

LAST THINGS

the coming of the MAN of SIN and the SON of MAN

PART ONE: **PROFILE** of the **MAN of SIN** as seen by **ISAIAH, DANIEL, JOHN, and PAUL**

A harmony, with commentary (*in italics*), of portions of Isaiah 14,24...Daniel 2,7, 8, 9, 11, 12...Revelation 12, 13, 17, 18...II Thessalonians 2.

INTRO to PART I

My heart has been gripped once more by a man of God who lived 2,600 years ago, a captive in Babylon named Daniel. Other men are herein quoted but it is Daniel that seems to have the essence of the truth with which I struggle. It is my belief that the same Spirit revealing future events to Daniel strives within me to continue a relentless search and analysis of his fascinating prophecy. In my searching I refuse to be bound by the current theories of men, even dearest friends, or my own past ideas. I consider the prophecies to be Holy Ground and I approach them timidly. But as the truth of what is being said sinks in, a quiver of excitement stimulates the otherwise drab existence of this life into pure joy! My spirit leaps up with "Eureka!" over and over. I've found it! It makes sense!

I speak specifically in these pages of a coming period of 7 years, referred to through much of the church's history as the "Tribulation." I have been especially captivated in this writing by Daniel's revealing of a profile of the coming "little horn," called the "king of Babylon" by Isaiah, the "man of sin" by Paul, and the "beast" by John. He is often called "antichrist" by the modern church, but this term can be generically applied to many who have usurped the position of the Lord Jesus through history. Even systems and institutions could be called "antichrist." But systems cannot be a man. One man. With a specific character, program, time span, and demise. Systems and whole empires are not thrown into a lake of fire.

I pass on the jewels of revelation haltingly, asking that the Body's members, similarly willing I hope to lay down biases, and approach this land with shoes off and head bowed, will in love correct what seems out of place, and rejoice with me in what is true.

You will notice that quoted Scriptures are in modernized English, many changed to present tense, for a consistent flow of the story, and that I have left out chapter and verse references, for the same reason. Most Scriptures can be found in the chapters mentioned in the title (above).

Readers will do well to remember that all words in regular print are inspired of God and must be taken with the full force of the Spirit. My own italicized words are suggested and studied opinions.

We begin with a look at the one behind all the madness of the Man of Sin:

SATANIC ORIGINS

The Little Horn's power shall be great but not by his own power.

Behold a great fiery red dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns and 7 crowns on his heads. A war breaks out in heaven. Michael, the great prince who stands watch over the descendants of Daniel's people, the Jews, and Michael's angels fight against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fight but they do not prevail, nor is a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon is cast out, that serpent of old, called the devil, and Satan, who deceives the world. (Jesus: I saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven. Prophetically, like John, Jesus sees into the future that He Himself pre-ordained, this cataclysmic event.)

How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut to the ground, you who weakened the nations! He is cast to the earth and his angels are cast out with him. *At one point John even sees three unclean spirits, out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These are said to be spirits of demons which go out to engage world rulers in this all-out battle.*

Now the accuser of our brothers has been cast down. At that time there is a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation. At that time Daniel's people are delivered.

He will be revealed in his time. He who hinders will hinder until he is taken out of the way. Then shall that wicked be revealed.

The true enemy of the people of God is revealed here as Satan, an angel in heaven, who is at this present hour being restrained by other angelic forces. But when the heavenly war is over, Satan is cast out to earth, and trouble is intensified there. We back up in the story to see how that trouble is caused and by whom.

KINGDOMS BEFORE ROME

Behold a great image. Its head is of fine gold. You, Nebuchadnezzar, *Babylonia*, are this head of gold. Its chest and arms are of silver. After you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours, *Medo-Persia*. Its belly and thighs are of bronze. Then shall be another, a kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth, *Greece*.

The prophecy is repeated but with added details. Behold four great beasts. The first is like a lion and has eagle's wings, *Babylonia*. A statue of this very image was visible to ancient Babylonians. And suddenly another beast, like a bear, raised on one side. It has three ribs in its mouth, *Medo-Persia*. *Lopsided. As was the rule of Medo-Persia, with Persia's influence far outweighing Media's.* Another, like a leopard, has on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also has four heads, and dominion is given to it, *Greece*. *The reference to "four" shows the break-up of Alexander's kingdom following his death, and the resultant world powers, out of which come the final world leader.*

Let me add here that there is NO reason, Biblically to change interpretations of original animal symbolism. Yes Britain is a lion, America is an eagle, Russia is a bear, and so on, but it is a damaging and confusing hermeneutic that develops from such groundless changing of the first-mentioned revelations. Such tactics can only be seen as diversionary.

THE FOURTH (FINAL) WORLD POWER (ROME)

The legs of the image *that Daniel sees* are of iron. And the **fourth kingdom** shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters all things; and like iron that crushes, **that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others**. *Nearly all scholars point to the Roman Empire as the final domain.*

And from the animal vision: Behold a fourth beast, different from all the beasts that are before it. It has ten horns. **The fourth beast shall be a fourth kingdom on earth, different from all other kingdoms, and shall eventually devour the whole earth.** *Again Rome is here meant, from its inception to its final phase, a 10-nation confederation*

ROME IN ITS FINAL FORM: 10 NATIONS

The prince who is to come shall confirm a covenant with many for one week.

The final 7-year period of history is foreseen by Daniel. The Jews are granted privileges unheard of since their resurgence in the 20th century. A temple is to be built, sacrifices are to return.

Many are offended at the idea of the return to animal sacrifice. But no one is contending that these sacrifices in any way mean anything to the born again, only that the Jews honor them still. Try announcing to an Orthodox Jew of Israel today that his temple will not be restored! The very foundation stone is ready to be carried up the Temple Mount! The very animals for sacrifice are being collected! The vestments of the priests are being prepared! God's Word is true!

By solving the "Jewish question", perhaps this Roman prince, a leader in the European Union? gains unprecedented popularity. By peace he becomes the world's "champion" and Europe's long-sought leader?. The "white horse" rider referred to by John, begins his conquests, it seems, by peaceful and political means. The coalition is united, but only in the sense seen by Daniel:

Its **feet, ten toes**, are partly of iron and partly of clay. The kingdom shall be divided, yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with clay. The kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. *The fragile part could be pulled up by the roots by the right man.* They will mingle with the seed of men, but they will not adhere to

one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Animal vision: The **ten horns** on the **fourth beast** are **ten kingdoms** that shall arise from this kingdom. The ten horns are **ten kings** which have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast .

In the middle of this blissful “week”, there is war in heaven ,alluded to earlier. Satan is cast to earth and is looking for a body to indwell, and finds one in the hero of the world. He causes the man to hate Jews and Christians alike. The treaty with Israel is broken. The “prince” brings an end to sacrifice and offering. Hell is released.

A surface reading of Scripture and a quick glance at current affairs some years back led scholar after scholar to conclude that in the end times a 10-nation confederation of revived-Roman-Empire nations, i.e. Europe, would arise. As the treaty signed in none other than Rome led to 3, 6, even the looked-for TEN such nations calling themselves the Common Market and then the European Community, Bible and Rome-watchers were EUphoric.

Then EU (as in European Union) began to spell trouble. The number of member nations surpassed 10. It has now reached 15 with no sign of letting up. 11 MORE are on a waiting list! Back to the Book. The Scriptures had once more been handled EISOgetically. (See elsewhere for explanation).

What the Scriptures had said about these final 10 was that they would be PART iron and PART clay. This could refer to the inability of these nations to get along, but also to the fact that SOME of them may not necessarily be Roman!

Worse, the Roman Empire was not limited to the western nations surrounding Italy. In fact it clearly excludes the Germanic countries and some others waiting in that long line for their ID card. Old Rome included much of Northern Africa, and huge portions of the Middle East, much of which we call “Asia” today. The Muslim world!

Sure enough, Daniel too envisions an intersection between old Rome and old Greece, and sees the final ruler, and perhaps the “final 10”, a lot farther east! Even John’s introduction of the beast is in terms of three animals we should know well by now, and which scholars have no business re-interpreting with modern maps in mind. They are the leopard, the bear, and the lion! Just what Daniel saw!

Without looking at the daily news, or listening to public radio, we conclude from Scriptura Sola that the little Horn Kingdom of 10 “Roman” nations and four “Greek” districts is somewhere between Greece and Iran. NOW looking at a modern map, we realize we may be describing a MUSLIM connection, which could set the stage for a final East West battle, maybe between Old Babylon and New. A “holy war”, if you please, as readers of Scarlet Threads have come to understand about World Wars One and Two.

THE LITTLE HORN: “ROME” POSSESSED

I was considering the **ten horns** on the **fourth beast**, and there was another horn, **a little one**, coming up among them. *This confirms that the coming world ruler is somehow within the boundaries of the last stage of “Rome’s” dominion.*

Another identification of the “little horn”: A male goat, *The Grecian Empire*, comes from the west, across the surface of the whole earth, without touching the ground; and the goat has a notable horn, *Alexander the Great*, between his eyes. He comes to a ram, *the Medo-Persian Empire*, that has two horns *that is, the Kings of Media and Persia*, is moved with rage against him, and breaks his two horns.

The male goat grows very great; but when he does, the large horn is broken, *Alexander dies at the height of his power*, and in place of it four notable ones come up toward the four winds of heaven.

The years following the reign of this young conqueror are frightfully confusing, as Alexander’s generals and heirs vie for dominion, none of them able to secure the entire area Alexander has overcome. But Britannica of 1997 reports that in 311 BC, only 12 years after Alexander’s death, four of his generals divide the world among themselves. Ptolemy is established in Egypt, Antigonus in “Asia”(a province in what we now call Turkey), Lysimachus in Thrace(a European province, formerly across from “Asia”), and Cassander in Macedonia/Greece.

This is a bit simplistic, though. The four have deliberately left out recognition of the biggest piece of that world, the old Babylonia-Media-Persia section ruled by Seleucus. So Seleucus, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Ptolemy -another group of four!- begin to call themselves “kings” shortly thereafter, eliminating Antigonus.

*But in the interpretation of the prophecy, **men** are not critical, only **territories**. Read on:*

And **out of one of them** comes **a little horn**. The ram with two horns is Media-Persia. The male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn is the first king. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power. **In the latter time of their kingdom, that is, the last-days territory reigned over by these ancient kings**, when the transgressions have reached their fulness, a king shall arise.

If the places are important, what places are involved in the dividing of Alexander’s Kingdom? The westernmost

place mentioned is Macedonia/Greece. East of this is Turkey. Area three is Iran - Iraq, and the fourth is a group of African nations headed by Egypt. Out of one of these four areas the final world ruler begins his rise to power.

Not too narrow a field of nations? There's more. Recall that the "little horn" of the final ROMAN kingdom and the "little horn" of the Grecian Empire are the SAME HORN. That means that all that is necessary is to find the **intersection** of these two realms to locate him further.

As stated above, the old Roman Empire can be found roughly by looking at the territory surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. A later extension includes the area of present-day Iraq. Greece started and extended much further east, even to India. The intersection of these lands narrows the search to Greece, Macedonia, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt.

Then consider this:

He shall be different. He shall subdue three kings. He shall **grow exceedingly great to the south, the east, and the Glorious Land.**

Growth to the South, in Kingdom terms, implies he is not in the South already. Same with the East, and the "Glorious" Land. One growing toward the South must be in the North. One growing to the East must be in the West, or at least North Central. It is my belief that this man will begin his rise in the northwestern section of the old Grecian Empire, and thus in the eastern section of Rome's domain, i.e., in southeastern Europe, or the western portion of the Middle East. That's where the evidence points. What geographical evidence points to an American antichrist? Or even an Italian one? Or a Russian?

It is so important here to use the process of **exegesis**, and not **eisogesis**, when dealing with this and all Biblical texts. With the former, we take OUT of the text the meaning inferred, and find the application somewhere in the world or in history. The latter method brings a preconceived idea INTO the text, and forces the text to obey its whims!

Surely Popes have been antichristian! Surely American rulers have been immoral and corrupt. Surely Communist dictators have been vicious and "pompous". But hatred, even godly hatred for Papism or the Red Star, cannot be allowed to color and twist an innocent text trying to shed light on the future of earth's dominions. Let the Word speak for itself.

THE SATAN-EMPOWERED KING

I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns. And on his heads was a blasphemous name. The beast I saw was like a leopard, *Greece, as first defined by Daniel*; his feet were like the feet of a bear, *Medo-Persia, as first defined by Daniel*; and his mouth like the mouth of a lion, *Babylon, as described by Daniel*. And the dragon, *Satan*, gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. The beast was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go to perdition. *Here is described the past, present, and future status, not of the human aspects of antichrist, but the Satanic side. For, this passage describes the RED beast, with crowns on the 7 HEADS, not the beast of the sea with crowns on his 10 horns. Here is the one who "was", according to chapter 12, attempting to kill the Child of the woman. Whether in Herod or in Judas, Satan was personally present to destroy Christ. Chapter 12's next episode describes that same Satan attempting to destroy Israel and the Church. When he ascends out of the bottomless pit, he will finish his ghastly work. We know his agents are busy today, and demon-possession is common in our world. But Satan possession has been reserved for those special occasions when the very Life of Christ is at stake. In that sense, he "was", he "is not" in John's day, but he will ascend...*

The seven heads are seven mountains and seven kings, five of which have fallen, *five great world powers of the past centuries headed by one key figure in each realm. I suggest a closer look at the theme of "Babylon" so prominent in John and Isaiah, even strong in Jeremiah. Imagine one world power, with seven manifestations in world history, called "Babylon", emanating from Nimrod of old, the first "King of Babylon" in the original Babylonia. The scene shifts to another Nimrodian city, Nineveh, and Assyria rules the world, but it is essentially the SAME world with the same Mystery Religion of Babylon. Then comes another Babylonia, neo-Babylonia, ruled by Nebuchadnezzar and company. Medo-Persia brings Cyrus, who also calls himself "king of Babylon". Greece points to Alexander, who is about to make Babylon the capital of his eastern empire, when he dies, lying in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar. The Greeks even call Cairo, Egypt, "Babylon", a title which will stick for centuries! Rome, with all the others, carries on the religion and even the same basic territory, though Rome's reign is promised to be even greater, and it is. Consider the final phase of Rome, still embracing much of that old Babylonian territory, including the city itself, and then consider the man of sin, called by Isaiah the "king of Babylon", and the picture, destruction and all, is complete.*

The "prince", a "peaceful" diplomat, is assassinated after 3 and 1/2 years of his reign, and immediately resurrected miraculously by Satan, to become the ogre of the second half of the tribulation. In the day the Lord gives you rest from your sorrow, take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How the oppressor has

ceased, the golden city ceased! The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked...

If this passage is talking about Israel's first return from captivity, it seems odd that Israel is directed to speak to a captor that has been defeated and dead over 70 years! Later in this same 14th chapter of Isaiah, the same king of Babylon is called LUCIFER and is given the same description as Daniel gives his "willful king". This is the man of sin we are tracking.

The title "King of Babylon" need not be limited to a modern Iraqi. I mentioned above Cyrus. Many other names, including Seleucus and Antiochus I, could be added to the list of those who desired the status of this title. But for sure the end time man will have it too.

Since we're talking about modern Iraqi's though, consider Saddam Hussein. Now that we know he's in the right possible location, what about the weapons of mass destruction that have terrified our present world, buried somewhere in Saddam's kingdom? The horn is to move east and south. Hussein has already moved to Iran (east) and Kuwait (south). Problem is, he was repelled in both instances. But we see at least what it CAN be like when this Middle Eastern man starts to move. Hussein definitely wants to be "Mr Arab", the head of an Arab coalition to compete against the growing western threats to his region. He has used chemical weapons against his own people. He has arrested people for turning off the TV when his IMAGE appears! He does "worship" a god of "forces", having mustered the fourth largest army of the world in a country that is NOT the fourth largest population or area of the world. Like the man he emulates, Nebuchadnezzar, he hates Israel, desires power, and is beautifying, yea, rebuilding the ancient city of Babylon! When the UN "sanctions" are lifted, and Iraq's \$100 million a day oil wealth is focused more on its rebuilding, look out world!

According to Grant Jeffrey, modern prophecy expert, the city of Babylon is being built over a subterranean lake of oil and asphalt. Anyone who watched the aftermath of the Gulf War in Kuwait remembers seeing the oil wells burning day and night. Professionals had to be called in to douse these "eternal" fires. Babylon is slated for a destruction of fire. The fuel is in place.

*God said he would raise up Medes against Babylon in the day of its FINAL overthrow. The Kurds of today, known and vocal enemies of Saddam, are descended from a people who have lived in this general region for millennia, according to the 1997 **Britannica**. And it is the same area of ancient Media!*

Further, Saddam is heavy into the occult. He's been holding an annual festival honoring the ancient gods of Mesopotamia. During the Gulf War, he brought in pagan witch doctors from Africa to predict the future of the war!

Something to think about. But there are some problems here. The Bible's man has to have a working western connection. And some finesse, and charm, and a desire to see peace with Israel. Scud missiles won't cut it! Plus, Saddam is already in his 60's.

Speaking of that restoration, does it trouble you that Babylon rises when God said it never would? Well, is it possible that the prophecies given have never really been fulfilled? Isaiah envisions nations from all over the world coming against Babylon. Has not happened. He couples this with "the day of the Lord". Has not happened. Babylon was to fall suddenly. It never did. He says Babylon will then never be inhabited. But Babylon has nearly always been inhabited,, even if by just a few. He says that after Babylon's punishment, the whole world will be at rest. We're definitely not there yet! Stones are not to be taken from Babylon to build anything, adds Jeremiah, who also sees an end-of-the-world scenario.. But the bricks of Babylon have long been used for a quarry, and a supply of building materials for other projects. The warning went out for God's people to flee Babylon when the judgment came. But Daniel never fled the city as the Persians took it over. It was merely a transfer of power. After the destruction is to be the everlasting covenant with God's people that will never be forgotten. None of this has happened! And now the city arises. Again.

We have said that five world powers are dead and gone, one is in John's day, and the other has not yet come, as late as the first century AD. The seventh king must continue a short time. We look even now for that seventh king/kingdom to arise. Antichrist as the Satanic creation is not next on the agenda of human history, but the kingdom which antichrist will usurp, and the "prince" who must be killed. A sad mockery attempting to duplicate our own Saviour's life, by the way. The beast, or antichrist, itself is the "eighth," but is really one of the seven. The resurrected prince is still the prince, but with Satan, "all things become new". So they worshiped the dragon, Satan, who gave authority to the beast, the man of sin, and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him, if he can keep coming back to life?

PERSONALITY OF THE LITTLE HORN/BEAST

Your pomp is brought down to Sheol.

In this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth speaking pompous words. This sentence demonstrates that we are talking about a man, not a system. We are talking about, for example, a Hitler who makes us think of

himself, not of Germany. Kings and Kingdoms are interchangeable in our thinking, but Daniel speaks of the King! His appearance was greater than his fellows. He will have a fierce countenance and understand sinister schemes. He will do according to his own will.

The devil will come down to you having great wrath, for he knows that he has a short time. *But* the Lord breaks the one who struck the people in wrath, who ruled the nations in anger.

HOW LONG?

He shall confirm a covenant with many for **one week**, but in the **middle of the week** he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. By him the daily sacrifices are taken away and the place of the Prince's sanctuary are cast down. Because of transgression an army is given to oppose the daily sacrifices. He casts truth to the ground, and prospers.

He shall intend to change times and laws. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for **a time and times and half a time**.

How long will the vision be concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation? 2,300 days (6 years). Understand that the vision refers to the time of the end. *Jesus*: When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, run, for then shall be unequalled tribulation.

And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be 1,290 days. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on, that they may rest from their labors. Blessed is he who waits and comes to the 1,335 days.

BLASPHEMER

He was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His Name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in Heaven. The horn grows to the host of heaven and casts down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground and tramples them. *This is a reference to the war in Heaven that immediately precedes the final 3 and 1/2 years of human history as we know it. One of the "stars", or maybe THE "star" is seen being given the key to the bottomless pit. He opens it and the "locusts" harm unbelievers around the world. The "king" of the locusts is called "Apollyon", perhaps Lucifer himself.* The dragon's tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to earth.

For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north. I will be like the Most High.

He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god. For he shall magnify himself above them all. He shall magnify himself in his heart, above every god. In their place he shall have a god of fortresses, and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory. And he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.

He opposes and exalts himself above all that is called god or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God showing himself that he is God.

ACCOMPANIED BY MIRACLES

I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a **dragon**. And he exercises all the authority of the **first beast** in his presence. He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast.

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.

The second beast, *later called the false prophet, since, after all, Jesus was announced and supported by a prophet, and this deceiver is trying to duplicate everything!* causes the earth to worship the first beast whose deadly sword-wound was healed. He tells them to make an image to the beast. *Jesus*: When you see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place *in a wing of the temple?*, let him which is in Judea flee. He gives breath to the image of the beast, so that it speaks. Anyone who does not worship the image is killed. Everyone must receive either the mark or the name or the name/number of the beast, the latter of which is 666.

BELIEVERS DEFEATED

And the souls under the altar, slain for the Word of God and their testimony, cry out, How long until we are

avenged? They are told to rest a little while longer, until both their fellow servants and brothers should be killed as they were, *not raptured, as they WEREN'T.*

Who are these in white robes *just a little later?* They came out of the great tribulation...and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. *Raptured? I think not. Killed!*

And the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them. He shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people. It is granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them.

Even the two "olive trees", mighty end time prophets, are slaughtered by this tyrant. The world will rejoice when it happens. Until they truly ARE raptured!

When the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman *Israel* who gave birth to the Male Child *Jesus*, and her other offspring, *the church*, who keep the commandments and have the testimony of Jesus.

And authority is given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. You have destroyed your land, and slain your people. And all who dwell on earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of the Lamb. And all the world, whose names are not in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, marvel, when they see the beast that was and is not and yet is...

And all those whose names ARE in the Book of Life of the Lamb do NOT marvel, do NOT worship. They DIE. This is none other than the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Saved during the tribulation" does not explain how the Holy Spirit could have been "removed" at the rapture and suddenly "returned" to do his saving work during antichrist's reign. It also does not explain how the church of Jesus could be divided in this manner. When the Marriage Supper comes, we'll all sit down together! After the fighting.

And they, *the church*, overcame him, *so not "defeated" after all!* by the blood of the Lamb and by the Word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the **death** (*not "to the rapture"*).

DETAILS OF HIS DEMISE

At the time of the end the king of the South, *defined by Daniel and history as an Egyptian coalition* shall attack him, and the king of the North, *defined by Daniel and history as the Seleucid Kingdom, comprising modern Iraq/ Iran and that vicinity; so if he originates from that land, his successor is bent on his destruction, and* shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, *obsolete form of "car" or "vehicle"*, horsemen, *still used in the world's armies*, and with many ships.

And he shall enter the Glorious Land, *Israel*, and many countries shall be overthrown. But Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon shall escape from his hands. *Are these lands not promised utter destruction long before this? How do they show up in the last days? Jeremiah indicates that God will bring the "captives" of Moab and Ammon in the "latter days". And there is a reference to the "remnant" of Edom and the "mountains of Esau" in the last days.* He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels. He shall prosper until the wrath, the consummation which is determined.

But news from the east and the north shall trouble him.

Indeed! John sees the release of four angels at the Euphrates, who set loose a 200-million member cavalry that kills one-third of mankind. Ezekiel sees an enemy to the far north of Israel, called Rosh, today known as Russia, who takes advantage of the deteriorating situation in the Mideast to do some major looting.

Therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.

COMES AGAINST JESUS, IS DEFEATED

He even exalts himself as high as the Prince of the host. He shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain. The ten horns and the beast will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them.

The beast is slain and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. The court shall be seated and they shall take away his dominion. He shall be broken without human hands. He shall come to his end and no one will help him. The Lord will consume him with the breath of His mouth and destroy him with the brightness of His coming.

I saw the beast, the *10* kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him. The beast was captured, and with him the false prophet. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

You shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the pit. Those who see you will gaze at you and

consider you, saying, Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities?

It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will punish on high the host of exalted ones, and on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and will be shut up in the prison. After many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be disgraced, and the sun ashamed.

THE REIGN OF THE TRUE CHRIST

Referring once more to the statue of Daniel, A stone is cut without hands and strikes the image on its feet of iron and clay, and breaks them in pieces. Then the iron, clay, bronze and silver are crushed together, and become like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The wind carries them away so that no trace of them is found. And the stone becomes a great mountain and fills the whole earth.

In the days of these *10* kings the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these nations, and it shall stand forever.

For the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously.

And behold a white horse. And He who sits on him is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, follow Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And he Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And I see thrones, and they sit upon them, and judgment is committed to them. I see the souls of those who have been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God, who have not worshiped the beast or his image, and have not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they live and reign with Christ for a thousand years.

addendum A a Quick Summary of the Man of Sin

(not necessarily listed in chronological order)

1. Is a ruler *in*, and then *of*, the final 10-nation confederation.
2. Usurps power from the first head of the world federation, which somehow represents all the empires of the past.
3. Rises to power from Mideast or southeast Europe.
4. Is somehow involved in and solver of the "Jewish Question."
5. Makes and breaks covenant with the Jews.
6. Is indwelt by Satan, who falls from Heaven after war there.
7. Is responsible for 1/3 of the angels losing their heavenly position.
8. Overpowers three of the original 10 nations.
9. Increases greatly toward the south, east, and Israel.
10. Is the "King of Babylon." Supports "Mystery Babylon", then shakes it off and burns it.
11. Dies of a sword wound.
12. Is raised from the dead.
13. Is object of wonder throughout the world.
14. Is at first so feared, the world cannot make war with him.
15. Speaks pompous words.
16. Has a fierce countenance.
17. Is self-willed.
18. Is VERY angry.
19. Is given control of the saints for 3 and 1/2 years. 20. Wears out, kills saints.
21. Speaks great blasphemies.
22. Has an abominable pride.
23. Cares not for the religion of his ancestry.
24. Cares not for women.
25. Magnifies himself against God.
26. Receives the world's worship via a co-worker called the false prophet, who works great wonders.
27. Honors a god of "fortresses."
28. Sits in the temple of God and declares himself to be God.
29. Is number 666.
30. Kills the 2 great endtime prophets.
31. Persecutes Israel and the church.
32. Is given total control over ALL people.
33. Destroys even his own land and people.
34. Is attacked by Egypt and Iraq, at end.
35. Enters Israel, at end, destroying as he goes.
36. Is attacked by a 200,000,000 person army from the far east, and a similar army from the far north.
37. Goes out with fury for one last round of destruction.
38. Sets up a throne between the seas and Sinai?
40. Makes war against the coming Lamb.
41. Is helped by no one as he is overwhelmed by the brightness of Jesus' coming.
42. With his prophet, is thrown into a lake of fire.
43. Is replaced by the reign of JESUS.

PART II: PRETRIB on TRIAL

INTRO, PART II

My brothers in the Lord:

I have traveled, Biblically, from old Babylon and Persia, to Galilee, to Corinth, to Thessalonica, and to Patmos, searching for the secret catching away of believers. In every case I have heard the Lord speaking through inspired writers to his disciples. In every case, the events do not change. There is a great time of trouble. There are signs in the heavens. There is a wicked world ruler. There are false Christs. Then the true Christ comes with his angels and saints, who are at that moment gathered from heaven and earth to be with the Lord as he comes to judge the earth. The pattern is consistent with brothers Daniel, Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul, and John. I must really be blind. But I don't see a "pretribulation" rapture.

Can someone give me only ONE passage that is as specific as what Jesus said in Matthew 24 (*immediately after the tribulation of those days ...they shall see the sign of the Son of Man...coming with great power and glory...He shall gather His elect*) or what Paul said in II Thessalonians 2? (*that day shall NOT come unless ...the man of sin be revealed!*) Give me only ONE passage that states unequivocally that Jesus comes half way down, picks up His Church, then goes back up for seven years, THEN comes back a second (that is, third) time? I love God's Word. Give me the one passage, and I'll believe it, embrace it.

In fact, every passage used by the pretribber assumes the argument has already been made. The concept is taken into the passage, and the passage is "interpreted". Several of these passages are strung together, and a "theology" is formed. I remember my first reaction to this in college about 30 years ago: *just how many "second" comings can there be?* It was of course "explained" to me later. Some of the arguments I heard I will share here. But laying argument, "logic", and theory aside, I desire to return to a clear and literal rendering of Scripture.

Let us assemble all the men whom God has used to speak to this issue, especially those of the New Covenant, beginning with Jesus Himself. Let their own Biblical words answer our many questions, and let us settle forever that what they said is not to be toyed with, but believed at any cost. Come, Jesus, come Gospel writers and apostles, come Holy Spirit, sit with us, speak to us. And may we have the grace to put aside that which is of man. Let our group ostracize, let our enemies enjoy a good laugh. But let us believe only God, for only He knows the day and the hour and the time and the season.

Why so important? Well, what if the "pretrib" theory is wrong? Should you see and recognize antichrist when he comes, will not you, like the Thessalonians of old, come to the heart-rending conclusion that you have MISSED the great day of the Lord? That Jesus has secretly caught away some, but left YOU to the wrath of God? Believing in the "pretribulation rapture" can do that to you, you know. The Scripture is explicit that antichrist comes *before* Christ. So, what if you see him, and are convinced he is the man of sin? Will you not feel Jesus has left you out? That the true believers are partying in Heaven, while you've been left to see hell on earth? Let the inspired Scriptures free you from this teaching, now.

I see the men are all assembled. Let the questions begin.

1. *How many times must Jesus appear in bodily form?* **The writer of Hebrews:** To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a SECOND time, apart from sin, for salvation.

2. *Should not all believers in Jesus be considered one body? Can there be an artificial separation of some New Testament believers from other New Testament believers?* **John:** The ones who come out of the great tribulation washed their robes and made them white in the **blood of the Lamb**. **The writer of Hebrews:** The **blood of Christ**...purges your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. **Paul:** There is ONE Body! We, being many, are one Body in Christ.

3. **Jesus**, *many of your followers today are trying to say that the things you said while here must give way to the things said by Paul, and that somehow you were not addressing the "church" in your words, but "Israel". Is that true?* Let him that READS understand. What I say to you (Jewish believers) I say to ALL, watch!

4. **Matthew**, to whom was Jesus speaking these very specific statements about His coming? Jesus' disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple, and He spoke to them.
5. **Mark**, concerning the prophecy itself, what was to be the final condition of Jerusalem following its destruction? Not one stone shall be left upon another. *But this did not happen. The temple wall stands today!*
6. **Luke**, what were the specific questions the disciples asked Jesus? When will this destruction take place, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place? *In other words, their questions were about one event, not two.*
7. **Matthew**, in answer to the "when" question, after what events does Jesus put the final destructions? Wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecutions, false prophets, apostasy, preaching of the Gospel in all the world. *An obviously long period of time.*
8. **Mark**, in answer to the "what sign" question, what does Jesus give as a sign? When you see the abomination of desolation (**Luke**: and don't forget the surrounding of Jerusalem!) standing where it ought not, RUN.
9. **Daniel**, help us out. What was Jesus referring to? Seventy "weeks" (of years) are determined for Israel to finish transgression, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint the Most Holy. From the command to restore Jerusalem shall be 69 weeks. Then Messiah will be cut off. Then a prince will come and confirm a covenant for one week.(7 years) But in the middle of that 7 years, the prince will bring an end to sacrifice and offering, and on the wing of abomination shall be one who makes desolate until the determined consummation is poured out on the desolate.
10. **Daniel**, How do we know that this abomination is at the end of all things and not in 70 AD, when Jerusalem was destroyed? I heard but I did not understand. I said, "My lord, what shall be the END of these things? He said...from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days (over three and one half years)...but you, go your way TILL the END...you will arise to your inheritance at the END of the days."
11. **Luke**, can you confirm that this destruction must be for the last days? These are days of vengeance that ALL things which are written must be fulfilled. **Matthew**? THEN shall be great tribulation such as has not been from creation until now, nor ever shall be. *Unparalleled trouble associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. Even the Holocaust was worse than this. Even worse is coming.*
12. We Christians are often called the "elect", the chosen ones. **Mark**, Are there any "elect" living during this horrendous time? Unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days...false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.
13. **Matthew**, what happens IMMEDIATELY AFTER the tribulation of those days? The sun will be darkened... then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds...
14. **Mark**, how will the church be caught up, or "raptured" at this time? He will send His angels, and gather together His ELECT from the four winds, (**Matthew**: don't forget the sound of a trumpet!) from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.
15. **Brother Paul**, are you in any disagreement over this order of events? The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. *No objections!*
16. **John**, what all happens at the "last" trumpet? When the seventh (final) angel sounds, the Kingdoms all become the Lord's, God's wrath has come, the dead are judged, the saints are rewarded, the temple of God is opened. *The very end of all things!*
17. **Jesus**, again, will BELIEVERS be in the tribulation? When YOU (believers)SEE these things happening, know that the Kingdom of God is near...this generation (*the one that sees the SIGN*) will by no means pass away till all things are fulfilled.
18. *We are all told to watch. Jesus may come and take us by death at any moment. Our last days*

interpretations may be wrong, as so many have been throughout the years. But by and large, who are the ones who will be surprised at the coming of Jesus? Gospel writers: The Kingdom is within you, so you can't watch for it. It comes as quickly as lightning. You can't know the exact day or hour, but you must WATCH. In the days of Noah and Lot they were leading normal lives when the Lord came and judged them suddenly (but not without warning). You also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at a time you do not expect Him. If the evil servant says in His heart, My master is delaying his coming, and begins to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that house will come on a day when he is not looking for him. **Paul:** You know that the day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night. They will receive sudden destruction. But YOU are not in darkness that that day should overtake YOU as a thief! You'll be watching when He comes! Keep busy for Him! The lawless one will deceive those who wanted to be deceived. But we are persuaded of better things about YOU.

19. *Is not the coming of Jesus a time of judgment, first? Jesus:* First burn the tares, then gather the wheat into my barns. At the end of the age, the Son of Man gathers out of the Kingdom all offenders and practicers of lawlessness (as the lawless one will spawn during his reign), casts them into the fire, and then the righteous shine. The lost go to everlasting punishment, the righteous to eternal life. **Paul:** When the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, he will take vengeance in flaming fire on those who do not obey the Gospel...when He comes in that Day to be glorified in His saints and admired among all those who believe. **Jude:** The Lord comes with ten thousands of his saints to execute judgment...**John:** I saw heaven opened, and He who sat upon the horse was the Word of God, and out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations...

20. **Paul,** *has not God delivered us from wrath?* The coming Son delivers us from the wrath to come. We are NOT appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation. **But John,** *in the midst of the consummation of judgment foretold by Daniel, at the 6th bowl, what does Jesus say, and to whom?* Behold I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. **Daniel:** Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days...**Jesus:** Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on (from the destruction of BABYLON towards the end of the tribulation). "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." *The conclusion of Scripture: God's people will be kept THROUGH the tribulation, not FROM it. The escape will be death, not rapture.*

At this point I hear rumblings in the hearing room, and questions that cannot be held any longer from the holders of this theory:

A. *But what about the times of NOAH, LOT, MOSES? Were God's people not always removed BEFORE the judgment?*

They were never removed from the EARTH. They were protected in the midst of judgment.

Further, the principle of protection for the *Christian* is always tempered with the principle and promise of persecution. We have been *promised* the constant chasing of the enemy. The man of sin will wear out the saints of God. He will kill them. But their deaths will be considered precious to the Lord. He will immediately wipe away all their tears. Our hope is not escape, but the ability to endure through God's grace. It could well be that the ravages of judgment that affect other of the world's citizens will stay far from us. But the direct pursuit of Satan will not.

B. *Luke tells his readers through Jesus' own words to pray that they might escape these things. The Philadelphia Church was promised that they would be kept FROM not THROUGH the tribulation. How is this consistent with the principles we have heard so far?*

If the Philadelphia Church is meant to be an end-time church (though there was a first-century church there) it can refer to the facts already stated, that God's people will be protected from the wrath, but Jesus certainly does not make exceptions of the persecution rule. If this is the first century congregation, the promise has already been kept. As to the statement of Luke, it is certainly desirable to live in any age and any place other than the central focus of the wrath of God of the last days. But our prayer is that we will be able to stand before the Son of man. We do that when we are suddenly absent from our

body, in death. By His grace, we will not be given more than we are able to bear. When it gets to that point, He will deliver us by calling us individually home. But that DAY of His return SHALL NOT COME, Paul says, until the man of sin has been revealed.

Obviously, great hosts of believers will be kept from that horrid time by the fact of their place in history or geography. But the Lord may be stirring some today to be ready to endure Satan's worst.

C. After the messages to the churches, didn't a voice call John up to heaven, and doesn't that mean that all Christians will be called up to heaven before the events that follow, namely, the tribulation events? This is called "begging the question," reading into a text the conclusion already formed. Certainly no one would think that the rapture should occur when PAUL was caught up to heaven. And before this theory began to circulate, no one would have imagined it at JOHN's ascension. When the Scriptures are SILENT we must allow them to remain silent. Which leads to the original question:

WHERE is there in SCRIPTURE one clear statement that is BEYOND "interpretation" that a "secret" coming must occur before what all agree is the "second" coming?

But there is a VERY specific arrangement given to DISPROVE such a theory: The Gospel Writers and Paul are in perfect agreement over it:

1. The abomination of desolation, the asked-for "sign" of His coming!
2. Unmatched tribulation, immediately following the sign.
3. Heavenly signs, immediately following tribulation, and immediately preceding
4. The coming of the Son, which includes the following events
 - angels gather the elect
 - a trumpet sounds
 - dead are raised
 - living saints are caught up
 - He comes then to the earth with 10,000's of his saints
 - there is massive judgment
 - there are then rewards

This has been the teaching of the Church and the Word for these 2000 years. Let us not bring confusion any longer to the Body by introducing a "secret."

Addendum B: A harmony of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 17 & 21

Jesus was looking at the rich putting their gifts into the treasury. He saw a poor widow putting in her 2 mites, and said, "This poor widow has put in more than all, for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she has out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

As Jesus went out of the temple, His apostles spoke of the temple and how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations. They said to Jesus, "Teacher, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

Jesus said to them, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down." *(There still stands to this day the famous wailing wall, a wall of the very temple Jesus here sees! This proves that the AD 70 destruction of Jerusalem did not ultimately fulfil the prophecy here given, as Isaiah's prophecies about Babylon also await perfect fulfilment)*

Now as He sat on the Mt. of Olives, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately, "Teacher, when shall these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age?" *(Reading in the AD 70 destruction, we have often thought that the two questions were: When will Jerusalem be destroyed, and When will you come again? The two questions are 1: **When** the destruction? 2: **What sign** do we look for? Jesus proceeds to answer both, and does NOT divide the Jerusalem chaos from the end-of-the-world scene.)*

Jesus answered, "Take heed that no one deceives you. *(Notice He does not discourage them about asking for signs. He in fact LISTS signs they should be looking for, as should we! Obviously most of what he now gives has not happened yet, and the original disciples could not benefit from the knowledge. They, like us, have been kept on guard by the simple command to "watch." But a generation must come that will treasure these simple signposts and rejoice in them. Are we the generation?)* Many will come in My Name saying 'The time has drawn near,' and 'I am Christ', and will deceive many. Do not go after them. You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. Don't be troubled. Such things must happen, but the end will not come immediately. *(So far, all can be relegated to the first century)*

"Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines, pestilences. There will be fearful sights and signs from heaven. These are the beginnings of birth pains. *(History of mankind in brief, but like a woman's pregnancy pains, there is a growing intensity up until birth)*

"Watch out, for before all these things *(He is now backtracking and speaking about the apostles' immediate circumstances, again first century)* they will lay their hands on you, persecute you, deliver you to the councils, to be beaten in the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before rulers and kings for my sake. *(Peter, Paul, etc)* But it will turn out to you as an occasion for testimony. So settle it in your hearts that you not meditate beforehand on what you will answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. Whatever is given you in that hour speak, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

"You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends, who will cause you to be put to death. You will be hated of all men for My Name's sake. But not a hair of your head shall be lost. In your patience possess your souls. *(Still in first century, but of course can be applied to our various situations of persecution)*

"Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. Because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. *(With this paragraph is a clear transfer to the last days)*

"So, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, *(There were two abominations so mentioned by the prophet. The one prophesied has already been fulfilled in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes, who brought a pig into the temple, showing us what the general idea of "abominations" is. But Daniel, in his famous "70-weeks" prophecy, spoke of another abomination for the end time by a prince that will come. The apostle Paul says that the man of sin will place HIMSELF in the temple, calling HIMSELF the God of all.)* (let him that reads understand) *(This Spirit-inspired footnote, either from the lips of Jesus or the Gospel writers, is the clue that from now on the "you" is a Bible-reader, not a*

person standing before Jesus in 30 AD) standing where it ought not, in the Holy Place, and when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, (*this sign is added by Luke, and has been widely interpreted, again, as the AD 70 destruction. The following details demand, as does the association with the very same discourse, that it is the same as Matthew's and Mark's destruction, at the end of history*) then know that its desolation (*as in "abomination of desolation" in Daniel*) is near. Then let those in Judea flee to the mountains. Let those on the housetop not go down into the house, nor enter to take anything out. Let him in the field not go back to get his clothes. "Woe to the pregnant and nursing! Pray that your flight is not in winter or on the Sabbath. (*So there WILL be Sabbath-keepers in the last days!*) There will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

"For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. (*All things were NOT fulfilled in AD 70.*) They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (*Yes this happened before, twice in fact. But it must happen again, if this text is to be interpreted consistently*) Then shall be great tribulation such as has not been from the beginning of the creation until now, nor ever shall be. (*In all three Gospels, unparalleled trouble is associated immediately with the destruction of Jerusalem. Though AD 70 was a horrendous year for the Jews, it does not compare even with the world wars and the Holocaust. And worse things are coming.*) And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the chosen ones, those days will be shortened.

"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look-Here is the Christ,' or 'There!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the chosen ones. See- I told you all things beforehand. So if they say to you, 'He is in the desert or the inner rooms,' do not believe it! For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together. (*His coming will be as obvious as the snatching of a dead body by a hungry bird of prey.*)

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days, (*Notice the clear-cut flow of events. Abomination of desolation, unparalleled destruction, signs in the heavens, return of Christ . Similar events to all have happened in history, but if they do not lead to the actual return of the Lord, they are NOT the events described here*) the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light. The stars will fall and the powers in heaven will be shaken. On the earth will be distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth.

"Then they will see the sign of the Son of Man, and all of the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. (*Here is the rapture. The dead in Christ rise, and we which are alive and remain, too, come from the farthest parts of earth. The departed spirits of the believers are called from all parts of heaven.*)

"Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near. Now learn this parable from the fig tree, and all the trees. (*Luke, in adding this last phrase , dispels the idea that Jesus is referring to Israel as the fig tree. Nothing hidden here. He's talking about TREES!*) When the branches are already becoming tender and putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things (*again he encourages them to look for THINGS to happen!*) happening, (*Aha! ALL these things will be seen from earth by DISCIPLES living at that time! They haven't been caught up secretly after all!*) know that it is near, at the very doors. Assuredly I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled. (*The generation that sees the BEGINNING of these things will also see their ENDING! Yet another reason for looking beyond the AD 70 occurrence!*) Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

"But of that (*exact*) day and (*exact*) hour no one knows, neither the angels nor the Son, but only the Father. (*The Godhead had limited Jesus' knowledge while here to those things necessary to be a perfect man and the Saviour of Mankind. What sublime humility! Even the period of time and the many centuries intervening were not on Jesus' mind as He gave this discourse. The disciples assumed that the time would be very short, but they have proved to be wrong. Post AD 70 followers must have been convinced that the end of the world had come. But they were wrong too. Conclusions I am making in my own day may also be proved*

wrong. *But this does not deter me from “watching” the times, the signs around us.*) As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. In the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away and destroyed them. Likewise was it in the days of Lot: they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. So also will the coming of the Son of Man be. In that night there will be two people in one bed: the one will be taken and the other left. Two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken, and the other left.

“ Take heed therefore, watch and pray. For you do not know when the time is that your Lord is coming. But know this, if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. You also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him.

“ It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, to each his work, to give food to the household, and to be a doorkeeper to watch. Watch therefore, take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life. If the evil servant says in his heart, ‘My Master is delaying his coming, and begins to beat his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that house will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Watch therefore, the master may come at evening, crowing of the rooster, or morning, lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. His coming will be a snare on all those who dwell on the earth. Pray that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. What I say to you, I say to all: WATCH!”

Other Scriptures on this subject:

JESUS:

Luke 12:35-40, 42-48, 13:24-30

John 5:28-29

Revelation 3:10-11, 16:15, 22:7,12, 13, 20

PAUL:

I Corinthians 15:12-28

I Thessalonians 1:9-10, 4:13-18, 5:1-11

II Thessalonians 1:3-10, 2:1-17

PETER:

II Peter 3:3-15

JUDE:

1:14,16,20

JOHN:

Revelation 6:9-11, 7:9-17, 11:15-18, 12:17, 13:7, 15:2ff, 17:6, 19:7-10, 20:4-6

ADDENDUM C: TWO BABYLONS? following page

TWO BABYLONS? one in Revelation 17 another in 18?

REVELATION 17

**one of the 7-bowl angels introduces
woman is called a great harlot**

**woman sits on many waters: people, multitudes, nations,
tongues**

**kings of earth commit fornication with her
inhabitants of earth made drunk with wine**

John carried in Spirit to wilderness

woman rides scarlet beast of chapter 12

woman is in purple and scarlet

she is adorned with gold and precious stones

**she has a cup of abominations in her hand
name on her forehead**

Mystery Babylon the Great

mother of harlots

mother of abominations of the earth

drunk with blood of saints/martyrs of Jesus

ten-nation confederation hates her, desolates her, burns her

she is the great city that reigns over the kings of the earth

7 heads are 7 hills where woman sits

REVELATION 18

**angel with great authority
that great city Babylon**

**wrath of her fornication with kings
all nations have drunk wine**

clothed in fine linen, purple and scarlet

**merchants rich through abundance of her luxury,
merchants great men of the earth**

in the cup she has mixed, mix double

Babylon the Great is fallen

kings commit fornication

by your sorceries nations deceived

rejoice apostles, and prophets, God has avenged!

**plagues come in one day...utterly burned with fire
in one hour she is made desolate**

kings of the earth committed fornication with her

time for her judgment... she is fallen, is fallen

God's people called out

cast down, never found anymore

no more music, crafts, millstone, lights, weddings

blood of prophets (OT), saints (NT) and ALL slain on earth!

mystery Babylon, mystery of the ages. Is she an idea, or a real city? If a real city, which one? Revelation Chapter 17 points to Rome, with its seven hills, and the direction to John in the closing verse. Surely the Spirit would not direct His people to such vivid imagery only to have them guess again. Rome is intended. But it is clear from the reference to as-yet unfulfilled prophecies from Isaiah and Jeremiah, that more is meant. Given the idea of a woman who can "sit" on a beast, or "sit" on seven hills, or "sit" on many waters, we see a system of evil that began as far back as Nimrod, who urged the people of his day to build a city, and a tower that would help them compete with the Almighty's power. She has sat before us, brothers and sisters, in every generation. She sits before us now in the city of Rome, for that kingdom is still with us. But in the final destruction, I believe that Babylon will be rebuilt to a major world power, compete with Rome, destroy Rome, and then itself be destroyed. Truly when it is all over, *Babylon is fallen, IS FALLEN!* It is not an accident that the statement is made twice. Every vestige of the mystery will fall from its grace and power, and only the power of God will remain.

Could it be that Zechariah saw this very thing in his own day? He tells us the story of a woman being carried in a basket to the land of Shinar (Babylonia). There a house is built to replace the basket. The woman? She is called "Wickedness"!

We have not seen the last of Babylon the Great. She seems to be rising even now in the land of Iraq.