

- Revelation = "apokalupsis" - "removing of a veil"
- this is an OPEN book (Rev. 22:10 vs. Daniel 12:4)
- v. 1 - "shortly" - not "soon," but "suddenly"
- v. 1 - "signified" = "symbolized" (show by a sign); word used for Jesus' miracles - deeper message!
- v. 2 - "things that he saw" - see v. 19
- **Why does Revelation use SYMBOLS?**
 1. spiritual "code" to protect first-century Christians
 2. symbolic language is not weakened by time
 3. symbols impart information with emotion
- v. 3 - "blessed" - 7 blessings in Revelation (1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 22:14), also 7 curses
- v. 3 - "at hand" - church believed in imminent return!
- v. 4 - "him which is...was...is to come" - this is a Greek exposition of God's OT name "I AM"
- v. 4 - "seven spirits" - see 4:5, 5:6, Zechariah 4:6,10
- 7 - perfect number, signifies fulness or completion
- v. 5 - "and" = "even" (see v. 6)
- v. 5 - "washed" = "loosed and freed" (Amplified)
- v. 7 - "see" = "stare at something remarkable" - not Rapture but return to earth (ch. 19, Mt. 24:29-30)
- v. 7 - "they which pierced him" - Jews (Zech. 12:10)
- v. 8 - Jesus Christ is Almighty God; Alpha & Omega are first and last letters in the Greek alphabet
- First & Last Scriptures: Rev. 1:8, 22:12-13, 1:17-18

- v. 9 - we will see tribulation, not Great Tribulation!
- **Isle of Patmos (v. 9):**
 - 60 miles SW of Ephesus in Aegean Sea
 - island 10 by 6 miles, volcanic, mostly treeless
 - Roman penal colony containing granite quarry
 - John exiled in his 90's by Domitian (AD 95-96)
- v. 10 - "in the spirit" = "rapt in His power" (Amplified)
- **The Lord's Day (v. 10):**
 - the day of Christ's resurrection was always called "first day of the week" in NT, never "Lord's Day"
 - in the OT, the "Day of the Lord" represented a future time of God's judgment
 - John was propelled into the future by the Spirit!
- **The Seven Churches (v. 11):**
 - in Roman province of Asia (modern day Turkey)
 - in order of Roman postal route (30-45 miles apart)
 - more than 7 (ie: Colosse); these are representative
- v. 12 - "candlesticks" = Jewish Menorah; shows the church as the fulfillment of OT Judaism
- v. 13 - "Son of man" = OT title for the Messiah
- Jesus clothed in priestly garments; girdle is about his chest - not waist - because his work is finished
- v. 14 - Daniel's vision of Ancient of Days (7:9)
- v. 16 - "seven stars" = angels, or "messengers"
- v. 16 - "sword" = God's Word (2:12,16; Heb. 4:12)
- v. 16 - power of His brightness - see 2 Thess. 2:8
- **reaction of Jesus' apostle, beloved disciple, cousin; WHAT DOES YOUR JESUS LOOK LIKE?**
- v. 18 - "keys" - denote authority in a royal household
- v. 18 - "hell and death" - physical and spiritual death
- v. 19 - **PROPHETIC KEY TO INTERPRETATION**
- v. 20 - "mystery" = "musterion," secrets known only to initiated; many symbols defined by Scripture

These seven cities were located in the Roman Province of Asia (modern Turkey), arranged in a horseshoe shape roughly 100 miles in diameter that formed the Great Circle Postal Route of the province. There were more churches in Asia, but these seven had strengths and weaknesses typical of all other congregations both ancient and modern. The messages are addressed to the angel ("messenger") of each church. Bible scholars see a three-fold application from these messages:

PRACTICAL -	Specific instruction to the churches in John's day
PROPHETIC -	Principles for the church in every age (Possible prophecies of the church in history)
PERSONAL -	Spiritual application for individual Christians

Not every church is commended, nor is every assembly rebuked, but to all Christ says "I know thy works." There is a promise given to the one that "overcometh" in every congregation. To every church Christ says "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The word "churches" is plural, indicating these messages were to be read by all congregations, not just the one addressed. The words "He" and "him" are singular, indicating individuals must be in tune with God's Spirit in spite of the condition of their assembly. The word "hear" means "take to heart and act upon" and does not indicate mere listening. Revelation 2 & 3 form the last message of Christ to His Church recorded in Scripture.

Only Christ can see the true condition of a church or an individual!

REVELATION 2:1-7

EPHESUS, THE CARELESS CHURCH

- Capital of Roman Province of Asia, wealthy commerce center
- Home of Temple of Diana, one of Seven Wonders of Ancient World
- Church founded by Paul (Acts 19-20), first pastored by Timothy
- John lived - and wrote his books - here before and after Patmos
- "Ephesus" - name means "desirable," also "to let go, relax"
- Heraclitus - "no one can live in Ephesus without weeping" (immoral)
- "labor" - "toil until exhaustion" / "patience" - "endurance under trial"
- "Nicolaitans" - "to conquer the people" (initiated concept of laity)
- PROBLEM - abandoned "honeymoon love" (fervent, uninhibited)
- So busy maintaining separation, they neglected adoration!
- They had been in heavenly places (Eph. 2:6), now they had fallen
- The church that loses its love will eventually lose its light!
- God will remove lampstand (church), not extinguish light (truth)
- *What we do is important, but so is why we do it!*

REVELATION 2:8-11

SMYRNA, THE CROWNED CHURCH

- Port city (modern Izmir), important center of Roman Imperial Cult
- Famous for "Street of Gold" & "Hill Pagus" ("Crown of Smyrna")
- Citizens not acknowledging Caesar as Lord excluded from guilds
- Exclusion meant unemployment and poverty ("absolutely nothing")
- Polycarp (one of John's disciples) burned at stake here in AD 155
- Large Jewish community (accepted by Rome) persecuted Christians
- Devil ("slanderer") controls those in "synagogue of Satan"
- "Smyrna" - "bitter" (root word "myrrh" - crushed to give fragrance)
- "ten days" - "a brief time" (Genesis 24:55, Acts 25:6) - or 10 "waves"
- "crown of life" - "victor's crown" (awarded at annual athletic games)

REVELATION 2:12-17

PERGAMOS, THE COMPROMISING CHURCH

- Pergamos had first temple dedicated to Caesar ("Satan's seat")
- 200,000 volume library, second only to Alexandria - educated society
- Also Temple of Aesculapius, god of healing (twin serpents on staff)
- Gigantic altar to Zeus - one of Seven Wonders of Ancient World
- Sword was symbol of Roman Proconsul, but Christ's sword greater!
- Satan not successful as roaring lion, but got in as deceiving serpent!
- Antipas first martyr in Asia - we do not know him, but God does!
- Doctrine of Balaam - mix godliness and worldliness (Num. 22-25)
- Christians here compromised to avoid suffering, achieve acceptance
- "Pergamos" - from "tower" and "marriage" - union with idolatry
- Christ has a sharp sword to separate His people from the world!
- "hidden manna" - spiritual food better than that offered to idols
- imperial cults had "secrets" for members - God promises same to us
- "white stone" - used to vote for acquittal or gain admission to a feast
- *This church more acceptable to society, but less acceptable to God!*

REVELATION 2:18-28**THYATIRA, THE CORRUPTED CHURCH**

- The longest message was sent to the church in the smallest city!
- A military and commercial center, numerous trade guilds here
- Temple to Apollo (Sun God) - "Son of God" only here in Revelation
- Lydia, seller of purple, was guild member from Thyatira (Acts 16:14)
- City known for "turkey red" Thyatira cloth and bronze production
- Christ comes to judge with "fiery" eyes and feet like fine brass
- "Thyatira" - means "unweary of sacrifice" - continuous good works
- No amount of loving or sacrifice can compensate for tolerance of evil
- "Jezebel" - not likely a real name, but real woman like the OT queen
- She taught that there was no harm in outward conformity to the world if inward holiness was maintained - false doctrine!
- Ephesus weak in love yet strong in doctrine; Thyatira weak in doctrine yet strong in love - both extremes hateful to God!
- "cast her into a bed" - bed of sin would become bed of sickness
- "kill her children with death" - "plague" / warning to ALL churches
- "depths of Satan" - heresy that taught Christians could indulge in immorality in safety because their sins were forgiven
- Only one command given to the faithful - "Hold fast till I come!"
- In the millenium the church will be given power to wipe out sin!
- Jesus, the morning star (Rev. 22:16), is our reward for faithfulness
- *The church crowded with good activity is not always a true church!*

REVELATION 3:1-6**SARDIS, THE FEEBLE CHURCH**

- At junction of five main roads - center for trade & military / on inaccessible plateau 1500 ft. high - impregnable fortress
- Center for worship of Artemis - nature-worshipping reincarnation cult
- Famous for wool garments, but city just a shadow of former splendor
- Church had become like city - alive in name only, living on past glory
- "seven Spirits of God" - God sees the reality beyond the reputation
- Twice in history Sardis captured because Sentries were sleeping
- "come on thee as a thief" - unexpected or undetected judgement
- Deadness in the assembly due to defilement among the assembled!
- No persecution of church in Sardis - no friction means no motion!
- Even a dead church can have a dedicated remnant - the only hope!
- Promise to wear white raiment meaningful to garment-making people
- *All the church's man-made programs cannot bring spiritual life!*

REVELATION 3:7-13**PHILADELPHIA, THE FAITHFUL CHURCH**

- In strategic place on trade route; "Gateway to the East" / called "Little Athens" - many temples; famous for vineyards
- Area prone to earthquakes; city was completely destroyed in AD 17
- "Philadelphia" - name means "brotherly love" / still exists today
- "Key of David" - authority of the Messiah (image from Isaiah 22:22)
- City was "door" through mountains; church had "door" of opportunity
- congregation small, but easily understood how a little strength in a narrow valley corridor could hold back a large army!
- Jews who rejected Christ were the worst persecutors of the church
- Many scholars believe verse 10 is one of God's promises for a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, since the "hour" (a specific time of trial) will come upon "ALL the world" and God says he will "keep" (Greek: "keep OUT OF") the church from it
- Overcomers will be made "pillars" (indicating stability in a city of earthquakes); names of prominent citizens were often engraved on temple pillars as a mark of honor - we will bear Christ's name forever
- *It is possible to lose our rewards if we ignore our opportunities!*

REVELATION 3:14-22**LAODICEA, THE FOOLISH CHURCH**

- "Laodicea" - name means "judgement of the people" or "mob rule"
- God comes to them as the Amen (Hebrew "truth" - Isaiah 65:16)
- "beginning of the creation of God" - "source" or "origin" of creation
- Located between Hieropolis (famous for hot springs) and Colossae (famous for pure cold drinking water) - water from either place would be "lukewarm" by the time it arrived in Laodicea (Colossians 4:13)
- City ravaged by earthquake (AD 61), but refused financial assistance from Rome in rebuilding due to its self-sufficiency

- Noted as banking center, for production of glossy black wool, for production of an eye salve used across the Empire
- God says they are poor, naked, blind; He counsels them to get gold, white raiment and eye salve for their spiritual lives!
- Christ is OUTSIDE the church, knocking because He wants inside!
- Door of ancient home had to be opened by the occupant from inside
- Laodiceans believed they had a perfect church because of prosperity
- God's counsel: "gold tried in the fire" - suffering realigns priorities!
- *Christ says "I stand" ("I have taken my stand") - what will YOU do?*

REVELATION 4:1-11

GOD'S THRONE IN HEAVEN

- "Church" not mentioned again until 22:16 - NOT ON EARTH
- purpose of Rapture - not mere escape, but translation of body!
- elsewhere only "come hither" (Rev. 17:1, 21:9) - RAPTURE
- throne room - similar arrangement to Tabernacle, with Throne in place of the mercy seat and other "furniture" in front of it
- jasper (crystal) - holiness; sardine (blood red) - wrath; emerald (predominant color of RAINBOW) - mercy at this throne!
- circle arrangement of Sanhedrin, no one closer than anyone else
- 24 elders - not angels (5:11), 24 priestly orders (1 Chron. 24:4); symbolic completion of 12 tribes + 12 apostles (Rev. 21:12,14)
- crowns - "stephanos" (victor's crown)
- lightnings & thunderings - Sinai (Ex. 19:16 - God's presence coming near in judgement)
- 7 Spirits (Zech. 4:6,10 - omnipresence and omniscience of God)
- sea of glass not literal - appearance! / glass dull in John's day (1 Cor. 13:12)
- unceasing watchfulness; CHERUBIMS - highest rank of angels
- "zoa" (living creature), not "therion" (vicious wild beast)
- symbolic of God's creation and covenant with Noah (man), fowl (eagle), cattle (calf), beasts (lion) - Genesis 9:9-10
- 4-fold portrait of Christ in gospels (Lion / Calf / Man / Eagle), similar to visions of Ezekiel (1:5,10,28) and Isaiah (6:2-3)
- primary function of cherubim is WORSHIP of Almighty God
- elders worship in a way even Cherubim cannot worship!
- "proskuneo" (prostrate) - to kiss, like dog licking master's hand
- CROWNS AWARDED: Victor's Crown of Life (James 1:12), Faithful Saint's Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8), Elder's Crown of Glory (1 Peter 5:4), Soul Winner's Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess. 2:19), Martyr's Crown of Life (Rev. 2:10)
- *Saints cast their crowns before throne in ultimate act of worship!*

Seven Reasons Why A Pre-Tribulation Rapture Is Biblical

1. It is the only view that clearly and logically untangles the contrasting details of Christ's Second Coming by taking Scripture in its literal sense whenever possible.
2. It is the only view that properly distinguishes between Israel and the church, thus avoiding the most common error in Bible interpretation.
3. It is the only view that truly gives the church a blessed hope by taking God at His Word when He promises to save His church out of the wrath to come.
4. It is the only view that preserves the motivating power of imminency teaching that was such a challenge to the early church, and keeps Christians in anticipation of the Lord's coming.

5. It is the only view that clearly and literally fits the flow of the Book of Revelation, and explains why the church is not mentioned as being on earth during the Tribulation period.
6. It is the only view that explains the questions troubling the young Christians at Thessalonica, and maintains 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 as a comfort passage.
7. It is the only view that explains why there is absolutely no Bible instruction on how the church should prepare for the Tribulation.

Scripture Verses to Consider

1 Thess. 4:13-18 - Rapture (Lat) = harpadso (Gr) = "snatched up"

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. **14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. **15** For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive [and] remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. **16** For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: **17** Then we which are alive [and] remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. **18** Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

1 Thess. 5:9 - We are appointed to suffering, but not God's wrath

For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Cor. 15:51-52 - Paul uses "we" because he expected Rapture

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, **52** In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Revelation 3:10 - We are kept from ("out of" - ek) the Tribulation

Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

Revelation 6:16-17 - God's wrath at beginning of Seven Years

And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: **17** For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

Revelation 13:9 - Word "church" not mentioned as in Rev. 2 & 3

If any man have an ear, let him hear.

*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ
(Titus 2:13)*

REVELATION 5:1-14

THE LAMB OPENS THE BOOK

- right hand symbolizes power and authority (Ex. 15:6, Psa. 17:7)
- scroll full - nothing can be added to God's Last Will & Testament
- sealed like Roman will - only to be opened by appointed heir
- Who is worthy (righteous enough) to loose the plagues in this "Title Deed to the Universe" and reclaim the earth for God?
- "wept much" - mourning as for a dead loved one in Bible times
- Lion of the tribe of Judah - image from Genesis 49:9-10
- Root of David - image from Isaiah 11:1,10 (as HUMANITY, His roots were IN David; as DEITY, He was the root OF David)
- "How can Messiah be both David's Lord & son?" (Mt. 22:41-46)
- "Lamb" = "a little pet lamb" / "slain" = "violently killed"
- 7 horns - complete power; 7 eyes - complete knowledge
- Lamb - 1st coming (redemption); Lion - 2nd coming (judgement)
- This scene describes what John sees as happening in the SPIRITUAL REALM - Jesus is not literally a Lamb or a Lion, just as He is not literally approaching a throne to obtain a literal book
- Revelation 5:7 is a fulfillment of what Daniel saw in Dan. 7:13-14
- prayers are preserved in Heaven as incense! (Psalm 141:2)
- new (kainos) - new in quality (never existed before - 2 Cor. 5:17)
- Redeemer had to be near of kin (humanity of Christ), willing to redeem (God's love), and able to redeem (Calvary's provision)

- saints from every kindred (ancestry), tongue (language), people (race), nation (government) have been redeemed by His blood
- "we shall reign on the earth" - will happen in the Millennium
- 10,000 - largest single number used in Greek ("innumerable")

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth; And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11)

- Christ now ready to open seals that begin the Great Tribulation

REVELATION 6

THE SEAL JUDGMENTS

- seals indicate judgement held back as long as possible
- start of 7-year Tribulation (Dan. 9:27) - covers Rev. 6-19
- first 3.5 years - Rev. 6-9 / middle part of Tribulation - Rev. 10-14 / last 3.5 years - Rev. 15-19
- similar to Zechariah's vision of four chariots patrolling the earth (Zech. 6:1-7) indicating God's activity or judgement
- "Come and see" = "come" (ie: come forth)

REVELATION 6:1-2

FIRST SEAL - WHITE HORSE (ANTICHRIST)

- "white horse" - a false Christ accepted by the world
- "bow" (without arrows) - peace and disarmament
- "crown" - "stephanos" (victor's crown) in 6:2, not "diadema" (kingly crown) worn by Christ in 19:12
- world dictator begins his career as a PEACEMAKER

REVELATION 6:3-4

SECOND SEAL - RED HORSE (WAR)

- Antichrist soon exchanges his empty bow for a sword!
- red associated with terror and death - wanton bloodshed
- these things have happened throughout history, but reach their height during the Tribulation period

REVELATION 6:5-6

THIRD SEAL - BLACK HORSE (FAMINE)

- black = famine (Jer. 14:1-2, Lam. 5:10) - the result of war
- "penny" ("denarius") = labourer's daily wage (Matt. 20:2) - ordinarily bought eight times as much!
- "measure" = individual daily requirement of food
- "scales" = rationing / "oil and wine" = luxury items
- rich will still have plenty; Antichrist will control economy!

REVELATION 6:7-8

FOURTH SEAL - PALE HORSE (DEATH)

- "pale" = "yellow green" (hue of sick and dying tissue)
- death claims body, Hell (Hades) claims soul; but Christ has authority over them both! (Rev. 1:18)
- fourth part of earth - 1/4 population or geographical area
- sword, hunger, death = war, famine, plague
- beasts - terror of man removed (reversal of Genesis 9:2)

REVELATION 6:9-11

FIFTH SEAL - PERSECUTION

- in OT, blood (representing life) poured out at base of altar
- those responding to the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM in Tribulation martyred for their loyalty to God
- they are praying for vindication of God and righteousness
- "white robes" = purity and victory
- "rest yet for a little season" - God delays judgement to allow evil-doers to repent, even though righteous suffer
- "their fellowservants also" - others yet to be martyred!
- God's justice is stirred, but so is His mercy!

REVELATION 6:12-17

SIXTH SEAL - GREAT EARTHQUAKE

- God's displeasure at the martyrdom of the righteous
- earthquake so great it moves mountains and islands
- sun blackens in a dramatic type of eclipse

- **MESSAGE:** "God is establishing His earthly Kingdom"
- It was preached primarily to the Jews when Jesus was on earth (Matthew 10:5-7, 15:24)
- It is vastly different from the gospel ("good news") preached by the New Testament church
- Preached from the time of John the Baptist until rejection of Christ by the Jews (crucifixion)
- Preached again by 144,000 sealed Jews during Tribulation & Millennium (Matthew 24:14)

Matthew 24

Jesus Gives Signs Of The End

FALSE CHRISTS - v. 4-5

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

WARS - v. 6

And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all [these things] must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

FAMINES - v. 7a

For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines ...

DEATH - v. 7b

... and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

FIRST FOUR SIGNS - "BEGINNING"

All these [are] the beginning of sorrows. (Matthew 24:8)

MARTYRS - v. 9

Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

WORLD CHAOS - v. 10-13

And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

PREACHING BY JEWS - v. 14

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Revelation 6 & 7

John Sees Events Of The End

WHITE HORSE - v. 1-2

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. 2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

RED HORSE - v. 3-4

And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. 4 And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

BLACK HORSE - v. 5-6

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [see] thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

PALE HORSE - v. 7-8

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. 8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

FIRST FOUR SEALS - "HORSEMEN"

The four horsemen are distinct from the other seals.

MARTYRS - v. 9-11

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? 11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled.

WORLD CHAOS - v. 12-14

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; 13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. 14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

144,000 SEALED - chapter 7

We are not told explicitly that the 144,000 are God's special witnesses, or that the gentile host mentioned is a result of their preaching, but this appears to be a logical deduction. Otherwise, why are the two associated in Revelation chapter seven?

Revelation 8:1-6

Silence Announces The Seven Trumpets

- note that judgments intensify through book: seals, trumpets, vials
- seals, trumpets in first 3.5 years / vials in last 3.5 years of Tribulation
- trumpet & vial judgments (ch. 16) very similar, but vials more severe
- seventh seal - contains seven trumpet judgments
- silence - in awe of terrible Day of the Lord (Zeph. 1:7)
- half an hour - singing throughout OT temple sacrifices, but absolute silence during the offering of incense (prayers of saints - Ps. 141:2)
- God is silencing Heaven's praise to hear the prayers of His Saints!

TRUMPETS IN THE BIBLE

- Trumpets announced war, gathered people together (Num. 10:1-10)
- Trumpets sounded when the law was given (Exodus 19:16-19)
- Trumpets sounded when a King was enthroned (1 Kings 1:34,39)
- Trumpets sounded at the conquest of Jericho (Joshua 6:13-16)
- Jesus' voice was like the sound of a trumpet (Revelation 1:10)
- John was summoned to Heaven by a trumpet (Revelation 4:1)
- The rapture will be signalled by a trumpet (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

- for centuries the saints have been praying, "Thy Kingdom Come" - those prayers are about to be answered through God's judgments!
- on Day of Atonement (Lev. 16), incense placed on coals in censer; here, incense placed on altar and coals cast to earth (Ez. 10:2)

Revelation 8:7

The First Trumpet - Judgment On The Land

- similar to seventh plague in Egypt (Ex. 9:24-25)
- 1/3 of trees burned, all green grass burned
- balance of nature & world food supply affected
- these may be events prophesied in Joel 2:30

Revelation 8:8-9

The Second Trumpet - Judgment On The Salt Water

- similar to first plague in Egypt (Ex. 7:20-21)
- 1/3 of oceans blood (1/4 of earth's surface), 1/3 of fish & ships (approx. 15,000) destroyed
- unprecedented ecological & trade disaster!
- mountain burning with fire - meteor, volcano (?)
- blood - appearance only, or literal (ie: Exodus)

Revelation 8:10-11

The Third Trumpet - Judgment On The Fresh Water

- 1/3 of earth's drinking water poisoned
- similar to event at Marah (Ex. 15:23-27), but this time no supernatural purification available!
- wormwood - a bitter, often poisonous herb (literally "undrinkable") - perhaps a meteor (?)
- wormwood associated with punishment for sin (Jer. 23:15, Prov. 5:4, Amos 5:7, Deut. 29:18)

Revelation 8:12-13

The Fourth Trumpet - Judgment On The Heavens

- similar to ninth plague in Egypt (Ex. 10:22-23)

- 1/3 of sun, moon & stars darkened
- absolutely black for 1/3 of day! (Amos 5:18)
- man's way of life & climate drastically affected
- supernatural darkness at Calvary (Matt. 27:45)
- angel - "eagle, bird of prey" - could be beast like an eagle (Rev. 4:7-8) sent by God
- last three trumpets judgments are so severe that they are also called "the three woes"
- message: "The Worst Is Yet To Come!"

Revelation 9:1-12

The Fifth Trumpet - An Army Of Locusts

- "star fall from heaven" - person ("him") identified in v.11 as fallen angel with names - Satan
- Satan compared to morning star (Isaiah 14:12-14), seen falling as lightning from Heaven (Luke 10:18)
- he has to be given the key to loose his own army!
- this army now incarcerated, awaiting their release
- "bottomless pit" - (Greek: "the shaft of the abyss"), an intermediate place of punishment for demons (ie: in Luke 8:31, they begged not to be sent there)
- "smoke" - Jesus said hell like furnace (Matt. 13:42)
- sky darkened even more during this judgment!
- locusts, similar to eighth plague in Egypt (Ex. 10:12)
- Joel prophesied such a plague (Joel 1:6-7, 2:1-11)
- ordinary locusts devour vegetation; these are demonic beings sent to torment sinful man
- scorpion sting a most intense pain (1 Kings 12:11)
- "torment" - not destroy, but lead to repentance
- men will seek death, but will not be able to die!
- plague will last 5 months, the lifespan of a locust
- 5 months (150 days) like flood judgment (Gen. 7:24)
- this plague will not touch the 144,000 sealed Jews (in the church age, Satan cannot touch those sealed by the Holy Ghost - Eph. 1:13) - note that there is no immunity for those "converted" in the Tribulation!
- appearance of locusts similar to Joel's prophecy (locusts resemble little armored horses)
- some commentators suggest a human army - unlikely since these are ruled by an angel
- could be "demon-possessed locusts" (Luke 8:33)
- this king is the angel of the bottomless pit (Abaddon - "the lowest depths of the earth, realm of the dead") and is called Apollyon ("Destroyer" - 1 Cor. 10:10)

Revelation 9:13-21

The Sixth Trumpet - An Army Of Horsemen

- four fallen angels are loosed from Euphrates River, the cradle of civilization (Gen. 2:14), as well as one of Israel's original boundaries (Gen. 15:18)
- Euphrates River later a boundary of the Roman Empire, symbolizing restraint of evil forces
- "hour...day...month...year" - specific time set by God
- 1/3 of mankind killed (since 1/4 of men killed earlier in Rev. 6:8, this results in 1/2 of mankind now dead)
- army numbers 200 million horsemen; some commentators identify this as Chinese army
- while we know from Rev. 16:12,16 and Rev. 19:19 that great human armies from the East will cross the Euphrates River for the Battle of Armageddon, we cannot definitely identify them here in chapter nine
- most likely another demonic army, only this time they are sent to kill rather than torment
- the most frightening thing about the Tribulation is not God's judgments, but the fact that men persist in sinning even while God is judging them!

- these sins will still be prevalent: devil worship and idolatry, murder, sorceries (Greek "pharmakia" - the use of drugs), fornication (sexual sin), theft
- society in utter chaos as man's sin increases & God's judgments continue to be poured out
- **seventh trumpet will be sounded at Rev. 11:15**
- **we are approaching the midpoint of the Tribulation**

Revelation 10:1-7

The Mighty Angel

- Revelation 10-14 describes events occurring in the middle of the Tribulation period; this explains John's repeated mention of 3.5 years (Rev. 11:2-3, 12:6, 12:14, 13:5) - Jewish months have exactly 30 days
- this is the time when Satan begins to unleash his power through the Antichrist (ch. 12-13)
- even in this period of turmoil, God has witnesses!
- Revelation has more than 60 references to angels - God's army sent to accomplish His will
- this mighty angel has several characteristics that could identify Him as Jesus Himself:
 - (1) The rainbow first seen around God's throne (4:3) now sits like a crown on His head
 - (2) He is clothed with a cloud, often identified with God (1:7, Ex. 16:10 & 19:9, Acts 1:9)
 - (3) His face is as the sun, like Jesus in Rev. 1:16
 - (4) His feet are like those of Jesus in Rev. 1:15
 - (5) His voice is like a lion roaring (5:5) -- God's voice is powerful (Joh. 12:28-29, Psa. 29)
 - (6) God often appeared in the OT as "the angel of the Lord" (Ex. 3:2, Jud. 6:11-12)
 - (7) He holds the book containing remaining judgments; if Jesus was the only one worthy to open the scroll (5:5), it is probable He is the only one worthy to present this book
 - (8) His posture is that of a conqueror taking possession of the world, a victorious Saviour!
- "seven thunders" - another complete cycle of judgments that are hidden from us at present
- "write them not" - secret things of God (Deut. 29:29)
- the seven thunders are the only sealed thing in an otherwise unsealed book (Rev. 22:9)
- "lifted up his hand" - solemn oath (Dan. 12:7)
- God has placed Himself under oath before:
 - (1) covenant with Abraham (Heb. 6:13-20)
 - (2) Son of God declared High Priest (Heb. 7:20-22)
 - (3) messianic promise to David (Acts 2:29-30)
- "time no longer" - delay no longer
- eternal life - not absence of time but ever-continuing time; time has a beginning but no end
- "mystery of God" - His purpose for Israel (Dan. 9:24)
- the last stage (3.5 years) of the Tribulation begins when the seventh trumpet sounds

Revelation 10:8-11

John Eats The Little Book

- John told to "eat" this book; messenger must receive the message before he can preach it!
- God's Word often compared to food:
 - (1) bread (Matthew 4:4)
 - (2) milk (1 Peter 2:2)
 - (3) meat (1 Corinthians 3:1-2)

(4) honey (Psalm 119:103)

- "bitter / sweet" - God's judgment and His mercy
- this is similar to Ezekiel's experience (Eze. 2:8 - 3:3) and that of Jeremiah (Jer. 15:16)
- Word must "become flesh" to be shared (John 1:14)
- "before" = "concerning" (not "appearing before them" - John not one of the two witnesses)
- this vision is in the past (John's day), not the future!

Revelation 11:1-6

The Two Witnesses

- to measure something is to claim it for yourself; the Lord is saying "this city and temple are mine!" (see Ezekiel 40-41 and Zechariah 2:1-3)
- Jerusalem will be overrun by the Gentiles for the last half of the Tribulation period (42 months), immediately after Antichrist desecrates the Temple
- **A third temple will be built in Jerusalem** (2 Thess. 2:3-4, Matt. 24:15 & Dan. 9:27)
- the two witnesses prophesy during the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation, then are killed by Antichrist at the same time he breaks his covenant with Israel
- two witnesses were the minimum number acceptable under OT law (Deut. 17:6, 19:15)
- two witnesses clothed in sackcloth because they call mankind to repentance (2 Kings 19:1)
- **Who are the two witnesses?**
 - (1) "the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks" - parallels Zerubbabel the Governor and Joshua the High Priest in Zechariah 4, two anointed men who built the second Temple
 - (2) they have power to call forth fire and to shut Heaven so it will not rain - this parallels the ministry of Elijah (1 Kings 18:38, 1 Kings 17:1)
 - (3) they have power to turn water to blood and to smite the earth with plagues - this parallels the ministry of Moses (Ex. 7:20, Ex. 9:14-15)
 - (4) the Jews expect a new **Moses and Elijah** (Deuteronomy 18:15-18, Malachi 4:5); it was these two who stood with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:3)
 - (5) it was **Elijah and Enoch** who were taken to Heaven supernaturally (2 Kings 2:11, Genesis 5:24) and "it is appointed unto man once to die" (Hebrews 9:27) - they haven't died yet! (Moses body was taken after his death - Jude 9)

Revelation 11:7-10

The Witnesses Killed

- the two witnesses can only be killed when they have finished their ministry - God's obedient servants are immortal until their work on earth is done!
- they are killed by the beast from the bottomless pit, yet his origin is not described until chapter 13; hence, these visions are not chronological
- the world will celebrate a "Satanic Christmas" (this is the world's reaction to TRUE PROPHETS OF GOD)
- "Sodom and Egypt" - immorality and persecution

Revelation 11:11-14

The Witnesses Resurrected

- their bodies will be left in the streets of Jerusalem for 3.5 days; the entire world will watch (via satellite TV) their miraculous resurrection and ascension
- terror magnified by an earthquake which kills 7000 and destroys one-tenth of Jerusalem
- "gave glory" - in awe without being converted
- "third woe" (seventh trumpet) - see Rev. 8:13

Revelation 11:15-19

The Seventh Trumpet Sounded

- seventh trumpet unveils temple of God in Heaven, from which later vial judgments come

- verses 15-19 are **PROLEPTIC** (regarding future events as so certain that they are spoken of as having already been accomplished) - Rom. 8:30
- the seventh trumpet signals the last half (3.5 years) of the Tribulation, the beginning of the period of wrath Jesus described in Matthew 24:15-21, also called the time of Jacob's trouble in Jeremiah 30:7
- the ark is seen in Heaven at this time - God will never break His covenant with His people!

Revelation 12 & 13

The Satanic Trinity

- Revelation 12 & 13 introduce us to the three key characters in the last half of the Tribulation, a "Satanic Trinity" that opposes God:
 - (1) The Dragon - Satan
 - (2) The Beast From The Sea - Antichrist
 - (3) The Beast From The Earth - False Prophet
- There are also three symbolic women that figure prominently in the book of Revelation, one of which is mentioned in chapter 12:
 - (1) The Woman Giving Birth - Israel (ch.12)
 - (2) The Harlot - Apostate World Church (ch.17)
 - (3) The Pure Bride - True Apostolic Church (ch.19)

Revelation 12:1-6

The Woman And The Dragon

- **Two wonders ("signs") in Heaven; emphasizing history leading to the Tribulation:**
 - (1) THE WOMAN GIVING BIRTH - ISRAEL
 - Joseph's dream foreshadowed this (Gen. 37:9)
 - A frequent type of Israel (Is. 26:17, 66:7-8)
 - She gave birth to the Messiah (Rom. 9:5)
 - Satan (ie: Herod) tried to kill Him (Matt. 2:16)
 - Jesus will rule all nations (Rev. 12:5, 19:15)
 - result of mid-Tribulation persecution: flight to wilderness (Matt. 24:16) for 42 months
 - the worst anti-Semitism the world has ever seen, but God will protect a remnant!
 - only 1/3 of Israel will survive! (Zech. 13:8-9)
 - (2) THE GREAT RED DRAGON - SATAN
 - positively Satan (v.9); "Dragon" 13X in book
 - 7 heads = 7 mountains (Rev. 17:9)
 - 10 horns = 10 kings (Rev. 17:12)
 - these are the same as the beast in Rev. 13:1, because Satan controls the Antichrist!
 - 12:4 - Satan cast out of Heaven in PAST, with 1/3 of angels (Is. 14:12-15, Ez. 28:11-19)
 - 12:7-10 - Satan cast out of Heaven in FUTURE, & forever banished (mid-Tribulation)

Revelation 12:7-17 Heaven

War In

- **John also sees a literal "current" war in Heaven:**
 - Michael (archangel protector of Israel) leads God's angels (Dn. 10:13,21; 12:1; Jude 9)
 - devil is cast down to earth, tries to destroy Israel; he knows he only has 42 months left!
 - banishment brings joy to Heaven but woe to earth (now completely possesses Antichrist)
 - Israel helped by "eagle's wings" (divinity):
 - Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 19:4)
 - Wandering in Wilderness (Deut. 32:11-12)
 - Return from Babylon (Isaiah 40:31)

- Satan sends flood (people - Rev. 17:15, Is. 17:12) but earth ("acts of God"?) helps Israel

• **A POSSIBLE SCENARIO (?)**

Perhaps Satan will be present at the Judgment Seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10-12, 1 Cor. 3:10-15, 2 Cor. 5:10-11) as the "accuser" of the brethren (Job 1-2, Zech. 3); he fails in his last attempt to condemn the church (Rev. 12:11, Eph. 5:24-27) and is cast out of Heaven, never to have access again!

Revelation 13:1-10

The Antichrist - The Beast From The Sea

- rises out of sea (chaotic events involving the world's people - Dan. 7:2-3, Rev. 17:15)
- will be empowered by Satan (v. 2, 4)
- will be worshipped by the world (v. 4, 8, 12, 15)
- begins his career as a Peacemaker (Rev. 6:2)
- emerges as the ultimate military power (v. 4)
- has a government that is a composite of past military kingdoms (v. 2, Daniel 7:2-7)
- has weaknesses in his kingdom that will cause him problems (Dan. 2:41-43, 11:40-44)
- is represented by a beast with seven heads (seven mountains of Rome - Rev. 17:9, 18) and 10 horns (ten kingdoms - Daniel 7:24, Rev. 17:12)
- this shows us a "Revived Holy Roman Empire" (logical conclusion of the "ecumenical" & "new age" movements, a religious world government)
- will blaspheme God (v.1, 6)
- blasphemy can be defined as calling human things divine, divine things human, good things evil, or evil things good
- persecutes those with faith in God (v. 7)
- makes, then breaks, 7 year covenant with Jews involving temple and peace (Dan. 9:27)
- will control the world's economy (v. 17)
- will set himself up as a god (2 Thess. 2:3-4)
- has a deadly wound that is healed (v. 3) - either literal or symbolic of his government
- the last of false Messiahs in history who manifest antichrist spirit (Mt. 24:24, 1 Jo. 2:18)
- will be defeated at Armageddon (Rev. 19:20)

Revelation 13:11-18

The False Prophet - The Beast From The Earth

- is identified positively in Rev. 16:13, 19:20, 20:10
- has religious authority (horns - v.11) but not political authority (no crowns on the horns)
- will craftily deceive the world ("like a lamb" - v.11)
- will receive his power from Satan, who resides in the Antichrist ("before him" - v.12, "in the sight of the beast" - v.14) - Satan is not omnipresent!
- will amaze the world with miracles (v.13, 14)
- will promote worship of the Antichrist (v.12,15)
- will use his religious influence to help Antichrist control the world's economy (v.16, 17)
- promotes a "mark" that is a counterfeit & a mockery of the "seal of God" (7:2-4, 22:4)

- NOTE: The Hebrew and Greek languages are alpha-numeric (they have no separate numerals, so each letter has a numeric value). The Antichrist's name CAN be identified by it's numeric value of 666, BUT ONLY IN HEBREW OR GREEK. This should be looked at as a warning to Tribulation saints rather than a sign to the church age.
- **THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO SALVATION FOR ANYONE WHO TAKES THE MARK OF THE BEAST IN THE TRIBULATION (Rev. 14:9-11)**

Revelation 14, 15 & 16 **Tribulation**

The Last Half of the

- the word "voice" is used eleven times in these three chapters; Heaven is pronouncing judgment as the world enters the last half of the Tribulation Period
- all the scenes in this section ANTICIPATE things yet to come; they are not CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS

Revelation 14:1-5

The 144,000 Before the Throne

- the 144,000 were sealed by God before the seventh seal (Rev. 7); they are now standing WITH the Lamb, BEFORE the four beasts and the elders (ie: they are not part of the church, but they are saved to become part of God's eternal kingdom)
- they are "virgins" - separated, literally or figuratively
- "firstfruits" - Jewish "evangelists" who reap a great harvest of people in the Tribulation

Revelation 14:6-20

Angels Pronouncing Judgment

- several angels are next seen pronouncing judgment:
 1. **"Judgment is come"**
 - "everlasting gospel" = "eternal good news"
 - return to "natural theology" (conscience discerning a Creator who must be worshipped)
 - "heaven & earth & sea & fountains of waters" - judged by the first four trumpets (ch. 8) and the first four vials (ch. 16)
 2. **"Babylon is fallen"**
 - PROLEPTIC prophecy: the fall of Antichrist's political and economic system in chapter 18 (ie: Isaiah 53, seven centuries before Christ)
 - "is fallen, is fallen" - double destruction? - two Babylons are destroyed (ch. 17 & ch. 18)
 - "fornication" - last days world built on LUSTS
 3. **"Escape God's Wrath"**
 - "drink of the wine" - drinking cup an image of judgment (ie: Jesus in Gethsemane)
 - "patience of the saints" - God's people should understand the end of the wicked
 - "blessed are the dead" - death to a saint is the ultimate blessing, not the ultimate curse!
 4. **"The Harvest is Ripe"**
 - three angels appear, encouraging the Lord to bring judgment (ie: sickle) upon the wicked
 - PROLEPTIC prophecy of Armageddon (ch. 19)
 - imagery of ancient winepress, with the Lord treading the grapes (wicked mankind)
 - "horse bridles" - probably not literal; an image of grape juice staining the robe of one who treads with much fury (Isaiah 63:1-3)

Revelation 15:1-8

The Seven Vial Judgments Prepared

- "seven last plagues ... filled up" - worst judgments!

- before the vial judgments are poured out, we are given a PROLEPTIC prophecy showing those who will eventually be saved out of the Tribulation
- "song of Moses" - same song sung to celebrate Israel's victory over Egypt (Ex. 15:1-21)
- "song of the Lamb" - OT and NT saints present here
- at sounding of the 7th trumpet (Rev. 11:15), God's temple was seen (11:19); we now return to it (15:5) to continue with 7 vial judgments, after three parenthetical chapters (12, 13, 14)
- "no man was able to enter" - irrevocable judgment!

Revelation 16:1-2 **Sores**

The First Vial - Grievous

- similar to sixth plague in Egypt (Ex. 9:8-12)
- only on those who serve the Beast (Rev. 14:9-10)
- these sores do not disappear (Rev. 16:11)

Revelation 16:3

The Second Vial - Sea Turned To Blood

- similar to first plague in Egypt (Ex. 7:14-25)
- second vial on sea, third vial on inland waters
- second trumpet turned one-third of sea to blood; second vial pollutes all of the sea

Revelation 16:4-7

The Third Vial - Rivers Turned To Blood

- also similar to first plague in Egypt
- third trumpet turned one-third of the fresh water bitter; third vial pollutes all the fresh water
- these judgments given because wicked men have shed the blood of God's people (v. 6)

Revelation 16:8-9

The Fourth Vial - Heat From The Sun

- previous judgments made the sun dim (Rev. 8:12)
- now the heat of the sun is increased, even as the world's water system lies useless!

Revelation 16:10-11

The Fifth Vial - Darkness

- similar to ninth plague in Egypt (Ex. 10:21-23)
- perhaps not worldwide (?), but certainly centered on Beast's throne (Jerusalem or Rome)

Revelation 16:12-16

The Sixth Vial - Euphrates Dried Up

- this river mentioned earlier (Rev. 9:14)
- drying up of river makes it possible for "kings of the East" to invade the Holy Land
- the Bible does not use the phrase "The Battle of Armageddon" - it comes from the Hebrew "har Megiddo" (hill of Megiddo, a place of slaughter)
- also called "Plain of Esdraelon" & "Valley of Jezreel"
- 14 miles wide, 20 miles long, beneath Mt. Carmel
- area in Northern Israel; Napoleon called it "the most natural battlefield of the whole earth"
- in this area, Barak defeated the armies of Canaan (Judges 5), Gideon met the Midianites (Judges 7), and Saul lost his life (1 Samuel 3)
- it is Satan that draws the nations to battle (v. 13-14)
- **the outcome of this battle is recorded in Rev. 19**

Revelation 16:17-21

The Seventh Vial - Earthquake and Hail

- similar to seventh plague in Egypt (Ex. 9:22-26)
- "great city" (v.19) - Jerusalem? (11:8, & Zech. 14:4)
- more important: Babylon will be judged (Jer. 50-51)
- "fled" (v.20) - "sunk into the water"
- **this will be the world's fiercest earthquake ever!**

- "talent" (v. 21) - hailstones weighing 125 pounds!
- image of blasphemers being stoned (Lev. 24:16)
- Satan's religious (ch.17), political / economic (ch.18) and military (ch.19) systems are about to be judged!
- **even after all these plagues, men will not repent!**

"Behold, I come as a thief" (Revelation 16:15)

Revelation 17 & 18

Two Babylons Destroyed

- Beginning in chapter 17, John describes the Lamb's step-by-step victory over the Beast and his kingdom:
 1. Rev. 17 - religious system judged
 2. Rev. 18 - political and economic system judged
 3. Rev. 19 - military system judged
- 2 Babylons in ch. 17 & 18, but while they share the same name & Satanic motivation, they are different entities:
 - 17** - this Babylon destroyed at midpoint of Tribulation
 - this Babylon destroyed by men who hate her
 - John "wondered" at this Babylon (ie: he never saw it before)
 - this destruction never mentioned in other Bible prophecies
 - this Babylon called Great Whore, woman, mother of Harlots
 - this Babylon makes herself rich
 - **this Babylon portrays a false ecumenical world church**
 - 18** - this Babylon destroyed at end of Tribulation
 - this Babylon destroyed by God's judgment; men mourn over it
 - John recognized this Babylon as God's ancient opponent
 - this destruction prophesied in the O.T. (Isaiah 13:1,6,19)
 - this Babylon is described as a queen
 - this Babylon makes the merchants of earth rich
 - **this Babylon portrays a world political-economic system**
- Religious Babylon (ch.17) identified with city reigning in John's day (v.18, "reigneth" is present tense) - ROME!
- Rome had "grown out of" the Babylonian system (ie: Daniel 2)
- Rome is the only city consistently identified with "seven hills"
- this woman is the "mother of harlots" (ie: birthed all false religions)

Revelation 17

The Babylonian Religion

The key to Babylonian worship is the exaltation of the individual "to become like god" (the word "Bab-el" means "the gate of God" - see Gen. 11:1-9). This demonic system motivated every ancient false religion and is behind each modern New Age cult that opposes the true worship of God. The city and empire of Babylon was founded by Nimrod, the "mighty hunter" (ie: mighty rebel, mighty in sin) according to Genesis 10:8-10. The name Nimrod became a proverb for a great apostate or evil rebel against God. Nimrod had a wife named Semiramis, according to ancient tradition. Their son, Tammuz, was killed. The occult tradition claims his mother prayed for forty days and he was revived. This story of Semiramis and Tammuz was known to the Greeks as Aphrodite and Eros, to the Romans as Venus and Cupid, and to the Egyptians as Isis and Osiris. The Assyrians called her Ishtar and her son Tammuz but the Phoenicians, who inhabited Palestine, called her Astarte and her son Baal. This primeval Babylonian myth traveled to Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome. It became the source of many of the occult mystery religions of the ancient world. The worship of Astarte involved offering incense and weeping for forty days until they celebrated her son's resurrection by exchanging Astarte eggs. This mysterious Babylonian cult was a continual temptation and snare for the Children of Israel. The prophet Jeremiah confronted the idol worshippers in Israel who were still burning incense to Astarte and offering a host, a wafer of bread, to honor "the queen of heaven." (Jer. 7:9,18; 44:15-19) Later, the prophet Ezekiel was taken by God into the secret chamber of the Temple to observe the occult worship of the pagan mother Astarte and the child. "Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which [was] toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz." (Eze. 8:14)

- harlot riding beast with 7 heads (7 mountains - v.9, also 7 kingdoms - v.10); five kingdoms fallen (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece had already dominated Israel), one is (Rome a world power in John's day), the other is not yet come (future worldwide empire - the beast's 10 horns, or 10 kingdoms, are future to John - v.12)
- because the Beast's nature will change drastically in the middle of the Tribulation after his deadly wound is healed (Rev. 13:3, 17:8), he can be said to be "of the seven" (ruler of revived Roman empire) and "the eighth" (satanically-possessed ruler during last 3.5 years)
- when John saw the apostasy of the false church after the Rapture, he "marveled" (Rev. 17:6) - his experience in the first-century church was of a small, powerless group under continual persecution by the Roman Empire, but now he sees a rich, powerful and apostate church killing tribulation saints who reject her demonic doctrines!
- *the only people present-day ecumenical groups oppose are those believing in fundamental biblical truths that cannot be compromised!*

Revelation 18

Political Babylon

- Babylon - not only an ancient city and a powerful empire, but also the symbol of mankind's rebellion against God
- in Revelation 18, it represents the Beast's world system, particularly its economic and political aspects
- **Where will the Antichrist's capital be?**
 - possible: Rome, Jerusalem, Babylon, UN headquarters
 - many scholars equate "Babylon" in ch. 18 with "Rome," particularly since the Harlot and the Beast cooperate during the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation
 - Peter used "Babylon" as a code word for "Rome" in 1 Peter 5:13, and John's readers would definitely think of the Roman Empire's headquarters!
- chapter 18 of Revelation includes four voices:
 - 1. THE VOICE OF CONDEMNATION (v. 1-3)**
 - announcement of Babylon's destruction earlier in 14:8
 - foreshadowed by destruction of ancient Babylon, prophesied in Jeremiah 51-52
 - 18:2 ("is fallen, is fallen") and 18:6 ("double unto her double") indicate dual destruction (ch. 17 & 18)
 - 18:2 - birds also a type of Satan in Matthew 13:31-32
 - "drunk ... fornication" - tempting world through LUSTS
 - 2. THE VOICE OF SEPARATION (v. 4-8)**
 - message parallels Jeremiah 51:6, 51:45 - GET OUT!
 - God's people have to separate themselves from the worldly, anti-God, Babylonian system in every age!
 - sins of Babylon: idolatry, pride, worship of pleasure
 - 3. THE VOICE OF LAMENTATION (v. 9-19)**
 - kings (v.9) and merchants (v.11) mourn the destruction of Political Babylon (government and business intertwined)
 - this section is an exact description of trade as it existed in ancient Rome (v.13 - one third of Rome's population were slaves, as many as 10,000 auctioned in one day!)
 - last day citizens will be "enslaved" to the economic system of the Beast in a literal sense!
 - this destruction will be swift ("one hour" - v. 10, 17); Babylon will drop out of sight like a millstone (v. 21)

4. THE VOICE OF CELEBRATION (v. 20-24)

- the same things that cause mourning on the earth cause rejoicing in Heaven (and vice versa) - WE NEED TO LOOK AT THINGS FROM GOD'S POINT OF VIEW!
- compare 18:24 with 17:6 - Satan has used both politics (economics) and religion to persecute God's people, but God will avenge the blood of His saints!
- note the refrain "no more!" (see also Rev. 21:4)

- **at this point, the Antichrist's Religious, Political and Economic systems have been destroyed; all that remains is for Christ to come from Heaven and personally defeat the Beast and his armies (Military system) in chapter 19**

Revelation 19:1-10

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

- chapter 19 contains Heaven's response to the command given in Rev. 18:20 - "Rejoice over her!"
- "Alleluia" is Greek form of Hebrew "Hallelujah" (HALEL - "praise" ... U - "ye" ... JAH - "the Lord")

- The "Hallelujah Chorus" is sung in Heaven because:

1. GOD HAS JUDGED THE HARLOT CHURCH

- her judgment is "righteous" (deserved!) and "for ever"
- the false church will spend eternity in the lake of fire!

2. GOD IS REIGNING

- v.6 - literally "has reigned," has demonstrated his reign
- God is love, but His holiness will bring about judgment

3. THE BRIDE IS NOW READY

- "24 elders" not seen past v.4 - now known as the Bride
- the Bride is the church (2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:22-23)
- Jesus Christ, the Lamb, is the Bridegroom (John 3:29)
- at this wedding, the BRIDEGROOM gets the attention!
- v.7 - "made herself ready" - judgment seat of Christ
- v.8 - "righteous acts of the saints" - our wedding dress!
- v.9 - "they" - Bride not invited to her own wedding; must be saints from OT and the Tribulation
- THIS WEDDING IS FUTURE; WE ARE ENGAGED TO THE LORD (in eastern culture, engagements made when children young; any unfaithfulness during the engagement considered adultery)
- Jesus had a choice between a harlot (church) & a virgin (church); HE CHOSE A PURE BRIDE!

- v.10 - John was so overwhelmed by these visions that he fell down twice to worship the angel who delivers them (Revelation 19:10, 22:8-9)
- only false angels (ie: Lucifer) will receive worship!

Revelation 19:11-21

The Battle of Armageddon

- immediately after the MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB is the BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON
- Christ's coming has two phases: He comes first in the air **FOR** His church (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and now He comes to the earth **WITH** His church (Rev. 19:14-15)

- Armageddon is the last event of the Tribulation period; it occurs when the world's nations under Antichrist make war against Israel (Joel 3:9-17) ... and God intervenes!
 - notice the emphasis on Christ's names (v.11 - Faithful and True; v. 13 - Word of God; v.16 - King of Kings and Lord of Lords; v. 12 - a secret name, for even in Heaven we will learn new things about our Savior! - Rev. 3:12)
 - could Christ's "many crowns" (v. 12) be given to Him by the church? (see Revelation 4:10)
 - His vesture is "dipped in blood" (v. 13) due to the fact that He "treadeth the winepress" (v. 15) - see Isaiah 63:1-4 and Revelation 14:20
 - "rod of iron" (v. 15) - looking ahead to Millennial Reign
 - the redeemed follow Him, but He wins the battle alone!
- 2 suppers in 1 chapter: Marriage Supper of the Lamb (v. 9) and Supper of the Great God (v. 17)
 - the beast and false prophet are the first to be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20) - they are not even given the formality of judgment; they are followed in 1000 years by the devil (Rev. 20:10) and sinners (Rev. 20:15)

Revelation 20:1-10 Millennium

The

- "bottomless pit" (v. 1) is not hell, but the abyss mentioned in Rev. 9:1-2,11; 11:7; 17:8
 - Satan is not cast into hell yet - he has one more task to perform at end of Millennium
 - Satan is not bound today (1 Peter 5:8)
- Millennium (Latin: mille-thousand, annum-year)
 - Christ and the church will be reigning from the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2), but the church is not mentioned definitely in this passage
 - Tribulation martyrs will also rule, but on the earth (see v. 4 & 6); these people are "priests" (offering worship), while those in church are "kings and priests" (Rev. 1:6, 5:10)
 - the Millennium is not designed for the church, but for those living on earth who are given a chance to live under God's rule for 1000 years
 - Israel and saved Gentiles enjoy God's blessing
 - two resurrections: 1st, of the saved BEFORE Millennium; 2nd, of the lost AFTER Millennium (some scholars include the Rapture as the "first stage," 7 years earlier, of the first resurrection)
- Satan is loosed after 1000 years and is able to gather an army of rebels, because a perfect environment cannot produce a perfect heart!
 - they war against God's people in Jerusalem at the Battle of Gog and Magog (not the battle of Ezekiel 38-39, for this army gathers from four quarters of earth, not just from the north)
 - the devil is now cast into the Lake of Fire, v. 10

Revelation 20:11-15

The Great White Throne Judgment

- "BOOKS" OF REVELATION 20:12 ...
 1. God's Word (John 12:48)
 2. Book of Works (to determine degree of punishment in hell - Matthew 11:20-24)
 3. Lamb's Book of Life (Phil. 4:3, Rev. 21:27)
- the Lake of Fire is the Second Death (v. 14); two births = one death, one birth = two deaths

Four Distinct Judgments

1. JUDGMENT OF THE CHURCH (see 2 Corinthians 5:10-11)

- occurs after Rapture, before Marriage Supper
- no one will be lost at this judgment; called "Judgment Seat of Christ"

2. JUDGMENT OF INDIVIDUAL GENTILES (see Matthew 25:32)

- occurs after the Tribulation, before Millennium
- division between sheep and goats; righteous enter Millennial Kingdom, not part of church!

3. JUDGMENT OF ISRAEL (see Ezekiel 20:33-38)

- occurs after the Tribulation, before Millennium
- Christ first delivers the nation at Armageddon, then He separates the individuals; righteous enter Millennial Kingdom, not part of church!

4. JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED (see Revelation 20:11-15)

- occurs after the Millennium
- no one will be saved at this judgment

Genesis and Revelation

The Beginning ... And The End

- *history of God's people begins and ends in paradise ...*

GENESIS: Heavens and earth created (1:1), Sun created (1:6), Night established (1:5), Seas created (1:10), Curse announced (3:14-17), Death begins (3:19), Man driven from garden (3:24), Sorrow and pain begin (3:17)

REVELATION: New heavens and earth (21:1), No need of sun (21:23), No more night (22:5), No more sea (21:1), No more curse (22:3), No more death (21:4), Man restored to paradise (22:14), No more tears or pain (21:4)

Revelation 21:1-7

All Things New

- v. 1 - "no more sea" - sea meant danger, storms, separation in John's day; exiled on an island!
- v. 3 - "tabernacle" - God has always dwelled among his people (Eden, Tabernacle, Temple, Jesus Christ, Church), but never in such a literal sense as this!
- v. 4 - "no more" - best way to describe Heaven - contrast!
- v. 5 - "new" = "new in character" (old elements renewed?)
- v. 7 tells of OVERCOMERS, v. 8 tells of those OVERCOME by sin ("abominable" = "polluted")

Revelation 21:8

What Do We Know About Hell?

- a place of unquenchable fire (Mark 9:44)
- a place of consciousness (Luke 16:23-24)
- a place of unbearable eternal torment (Luke 16:28)
- a place of darkness (Matthew 8:12)
- a place of intense weeping (Matthew 13:42)
- a place of separation from loved ones (Luke 13:28)
- a place with no hope of release (Matthew 25:46)
- a place where memory will torment (Luke 16:28)
- a place where lustful cravings will torment (Rev. 22:11)

Revelation 21:9-27

What Do We Know About Heaven?

- v. 12-14 - gates and walls speak of protection, while foundations speak of permanence; saints from OT and NT covenants will be united in this city!
- v. 16 - "foursquare" = "equal on all sides" (2 possibilities: shaped like a cube or like a pyramid)
- foursquare - same as holy of holies (God's dwelling)
- v. 16 - "12,000 furlongs" = "1,500 miles" - covers area over half of US, and is 1,500 miles high!
- such a city could easily accommodate world's population!
- v. 17 - "144 cubits" = "216 feet" - height of city wall
- v. 18 - "jasper" - city's walls built of a transparent crystal

- v. 18 - "pure gold" - city itself built of a transparent gold
- v. 19-20 - "foundations" - usually hidden part of construction, but these will be visible and beautiful, each made of a separate jewel (some colors unknown)
- v. 21 - "pearls" - an ancient "royal gem," produced by a mollusk covering an irritating grain of sand in its shell; stepping through gates of pearl is the ultimate reward for those who lived through the "irritation" of trials on earth!
- v. 22 - no temple, for God's presence is everywhere
- v. 23 - no sun or moon, for "the Lamb is the light thereof"
- v.24-27 - mention of "nations" suggests that there will be groups of people living eternally on earth
- v. 26 - ancient practice of kings and nations bringing wealth and glory into city of the greatest king!
- v. 27 - though unredeemed men live on earth in Millennium (20:7-8), there is no sin on the new earth
- *when we were born again, we were saved from the **PENALTY** of sin; as we abide in Christ daily, we are saved from the **POWER** of sin; when we enter Heaven, we will be saved from the very **PRESENCE** of sin!*

Revelation 22:1-6

The New Jerusalem

- v. 1 - from the base of the throne comes a River of Life (Jesus gave living water - John 4:13-14)
- v. 2 - man once again has access to the tree of life (a TYPE of tree rather than a single tree?)
- v. 2 - twelve month cycle - Heaven is not absence of time, but rather infinity of time!
- v. 2 - "healing" = "therapeia" - care, nutrition
- v. 3 - "serve" - service to God in this life is preparing us for eternal service in Heaven
- v. 4 - *we will finally see our Redeemer's face!*
- v. 4 - "foreheads" - contrast to Mark of the Beast
- *many of our questions about Heaven must go unanswered until we get there; however, John tells us that we have responsibilities NOW because we are going to Heaven in the FUTURE*

***Heaven is more than just a destination;
it is also our greatest motivation!***

Revelation 22:6-21

A Final Message To John ... And To Us

- v. 6 - "shortly" = "quickly," not "soon"
- v. 8 - John again falls down to worship an angel, but is forbidden; **why then did Jesus receive worship?** (Rev. 1:17, Luke 5:8) - **He was God!**
- v. 10 - in contrast to Daniel (12:4), Revelation is NOT a sealed book; since John's day we have been in the "last times" (1 John 2:18)
- v. 11 - no time to repent at Christ's coming!
- *today's decision determines your eternal destiny!*
- v. 13 - what God starts, He will finish - salvation!
- service involves not only expectancy (v.12), but also occupying until He comes (v.14)
- v. 15 - "without" - "outside" of God's Kingdom
- v. 16 - "mine angel" = "my messenger" (John?)
- v. 16 - "root and offspring" - David's creator and ancestor (root), but also his descendant (offspring) - see Matthew 22:41-46
- v. 16 - "morning star" - indicates coming of dawn
- v. 16 - ROOT = 1st coming, STAR = 2nd coming
- v. 17 - "come" = "be thou continually coming," or "keep coming until you finally arrive"

- v. 17 - "whosoever will" = "whoever is desiring"
- v. 18-19 - warnings of this type were commonly added to ancient writings, because scribes who copied them might be tempted to tamper with the material - Message: ***Don't tamper with God's Word!***
- v. 20 - "quickly" - one day is with the Lord as a thousand years! (2 Peter 3:3-4, 8-9)
- v. 20 - "even so, come" - the cry of the church

Conclusion

Your beliefs concerning the various minute aspects of prophecy are not crucial to your salvation; however, this one thing IS crucial ... "unto THEM THAT LOOK FOR HIM shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Hebrews 9:28) **LET'S BE READY!**