3. THE **THIRD** SEAL --- GREAT FAMINE, 6:5-6

4. THE **FOURTH** SEAL --- WIDESPREAD DEATH, 6:7-8

THE WRATH OF GOD, THE CHURCH, THE RAPTURE AND DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK

5. THE FIFTH SEAL --- THE MARTYRS, 6:9-11

-John saw the disembodied souls of believers who had previously been martyred sometime before the breaking of the 5th Seal. Note that the people who killed these believers were still alive on the earth which requires that these are Tribulation martyrs and not martyrs from all the ages.

-The nature of this judgment is seen in the martyrs' prayer in 6:10. These prayers assure future, terrible judgment on these who are carrying out the will of Satan. These believers had seen, in the first four Seals, God's wrath. They are guaranteed that wrath would continue on these hardened unbelievers (cf. Luke 18:7). Their prayers are legitimate and righteous because their killers have removed themselves from grace by their willful alignment with the Devil.

-“The fifth seal will reveal one reason why Satan’s forces will deserve more divine wrath poured out on them through the remaining seals, trumpets and bowls.” (R. Showers, “The Pre-Wrath Rapture View”, p. 74)

6. THE **SIXTH SEAL** --- GREAT COSMIC DISTURBANCES, 6:12-17

-“Fall on us” (cf. Isa. 2:10, 19, 21; Hosea 10:8; Luke 23:30). A picture of absolute terror as men of all ranks would prefer to die in the collapse of mountains than face the One on the throne.

-“for the great day of their wrath HAS COME.” The verb “has come” (elthen; □□□□□) is an aorist indicative which refers to the fact that the wrath of God had previously arrived (not about to arrive). This is “a constative aorist looking back in time to the point in the past when the great day of wrath arrived.” (Robert Thomas, “Revelation”, p. 470). The earth dwellers are just now realizing that these terrible events have been God’s wrath all along.

7. A PARENTHETICAL PORTION --- GREAT SALVATION, 7:1-12

8. THE **SEVENTH SEAL** --- THE OPENING OF THE TRUMPETS, 8:1

C. THE SEVEN TRUMPETS, 8:2-9:21

1. ANGELIC PREPARATION, 8:2-6

2. THE **FIRST** TRUMPET --- VEGETATION BURNED, 8:7

3. THE **SECOND** TRUMPET --- AGAINST THE OCEANS, 8:8-9

4. THE **THIRD** TRUMPET --- AGAINST THE FRESH WATERS, 8:10-11

5. THE **FOURTH** TRUMPET --- AGAINST SUN, MOON AND STARS,
8:12-14

THE THREE WOES AND THE TRUMPET JUDGMENTS

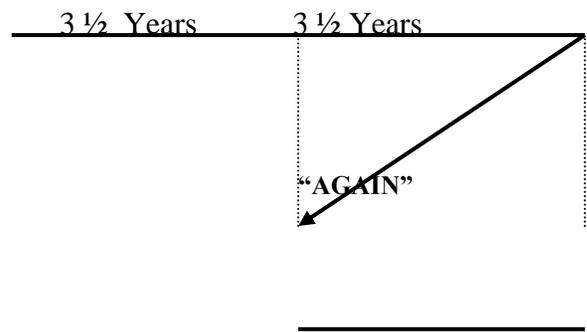
6. THE **FIFTH** TRUMPET --- DEMONIC ACTIVITY, 9:1-12

7. THE **SIXTH** TRUMPET --- ARMIES FROM THE EAST, 9:13-21

(NOTE: The 7th Trumpet is mentioned in 11:15-19)

D. THE PROPHECIES ON THE NEW SCROLL, 10:1-14:20

1. THE LITTLE BOOK, 10:1-11



2. THE TWO WITNESSES, 11:1-14

❖ The Location of Their Ministry

❖ The Time of the Their Ministry

❖ The Identification of the Two Witnesses

❖ The Ministry of the Two Witnesses

3. THE SEVENTH TRUMPET, 11:15-19

4. PROPHECY OF THE WOMAN, CHILD AND DRAGON, 12:1-17

❖ The Persecution of the Woman

“THE WOMAN” =

“THE MALE CHILD” =

“THE DRAGON” =



CREATION

**BIRTH/LIFE
OF CHRIST**

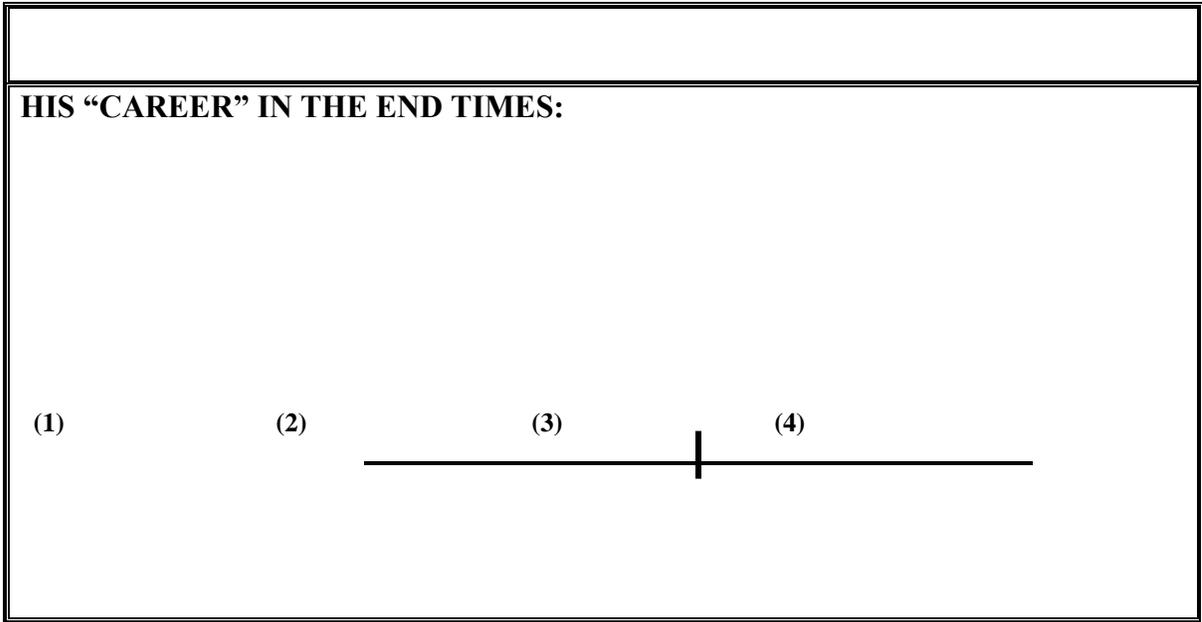
**1260
DAYS**

❖ The War in Heaven

❖ The End Time Persecution of Israel

5. PROPHECY OF THE BEAST OUT OF THE SEA, 13:1-10

KEY SCRIPTURES: Daniel 7, 9 11; Revelation 13, 17; Matthew 24; 2 Thessalonians 2
HIS NAMES AND CHARACTER:



6. PROPHECY OF THE BEAST OUT OF THE EARTH, 13:11-18 (NOTE: This is the first place in Scripture where this individual is mentioned. In Revelation 19:20; 20:10 is where this "second beast" is referred to as the "False Prophet")

7. PROPHECY OF THE GREAT HARVEST, 14:1-20

❖ The 144,000 on Mount Zion (1-5)

-WHO ARE THE 144,000?

-WHERE ARE THEY?

-WHEN DOES THIS TAKE PLACE?

❖ The Angelic Announcements (6-12)

-1ST ANGEL --- AN EVERLASTING GOSPEL

-2ND ANGEL --- THE FALL OF BABYLON

-3RD ANGEL --- THE JUDGMENT OF BEAST WORSHIPERS

❖ The Winepress of God (13-20)

E. THE SEVEN BOWLS, 15:1-16:21

1. PREPARATION FOR THE BOWL JUDGMENTS, 15:1-16:1

2. THE **FIRST** BOWL --- MALIGNANT SORES, 16:2

3. THE **SECOND** BOWL --- SEA TURNED TO BLOOD, 16:3

4. THE **THIRD** BOWL --- FRESH WATER TO BLOOD, 16:4-7

5. THE **FOURTH** BOWL --- MEN SCORCHED WITH FIRE, 16:8-9

6. THE **FIFTH** BOWL --- THE THRONE OF THE BEAST, 16:10-11

7. THE **SIXTH** BOWL --- INVASION FROM THE EAST, 16:12-16

8. THE **SEVENTH** BOWL --- GREAT EARTHQUAKE, 16:17-21

F. THE JUDGMENT OF THE TWO BABYLONS, 17:1-18:24

(This appears to be like a content “footnote” designed to explain Rev. 14:5; 16:19)

1. RELIGIOUS BABYLON, 17:1-18

❖ **HARLOT**

❖ **MANY WATERS**

❖ **SCARLET BEAST**

❖ **HER CLOTHING**

❖ **HER NAME**

❖ **HER DRUNKENESS**

❖ **TEN HORNS**

❖ **SEVEN HEADS**

❖ **HER FINAL END**

❖ **HER LOCATION**

“BABYLON” IN THE BIBLE

SCRIPTURES: Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2

Genesis 10:8-10; 11:1-9

2. POLITICAL BABYLON, 18:1-24

❖ **HER WEALTH**

❖ **HER FINAL END**

❖ **HER LOCATION**

RELIGIOUS BABYLON POLITICAL BABYLON

G. THE FINAL VISIONS OF JOHN, 19:1-22:5

1. REJOICING IN HEAVEN, 19:1-10

❖ **VICTORY**

❖ **MARRIAGE (and the Marriage Supper)**

2. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, 19:11-16

❖ **HIS NAMES**

❖ **HIS FOLLOWERS**

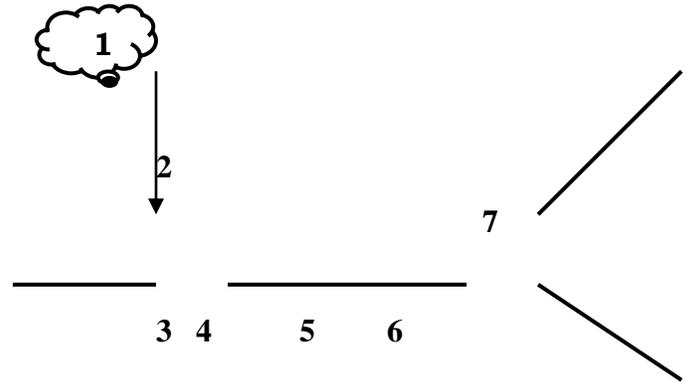
3. THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON, 19:17-21

4. THE BINDING OF SATAN, 20:1-3

❖ **THE BINDING AND THE 'CHAIN'** (1 John 5:19; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Rev. 12:9-12; Jude 1:6)

❖ **THE ABYSS** (Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1, 11; 20:7)
(cf. "PRISON" Rev. 2:10; Acts 5:23; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:23)

❖ **THE 1,000 YEARS**

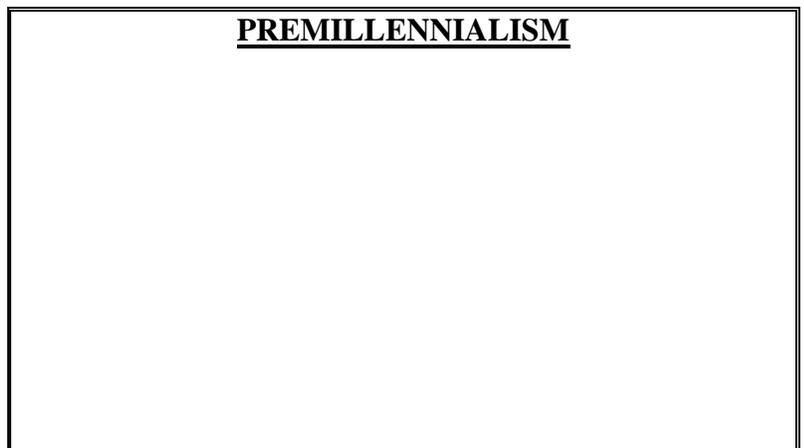


5. THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, 20:4-6

❖ **THRONES**

❖ **THE SOULS**

❖ **THE RESURRECTIONS**



<u>AMILLENNIALISM</u>
<u>POSTMILLENNIALISM</u>

6. THE LOOSING OF SATAN, 20:7-10

7. THE FINAL JUDGMENTS, 20:11-15

❖ **The Judgment of the Heavens and Earth**

❖ **The Judgment of Satan**

❖ **The Judgment of the “Great White Throne”**

8. THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD, 21:1-22:5

➤ **WHAT WILL BE PART OF LIFE IN THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD.**

(1) **THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH, 21:1**

- “new” (xainos)

- Absence of the “sea”

(2) **THE PRESENCE OF GOD**, 21:3, 11, 23; 22:4-5

- God and His people in fellowship. Lev. 26:11; Jer. 24:7; 30:22; 31:1, 33; 32:28; Ezek. 37:27; 48:35; Zech. 2:10; 8:8

- God “tabernacles” among believers

- God’s glory is present

(3) **THE NEW JERUSALEM**, 21:2, 9-27

- It is in contrast with the old Jerusalem

- It is a “holy” place

- It has 12 gates (note Ezek. 48:30-35)

- It has 12 foundation stones

- It has an immense wall

- It is a cube (1500x1500x1500)

- It has no temple in it
- It has no need for the sun or the moon
- It is the focal point of the nations and their kings

(4) **THE WATER OF LIFE**, 21:6; 22:1, 17

- cf. Rev. 7:7; 22:17; Gen. 2:10, 14; Ezek. 47:1, 12

- It is not your ordinary river: it has a life giving quality to it

(5) **THE TREE OF LIFE**, 22:2, 14

- cf. Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19; Gen. 2:8, 22

- Gives life

➤ **WHAT WILL NOT BE PART OF LIFE IN THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD.**

- ❖ That which sin brought into the human experience will be completely and permanently gone.

- Death

- Mourning

- Crying
- Pain
- The “curse”
- The Lake of Fire

H. THE CONCLUSION OF THE BOOK, 22:6-21

- **The Importance of the prophecy (Revelation), 22:6-7**

- **The Testimony of John, 22:8-11**

- **The Testimony of Jesus, 22:12-20**

➤ **The Response and Benediction of John, 22:21b-22**

APPENDIX ONE - “PRETERISM”

There is a growing interest in the eschatological view known as “preterism.” This term is based on the Latin *preter* which means “past.” There are three basic kinds of Preterism; namely Mild, Moderate and Extreme. Generally this position believes that most, if not all, prophecy has already been fulfilled and is not, therefore, something that will take place in the future. The Preterist sees much of Bible prophecy as being fulfilled in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Rome in A.D. 70.^{xviii}

MILD Preterism teaches that Revelation was fulfilled during the first three centuries after Christ’s first coming. During this time, God defeated the two great enemies of the Church; namely Israel and Rome. The idea is that the first part of Revelation teaches the defeat of Israel in 70 A.D. while the last part of Revelation speaks of God’s defeat of Rome. This form of Preterism teaches that Revelation essentially was fulfilled in the first 300 years of the Church’s history. MODERATE Preterism is the most popular and teaches that almost all of prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. This view does hold that a few passages do teach a future Second Coming of Christ, along with the resurrection of believers at this bodily return of Christ. EXTREME Preterists believe that they are the most consistent of all the Preterists. They believe that all Bible prophecy was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. It is their position that if there is a future Second Coming, the Bible does not reveal it. Also, they do not believe that there is a future bodily resurrection; a position that puts them outside of the realm of Christian orthodoxy.

Mild Preterism (the most popular form) believes that certain statements found in the Scriptures require a first century fulfillment for Christ’s return. So, for example, when the Lord said that “this generation” would not pass away until all would be fulfilled (Matt. 24:34), it must be fulfilled within a 40 year period. Therefore, according to preterism, it is the events surrounding the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem that are in view. They further argue that John expected the soon fulfillment of prophecy when he wrote Revelation (they say in the mid to late 60s) and spoke of things coming to pass “quickly/shortly” (Greek *tachos*). Preterists use Revelation 1:7 stating that God is saying that He will judge the first century Jews who rejected Christ. They combine this with what they refer to as “timing texts” (Rev. 1:1, 3; 2:16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:6, 7, 10, 12, 20) which speak of events that must “shortly” take place or must happen “quickly.” They state that these passages only make sense if we understand that John is speaking of that which will take place very soon after his writing.

Matthew 10:23 records the words of Christ as He spoke to the Twelve. Jesus said that they would “not finish going through the cities of Israel, until the Son of Man comes.” This view teaches that before the Twelve would finish evangelizing the towns of Palestine the Lord would come and destroy Jerusalem and scatter the nation of Israel. But this passage is not looking at 70 A.D. but rather the Lord is looking ahead to the tribulation period and His second advent. This has been the conclusion of many commentators from various eschatological camps.^{xix} Preterists also use Matthew 16:27-28 to support a coming of Christ in connection with His destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Rome. That passage states that some would

not taste death “until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.” They deny that this refers to the following account of the Transfiguration which is the usual interpretation of this passage.

One of the most fundamental problems with the Preterist approach to these and other scriptures is their terribly inconsistent hermeneutics. At many points they are rigidly literal in their interpretation but then quickly switch to a symbolic approach where a phrase is allegorized. This is sometimes done within the confines of a single verse. For example, while insisting on a literal destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple by the Romans (in 70 A.D.), they must allegorize many of the details of Matthew 24 such as the “abomination of desolation” which historically did not take place in 70 A.D. In fact, much of Matthew 24 simply does not correspond well to 70 A.D. It should be noted that both futurists and preterists agree that Luke 21:12-24 speaks of this time of destruction in 70 A.D. But Luke’s account clearly distinguishes between the Tribulation and the days of 70 A.D. by the Lord’s statement in 21:12 “but before all these things”. Another illustration would be in the preterist’s view of Zechariah 12-14. They believe that this passage is a parallel to Matthew 24, the Olivet Discourse, which they interpret to refer to 70 A.D. But Zechariah 12-14 does not fit with the Rome’s destruction of Israel in 70 A.D. Zechariah speaks of “all the nations” of the earth being involved, not just Rome; and it speaks of the Lord’s deliverance of Israel, not His destruction of Israel. So they find it necessary to leave any sort of meaningful exegesis of this passage and symbolize it to mean things it simply cannot reasonably mean.

The myriad of details in the discussion with Preterism are outside the scope of this summary. However, several key points do need to be made. First, the phrase “**this generation**” which is crucial to preterism (Matthew 24:34) is governed by the related phrase “all these things.” The Lord is saying that the generation that sees “all these things” (that which He spoke of in 24:4-31) will be the ones who will also see all the events of the Tribulation. The Lord is not speaking, as it turns out, to His contemporaries but to the generation to whom the signs of Matthew 24 will become evident. The generation of the first century did not see these events found in Matthew 24:3-31. At this point, Preterists will point out that in the other uses of “this generation” that it is Christ’s contemporaries being referred to. That is true, but that is so because the other texts are *historical texts*. This one is not found in an historical text but in one that is *prophetic*. Several other points should also be noted in connection with Matthew 24:34. It is obvious that the events spoken of in Matthew 24:3-31 did not literally occur in the events of 70 A.D. The Preterists who wish to be very literal on the “this generation” are forced into spiritualization of the text. One basic point to note regarding Matthew 24 is that the Lord Jesus taught the deliverance of Israel in Matthew 24, not their destruction.

Out of necessity, Preterists subscribe to an early date for the writing of the Book of Revelation by John. They place its writing in the mid to late 60s, as opposed to the futurists who place it late in the first century, somewhere in the mid 90s. Obviously they cannot have the Apostle John writing 25 years after the destruction of Jerusalem and be writing prophetically. Preterists would agree that if it can be shown that Revelation was written after 70 A.D. then their whole position collapses. Preterism simply cannot allow for a late date for the writing of Revelation. But the evidence for the late date is strong and compelling.^{xx}

Especially convincing is the testimony of Irenaeus (AD 160) who was a disciple of Polycarp who was a disciple of John himself. Irenaeus declared that John wrote the Apocalypse towards the end of the reign of Emperor Domitian, placing it around 95-96 A.D. Other church fathers confirm this statement about the time in which John wrote the Revelation.

A word needs to be said about the “timing texts” on which Preterism leans so heavily. But to call these “timing texts” is not accurate since the timing of a passage is determined by taking into account all the factors in a given passage. The terms found in Revelation (Greek *tachos*; *eggus*) are to be understood, not as chronological indicators but as qualitative indicators which describe HOW the Lord will return. He will return “suddenly.” The Greek word, *tachos*, (and related words) can mean “soon/quickly” (Preterism) or it can mean “suddenly/quickly” (Futurism). There is strong support for the futuristic view of “*tachos*”. The leading Greek lexicon of Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich recommends that “*tachos*” in Revelation be translated as descriptive of the manner in which things will happen (that is, “suddenly” or “quick, swift, speedy”).^{xxi} The Greek lexicon of Liddell and Scott says that “*tachy* does not mean “soon” but “swiftly”.^{xxii} The word is, therefore, communicating the idea that when the events take place it will be sudden; that is, the events will occur rapidly once they begin to take place. This point is further reinforced by the authoritative Greek grammar of Blass-Debrunner which describes the “*tachos*” family as an “adverb of manner” (not an adverb of time).^{xxiii} Again, this means that the terms are not describing WHEN the events will occur but the MANNER in which they occur.

The grammatical and lexical evidence is strong for the futurist position. This combined with a consistent literal approach to the texts as well as the strong testimony of early church history places the futurist position on firm footing. It seems that Preterism is gaining some adherents, not because of its compelling hermeneutics or exegesis, but because it gives individuals an alternative to futurism.

For a more detailed discussion of Preterism, see “Understanding End Times Prophecy” (revised edition, 2006) by Dr. Paul Benware.

APPENDIX 2 – NUMBERS IN REVELATION

THE 1,000 YEARS and NUMBERS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

In Revelation 20, the phrase “thousand years” □□□□□□□□□□ occurs six times. This phrase establishes the length of Christ’s reign. It is the position of Premillennialism that this is to be understood as a literal time period of one thousand years when Jesus will rule while actually on this present earth. It is the view of both Amillennialism and Postmillennialism that this phrase is to be taken as a figure of speech; that is, □□□□□□□□□□ is speaking of a long period of time, namely this present church age. This view assumes that numbers in the Book of Revelation are so very often just figurative and, therefore, the “thousand years” of Revelation 20 is best put into the symbolic category. Amillennial scholar Anthony Hoekema clearly states this position.

“The Book of Revelation is full of symbolic numbers. Obviously the number “thousand” which is used here must not be interpreted in the literal sense. Since the number ten signifies completeness, and since a thousand is ten to the third power, we may think of the expression “a thousand years” as standing for a complete period, a very long period of indeterminate length...We may conclude that this thousand-year period extends from Christ’s first coming to just before his Second Coming.”
(from “The Meaning of the Millennium” ed. R. Clouse, p.161)

Hoekema’s view is commonly held by those who are not Premillennial.

But when we look carefully at the use of numbers in the Book of Revelation (and in biblical apocalyptic literature) it is not at all “obvious” that the number “thousand” must not be interpreted in the literal sense. The following data needs to be considered when dealing with the phrase “thousand years” in Revelation 20.

(1) THE BASIC FUNCTION OF NUMBERS

The most basic function of numbers is to designate the quantity of something. Numbering systems have always been devised for the purpose of expressing QUANTITATIVE functions such as counting, determining order, making measurements, performing calculations and expressing quantity. A number is, and always has been, by its very nature literal (i.e. 5=5, 23=23, 167=167, etc.)

Historically, numbers were not used symbolically. Some in the course of history have been involved in gematria (number mysticism). They have specific attached meanings to specific numbers. For example, “5” stands for grace or God’s goodness; “12” = governmental perfection; and “28” = eternal life. Every number has such meanings attributed to them, though different men have come up with entirely different lists of meanings. Even the casual observer is struck by the complete lack of objectivity to such systems. And upon closer inspection it is discovered that some numbers have nearly the identical meaning as others; others simply do not fit the given meanings, as well as the fact that some numbers are used so infrequently (or not at all) that it is just impossible to see how they can be symbolic of anything.

(2) THE NUMBER “7”

The number “7” is used frequently in the Book of Revelation. Dr. John J. Davis in his book “Biblical Numerology” presents a convincing case that no number carries in it an inherent meaning. He demonstrates that the only exception is the number seven which seems to sometimes have the idea of “perfection” or “completeness”. This is derived from its usage in the Bible as well as in other ancient cultures (e.g. Egypt and Ugarit), possibly because of the seven days of creation. It could be that oral tradition passed on since the creation week into many cultures was the catalyst for the number “7” having the special significance of completeness. But even in its use in the Bible, the number “7” does not lose its normal quantitative value, nor does it always carry the idea “completeness” (for example, there is probably no symbolic meaning in Paul staying 7 days in Troas). And when Revelation speaks of 7 seal judgments, 7 trumpet judgments and 7 bowl judgments it could be communicating that the judgment of God is a perfect and complete judgment. But it is also true that there are actually 7 seals, 7 trumpets and 7 bowls. It should be noted that it is primarily the large usage of the number “7” that makes such an observation possible. But no other number, including the number one thousand, carries symbolic meanings with it.

(3) THE USE OF NUMBERS IN BIBLICAL APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Much of the imagery in the Book of Revelation has been used and essentially defined by the writers of the Old Testament. It is worth noting that in biblical apocalyptic literature, numbers are used in their normal way about **94%** of the time; that is, the numbers used express quantitative functions, which is their usual purpose. (See Stephen Carlson, “The Relevance of Apocalyptic Numerology for the Meaning of □□□□□□□□□□ in Revelation 20” (Ph.D. dissertation, Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 1990).

Such a statistic immediately raises concerns about numbers in the Book of Revelation labeled “symbolic” since the normal use of numbers in biblical, apocalyptic literature is according to the basic function of numbers. Does this pattern hold true in Revelation?

(4) THE USE OF NUMBERS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

There are **240** occurrences of numbers in the Book of Revelation (this is assuming that my counting is correct!). Eliminating the six occurrences of “thousand years” in Revelation 20 (the meaning of which we are trying to determine), that leaves **234** times where numbers are used. Of these occurrences:

- 19 times fractions are used** (i.e. 1/3 of the earth burned up)
- 59 times as in numerical sequences** (i.e. the 4th angel sounded)
- 162 times as full numbers** (i.e. 24 elders)

Out of the **234** numbers used (excluding the 6 in Revelation 20), it seems to me that the vast majority of the numbers are to be interpreted in the way that numbers are normally interpreted; that is as expressing quantities. So when we read that there are seven churches, there are seven actual churches that are in view and we can count them. When we read of 144,000 men carefully selected in groups of 12,000 from 12 specific Israelite tribes, there is no reason not to understand that these are normal quantitative

expressions. Why should we not understand that an army of 200,000,000 is actually composed of that number or that 42 months means 42 months?

It seems that only **16** times in Revelation numbers are symbolic. If this is correct then Revelation pretty much follows the rest of biblical, apocalyptic literature by using numbers in their normal quantitative use about **93%** of the time. Of the **16** times when the number is symbolic, **15** times they are symbolic of established, literal entities. The one exception is Revelation 13:18 where the “666” mark of the beast is mentioned. The “666” is to be understood as the numerical value of the beast’s name but it clearly has a mystical significance. Since this number is found nowhere else, no help comes from other sources. The other 15 symbolic occurrences are as follows:

(1) The 7 SPIRITS (1:4; 3:1;4:5; 5:6) and the 7 LAMPS (4:5)---apparently refers to the prominence/fullness of the Holy Spirit’s activity in the world. This imagery is clearly based on Zechariah 3:9; 4:1-10 and Exodus 25:37.

(2) The 7 HORNS and the 7 EYES (5:6)---this pictures Christ as the all-powerful sovereign as well as being omniscient. This imagery is also based on Zechariah 3 and 4 along with Daniel 7:20 and 8:5)

(3) The 4 CORNERS OF THE EARTH and the 4 WINDS OF HEAVEN (7:1; 20:8)---the 4 corners of the earth is a term to designate the four directions of the compass, thus the ‘whole earth’ and the 4 winds represent God’s destructive judgments that are being temporarily held back by the angels. This imagery is based on Jeremiah 49:36-38; Isaiah 11:12; Daniel 7:2.

(4) The use of 1 HOUR and 1 DAY (17:12; 18:8, 10, 17, 19)---these expressions are used to emphasize the suddenness of the unfolding events. The kings (17:12) will give their authority of the beast for one hour (not just 60 minutes because Daniel tells us that they are in league with him for some 7 years) and the judgments (18:8-19) will likely not just be over a 24 hours period to have meaning to those on the earth, but will happen suddenly and quickly. This imagery is found in Isaiah 47:7-9, a chapter to which Revelation 18 is apparently to be linked.

CONCLUSION

So when we come to the six uses of “thousand years” in Revelation 20, how should we best interpret the phrase? When we look at this data from Revelation it does not appear that the phrases “obviously...must not be interpreted in the literal sense.” Just the opposite would appear to be the case. The evidence that the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 is speaking of an actual 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth is strong.

First, the normal and universal use of numbers is not symbolic but is to indicate the quantity of something. To attach meanings to numbers (usually quite arbitrarily) is to engage in a highly speculative and subjective practice. On what basis can it be said that the number 10 “signifies completeness.” **Second**, the vast majority of times (over 90%), apocalyptic literature uses numbers in the normal quantitative way. This calls into question the oft-repeated statement of amillennialism and postmillennialism that Revelation is filled with symbolic numbers. **Third**, only the number 7, on occasion, appears to have symbolic significance and even then it usually retains its quantitative meaning. **Fourth**, the phrase “thousand years”

does not appear anywhere else in Revelation or in any other apocalyptic literature and thus there is no possible symbolic meaning that can be brought in from some other source. Peter's use of the phrase, in 2 Peter 3:8, is not at all symbolic. He is not saying that a day equals a thousand years but simply reveals how much God can do in a single day. Peter's point only makes sense if he is using "day" and "years" in their usual quantitative sense. One must, therefore, look to the context of Revelation 19-22 and the larger context of the entire Book of Revelation. **Fifth**, there is nothing within the final vision of John in Revelation 19-22 that compels one to abandon the normal use of numbers. In fact, other expressions in that context would argue for taking the 1,000 years literally. (The point here is that John uses indefinite terms in Revelation 19-22, such as "a short time" and "forever and ever". And so, when he uses the specific phrase "1000 years" instead of some indefinite term, we would think that it should be understood specifically as numbers usually are). **Sixth**, indefinite expressions are used in Revelation where we are told that there are "thousands and thousands" around the throne (5:11) and a "great multitude" (7:9). John is obviously capable of expressing numbers in general, non-specific ways. This he did not do when discussing the length of Messiah's kingdom. And **seventh** (in order to have a "complete" conclusion) the use of "thousand" does occur in Revelation in several places where multiples of "thousand" are given; such as 12,000 from each Israelite tribe. These uses seem to make a normal rendering of such statements as far more reasonable than a symbolic one. **We must conclude that John's use of 1,000 (thousand years) is to communicate the fact that when the Lord Jesus returns to this earth, He will reign for 1,000 years.**

NUMBERS ARE FOUND IN THESE VERSES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION. 1:4, 11, 12, 16, 20; 2:1, 10, 12; 3:1; 4:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; 5:1, 5, 6, 8, 14; 6:1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12; 7:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13; 8:1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13; 9:1, 5, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18; 10:3, 4, 7; 11:2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16; 12:1, 3, 4, 6, 14; 13:1, 3, 5, 11, 12, 18; 14:1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 20; 15:1, 6, 7, 8; 16:1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 17, 19, 21; 17:1, 3, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16; 18:8, 10, 17, 19; 19:3, 4, 20; 20:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14; 21:1, 4, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19
