

# **Critique of Irvin Baxter's "Revelation Commentary"**

**By Karl Kemp; December, 2015**

All quotations were taken from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 edition, unless otherwise noted. Sometimes I make comments in the middle of quotations using brackets [ ] or [[ ]] to make them more obvious. I am using straight quotation marks ("), hyphens (-) instead of dashes, and a few other things like this because some of the internet sites where I post these articles require it. Also they don't allow footnotes. Cf., e.g., means "compare, for example."

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I BELIEVE REVELATION 12:5 IS THE MOST IMPORTANT VERSE IN THE BIBLE TO  
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**INTRODUCTION.** This paper deals almost entirely with Irvin Baxter's "Revelation  
Commentary" that is published by "EndTime Ministries," no publication date is given, but  
this 179 page, large size (8 1/2 x 11 inch) book was written quite a few years ago.  
Sixteen video recordings go with the sixteen chapters of this book. I purchased and  
watched most of the recordings in preparation to write this paper. (I purchased this  
material in November, 2015.)

I'll quote a few sentences from Irvin Baxter's website regarding his ministry: "Irvin Baxter is the founder and president of EndTime Ministries. He is a television and radio host, author, publisher, and international prophecy teacher. ... Publication of 'EndTime Magazine' began in 1991 and has now become the most widely circulated prophecy magazine in the world." I have been reading Baxter's "EndTime" magazine for more than twenty years. It is published every two months. (I have only heard a few of his radio or TV broadcasts, and I have seen him a few times on TBN's "Praise the Lord" program.)

One primary reason I am writing this paper is because Baxter's teaching is influencing very large numbers of Christians across the world. As you can tell from this paper, I often strongly disagree with Baxter's end-time teaching. (I won't be discussing places where I agree with his teaching in this paper, but there are many more places where I disagree with him than I will be able to deal with in this paper.) For one thing, much of his teaching on the beasts of Daniel chapter 7 and Rev. 13:1-3 and the seals and trumpets of the book of Revelation seem to be original with him. I am quite sure that much that he says on these important passages is wrong. And he teaches the end-of-the-week (end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week) rapture. I have been teaching the mid-week rapture since 1970. However, a large part of the content of this paper has nothing to do with the timing of the rapture.

Baxter does a good job keeping up with things that are relevant to end-time prophecy that are happening around the world: in Israel, in the United States, in the United Nations, in Europe, in the strong push toward a one-world government, in the strong push to unite all religions, etc. He frequently interviews people who are involved in these things, sometimes including the leaders who are directly involved in these things. And he always takes a strong stand on the truthfulness of the Bible and Christian moral issues.

It seems obvious that Baxter is trying to be faithful to God and His Word. He clearly spends a lot of time studying and doing research and sincerely wants to accurately teach God's Word. However, Baxter's interpretation of the Bible is sometimes strongly influenced by the fact that he is a oneness Pentecostal. For one thing he pastored a United Pentecostal Church, International church in Richmond, Indiana for 32 years.

When I decided I should write this paper on Baxter's teaching on the end times, I didn't have any idea that I would need to add a second paper to point out some super-strong things that Baxter says against those who baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in his "Revelation Commentary" and to discuss this oneness theology and the Trinity. I always knew that Baxter was associated with the United

Pentecostal Church, International, which is oneness. I never have agreed with their oneness doctrine, which I consider to be a serious problem, but I believe that some of them are true Christians. (Based on what Baxter says, there is no way he could accept me, or a whole lot of believers like me, as a true Christian. I believe this is a serious problem!) Also, it takes a lot more than believing in the Trinity to make a person a true Christian. God is the Judge! HE determines who the true Christians are! We should be very careful about passing judgment for God regarding who the true Christians are!

I'm not attacking Baxter or anybody else, but I am trying to make it a top priority to be faithful to God and present the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. I would like to be a blessing to Baxter and every Christian, and every non-Christian.

I have written four papers dealing with oneness theology that are available on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching): "Who Do We Worship? (Jesus-only Worship Songs)"; "Who Do We Pray to?"; "The Name 'Yahweh' and God the Father and God the Son: The Name 'Yahweh' and a Listing of Some of the Large Number of Passages in the Hebrew Old Testament Where We Can See God the Son Along with God the Father"; and "More on the Trinity: Some Key Passages from the New Testament Where We See the Full Deity and Preexistence of God the Son with God the Father and Some Key Bible Passages Used to Teach a Oneness View of God."

In all the years I have read Baxter's magazine (or heard him anywhere else) I don't believe he ever told his readers/listeners that they were not true Christians and were headed for God's eternal wrath and judgment if they were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (or if they didn't deny the Trinity or if they didn't speak with tongues, etc.) and didn't repent. He did, however, sometimes encourage his readers to order his literature on how to be saved. I pretty much knew what that literature would say, and recently, in the process of writing this paper, I ordered that literature to confirm what it would say. It presents the typical oneness (United Pentecostal) viewpoint. I'll comment briefly on that literature in the second paper.

I was quite disappointed and somewhat shocked when I read Baxter's "Revelation Commentary," while preparing to write this paper. He strongly and clearly stated, for example, that Christians who baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are part of the whore (using the wording of the King James Version) of Babylon and "In conclusion, God's anger toward Catholicism and other branches of false Christianity [which he says includes all the non-Roman Catholics who baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit] is best described with Revelation 19:3: 'And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke [the smoke of the "great whore" (Rev. 19:2 KJV)] rises up forever and ever' " (page 145). Baxter uses a lot of strong language

in his "Revelation Commentary." Using such strong language is dangerous if God doesn't agree with what you are saying. Baxter is totally and unequivocally writing off most of the Christians, including most evangelicals (if they don't repent and join the oneness Christians). Anyway, you cannot accuse Baxter of not saying what he believes in his "Revelation Commentary." I will be quoting some equally strong language from Baxter in the second paper, "Irvin Baxter on the Harlot of Babylon; Trinity and Oneness."

## REVELATION 3:10

I believe this verse powerfully demonstrates that the end-of-the-week-rapture viewpoint, which Baxter (and many others) teaches, is wrong. (I don't believe Baxter mentioned this verse in his book.) This verse is packed with good news for all the Christians who will be faithfully living for the Lord Jesus (by grace through faith) when He returns in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. We will not be on the earth after the devil is cast down to the earth (with his angels), having great wrath, in the middle of the seven years, or after Antichrist begins his super-evil three and one-half year reign at that time. Instead of living on the earth while the "hour of testing" (Rev. 3:10) is taking place, we will be glorified and reigning with the Lord Jesus as He judges the world (and does some other things) throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

I'll quote REVELATION 3:10 and make quite a few comments in brackets (I'll quote from the NASB, 1995 edition, which I always do unless I mention otherwise): **"Because you have kept the word of My perseverance** [[The NKJV translates, "Because you have kept My command to persevere"; The NIV has, "Since you have kept my command to endure patiently." They have been keeping the word of Christ that requires perseverance (by grace through faith). We must understand that the Lord Jesus could not, and He did not, say these words (or similar words) to all the Christians of the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3. His word to many of those Christians (to most of them in some of those churches) was that they must repent if they want to continue to be true Christians. (See on Revelation chapters 2 and 3 in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10, and see my paper "Once Saved, Always Saved?" They are both available on my internet site [Google to Karl Kemp Teaching]).]], **I also will keep you from** [or "out of"; Greek preposition "ek"] **the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come** [or, "which is going to come"] **upon the whole world to test those who dwell on the earth.**" THE GREEK (and other considerations) MAKES IT QUITE CLEAR THAT HE IS GOING TO KEEP US (those who have been keeping His word that requires perseverance, which is included in what it means to be faithful to Him by grace through faith; those who have truly repented where repentance was required are included) "OUT OF" OR "FROM" THE HOUR OF TESTING, NOT TO KEEP US

"DURING," OR "THROUGH," THE HOUR OF TESTING. WE WILL BE KEPT "OUT OF" OR "FROM" THE HOUR OF TESTING BY BEING RAPTURED FROM THE EARTH RIGHT BEFORE THE HOUR OF TESTING BEGINS. All the passages in the Bible that show that the Lord Jesus will return in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (especially Revelation chapters 11-13 and Daniel chapter 12) confirm this interpretation. Both of my end-time books discuss those passages: "The Mid-Week Rapture" and "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture," which is available in e-book format or a printed book. I recommend reading the "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture" first, but "The Mid-Week Rapture" contains a large amount of information not available in the other book. Both books are available at amazon.com. The printed books are also available on my internet site.

The Lord Jesus could keep us faithful during the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week if we were going to be living on the earth at that time, BUT THAT ISN'T WHAT THIS VERSE SAYS. God has chosen to give us this great blessing of being glorified and raptured to begin to reign with Christ Jesus as He is judging the world throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, instead of living on the earth during those very difficult years. It is going to be a very difficult time for Christians who live on the earth during that period (that is, for those who become Christians after the rapture, centering in the end-time remnant of Israel.) (They will be very thankful to be saved at the last second, even after the Lord Jesus has returned and the day of judgment has begun.) Consider, for example, Dan. 7:21, 25; 12:7; Rev. 6:11; 12:13-13:18 ((especially Rev. 13:5, 7; Rev. 13:5 shows that Antichrist's reign will last for three and one-half years, and I'll quote the first half of Rev. 13:7: "It was also given to him [to Antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them" (see Dan. 7:21, 25); this doesn't mean that Antichrist will have the power to make them sin or turn from Christ)); and Rev. 20:4. To keep us "out of" or "from" the extreme difficulties of the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, when the devil has been cast down to the earth with his angels and having great wrath and Antichrist's super-evil reign is taking place, is God's plan, not a hope that Christians came up with in an attempt to evade difficulties, and I'm sure that God would have us rejoice in His plan, with thankfulness. All true Christians are sufficiently tested during their lives on the earth. We don't have to worry about that. Revelation 3:10 shows that these Christians have kept His word, which has required perseverance in difficult places.

I believe we have enough information to understand the "hour of testing." The "hour" will take place throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. (IT IS INTERESTING AND SIGNIFICANT THAT THE WORD "HOUR" [OR "ONE HOUR"] IS USED SEVERAL TIMES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION TO REFER TO THE SECOND HALF OF DANIEL'S 70<sup>TH</sup> WEEK [see Rev. 17:12; 14:7, 15; cf. Rev. 18:10, 17, and 19].) The test will involve whether people will submit to God (cf. Rev. 14:6, 7) or submit to Antichrist

when it will be very difficult to not submit to him (see Revelation chapter 13 for example). God makes it very clear that those who submit to Antichrist will suffer very severe consequences; they cannot say they haven't been warned: I'll quote REVELATION 14:9-11: **"Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast [Antichrist] and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand [see Rev. 13:14-18], (10) he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. (11) And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' "**

Christians who believe that we will not be raptured until the end of the seven years are forced to try to interpret Rev. 3:10 in a way that will fit their viewpoint, but I don't believe their interpretations are reasonable or accurate, even if they are sincerely held.

Some of those who hold the end-of-the-week-rapture viewpoint appeal to John 17:15 in an attempt to show that what Jesus really said in Rev. 3:10 was that He would keep us "during" or "in" or "through" the "hour of testing." I'll quote John 17:15: **"I [Jesus] do not ask You [Father] to take them out of [Greek preposition "ek"] the world** [[It certainly wasn't time to take the apostles out of the world; they had a lot of super-important work to do, including establishing the new-covenant church on the earth and giving us the New Testament. It will be different at the end of this age. Those Christians who have stayed faithful when tested (Rev. 3:10) will be taken out of the world when the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place.]], **but to keep them from [ek] the evil one.**" [[(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) Keep in mind that what we want to discern here is how the words KEEP "from" or "out of" are used in John 17:15. The Greek preposition that is translated "from" in John 17:15 is "ek," which is the same preposition used in Rev. 3:10, translated "from." It could just as well been translated KEEP "out of" in both verses, which I prefer. In the margin of John 17:15 the NASB has, "Or [keep] 'out of' the power of." The NKJV has, "but to keep them from the evil *one*, with the word "one" being in italics. The NASB has the word "one" in italics too.

It doesn't make much difference whether they were to be kept "from," or "out of" "the evil [of this world]" or "from" or "out of" "the evil *one*." Either way, Jesus was asking that they be set apart by God (for God and His truth and righteousness) from evil and the god of evil (Satan). In John 17:12 Jesus said He had been keeping them, but now He was leaving (by way of the cross, through which He saved us) and He was asking the Father to keep them set apart from the evil one and from evil, with much emphasis being put

on their being set apart from being enticed to become evil/do evil. There certainly is no idea in John 17:15 of keeping them "in" or "through" evil or the evil one. I don't believe John 17:15 offers any support for the idea that we will still be living on the earth during the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

Jesus asked (in John 17:15) that those believers be kept "out of" or "kept from" (be kept separate from) the evil or the evil one in the same sense that He said (in Rev. 3:10) that the faithful Christians will be kept "out of" or kept "from" the "hour of testing/trial." The Christians will be kept out of, or kept from, the "hour of testing" by being glorified and raptured from the earth at the time the "hour of testing" begins. Revelation 3:10 speaks of being KEPT OUT OF or KEPT FROM the HOUR OF TESTING, using the preposition "ek" as it is used in John 17:15.

I would like to make an important point that isn't directly related to the interpretation of Rev. 3:10, but it does relate to what God requires of us to be ready to stand before Him at the end of this age. We need to understand that God's new-covenant plan of salvation provides the grace (which includes all the work of the indwelling Holy Spirit of life, truth, righteousness, etc.) that enables Christians to know and to walk in the righteousness and holiness of God. However, the New Testament makes it very clear that we will walk in these things only to the extent that we appropriate and walk in these things by faith, against the opposition of the world, the flesh (the old man who wants to continue in sin), and the devil and his hosts. The victory certainly isn't automatic!

Jesus exhorted large numbers of the Christians in the seven churches of the book of Revelation (Revelation chapters 2 and 3) that they must repent if they want to continue to be true Christians. I'll quote LUKE 21:34-36, "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come upon you suddenly like a trap [The Lord Jesus was speaking of the day of judgment that will start when He returns.]; (35) for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. (36) But keep on the alert at all times [which includes always living as He requires us to live (by His grace through faith), so that, for one thing, we will always be ready for His return], praying [which includes always looking to God] that you may have strength [I would translate "be able" with the NIV; the BAGD Greek Lexicon (under the verb "katischuo") translates "be able, be in a position" here] to escape all these things that are about to take place [the judgments that will fall on the earth in the last days when the day of judgment comes], and to stand before the Son of Man." Those who are faithful (by grace through faith) before He comes will be raptured from the earth and will not be on the earth when the day of judgment falls on the earth. That is how we "escape all these things that are about to [or, "that are going to"] take place." We will "stand before the Son of Man" as His people. It will be like Matt. 24:38, for example: Noah and

his family entered the ark before the flood of judgment fell on the earth. God even told Noah to get in the ark (Gen. 7:1): "For after seven more days, I will send rain on the earth forty days and forty nights; and I will blot out from the face of the land every living thing that I have made" (Gen. 7:4).

Baxter puts an emphasis on the need for Christians to put God first in every area of life, which is good, very good, but he doesn't see that we will be raptured from the earth before the "hour of testing/trial" begins. As I mentioned, it is a major feature in God's plans for the end of this age to glorify us and rapture us from the earth to begin to reign with Him instead of living on the earth when Satan has been cast down and has great wrath and Antichrist's super-evil three and one-half year reign is taking place. WE WILL BE ABLE TO GLORIFY GOD ALL RIGHT THROUGHOUT THOSE THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS AS WE REIGN WITH THE LORD JESUS WITH A ROD OF IRON!

## **DANIEL CHAPTERS 2 AND 7**

I am responding here to what Baxter says on pages 168-171 of his "Revelation Commentary." I agree with much that he says regarding the image of Daniel chapter 2, but I stand amazed by how his perspective changed in Daniel chapter 7, which builds on Daniel chapter 2. It seems possible to me that nobody else has ever taught what Baxter teaches on most of the beasts of Daniel 7. It certainly is different than the many commentators on Daniel or end-time teachers that I am aware of have taught. (Since I wrote the last two sentences, I have come across several other writers, almost all of them very recent, who agree with Baxter. Some of them may have borrowed from Baxter. Much of Daniel chapter 2 is discussed in chapter 5 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture," and all of Daniel chapter 7 is discussed in some detail in chapter 6 of that book.)

Baxter rightly says that the image that King Nebuchadnezzar saw in Daniel chapter 2 represents five world-kingdoms: The head of gold represents Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian world-kingdom; the breast and arms of silver represent the next world-kingdom, the Medo-Persian; the belly and thighs of bronze represent the next world-kingdom, the Greek; the legs of iron, the Roman; and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay come next. I agree with the very common viewpoint that this fifth world kingdom is the revived Roman Empire of the last days. Baxter differs here. He says that the last kingdom is the Holy Roman Empire.

He says "the Holy Roman Empire was not born until AD 800. The Holy Roman Empire was born when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Holy Roman

Empire. At its birth the iron [the Roman Empire had ceased to exist long before 800; one date that is often given is 476.] was mixed with clay; the Roman Empire merged with the Roman Catholic Church to become the Holy Roman Empire. The Bible teaches that the ten toes of this image symbolize ten kings of a ten-nation federation that will exist at the end of this age. This ten nation union is represented by ten horns on beasts in other prophecies. They are the ten kings that will unite and rise from the reborn Holy Roman Empire, the European Union" (page 169).

I don't believe the iron and clay in the feet deal with the union of the Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church. Daniel 2:41-43 show that the clay (which is contrasted with the iron which is strong) represents weakness (a weak component) in the revived Roman Empire that contains ten nations. The ten toes correspond with the ten horns (ten rulers of the ten nations) of Dan. 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; and 17:3, 7, 12, 16. Antichrist's uprooting three of the ten horns in Dan. 7:8, 20, 24 may well involve his removing clay from the kingdom. It is interesting that the book of Revelation speaks of the ten horns (no horns are missing). Antichrist will undoubtedly replace the three horns with rulers loyal to him.

Baxter goes on speaking of these things, but I don't see any reason to depart from the common viewpoint that the feet and toes represent the revived Roman Empire that will begin to exist in the last days. That world-kingdom will become super important in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week when Antichrist begins his super-evil reign that will last throughout the second half of that seven-year period (see, for example, Dan. 7:21, 25; 12:7; Rev. 13:5, 7). Two significant things have to take place before Antichrist can begin this super-evil reign. Antichrist has to be killed and come back from the dead (see, for example, Rev. 13:3, 14; 17:8 with 11:7). And the devil (having just been cast down to the earth with his angels right in the middle of the seven years [Rev. 12:4, 7-9] and having great wrath [Rev. 12:12]) has to give "his power and throne and great authority" to Antichrist (Rev. 13:2). Revelation 17:12, 13 show that the ten horns will "give their authority and power to the beast [Antichrist]" and that they will reign with him (and very much under him) throughout his super-evil reign that will take place throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

It is significant that the Lord Jesus will return at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet of the book of Revelation (Rev. 11:15-18) and the resurrection and rapture will take place at that time, right in the middle of the seven years (Rev. 11:15-18; 11:11, 12; 12:5 [these verses are all discussed in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture" and my recently published "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture"]). And it is significant that the trumpet of Rev. 11:15 is the trumpet of Matt. 24:30, 31; 1 Cor. 15:50-53; and 1 Thess.

4:16, 17. (I believe that Baxter agrees that these four trumpets are the same trumpet, but he believes this trumpet will sound at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.)

NOW WE'LL DISCUSS THE FOUR BEASTS OF DANIEL CHAPTER 7 THAT CORRESPOND WITH THE WORLD KINGDOMS OF DANIEL CHAPTER 2. The reason that we only have four beasts here instead of five is because the fourth beast of Daniel chapter 7 incorporates the fourth and fifth kingdoms of Daniel chapter 2, with the emphasis on the fifth kingdom. The legs of IRON and the feet partly of IRON and partly of clay of Daniel chapter 2 show the continuity of the fourth kingdom with the fifth. And the fourth beast of chapter 7 has large IRON teeth (Dan. 7:7, 19).

It is very surprising that Baxter doesn't see that the beasts of Daniel chapter 7 build on the world-kingdoms of Daniel chapter 2. This is all the more surprising in that Daniel chapter 8 continues to prophesy regarding some of these world-kingdoms, specifically the Medo-Persian and the Greek world-kingdoms. Daniel chapter 8 is packed with many very important details regarding Antichrist and the forerunner of Antichrist (Antiochus IV Epiphanes), who reigned over one of the four kingdoms (from 175-164BC) into which Alexander the Great's Greek world-kingdom was divided.

The first beast in Daniel chapter 7 represents Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian world-kingdom. (These kingdoms represent the kings and the kingdoms; sometimes the king/ruler is in the spotlight and sometimes the kingdom.) On page 170 Baxter says "The first beast depicted here is the bear, symbolizing Russia. Russia came into existence around 1467. [Actually the bear is the second beast listed in Daniel chapter 7. The first beast was like a lion. Baxter gets the sequence right on page 82.] The next beast was like a lion. The lion is Great Britain, and became known as Great Britain around 1707. The nation represented by the leopard, became known as Germany in 1871. ... The prophecy [of Daniel chapter 7], given in 600 BC [probably 553 BC (see Dan. 7:1)], foretold in minute detail what nations would be in existence on the earth at the time of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ." I don't think there is any possibility that Baxter is right on the identity of any of the first three beasts of Daniel chapter 7. (I'll get into some of the details as we continue.) And, as we will see, the errors here are undoubtedly related to his errors regarding the identity of the beasts of Rev. 13:2.

I'll quote Dan. 7:4: "**The first [beast] was like a lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I kept looking until its wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the ground and made to stand on two feet like a man; a human mind also was given to it.**" I'll quote what I said under this verse in my "The Mid-Week Rapture": This first beast represents Nebuchadnezzar [who played a major role in Daniel chapter 2] and the Babylonian Empire, as did the head of gold (Dan. 2:32, 37, 38). Nebuchadnezzar is

pictured as a LION in Jer. 4:7 and 50:17, and he is pictured as an EAGLE in Ezek. 17:3: cf. 17:12. I believe the rest of this verse is explained by Daniel chapter 4. After Nebuchadnezzar was humbled (as described in Daniel chapter 4), he was much better qualified to reign over the Babylonian Empire.

Baxter discusses the beasts of Daniel chapter 7 in more detail on pages 82-86. He discusses the third beast, which he says is Germany on page 83. I'll quote part of what he says there: "Note that the leopard has four heads. All the other beasts have one head each, but the leopard had four. ... Multiple heads on a beast, symbolize the number of times that nation will rise and fall. ...."

Rather, there is widespread agreement that the four heads prophesy that the Greek world-kingdom (which corresponds with the third kingdom of Daniel chapter 2) will eventually be divided into four parts under the leadership of four of Alexander the Great's generals after his death (in 323 BC). Daniel 8:5-8 with 21-22 confirm this interpretation. Alexander the Great is the "conspicuous/large horn" of Dan. 8:5, 8. Daniel chapter 8 is discussed in some detail in chapter 7 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture." The fact that this beast was "like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird" (Dan. 7:6) prophesies, at least for one thing, of the very rapid conquests of Alexander the Great.

I believe it is quite clear that the fourth beast of Dan. 7:7 represents the ancient Roman world-kingdom and the revived Roman world-kingdom, with all the emphasis on the revived Roman world-kingdom. It is very significant that the large IRON teeth correspond with the IRON pictured in Daniel chapter 2 for the Roman world-kingdom and the revived Roman world-kingdom. The fact that the beast of Dan. 7:7 has ten horns puts all the emphasis on the revived Roman world-kingdom, because the ten horns represent the ten rulers of that revived kingdom. Without getting into all the details, Baxter agrees that the fourth kingdom of Daniel chapter 7 prophesies of the revived Roman Empire with ten horns (but as I mentioned he speaks of the Holy Roman Empire) and that Antichrist will reign throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

As I mentioned the misinterpretations of Daniel chapter 7 regarding the identity of the first three beasts undoubtedly is related to misinterpretations of the beasts of Rev. 13:2; Rev. 13:1-3 are very important verses. I'll quote Rev. 13:1-3, discuss the interpretation to some extent (see under these verses in chapter 22 of "The Mid-Week Rapture" for more details), and then briefly discuss Baxter's interpretation.

### **REVELATION 13:1-3**

**"And the dragon [the devil] stood on the sand of the seashore.** [This scene will take place right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, right after the devil and his angels are cast down to the earth (Rev. 12:4, 7-9, 12-17). The devil has an appointment with Antichrist.] **Then I saw a beast [Antichrist and his world-kingdom] coming up out of the sea [the sea of mankind (cf. Dan. 7:2, 3; Rev. 17:1, 15, 18)], having ten horns [referring to the ten rulers of the revived Roman world-kingdom (Dan. 7:7, 20, 24; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; and 17:3, 7, 12, 16).] and seven heads** [[(This double bracket goes on for two paragraphs.) The seven heads represent the seven world-kingdoms that the Bible speaks of. We have already discussed the last five of these heads. (See Daniel chapters 2 and 7.) The first two heads (of the seven) are the Egyptian and Assyrian kingdoms. Both of those kingdoms interacted with God's people in a very negative way, as do the five world-kingdoms that follow them. This is no surprise in that, as Rev. 12:3 shows, the devil is behind the seven world-kingdoms; he is the god of this world (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2; 6:12; and 1 John 5:19).

I'll quote REVELATION 12:3, "Then appeared another sign in heaven: and behold a great red dragon [It is clear that this is the devil (Rev. 12:9); the red undoubtedly relates to the blood he sheds (cf. John 8:44).] having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads *were* seven diadems." The fact that the seven heads are crowned here helps communicate the fact that the evil reign of Satan continues through each of these world kingdoms (throughout the history of man after the fall). It is significant that in Rev. 13:1 the ten horns (not the seven heads) are crowned, because that word picture is limited to the time when the ten horns are reigning.], **and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were blasphemous names.** [The devil and his kingdoms blaspheme God, one way or another, on a consistent basis.] **(2) And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.** [[We can understand the mention of these animals here, because these same animals were mentioned in Daniel chapter 7. The idea is that something of those earlier world-kingdoms (the Greek, the Medo-Persian, and the Babylonian) remains and has been incorporated in the world-kingdom of the last days. The words that follow here in 13:2 are very important to understand the magnitude of Antichrist's super-evil reign throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

It is very important to understand that Antichrist comes on the scene at the right time in accordance with the plan of God. See Dan. 8:19 (God's "indignation" against sin); 11:36; Zech. 11:15-17; 2 Thess. 2:8-12; Rev. 3:10. God is in control of every situation, and he uses the devil and Antichrist and the evil angels (cf., e.g., Rev. 9:14, 15) and the demons (Rev. 16:13-16), even though they hate Him.]] **And the dragon [the devil] gave him [Antichrist] his power and his throne and great authority.** [As I have mentioned, these words are very important for us to understand the authority and power of the three

and one-half year super-evil reign of Antichrist that will start right after the rapture.] **(3) And I saw one of its heads as if it had been slain and his fatal wound was healed.** [(This double bracket continues for two paragraphs. I'll be brief here. See "The Mid-Week Rapture" for the details.) One of its heads represents Antichrist and his world-kingdom, the seventh world-kingdom, the revived Roman world-kingdom, with all the emphasis on him. Antichrist will undoubtedly be assassinated (probably during the month between the abomination of desolation and the middle of Daniel's 70th week; I believe Dan. 12:11 shows that the abomination of desolation will take place a month before the middle of the seven-year period) and come back from the dead. (We'll discuss these things later in this paper. See the Contents of this paper.) We see Antichrist COME UP OUT OF THE ABYSS (come back from the dead) in Rev. 11:7 in time to kill the two witnesses three and a half days before they come back to life and are caught up (raptured) in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (Rev. 11:8-12). He probably won't be dead for very long, maybe a few days.

Revelation 17:8 also speaks of Antichrist being killed (when "he is not") and COMING UP OUT OF THE ABYSS. I'll give an excerpt from Baxter's page 141 that deals with this COMING UP OUT OF THE ABYSS which is quite different: "...this seven headed, ten horned beast will ascend out of the bottomless pit ["abussos" in the Greek]. This beast is the New World Order that is currently emerging upon the world scene, a world government structure under the United Nations. The United Nations is a godless organization that is led [by] Satan. ...."] **And the whole earth** [excluding God's elect, whose names are written in the book of life (cf., e.g., Rev. 13:8; 17:8)] **was amazed and followed after the beast...."**

Baxter says (see his page 85 for example) that the beasts of Revelation chapter 13 are the same as in Daniel chapter 7. This means that for him the leopard of Rev. 13:2 is Germany; the bear is Russia; and the lion is Great Britain. As I have mentioned, I don't believe there is any possibility that Baxter is right here. He says four of the seven heads refer to Germany (on page 83 he lists the four heads: "the First Reich [or kingdom], the Second Reich, Hitler's famous Third Reich, and the Fourth Reich, which is rising"), one refers to Russia, one to Great Britain, and one to the ten-horned beast. I'll quote a paragraph from his page 86: "This prophecy [Rev. 13:1, 2] is saying that Great Britain, Russia, Germany and the final ten-nation union from the European Union, will join together in a one-world government that will most certainly be administered through the structure of the United Nations. The United Nations is the only body on the earth that has been purposely designed to be a one-world government."

Baxter has a one and a half page section on pages 88, 89 under the heading "The Healing of the Deadly Wound." I'll just list his key points. Commenting on Rev. 13:3 he

says "Many people have thought that the Antichrist will be killed and raised from the dead, and, for this reason, the whole world will follow him." This will be one big reason they follow him. Baxter goes on to say that "It was the third head of the leopard or Hitler's Third Reich that was wounded nigh unto death." And "the healing of the deadly wound occurred when the Berlin wall fell, November 9, 1989. I cannot agree with any of this, and I don't believe you will hear many, if any, other end-time teachers agreeing with any of this.

## **THE SEALS**

Baxter has two paragraphs on "The Seals" on page 174. I don't agree with much that he says here. After making a few preliminary comments, I'll quote what he says here on the first six seals. Then I'll include most of what I said on the first six seals in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 that will cover some nine pages. It is important for us to understand the seals. For one thing, I believe, in agreement with many, very much including the writers of the early Christian church, that the rider on the first horse, the white horse, builds on what Jesus said in Matt. 24:14 about the "gospel of the kingdom being preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." And I believe that the second and third seals build on what Jesus said in Matt. 24:4-8 about the beginning of birth pangs. The second seal of the book of Revelation with the red horse and its rider builds on the wars and rumors of wars and nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom of Matt. 24:6, 7. The third seal with the black horse and its rider builds on the famines in various places of Matt. 24:7.

I'll quote from Baxter (This excerpt covers two paragraphs): "The first seal, the white horse, is the symbol of Catholicism, which was born in 325 AD. The second seal is the symbol of Communism, the red horse, which was born in 1917 when the Communists overtook the Soviet Union during the Bolshevik Revolution. The Black horse is the symbol of Capitalism, which was born in the 1700s. It has become the dominant power in the Twentieth Century. The fourth seal, the green horse, is Islamism. [[The KJV, NKJV, and NIV translate "pale," not "green"; the NASB has "ashen" and in the margin has "Or sickly pale." The Greek noun "chloros" can be translated "green" (cf. Mark 6:39; Rev. 8:7; 9:4), but "sickly pale" or "pale" seems to fit the context much better here with the reference to death in Rev. 6:8, which deals with the fourth seal. The BAGD Greek Lexicon has two listings under the Greek adjective chloros. It has "yellowish green, (light) green" and it has "pale, greenish gray." It points out under the second listing that this adjective was sometimes used of death, and it lists Rev. 6:8 under the second listing.]] Many believe Islam was born in 622A.D. when Muhammad went from Mecca to Medina. The Green horse is rising to power now during our time. The fifth seal shows

the souls that are under the altar crying out for God to avenge their blood upon those who dwell upon the earth. It appears that this happens during the Great Tribulation. [[Baxter believes the Great Tribulation will take place throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. As I will discuss below, I am quite sure that the fifth seal takes us to the time of the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The martyred saints will be resurrected (and raptured) at that time, when the Lord Jesus returns at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, and they will receive their white robes, but they are told that they will have to wait a while for God to avenge their blood because many more saints (saints who will become Christians after the rapture, centering in the end-time remnant of Israel) will be martyred during the second half of the seven years.]] When the sixth seal is opened the voice says: the wrath of God is come [[(My double bracket continues for two paragraphs.) The wrath of God will come when the Lord Jesus returns at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The sixth seal gives a brief overview of some of the things that will take place when the Lord Jesus returns to judge the world in the middle of the seven years. (The fifth seal has already brought us to the middle of the seven years.) The first six seals don't give us much new revelation. However, once the seventh and last seal has been removed at Rev. 8:1, we are given a very large amount of new revelation on to the end of the book of Revelation.

The first thing we learn about after the scroll is opened is the sounding of the seven trumpets, which is very important new revelation. (The first six trumpets sound in Revelation chapters 8 and 9; the seventh trumpet sounds at Rev. 11:15.) The trumpets will announce the return of the Lord Jesus (in the middle of the seven years) at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet. The first six trumpets will all sound before the Lord Jesus returns, each trumpet bringing us closer to His imminent return. So, the first six trumpets will all necessarily sound before the events of the sixth seal come to pass.]]; hide us from Him that sits upon the throne [God the Father]; the heavens depart like a scroll; and the mountains and islands are moved out of their places. This happens immediately before and during Armageddon. [Armageddon is at the end of the seven years.] The Bible teaches that, at that time, the sixth seal will be opened and the vials of wrath will be poured out on the invading armies of the United Nations dominated by Russia. [Baxter has two last sentences that I didn't quote that deal with the seventh seal.]" I have already shown that I don't agree with much that Baxter teaches on the seals.

I Have A Paper On My Internet Site That Discusses Revelation Chapters 1-10 Verse-By-Verse. I'll quote most of what I said there on REVELATION 6:1-17, which covers the first six seals:

(Rev. 6:1) **"Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals [cf. Rev. 5:1-10], and I heard one of the four living creatures [cf. Rev. 4:6-10] saying as with a voice of thunder, 'Come.'** [(This double bracket goes on for four paragraphs.) The KJV and NKJV, following a different Greek reading, have "Come and see," as if the words were spoken to John. There's widespread agreement that the Greek reading followed by the NASB (and the NIV) is the correct reading, the original reading. This living creature was calling forth the rider on the first horse, the white horse, even as the other three living creatures call forth the next three riders and their horses in the following verses. The first four seals go together as a unit. We learn of the famous Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (of the book of Revelation) from these verses (Rev. 6:1-8).

As discussed in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," I believe the four horsemen all ride forth at the same time, throughout this entire Christian age. The primary cross-reference that convinces me of this interpretation (which is widely held) is the teaching of Jesus in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:3-14; Mark 13:3-13; and Luke 21:5-11). The Rider on the white horse corresponds (at least to some significant extent) with the worldwide preaching of the gospel and the advancement of the Kingdom of God before the end comes that is spoken of in Matt. 24:14. The Rider on the white horse is the Lord Jesus Christ, or the Gospel of the Kingdom (or the equivalent). This Rider has been riding forth conquering the hearts of all who will submit to the gospel. It's very good to have your heart conquered by this glorious Rider. It's clear that the Rider on the white horse in Rev. 19:11 is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the word "white" is always used in the book of Revelation (17 total uses) of the things of God, very much including victory and purity.

The warfare and famine associated with the second and third seals are part of what Jesus called "the beginning of birth pangs" in Matt. 24:8 (see Matt. 24:6-8). The time of transition beyond the beginning of birth pangs will be the abomination of desolation (see Matt. 24:9, 15; cf. 2 Thess. 2:3, 4). (The abomination of desolation centers in the fact that Antichrist will enter the temple that will be rebuilt in Jerusalem, stop the sacrifices, and demand that he be worshiped. That abominable activity will lead to great desolation.) We can apparently say that the riding forth of the second, third, and fourth horsemen will continue until they are superseded by the events associated with the sounding of the trumpets of the book of Revelation. Events clearly go beyond the limits prescribed for the fourth horseman under the sixth trumpet, where one-third of mankind is killed. The abomination of desolation will take place about the time of the sounding of the sixth trumpet, a month (see Dan. 12:11) before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place. (Matthew chapter 24 is discussed verse-by-verse in a paper on my internet site. Daniel chapter 12 is discussed in significant detail in my "The Mid-Week Rapture." It is discussed in far less detail in my "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture.")

I'll quote a few sentences from George E. Ladd's introduction to Revelation chapter 6 ("Commentary on the Revelation of John" [Eerdmans, 1972], pages 95, 96): "The breaking of the seven seals is preliminary to the actual opening of the book [scroll] and the events of the end time. [The scroll cannot be opened (at Rev. 8:1) until all seven seals have been removed. In one sense at least, the scroll has been opened and THE CONTENTS OF THE ALL-IMPORTANT SCROLL HAVE BEEN REVEALED TO US IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION. The events associated with the fifth and sixth seals will not come to pass (or start to come to pass) until the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.] It [the breaking of the seals] PICTURES THE FORCES THAT WILL BE OPERATIVE THROUGHOUT HISTORY BY WHICH THE REDEMPTIVE AND JUDICIAL PURPOSES OF GOD WILL BE FORWARDED [my emphasis]. They are not a part of the great tribulation itself, but are preparatory and preliminary to the great tribulation. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the breaking of the sixth seal clearly brings to the threshold of the end; the five seals must precede it." (Ladd teaches that the Lord will return and the rapture will take place at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.)) **(2) I looked, and behold, a white horse [cf. Rev. 19:11], and he [or, He] who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him** [[Compare Zech. 6:9-15 (Zechariah chapters 1-8 are discussed verse-by-verse in a paper on my internet site.); Rev. 14:14; and 19:12 [note the crown in 14:14 and the crowns/diadems in 19:12]; and see under Rev. 5:6 [in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10] on the authority/reigning [the authority/reigning goes with the crown]] of the Lord Jesus Christ from the time of His resurrection, ascension, and glorification. As I mentioned, I believe Christ, or the Word of the Gospel of Christ (or the equivalent), is the Rider on this horse. Those who believe the events associated with the seals will only come to pass in the last days typically understand the rider to be Antichrist. What a difference! Baxter, you will remember, teaches that the white horse with its rider represents Catholicism.]], **and he went out conquering and to conquer.** [(This double bracket goes on for four paragraphs.) I'll quote part of what Henry Alford said under this verse ("New Testament for English Readers," Vol. 4 [Baker, 1983 reprint], pages 1830, 1831): "The going forth conquering and in order to conquer can only, it seems to me, point to one interpretation. The conquering might be said of any victorious earthly power whose victories should endure for the time then present, and afterwards pass away: but the in order that he may conquer [The words "in order that he may conquer" are a more literal translation of the Greek than the words "to conquer" of the NASB.] can only be said of a power whose victories should last forever. Final and permanent victory then is here imported [stated]. Victory, we may safely say, on the part of that kingdom against which the gates of hell shall not prevail: whose fortunes and whose trials are the great subject of this revelation. Such is the first vision, the opening of the first seal in the mystery of the divine purposes: victory for God's church and people: the great keynote, so to speak, of all the apocalyptic harmonies. ... [Alford doesn't believe the rider is the Lord Jesus Himself. He says the rider is "only a

symbol of His victorious power, the embodiment of His advancing kingdom...."] ... In all cases but the last [the fourth rider], these riders are left in the vagueness of their symbolic offices. If we attempt to specify further, as e.g., Victorinus (I had a footnote here, "Victorinus of Pettau [died about AD 304]. Bishop and exegete." Quoting from Michael P. McHugh, "Encyclopedia of Early Christianity" [Garland Publishing, 1990], page 927.) 'The white horse is the word of preaching with the aid of the Holy Spirit sent forth into the world; for the Lord saith, This gospel shall be preached through all the world, for a testimony before the nations, and then shall the end come [Matt. 24:14],' - while we are sure that we are thus far right, we are but partially right: we do not cover the extent of the symbol, seeing that there are other aspects and instruments of victory of the kingdom of Christ, besides the preaching of the Word. [That is, Alford agrees with what Victorinus said, but he doesn't want to limit the meaning of the first seal to what he said.] The same might be said of any other of the partial interpretations which have been given by those who have taken this view. AND IT WAS TAKEN, WITH DIVERGENCES OF SEPARATE DETAIL, BY ALL EXPOSITORS FROM EARLIEST TIMES DOWN TO THE YEAR 1500 [my emphasis]." In other words, according to Alford, the interpretations regarding the first seal all agreed in understanding the first seal to deal with the kingdom of Christ and its expanding victory until AD 1500. I'm confident that they were right. (In the early 1500s Luther and the pope began to call one another Antichrist.)

I decided to see if Irenaeus commented on the identity of the Rider on the white horse in Rev. 6:2. Irenaeus is a well-respected Church Father (about AD115 to about 202; bishop of Lyons); he was well acquainted with Polycarp, who knew the apostle John, who wrote the book of Revelation by the inspiration of God. In his "Irenaeus Against Heresies" (Book 4, Chapter 21.3), Irenaeus takes the Rider to be the Lord Jesus Christ.

I'll also quote from George E. Ladd ("Revelation of John," pages 99, 100), "The rider is not Christ himself but symbolizes the proclamation of the gospel of Christ in all the world. ... It will be preached effectively in all the world; and in spite of an evil and hostile environment characterized by human hatred, strife, and opposition, the gospel will make its way victoriously in all the world.

Here is a word of confidence, combined with a realistic note, for the church of the first century and every other age. How can any people be devoted to a cause which they believe will experience only defeat? The first generation of believers suffered, and at the hands of some of the later emperors they met determined efforts to root them out and to destroy them completely. But in spite of every form of opposition, the church effectively and victoriously established the gospel in all the Roman world until the Empire ceased its violent opposition. [There has been plenty of violent aggression by the world against

God and His people since that time.] We do not look for the coming of God's Kingdom and the righting of the world's evils short of the return of Christ; but we are, as the modern bearers of the gospel of the kingdom, expectant of seeing victories won by the power of this gospel."]] **(3) When He broke the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come.'** **(4) And another, a red horse, went out; and to him who sat on it, it was granted to take peace from the earth, and that men would slay one another; and a great sword was given to him.** [[Compare Matt. 24:6, 7; 10:34-36; Mark 13:7, 8; and Luke 21:10. Alford ("New Testament for English Readers," Vol. 4, page 1831) quotes Victorinus again here: "The red horse, and he that sat upon him having a sword, are future wars, as we read in the gospel, for nation shall rise against nation...(Matt. 24:7)." The color red undoubtedly goes with the shedding of blood. We should undoubtedly expect an increase in this warfare as we approach the end of this age; so too for the famines of the third seal.]] **(5) When He broke the third seal, I heard the third living creature [cf. Rev. 4:7] saying, 'Come.' I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand [cf. Ezek. 4:16, 17].** **(6) And I heard something like a voice in the center of the four living creatures** [A voice coming from this location would apparently be the voice of God. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit all speak in the book of Revelation.] **saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not damage the oil and the wine.'** [[As discussed on page 21 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," I agree with the widespread viewpoint that these verses picture famine - limited famine. We obviously couldn't say that there never would be a famine in any part of the world throughout this Christian age more severe than this.

Based on the information cited in the commentaries, the prices given here for wheat and barley are some eight to fifteen times higher than the normal prices in the Roman Empire of John's day. The oil and the wine are apparently considered to be basic food items, not luxury items (cf., e.g., Deut. 7:13; 11:14; and 28:51). Warfare and strife can lead to famine, but so can a shortage of rain/water (e.g., Deut. 11:14; Hag. 1:11), or many other things, including locusts. As several commentators point out, the roots of the olive tree (for oil) and of grapevines are deeper and less affected by limited drought than those of wheat and barley.]] **(7) When the Lamb broke the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come.'** **(8) I looked, and behold, an ashen horse** [In the margin the NASB has, "or, sickly pale," which can be considered the color of death. See above (in the second paragraph under "THE SEALS") on the meaning of the Greek adjective "chloros."]; **and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades** [[The Greek noun is "hades," but the KJV translates "Hell." I believe it is clear that Hades is the correct translation here and in some other verses, including Rev. 1:18; 20:13 and 14. The KJV has "hell" in all three of those verses. However, the NKJV rightly has "Hades" in 1:18; 6:8; and 20:13, 14. I'll say more on Death and Hades as we

continue with this verse.]] **was following with him.** [[It isn't surprising that Hades would follow Death. Hades is the abode for the dead, excluding true Christians, who go directly to be with the Lord at death (cf. Phil. 1:21-23; 2 Cor. 5:8; 1 Thess. 4:14; and Heb. 12:22, 23). The departed saints are with God now (but most of them have not yet received their resurrection/glorified bodies [cf. Matt. 27:52, 53]); when Christ returns (in the middle of the seven years) they will come with Him (cf., e.g., 1 Thess. 4:13-18).]] **Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence** [including plagues (cf. Luke 21:11)] **and by the wild beasts of the earth.** [[I understand these words to teach that throughout this age, up until about the time of the sounding of the sixth trumpet, the total number of premature deaths from all causes will be limited to a maximum of a fourth of the population.

Much of the popular end-time teaching of our day understands this verse to teach that at some time during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, within a very short period of time, a fourth of the entire population of the earth will be killed. I know of at least one minister who locates the fourth seal (and all of the seven seals) in the first half of the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. With the present population of the earth, which is now 7.3 billion, that would be more than 1.8 billion people killed. For that many people to be killed within a short period of time would be a very big deal. During World War II, which lasted more than five years, the total number of deaths, including civilian deaths, was estimated to be some fifty to sixty million. Fifty million people is only some 2.8 percent of 1.8 billion.

I expect an increase in birth pangs (an increase in frequency and in intensity) in the last years of the "beginning of birth-pangs" (Matt. 24:8), in the years before the transition beyond the beginning of birth pangs at the abomination of desolation, which will be initiated about a month before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, about the time of the sounding of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation. But I don't expect a gigantic number of people to be killed during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week before the abomination of desolation and the short great tribulation. It could, for example, be less than ten percent of 1.8 billion. We will discuss the first six trumpets as we continue with this paper. I believe that the events associated with these trumpets will all come to pass during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.]] **(9)** [On Rev. 6:9-11 also see pages 21-23 of "The Mid-Week Rapture."] **When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar** [On the sacrificial "altar," which is to be distinguished from the golden altar before the throne of Rev. 8:3, see Rev. 8:3, 5; 14:18; and 16:4-7.] **the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained** [[The emphasis here is undoubtedly on Christian martyrs, but I assume the martyrs for God from Old Testament days (starting with Abel) are included too. The apostle Paul was one of many saints who was sacrificed on this altar for God (cf. Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6-8). In Rev. 20:4 John saw the souls of Christian martyrs, and

he saw them come to life, which includes their receiving glorified bodies. The difference is that the martyrs of Rev. 6:9-11 refers to those martyred in the days preceding Christ's mid-week return, whereas the martyrs of Rev. 20:4 are those who will be martyred during the three and one-half year super-evil reign of Antichrist; they will not become Christians until after Christ's mid-week return and the rapture. (See under Rev. 20:4 in my paper on Revelation chapters 20-22 on my internet site.)); **(10) and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord** [[The Greek noun normally translated "Lord" ("kurios") isn't used here. In the margin the NASB has "or, Master." The NIV has "Sovereign Lord." I assume these words were addressed to God the Father, the Person on the throne in Revelation chapters 4 and 5, the Person with the preeminent role in the Trinity. (I have four articles on my internet site that deal with the Trinity: "Who Do We Worship?"; "Who Do We Pray To?"; "More on the Trinity"; and "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.")], **holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"** [[God will avenge the blood of His bondservants (cf., e.g., Rev. 17:1, 6; 18:20, 24; 19:2; Gen. 4:10; Deut. 32:43; Psalm 79:10; Luke 18:7, 8; Rom. 12:19; and 2 Thess. 1:4-10). He must eventually judge the world and make things right in accordance with His character as a righteous Judge and in accordance with His Word (both the Old Testament and New Testament). He cannot allow the persecution and murder of His people to continue forever; neither can He allow rebellion and chaos to continue forever. 2 Peter 3:9 helps explain God's delay in judging the world (cf. 1 Tim. 2:1-7).]] **(11) And there was given to each of them a white robe** [at the time the Lord Jesus returns and they are resurrected, right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week; these souls have to receive their glorified bodies before they can wear their white robes (cf., e.g., Rev. 3:4; 6:11; 7:14; and 19:8)]; **and they were told that they should rest** ["that they should wait"; the BAGD Greek Lexicon gives "rest" as the basic meaning for this verb ("anapauo"), but on this verse it says, "remain quiet (i.e. wait) for a short time"; the NIV has "wait"] **for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also.** [[They would still have to "wait for a little while" before God would avenge their blood and judge and remove those who shed the blood of God's people. (God won't fully avenge the persecution and shed blood of His people until the great-white-throne judgment at the end of the millennium, but He will have done a lot of judging by the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.) The book of Revelation goes on to show that after the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week many more Christians will be martyred for Christ. Many of the people who become Christians after the rapture, centering in the end-time remnant of Israel, will be martyred during the super-evil reign of Antichrist throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.

The "little while" of Rev. 6:11 corresponds with the "short time" of Rev. 12:12 that the devil will have left to do his evil work after he is cast down to the earth in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, at which time he gives Antichrist "his power and his throne and great authority" (Rev. 13:2). In Rev. 20:4 we see the martyred saints ((those who will be martyred during the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week; Rev. 20:4 indicates that the martyrs pictured there were slain during the reign of Antichrist with the words "those who had been beheaded because of their testimony to Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast [Antichrist] or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands" [NIV])) come back to life; they will be resurrected into the full glory of eternal life and begin to reign with the glorified saints who will have been reigning with the Lord Jesus throughout the second half of the seven-year period. (See under Rev. 20:4 in my verse-by-verse study on Revelation chapters 20-22 on my internet site.)] **(12)** [[Here we have a brief, very condensed, early look at the arrival of judgment day before the seventh seal is removed and the all-important scroll can be opened. It is designed to show the terror of judgment day for those who have not been living for God and aren't ready for that day. We have to wait until the scroll is opened (at Rev. 8:1) to learn the details regarding God's end-time judgment of the world. Many of those details had not been revealed before (in the Bible). (I refer the reader to the discussions of Rev. 6:12-17 in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," pages 301-304.)

I'll quote part of what William Hendriksen said under Rev. 6:12-17 ("More than Conquerors" [Baker, 1982], pages 107, 108). "The sixth seal...introduces the judgment day. It describes the one great catastrophe at the end of this age. [This "one great catastrophe" won't be finished in the full sense until after the millennium and the great-white-throne judgment. Hendriksen, now deceased, held the amillennial (no millennium) viewpoint.] The dread and terror, the awe and consternation of that day is pictured under the twofold symbolism of a crashing universe and a thoroughly frightened human race. The terror of that day refers, of course, only to the wicked. ...

What we have here is a symbolic picture of the terror of judgment day. The symbol, taken as a whole, teaches just *one* lesson, namely, that the final and complete effusion of God's wrath upon a world that has [rejected God the Father and His Son and] persecuted the Church will be terrible indeed. ... ..we do not deny, of course, that there will be a most thorough-going dislocation of the heavenly bodies and a rejuvenation of the universe, in connection with the end of this present age. Scripture clearly teaches this (2 Pet. 3:10, 12, *etc.*). Neither do we at all deny that also our present passage refers to this fact (cf. Matt. 24:39 [24:29]). But the main point of our passage is this: it stresses the terror of the day of wrath for the wicked. The dissolving elements, earthquake, falling stars, *etc.*, add terror to the picture."]] **I looked when He broke the**

**sixth seal, and there was a great earthquake** [[I believe it would be better to translate "a great shaking." This great shaking probably includes the intense shaking of the short great tribulation, which will come to pass under the sixth trumpet and will be over before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place in the middle of the seven years at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, and it undoubtedly includes the shaking pictured in Rev. 6:13, 14. (For the details, see under "The Sixth Trumpet and the Short Great Tribulation," later in this paper.) It apparently also includes all the shaking that will take place throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week as God shakes the world in judgment. On the shaking of judgment day, cf., e.g., Isa. 2:19, 21; 13:13; 24:19, 20 [Isaiah chapter 2; 13:6-13; and chapter 24 are discussed in a verse-by-verse manner in my eschatological paper on Isaiah on my internet site.]; Hag. 2:6, 7, 21; and Heb. 12:26-29. On this great shaking/earthquake, also see under Rev. 16:18-20 in the paper on my internet site that deals with Rev. 14:6-19:21.]]; **and the sun became black as sackcloth made of hair, and the whole moon became like blood** [cf., e.g., Joel 2:30-32 (Joel 2:30, 31 are quoted and discussed later in this paper: see the Contents of this paper); Matt. 24:29-31]; **(13) and the stars of the sky fell to the earth, as a fig tree casts its unripe figs when shaken by a great wind.** [[The stars here apparently refer first, and foremost, to the angels of Satan, who will be cast down to the earth with their leader (from their present privileged position in heavenly places) right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. See Rev. 12:4, 7-9: the third of the angels who follow Satan are cast down to the earth right in the middle of the seven-year period; those angels are called "stars" in Rev. 12:4. This is a major feature in God's end-time judgment of the world (see pages 15, 317-319 of "The Mid-Week Rapture" on these verses).

Matthew 24:29 is another important cross-reference for the stars falling at the time of Christ's return with the clouds of heaven, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, right in the middle of the seven-year period. I'll quote the second half of Matt. 24:29: "and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of heaven will be shaken." Satan's kingdom will obviously be greatly shaken at the time he and his angels are overpowered and cast down to the earth. (Matthew 24:29 is discussed in my verse-by-verse study of Matthew chapter 24 on my internet site, for one place.) Also see Isa. 34:4. I should point out that the "host of heaven" in Isa. 34:4 refers to the stars.

We should probably also think of literal falling stars here in Rev. 6:13; Matt. 24:29; etc. This present natural/physical world must ultimately pass away/vanish to be replaced by God's new heaven and new earth (cf., e.g., Matt. 24:35; Rev. 20:11; 21:1).] **(14) The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up** [I discuss the meaning of these words under this verse in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on my internet site.], **and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.** [[By the time God is fully done shaking/judging and bringing forth His new heaven and new earth, everything

associated with this present world - including the present sky, mountains, and islands - will have been removed, or made new (cf. Rev. 21:5). See Nah. 1:2-8; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 16:20; 20:11; and 21:1.]] **(15) Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the strong and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains; (16) and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne [God the Father], and from the wrath of the Lamb** [This is one of a very large number of verses that show that God the Father and God the Son are distinct Persons in the Trinity. Compare Isa. 2:10-22 (Isaiah chapter 2 is discussed verse-by-verse in the paper on Isaiah on my internet site.); Hos. 10:8; Luke 23:30.]; **(17) for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"** The great day of the wrath of God the Father and God the Son will officially begin when the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. ((God's wrath will also be manifested to a significant extent for those directly involved with the shaking of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22, which equals (at least for the most part) the warfare of the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21). Antichrist's abomination of desolation, which will take place about a month before the Lord Jesus returns (cf. Dan. 12:11), will signal that it is time for the short great tribulation to take place (cf. Matt. 24:15, 21, 22).))

All the true Christians living on the earth will be able to stand because they will be ready for the return of the Lord Jesus; they live in the light of His return; they are the ones "who have loved His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:8); they will be glorified, raptured, and begin to reign with the Lord Jesus when He returns in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. (Compare, for example, Psalm 1:3-6; Nah. 1:6-8; and Luke 21:36.)

Revelation Chapter 7 is an interlude (a parenthetical insert) that answers the question of Rev. 6:17, "and who is able to stand." (Revelation chapter 7 is discussed in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on my internet site, for one place.) Revelation chapter 7 deals with two groups of people who will be able to stand. Revelation 7:9-17 deal with the true Christians who will be living on the earth at that time. Those verses picture them having been caught up into eternal glory. Revelation 7:1-8 deal with the elect end-time remnant of Israel. Revelation 7:1-3 picture them being given a special seal for protection; for one thing, protection during the days of the sounding of the first six trumpets, especially the sixth trumpet, to make sure that each one of them remains alive to receive the Lord Jesus when/after He comes. (Compare what Michael the archangel does in Dan. 12:1.) They will not repent and submit to Him in faith until after He returns and the rapture takes place.

## **IRVIN BAXTER AND THE FIRST SIX TRUMPETS (Rev. 8:7-9:21)**

Baxter discussed these trumpets on pages 44-55. After we somewhat briefly discuss Baxter's viewpoints on these trumpets, I'll include an excerpt from my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 that deals with these trumpets. The excerpt also deals with Rev. 8:1-5, which is a very important introduction to the trumpets.

Baxter discussed the third trumpet first. He said that was the first trumpet that he understood first (in 1995), and it helped open the way for him to understand the other trumpets. It seems clear that Baxter wasn't passing on views that he had heard others teach on these trumpets; it seems that these views originated, at least for the most part, with him. (I assume that is true for much that he said on the seals, on Daniel chapter 7, and on Rev. 13:1-3 and on the trumpets. I won't deal with the bowls of wrath hardly at all in this paper) I haven't heard any other end-time teacher (there may be some) who interpreted the third trumpet (and most of the other trumpets) the way Baxter does. I don't see that there is any possibility that he is right. I'll give what I believe is the correct interpretation as we continue.

For one problem, I believe that the first six trumpets will all sound in the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. They will come to pass, one after the other, to announce the imminent coming of the Lord Jesus to save His people and judge the world. I believe He will come right in the middle of the seven years, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet. The first six trumpets will probably be all-the-more-powerful attention-getters through being announced by the two witnesses of Revelation chapter 11 before they sound. The trumpets won't begin to sound until the event prophesied in Rev. 8:5 has come to pass, which will initiate God's end-time judgment of the world: "the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar [the sacrificial altar in heaven], and threw it to the earth."

I am confident that none of the trumpets have sounded yet in our day (this is the dominant viewpoint), and I am totally confident that the third trumpet did not take place in 1986, when Baxter says the third trumpet sounded. With Baxter's viewpoint the third trumpet was sounded at least twenty-nine years before Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week begins. And the first trumpet (he believes that the first trumpet probably was WWI and the second trumpet WWII) sounded something like a hundred years before Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week has begun. I won't comment further on the first and second trumpets except to say that the things that will take place under the sounding of those trumpets (Rev. 8:6-9) don't fit WWI and WWII well at all. (Baxter emphasizes the point that some one-third of the ships were destroyed in WWII. I believe it would take a whole lot more than that detail for WWII to fulfill what the Bible prophesies about the second trumpet.) As I mentioned I will discuss what I believe is the correct interpretation for all the trumpets below.

I'll quote Rev. 8:10-11, which deal with the sounding of the third trumpet, from the King James Version, which Baxter quoted: **"And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."**

Baxter believes that the sounding of the third trumpet was fulfilled by the catastrophic nuclear accident that took place April, 1986 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine, which was part of the Soviet Union at that time. He began to consider this viewpoint when he learned that the Russian word translated "wormwood" is "chernobyl." After determining that the third trumpet referred to the Chernobyl disaster, the way was open to see WWII as the second trumpet and then it followed that the first trumpet was WWI. I don't believe there is any possibility that Baxter is right on any of the first three trumpets. So too for the fourth and fifth trumpets. He believes that they have already sounded too. We will briefly consider them as we continue.

Baxter isn't dogmatic on these trumpets. On page 49 he says "Of all of these trumpets, the one that seems most certain in the Chernobyl trumpet. That happened in 1986. If they are in order [which we certainly should expect], the fourth is the next one due to happen. The next question becomes: is there a chance that it has happened already, and if so, did we miss it?" I'll quote Rev. 8:12 from the KJV, which Baxter quoted here: **"And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."**

Baxter discusses the fourth trumpet on pages 49 and 50 under the heading "Shortening of Days." I'll quote part of what Baxter says here: "Let me turn your attention to another prophecy, Matthew 24:22. Jesus gave a very interesting prophecy concerning the time of the Great Tribulation. He said in Matthew 24:21, 22, **'For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days shall be shortened** [The NASB translates 'had been cut short,' which I believe is better, but the King James translation is acceptable here.], **there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened** [I prefer "cut short" with the NASB]."

Here Jesus prophesies of a shortening [or a cutting short] of days. The question becomes are the number of days shortened or is the length of days shortened? It has to refer to length of days. Here's why. God's Word cannot be changed. ...." Baxter goes on

to state that the time involved for the reign of the Antichrist is fixed at 1,290 days (Dan. 12:11). Therefore, he says God "will shorten the length of the days and nights" (page 50), and he suggests that this has probably already happened, and that the rotation of the earth has speeded up. Baxter doesn't mention this detail in the book, but in the video he specifies that that the length of the days and nights will be shortened by one-third. Scientists keep track of the rotational speed of the earth, which (as Baxter says) determines the length of the day and night and it has not speeded up recently, even though it may feel like things have speeded up. In fact the rotational speed of the earth is constantly slowing down by a very small amount for one primary reason: the earth's interaction with the moon. (You can verify this on many internet sites through Google.) So, I have to disagree with Baxter's interpretation for the fourth trumpet.

Baxter is right that God isn't going to change the length of the great tribulation. The idea is that He predetermined that the great tribulation won't last long. I believe the short great tribulation will take place within the one-month period between the abomination of desolation and the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus. The short great tribulation will consist of very intense warfare, which equals the warfare of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation. This very intense warfare (the warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22) is also pictured (along with Rev. 9:13-21) in Joel 2:30 and Dan. 11:40-44, especially verse 44. We will discuss these super-important details under the major heading "The Sixth Trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21) and the Short Great Tribulation." They are discussed in more detail in my recently published e-book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture" that is available on amazon.com, for one place.

Baxter discusses the fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:1-11) on pages 50-52. I have to totally disagree with what he says regarding the fulfillment of this trumpet, which he believes has already happened. He believes the darkness that is caused by the smoke that comes up out of the "bottomless pit" (Rev. 9:2) was fulfilled when Saddam Hussein set the oil wells on fire in Kuwait in 1990, and he believes that the locusts that came out of the smoke of the "bottomless pit" (Rev. 9:3) refers to helicopters. On the video, but not in the book, he mentioned that the stings in the tails of the locusts (I'm confident that they are demonic locusts who come up out of the abyss) refers to tail gunners in some helicopters. As I mentioned, I will give what I believe is the correct interpretation for these six trumpets below.

Baxter discussed the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21) on pages 52-55. I'll just mention one detail (a very important detail) where I differ with him on these verses. He believes that this warfare could happen any time. I am sure that it cannot happen until after the seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27; until after the two witnesses of Revelation chapter 11 have been ministering for some three years and five months; until after the

first five trumpets have sounded in sequence and the events associated with those trumpets have come to pass; and after the temple has been built and the Jews have been worshipping in the temple for quite a while (until the last part of the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week; cf. Rev. 11:1, 2). For more on the sixth trumpet see the major heading below titled, "THE SIXTH TRUMPET (Rev. 9:13-21) AND THE SHORT GREAT TRIBULATION."

**REVELATION 8:1-5 INTRODUCES THE TRUMPETS, INCLUDES BREAKING THE SEVENTH SEAL.** I'll quote and rather thoroughly discuss these verses that introduce the SEVEN TRUMPETS of the book of Revelation:

**"When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.** [[I assume this time of silence goes with the awesome significance of the Lamb's breaking the seventh and last seal. Now the all-important scroll that the Lord Jesus took from God the Father in Revelation chapter 5 can be opened. Once the scroll is opened, we begin to receive much super-important revelation of things that had not been revealed before, starting with the revelation of the seven angels with the seven trumpets, which will announce the coming of the Lord Jesus, the resurrection and rapture, and the day of judgment.

The Lord Jesus will return at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The seventh trumpet is extremely important. God's plans to save and glorify His people and to judge the world at the end of this age will come to pass under the sounding of that trumpet (see Rev. 10:7; 11:15-19, for example). This is very important information, especially for the people who will be living on the earth at the time of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, which probably includes us.]] **(2) And I saw the [The definite article ("the") is included in the Greek.] seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.** [[These seven angels, who clearly have a high standing before God, have not been mentioned before in the book of Revelation, at least not specifically mentioned. They're mentioned again in Rev. 8:6 and then individually in the following verses as each one progressively sounds his trumpet (Rev. 8:7, 8, 10, 12; 9:1, 13; and 11:15). (It seems clear that they are different than the seven angels with the seven bowls of wrath [e.g., Rev. 15:1, 6-8].) Many commentators believe these seven angels are the seven archangels. ((I had a footnote here, F. F. Bruce ("New Layman's Bible Commentary" [Zondervan, 1979], page 1692), for example, says, "Gabriel identifies himself as one of these [that is, as an angel who stands before God] (Luke 1:19); cf. Tobit 12:15, where Raphael describes himself as 'one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and stand before the presence of the glory of the Holy One.' The names of all seven appear in 1 Enoch

20:2-8 as Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sariel, Gabriel and Remiel: 'the archangels' names are seven.' " Craig S. Keener ("Bible Background Commentary" [Inter-Varsity Press, 1993], page 785) says, "Between the Old Testament and the New Testament Judaism had settled on seven archangels (adding five to the two important angels named in Daniel [Michael and Gabriel]), and they are probably in view here." It's clear that Michael is the (or, an) archangel (Jude 1:9; cf. 1 Thess. 4:16; Rev. 12:7; Dan. 10:13, 21; and 12:1). It's also clear that Gabriel is a mighty angel of God (Dan. 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26; cf. Dan. 10:10-21). Daniel 10:13 is interesting, "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia [an evil angel] was withstanding me [probably Gabriel] for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, ONE OF THE CHIEF PRINCES [my emphasis], came to help me...." The words "one of the chief princes" fit the idea that there are other archangels.))]] **(3)** [[Revelation 8:3-5 are discussed on pages 174-176 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture." For the full discussion, see pages 165-179. After I quote verses 3-5 and make a few comments, I'll include a lengthy excerpt dealing with Rev. 8:1-5 from Article #19 of my e-book (which is also available now in a printed version), "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture."]] **Another angel** [As discussed in "The Mid-Week Rapture," this angel/Angel probably is the Angel (or Messenger) of the LORD [Yahweh] of the Old Testament (God the Son).] **came and stood at the [sacrificial] altar, holding a golden censer [or, firepan]; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to [offer it with] the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. (4) And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. (5) Then the angel took the censer [or, firepan] and filled it with the fire of the [sacrificial] altar, and threw it to the earth [[Compare Ezek. 10:2. The first three trumpets all include fire (in one form or another) being thrown to the earth/sea, and the sixth trumpet mentions the plague of fire (Rev. 9:17, 18). On the fire of God's judgment in the book of Revelation, also see Rev. 11:5; 14:10, 18; 16:8; 17:16; 18:8; 19:20; 20:9, 10, 14, 15; and 21:8.]]; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake [cf. Rev. 11:19; 16:18].**

A Lengthy Excerpt Dealing with Rev. 8:3-5 from Article #19 of my book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture":

Revelation 8:3-5 contain some very important information that is related to the sounding of the trumpets and God's end-time salvation of His people and His end-time judgment of the world. In verses 3, 4 the prayers of the saints are offered before God. For one thing, these verses help demonstrate that the events associated with the sounding of the seven trumpets will come to pass (in part) in answer to the prayers of the saints. I'm speaking especially of prayers like "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." It is important to know that the judgments associated with the trumpets will not be coming against believers. And it is important to know that God's promised full

and final salvation will come to all the members of His true Israel (which includes all true Christians, who have been grafted into God's true Israel [Rom. 11:17-24]) under the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Knowing that these things will come to pass in accordance with the will of God, and in answer to our prayers, helps give us the right perspective as we discuss the seven trumpets.

In verses 3 and 4 we read of an "angel" offering our prayers before God, and in verse 5 we read of this same "angel" casting fire on the earth, which will initiate God's end-time judgment of the world. I cannot be dogmatic on this point, but I believe the evidence is very strong for the point of view that this "Angel" (or "Messenger") is the Lord Jesus Christ, and I favor this viewpoint. We'll discuss this viewpoint as we continue. These verses become all the more interesting if the Lord Jesus Christ is the One doing these things.

I'll read Rev. 8:3, 4 from the "New King James Bible." (Unless I mention otherwise, I always quote from the "New American Standard Bible," 1995 edition.) **"Then another angel, having a golden censer [or, fire-pan], came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar [upon the golden altar of incense] which was before the throne. (4) And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from [or, out of] the angel's hand."**

First let's discuss the words, "**another angel.**" This angel is *another* angel in distinction from the "seven angels" of Rev. 8:2. As I mentioned, I favor the viewpoint that this "angel/Angel" is the Lord Jesus Christ. Quite a few commentators agree. I discussed this viewpoint in substantial detail in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture." I admit, of course, that it is highly unusual to refer to the Lord Jesus Christ as "another angel," but I believe the evidence for this viewpoint is so strong that I have to favor this viewpoint. Of course God the Son is not a *created* angel, but He did appear quite often in the Old Testament as the Angel (or Messenger) of Yahweh. (See my paper "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son" on my internet site [Google to Karl Kemp Teaching].)

As I mentioned when we discussed Rev. 7:2 in the last article [in the last article in my book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture"; that article is not included in this paper], it is easier to see the Lord Jesus Christ behind the words "another angel" in that verse if He is also called "another angel" in Rev. 8:3-5 and "another strong angel" in Rev. 10:1, which seems to be the case. As the following discussion of Rev. 8:3-5 will demonstrate, these verses strongly support identifying this angel/Angel with the Lord Jesus Christ. Anyway, whether this person is the Lord Jesus Christ, or not, does not substantially

affect the overall interpretation of these verses. If it isn't the Lord Jesus Christ, it is a high level angel who perfectly fulfills His assignments, as God's angels always do.

Apparently this "angel" is standing by the *sacrificial* altar here; the altar mentioned in verse 5 is the *sacrificial* altar also. The sacrificial altar is different than the golden altar (of incense) that is before the throne of God. We should think of hot coals being taken from the sacrificial altar and carried in the golden censer [or, fire-pan] to the golden altar (of incense). That's what the priests did twice a day in the ancient temple at Jerusalem.

I'll quote verses 3 and 4 again before we further discuss these verses, "**Then another angel, having a golden censer [or, fire-pan], came and stood at the altar. And he was given much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. (4) And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.**" Apparently the incense that was given to this "angel/Angel" (which ultimately came from God the Father as part of His overall plan of salvation) represents that which makes the prayers of the saints acceptable and effective before God. Apparently this incense represents the fruit of the mediatorial work of the Son of God. Through His incarnation and atoning death, the Lord Jesus Christ has earned the right to save us and function as our great high priest (compare Heb. 4:14-16; 5:5, 6; 7:15-8:6; 9:1-28; and 13:15). He has also earned the right to judge the world and to remove all the unrepentant rebels, very much including the devil.

The mediatorial role of this "angel/Angel" is emphasized by the fact that the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, "**ascended before God [God the Father] from [or, out of] the angel's hand.**" It hardly needs to be said that the mediatorial role of this "angel/Angel" perfectly fits the Lord Jesus Christ, our great high priest.

Before we leave verses 3 and 4, I should point out that the fact that John "heard a voice coming from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God" when the sixth angel sounds his trumpet helps confirm that the judgments associated with the trumpets are coming (in part) in answer to our prayers. (Our prayers are offered before God the Father on the golden altar which is before God.) The judgments are not coming against God's people. Under the fifth trumpet, for example, the demonic locusts will not be permitted to touch God's elect.

REVELATION 8:5. As we will see, this verse lends very strong support to the idea that this "angel/Angel" is the Lord Jesus Christ. "**Then the angel took the censer [or, fire-pan] and filled it with the fire of the altar [undoubtedly referring to fire from the sacrificial altar], and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and**

**sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake."** Apparently this casting of fire to the earth initiates God's end-time judgment of the world that will come to pass under the sounding of the trumpets. It certainly would be appropriate for the Lord Jesus Christ to be One who initiates the end-time judgment of the world. The Scriptures make it quite clear that the end-time judgment of the world has been given (by God the Father) into His hand (see, for example, Matt. 13:36-43; 16:27; 25:1-46; John 5:22-29; Acts 10:42; 17:30, 31; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; 2 Thess. 1:5-10; and 2:8-12).

It is quite significant that this casting of fire to the earth apparently builds on Ezekiel chapter 10, where the "man dressed in linen" scattered coals of fire over Jerusalem, which initiated the judgment of that city in the days of the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel. This cross-reference is all the more significant, because as we discussed in the last article [referring to the last article (Article #18) in my "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture," which is not included in this paper], the "man dressed in linen" is the One who sealed the believers in Jerusalem with a mark on their foreheads for protection in Ezekiel chapter 9. He sealed the believers for protection before He initiated the judgment by scattering coals of fire from God over Jerusalem in Ezekiel chapter 10. That judgment came through the Babylonians, who destroyed the city and the temple in 587/586 BC. As we discussed in the last article (Article #18 of my "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture"), the evidence is very strong that the "man dressed in linen" of Ezekiel chapters 9 and 10 and of Daniel chapters 10 and 12 was God the Son, who frequently appeared in the Old Testament as the Angel [or, Messenger] of Yahweh. And as we discussed in the last article, I have to favor the viewpoint that it is God the Son who seals the end-time remnant of Israel on their foreheads for protection in Revelation chapter 7. He seals them before He initiates the end-time judgment of the world and the seven angels begin to sound their trumpets.

**REVELATION 8:6-9:11 AND THE FIRST FIVE TRUMPETS.** Having finished the excerpt that deals with Rev. 8:3-5, we'll continue with REVELATION 8:6 and the first five trumpets.

**"(6) And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound them.** [[Chapter 2 of "The Mid-Week Rapture" is titled "Chronological Chart for Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week with Explanatory Notes." The foldout Chronological Chart itself is located in the back of the book; I recommend the reader look at the chart. (You can see the chart on my internet site under Articles and Papers; Google to Karl Kemp Teaching.) The first five trumpets (Rev. 8:7-9:11) are briefly discussed under number 6 on page 13 of "The Mid-Week Rapture." The sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21) is discussed under number 8 on page 14. Also see number 9, which is closely related to the sixth trumpet, on pages 14, 15. The seventh and last trumpet is briefly discussed under number 11 on

page 15. Also see numbers 10, 12, and 13, which are closely related to the seventh trumpet, on pages 15, 16. Some may want to read on through number 21 to get a further overview of what will happen after the seventh trumpet sounds in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week.]] **(7) The first sounded** [the first angel sounded his trumpet], **and there came hail and fire, mixed with blood, and they were thrown to the earth; and a third of the earth was burned up, and a third of the trees** [cf. Rev. 7:1] **were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up.** [[[This double bracket goes on for eight paragraphs.) Revelation 11:6 speaks of rain not falling during the three and one-half year ministry of the two witnesses/prophets, which will cover the first half of Daniel's 70th week. Drought conditions could help explain why the fire of the first trumpet causes such extensive damage. There's some similarity between the events of the first trumpet and the events of the seventh plague of hail at the time of the Exodus (Ex. 9:13-35). Under the seventh plague in Egypt, however, there was no mention of "blood" being thrown to the earth, and there was no mention of damage being caused by the fire that accompanied the hail. (The fire mentioned in Ex. 9:23, 24 apparently referred to lightning.)

Hail caused the damage in Egypt, but here under the first trumpet the fire thrown to the earth causes the only damage that is mentioned. The trees are more resistant to damage by fire than the far-less-substantial grass, which undoubtedly includes essential grains like wheat, oats, and barley. I assume we are to think of the fire causing damage to cities, homes, commercial buildings, etc. as part of what it means for a third of the earth to be burned up. Some say that a third of the trees and all the green grass within a third of the earth will be burned up, but this verse seems to say that a third of the trees and all the green grass of the earth will be burned up.

It is quite possible that only a relatively small part of the earth will be directly involved in the events of the sounding of the first five trumpets, that part of the world centered in the revived Roman Empire. (We'll get into some details when we discuss the individual trumpets.) If that proves to be true, the entire world will certainly be very much aware of and affected by what is happening. Anyway, even though there's some uncertainty about some of the details for the first five trumpets, we shouldn't have any doubt regarding the fulfillment of these prophesied warning judgments when they finally fall on the earth.

For one thing, there will be confirming signs, including such things as the seven-year covenant/treaty of Dan. 9:27; the ministry of the two witnesses/prophets of Rev. 11:3 (they may announce the sounding of the trumpets before they sound, even as Moses announced the plagues before they fell on Egypt, and/or they may identify these events as fulfilling the trumpet judgments after they sound, which will make these events all the more effective at getting the attention of the world); and the rebuilding of the temple.

Furthermore, even if there is some room for doubt about whether the things that have happened fulfill the prophecy regarding the first trumpet, any such doubts should be erased when the second, third, and fourth trumpets follow in sequence.

When will the trumpets sound? Revelation chapters 11-13 show that the seventh and last trumpet will sound right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The sixth trumpet will sound about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation, some thirty days before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (Dan. 12:11). (The sixth trumpet will initiate the super-intense warfare of the short great tribulation. We will discuss the content and timing of the abomination of desolation and the content and timing of the short great tribulation later in this paper under the major heading, "The Sixth Trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21) and the Short Great Tribulation.") We are informed that the events associated with the fifth trumpet will last for five months. At the latest then, the fifth trumpet will sound about six months before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The first four trumpets will all sound in sequence before the fifth trumpet sounds. I assume they will all sound during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The first trumpet could sound as late as something like a month or two before the sounding of the fifth trumpet. I get the impression that once the first trumpet sounds the other trumpets will follow rather quickly.

The mention of a "third" twice in this verse is typical for the first six trumpets (Rev. 8:8, 9, 10, 11, 12; 9:15, 18). This "third" factor substantially lessens the severity of these warning judgments. (The judgment of the sixth trumpet is too severe to be labeled a warning judgment.) Another factor that lessens the severity of the warning judgment of the first trumpet is that the "grass" won't be permanently destroyed. See Rev. 9:4; the same Greek noun ("chortos") for "grass" is used in Rev. 8:7 and 9:4. (I had a footnote here, See Matt. 13:26, where the NASB translated this noun as "wheat," and Mark 4:28, where the NASB translated this noun as "blade," clearly speaking of grass that yields a harvest for food.) The fact that the grass has had time to grow back after the burning under the first trumpet (assuming that this is the way to explain the presence of grass in Rev. 9:4) would tend to argue for quite a few months between the sounding of the first trumpet and the sounding of the fifth trumpet.

When God poured out the ten plagues on Egypt, He made a distinction between His people and the people of Egypt (Exodus chapters 7-12). I believe there will be a similar protection for God's people during the events of the seven trumpets. The judgments of the trumpets aren't aimed at God's people. They are, in fact, coming (in part) in answer to the prayers of His people (cf. Rev. 5:8; 6:9-11; 8:3-5; and 9:13, 20, 21). Revelation 9:4, which deals with the fifth trumpet, specifically mentions that the (demonic) locusts will not be permitted to touch God's people.

How many people will die under the first trumpet? We're not told that any will die under this trumpet, but we would tend to expect that some will die (cf. Ex. 9:19-21, 25). Anyway, I assume that the loss of life will be relatively limited under the first three trumpets, and it doesn't seem that any will die under the fourth or fifth trumpets. This will change drastically under the sixth trumpet.]] **(8) The second angel sounded, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea** [[Note the sea in Rev. 7:1. It makes a very big difference what "the sea" means here. Some think of the oceans of the earth; I favor the much-less-severe view that the Mediterranean Sea is meant. "*Something* like a great mountain burning with fire" would fit a meteor very well; it could be some sort of nuclear device, or it could be something obviously supernatural.]]; **and a third of the sea became blood** [Compare Ex. 7:17-25; Rev. 11:6; and 16:3-7. This need not be literal blood, and its origin could be supernatural.], **(9) and a third of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died** [contrast Rev. 16:3]; **and a third of the ships were destroyed** [cf. Isa. 2:16]. [[The "third" factor goes with the first six trumpet judgments, as noted under Rev. 8:7. It seems clear that a substantial number of people will die under this catastrophe, but it will undoubtedly be a relatively small number when you think in terms of God's end-time day of judgment, especially if the Mediterranean Sea is meant.]] **(10) The third angel sounded, and a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of waters.** [Because of the following words regarding a third of the waters becoming wormwood, we should apparently think of the star falling on a third of the "springs of waters" too (as with the rivers).] **(11) The name of the star is called Wormwood** [[This great star which falls from heaven could involve an evil angel. Stars are sometimes used in the book of Revelation to represent angels, good and evil angels (Rev. 1:20; 9:1, 2; and 12:4, 7-9), and the fact that this star has a name could fit that viewpoint. Note the use of the word "wormwood" later in this verse, and note the words "made bitter." The BAGD Greek Lexicon, under the Greek noun translated Wormwood/wormwood ("apsinthos"), points out that wormwood "[contains] a very bitter substance."]]; **and a third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the waters, because they were made bitter.** [[See Jer. 9:15; 23:15. The bitterness (which here clearly includes poisonous qualities) could be caused by material coming from this falling star, or it could be entirely supernatural. "Many" will die under the sounding of the third trumpet, but, again, the number will probably be relatively small when considered in the context of judgment day.]] **(12) The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not shine for a third of it, and the night in the same way.** [[The darkening by a third goes with the "third" factor of the first six trumpets. It's not clear exactly what will happen here, but it shouldn't be difficult to recognize when it comes to pass, especially with it coming to pass in sequence after the first three trumpets. This probably just

means that a third of the light coming from the sun, moon, and stars to the earth will be blocked out (darkened) somehow under the fourth trumpet. I assume that it will be obvious that something unusual (apparently supernatural) is happening.

Some believe this speaks of a partial eclipse, which seems rather complicated when applied to the sun, moon, and stars. Others speak of the light being blocked out for a third part of the day (like for four hours) and for a third part of the night. (This view also seems rather complicated, but God certainly could do it this way.) This partial darkening foreshadows/anticipates the somewhat complete darkening of the sun, moon, and stars that will come to pass in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (cf. Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:31; 3:14; Zeph. 1:15; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Luke 21:25; and Rev. 6:12). Also, under the fifth bowl of wrath, the kingdom of Antichrist will be darkened (Rev. 16:10, 11). It doesn't seem that anyone will be harmed, much less die, under the fourth trumpet.]] **(13) Then I looked, and I heard an eagle flying in midheaven, saying with a loud voice, 'Woe, woe, woe to those who dwell on the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!'** [[The warning judgment of the fifth angel is called the "first woe" in Rev. 9:12. (No one will die under the fifth trumpet.) The intense judgment of the sixth judgment is called the second woe (Rev. 11:14), and the seventh trumpet, with its very extensive judgments, is called the "third woe" (Rev. 11:14). Many glorious things will also come to pass under the sounding of the seventh trumpet (it will sound right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week), including the return of Christ; the resurrection and rapture; and the salvation of the end-time remnant of Israel.]] REVELATION CHAPTER 9 **Then the fifth angel sounded [his trumpet], and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth** [This fallen "star" is an evil angel (cf. Rev. 12:4, 7-9; 8:10, 11; and 1:20).]; **and the key of the bottomless pit** [[As the margin of the NASB points out, the Greek literally has "the key of the shaft of the abyss." The NIV has "the key to the shaft of the Abyss." The English word "abyss" comes from the Greek "abussos," which was also used in Luke 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; and 20:1, 3.]] **was given to him.** [[With this key the "star" could now open the shaft of the abyss. The fact that the key, which ultimately came from God, was given to this fallen star shows that God is in control, including the timing. God often uses evil beings in His end-time judgment of the world. We'll discuss this point further when we discuss His use of four evil angels under the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:14, 15).]] **(2) He opened the bottomless pit** ["the shaft of the abyss"], **and smoke went up out of the pit** [shaft], **like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit** [shaft]. [[The fact that John saw smoke come out of the shaft of the abyss that darkened the sun and the air doesn't necessarily mean that the sun and air will be darkened when the fifth trumpet sounds in the last days. These words regarding the sun and air being darkened by smoke demonstrate, however, that

it's Biblical to think of the sun being darkened by smoke that blocks out the light coming from the sun to the earth. The sun itself isn't actually darkened.

This confirms that it's reasonable to say that the darkening of the sun and moon at the time the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (e.g., Joel 2:31; Matt. 24:29, 30; Mark 13:24-26; and Rev. 6:12) will be caused by the smoke and dust generated during the very intense warfare of the sixth trumpet, which is the equivalent of the short great tribulation (e.g., Joel 2:30; Matt. 24:21, 22; Mark 13:19, 20; Rev. 6:12 [the great shaking of Rev. 6:12 probably includes this intense warfare]; and Rev. 9:13-21 [note the smoke in 9:17, 18]). We will discuss these things under Rev. 9:13-21 (these verses discuss the very intense warfare of the sixth trumpet).] **(3) Then out of the smoke** [which came up out of the shaft of the abyss] **came locusts upon the earth** [[A large number of locusts came into Egypt under the eighth plague (Ex. 10:1-20). Joel 1:1-20 (cf. Joel 2:1-27) are another important cross-reference for the locust attack of Rev. 9:1-11; these verses in Joel also are an important cross-reference for Rev. 9:13-21. Cross-references to Joel will demonstrate this fact as we continue. Exodus 10:1-20 and Joel 1:1-20 (cf. Joel 2:1-27) speak of an invasion by a large numbers of literal locusts, but it's clear (based on the description of the locusts) that the locusts of Rev. 9:1-11 aren't literal locusts. In agreement with many, I consider them to be demonic locusts. They come up from the abyss, from the underworld. John saw these demonic locusts while receiving this revelation, but it's quite possible that these locusts won't be visibly present during the time of their attack.]], **and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power** [see Rev. 9:5, 10]. **(4) They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth** [These directions ultimately came from God, who is in control. Apparently at least some of the grass that was burned up under the first trumpet (Rev. 8:7) will have been replaced by newly grown grass.], **nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.** [[In Rev. 7:1-8 we learned that the end-time elect remnant of Israel will be sealed on their foreheads for protection. They won't become Christians until after the rapture at the seventh and last trumpet, so they will need a special seal for protection during the sounding of the trumpets, especially during the events of the sixth trumpet. The true Christians who will be living on the earth during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, in the days before the rapture when the trumpets will be sounding, won't need a special seal: As born-again Christians they have been sealed by God with the blood of Christ and with the Holy Spirit (cf. Eph. 1:13; 4:30; and 2 Cor. 1:22).]] **(5) And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months** [Compare Rev. 9:10. I assume that this locust attack will last for a literal five months.]; **and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man** [cf. Rev. 9:3, 10]. [[It's clear that this warning judgment will be powerful enough to get the attention of the world, and it's equally clear that this judgment is in the category of being a warning of the fast

approach of the day of judgment and of the need for repentance, with no one dying under this trumpet. The fact that these locusts won't be able to touch God's people, that it will follow in sequence after the first four trumpets, and that it will last for five months, etc. - just like the Bible said - will make this warning judgment all the more effective at getting the attention of people worldwide. It will be more effective yet if the two witnesses/prophets announce this trumpet before it sounds and/or speak of this warning judgment while it is taking place, which I assume will happen.]] **(6) And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die** [cf. Job 3:21; 7:15; Jer. 8:3; and Rev. 6:16], **and death flees from them.** [[I don't believe there's any idea intended that God will prevent men from committing suicide, etc. This verse apparently just emphasizes the fact that the torment that results from the sting of these demonic locusts will be quite severe. This *will* get the attention of the world.]] **(7) The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle** [[JOEL 2:4 says, "Their appearance is like the appearance of horses; And like war horses, so they run." I'll comment briefly on the background and meaning of Joel chapters 1, 2. Joel chapter 1 speaks of a literal invasion of locusts that came to Israel/Judah in the days of Joel. God, through Joel, called for the repentance of His people in the light of their dire straits, and in light of the fact that the day of the Lord was still coming (cf. Joel 1:15; 2:1, 11). Joel chapter 2 builds on the locust invasion of chapter 1 and warns of a mighty invasion of the land of Israel/Judah in the last days by gigantic armies of men, which is likened to an invasion of locusts, and of the need for repentance at that time (not that God's people are supposed to wait for signs before they repent). The last lines of Joel 2:19 ("And I will never again make you a reproach among the nations," of Joel 2:26 ("Then My people will never be put to shame"), and of Joel 2:27 ("And My people will never be put to shame") help demonstrate that Joel chapter 2 looks beyond the days of Joel to God's ultimate salvation of the elect remnant of Israel. Joel chapter 2 has much application for the people of Joel's generation and subsequent generations too.

I believe the ultimate fulfillment of the invasion spoken of in Joel chapter 2 will come to pass with an invasion of large armies (on the very large armies, see under Rev. 9:14-16) that will lead to the intense warfare of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation that will be centered in that part of the world which includes Israel/Judah. We can see the effects of this warfare in Joel 2:30, "blood, fire and columns of smoke." Joel 2:31, 32 go on to say, "The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD [Yahweh] comes. (32) And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the LORD has said, Even among the survivors whom the LORD calls." On the intense warfare of the sixth trumpet and the darkening of the sun and moon, see under Rev. 9:13-21 below. The fifth trumpet with its

invasion of "locusts" on the earth builds to some extent on Joel, but the sixth trumpet, with the very large armies, apparently builds even more on Joel.

I'll quote from Robert B. Chisholm's introduction to the book of Joel ("Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament" [Victor Books, 1985], pages 1410, 1411). I'll quote part of what he said under the heading "The nature of the army in [Joel] 2:1-11." "Some contend that the locust plague in Joel 1, or an even more severe wave of locusts, is described in 2:1-11. ...

A more likely interpretation is that a literal foreign army is envisioned. The account is patterned after that of chapter 1, the army being described in locust-like terms in many respects (cf. Hans W. Wolff, "Joel and Amos," p. 42). In this way the close relationship and continuity between the plague of chapter 1 and the army of chapter 2 is emphasized. Both were instruments of the Lord's judgment - one past, the other future. Locusts had come - more 'locusts' were coming!

Several observations may be made in support of this position.

(1) The locust plague of chapter 1 was past; the invasion of 2:1-11 was still future from Joel's vantage point (cf. also 1:15). Thus the two accounts cannot deal with the same event (Wolff, "Joel and Amos," pp. 6-7, 42). ...

(2) The army in 2:1-11 is called in 2:20 'the northern army' (literally, 'the northerner'). Locusts usually attack Palestine from the south or southeast, not from the north (though invasions from the north are not unknown; cf. Allen, "The Books of Joel, Obadiah, and Micah," p. 88). The designation 'northerner' more likely refers to a literal foreign army, since historical or eschatological armies are often described as invading Palestine from that direction (including Assyria, Isa. 14:25, 31; Babylon, Jer. 6:1, 22; 15:12; Ezek. 26:7; and Gog, Ezek. 38:15 [cf. Dan. 11:40-44; we will discuss these verses that apparently prophesy of the warfare of the short great tribulation below]).

(3) The use of locust imagery in the description of the army in Joel 2 has parallels in the ancient Near East (cf. John A. Thompson, 'Joel's Locusts in the Light of Near Eastern Parallels,' 'Journal of Near Eastern Studies' 14. 1955:52-5." Chisholm continued with a fourth observation and further discussion.]); **and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. (8) They had hair like the hair of women [probably meaning long hair], and their teeth were like the teeth of lions.** [JOEL 1:6, speaking of literal locusts says, "For a nation has invaded my land, Mighty and without number; Its teeth are the teeth of a lion, And it has the fangs of a lioness."] **(9) They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their**

**wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing to battle.** [[The NIV has, "and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle." JOEL 2:4b, 5 has, "And like war horses, so they run. With a noise as of chariots."]] **(10) They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months.** [Cf. Rev. 9:3, 5.] **(11) They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss** [On the abyss see under Rev. 9:1.]; **his name in Hebrew is Abaddon** [i.e., Destruction. Compare Job 31:12.], **and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon** [i.e., Destroyer]. [[Apparently the king of these demonic locusts, the angel of the abyss, is an evil angel under Satan who has authority over the abyss. It's possible that the angel of the abyss is the same angel pictured in Rev. 9:1, 2, the one who received the key and opened the shaft of the abyss.]] **(12) The first woe is past; behold, two woes** [the judgments of the sixth and seventh trumpets (cf. Rev. 8:13)] **are still coming after these things.**

## **THE SIXTH TRUMPET (REVELATION 9:13-21) AND THE SHORT GREAT TRIBULATION:**

**Some Preliminary Comments.** These verses that deal with the sounding of the sixth trumpet are extremely important to a correct understanding of the end times. The timing (with respect to Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week) of the abomination of desolation directly affects the timing and content of the warfare of the sixth trumpet, which is the warfare of the short great tribulation. These things are discussed under this heading. ((They are discussed in some detail in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture" and my recently published e-book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." (A printed version of the e-book is now available for those who prefer printed books.) For a brief overview see number 8 on page 14, and see pages 31, 32, and 131, 132 of "The Mid-Week Rapture." On the warfare of the sixth trumpet, see pages 137-143 [starting with Dan. 11:40] and pages 149-159 (under Dan. 12:1). On when God's day of wrath begins, see note 24 on pages 308, 309. The warfare of the sixth trumpet is also discussed in my eschatological paper on Matthew chapter 24, which is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching).))

I'll include a few excerpts from Baxter on the meaning of the short great tribulation: "The Great Tribulation is Satan's wrath upon the earth and not the wrath of God, and it begins when he is cast out of heaven" (page 75). He says the devil will be cast down to the earth in the middle of the seven years. (I agree with that last point.) "When he is cast down, Satan launches his persecution called the Great Tribulation" (page 75). "These scriptures [Matt. 24:15, 16, 21] place the casting down of Satan and the Abomination of Desolation at the same time; both of them beginning the Great Tribulation" (page 75). I agree that the Great Tribulation will start about the time of the Abomination of

Desolation, but (as I discuss in this paper) I believe the Abomination will take place a month before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. "The Great Tribulation is the wrath of Satan against God's people, and all who will not conform to his lordship upon this earth" (page 114). This paper makes it clear that I don't agree with Baxter's understanding of the short great tribulation: The short great tribulation originates with God (not Satan, but God, who always is fully in control of what is happening, uses four evil angels in His judgment of extremely intense warfare of the sixth trumpet); the short great tribulation will start a month before Satan is cast down to the earth with his angels and it will be over before the Lord Jesus returns and Satan is cast down in the middle of the seven years.

**When Will the Abomination of Desolation of Daniel 9:27; 12:11; and Matthew 24:15 Take Place in Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week?** As I mentioned this topic directly affects our understanding of the short great tribulation.

**DANIEL 9:27** (I'll quote this verse as we continue) is the only verse in the Bible that speaks of that super-important seven-year period that is sometimes called Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, but it is very significant that we read of half of that seven-year period (the equivalent of three and one-half years) in Dan. 7:25 and 12:7 and in five verses in the book of Revelation (11:2, 3; 12:6, 14; and 13:5). Daniel 12:11, which is a very important verse that I will quote and discuss as we continue, mentions 1,290 days, which is the equivalent of three and one-half years plus 30 days (a month). The expressions used in the Bible for the three and one-half year periods are a time, times, and half a time (a year, two years, and half a year); forty-two months; and 1,260 days (42 months times 30 days per month).

Baxter believes (and many agree with him on this point) that all seven of these three and one-half year periods will take place in the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. (On Rev. 11:2, 3 see his Chronological Chart for "Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week for example.) It has always seemed clear to me, and still does, that the three and one-half years of Rev. 11:2 and 3 refer to the first half of the seven-year period. The evidence is very strong! THIS MAKES A GIGANTIC DIFFERENCE IN THE INTERPRETATION OF REVELATION CHAPTERS 11-13, WHICH IS OF KEY IMPORTANCE. For one thing, the seventh and last trumpet sounds in Rev. 11:15, right in the middle of the seven-year period. ((Baxter agrees that the seventh trumpet sounds in Rev. 11:15, but there are gigantic differences in our understanding of the details of Revelation chapters 11-13, and other parts of the book of Revelation. For one thing, Baxter believes the seventh trumpet will sound at the end of the seven years, not in the middle of the seven years. He believes that Rev. 11:1-3 show that Jerusalem will be tread under foot by the

Gentiles during the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week and that the two witnesses will minister then too [see his pages 58-64, for example]. As I mentioned, I am confident that these things will take place in the first half of the seven years.))

I'll quote DANIEL 9:27 and make a few comments in brackets: "**And he** [Antichrist] **will make a firm covenant** [or, he will confirm (make strong) a covenant/treaty] **with the many** [Israel will be involved] **for one week** [a week of years; a seven-year period; for more details see Dan. 9:24-27 (these verses are discussed in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," in chapter 8)], **but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one** [referring to Antichrist and his abomination of desolation] **who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed** [by God] **is poured out on the one who makes desolate** [referring to Antichrist]."

Assuming that this covenant/treaty will be ratified in the near future, it will undoubtedly give the Palestinians much of what they want, and it will probably include Israel giving up control of Jerusalem (Rev. 11:2), but with Israel being given the right to rebuild the temple on the temple mount north of the Dome of the Rock. Israel will be promised security, but sometimes the promises of men are worth zero, or less than that.

I'll quote **DANIEL 12:11** ((This is one of the most important verses we will discuss in this paper. I don't believe we can adequately understand the details of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week and the end times unless we rightly interpret this verse. I don't believe Baxter rightly interprets it, but most agree with him; the majority is often wrong. I'll quote from the NASB, which I always use unless I mention otherwise.)): "**From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up** [I would translate "is initiated" or the equivalent (see pages 183, 184 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture"); we will discuss the image of the beast as we continue.], **there will be 1,290 days.**" Our primary purpose here is to discuss the 1,290 days. This verse is of crucial significance in that it shows that the abomination will take place a month before the more precise middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. As we will discuss, Dan. 12:11 (and other significant considerations) demonstrate that the words "in the middle of the week" of Dan. 9:27 speak of the approximate middle of the seven-year period. Antichrist's abomination of desolation will consist of his going into the (rebuilt) temple in Jerusalem, putting a stop to sacrifice and grain offering, and demanding that he be worshiped (cf., e.g., Dan. 9:27; 11:36, 37; Matt. 24:15; and 2 Thess. 2:3, 4).

Antichrist's abomination of desolation has nothing to do with the image of the beast of Rev. 13:14, 15. For one thing, the false prophet will not have the image of the beast (the beast is Antichrist) made until the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, AFTER THE

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (which will take place a month before the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture), and after Antichrist has been killed and come back from the dead.

The image will commemorate the fact that Antichrist has come back from the dead (Rev. 13:12, 14; cf. 13:3; 17:8 with 11:7). Antichrist will apparently be killed during the very intense warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22, which will take place AFTER the abomination of desolation of Matt. 24:15. And it is clear, I believe, that he will come back from the dead (he will come up out of the abyss [Rev. 11:7]) AFTER the abomination of desolation and in time to kill the two witnesses whose bodies will lay dead in Jerusalem for three and one-half days before they come back to life and are raptured before the watching world right in the middle of the seven years. (It is very unlikely that Antichrist will be killed before the abomination or that much time will pass between the time he comes back from the dead and the time he kills the two witnesses.) As I mentioned, Dan. 12:11 enables us to see that the abomination of desolation will take place a month before the return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture.

We will discuss these things in more detail as we continue, and they are discussed in some detail in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," and my recently published e-book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." (As I mentioned the printed version of the e-book is now available.) "The Mid-Week Rapture" contains much more information, but "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture" should typically be read first; for one thing it is easier to read and it deals more directly with the timing of the return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture. Both books are available at amazon.com, and both paperback books are available on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching). Also, quite a few of my papers dealing with the end times are available on my internet site.

((ZECHARIAH 11:8 serves as a rather strong confirmation of a one-month period that will take place right before Antichrist begins his three and one-half year super-evil reign in the middle of the seven years. Antichrist cannot begin this super-evil reign until he has been killed and come back from the dead. (As I mentioned, we know that he will come back from the dead in time to kill the two witnesses three and one-half days before the mid-week rapture [Rev. 11:8-13]). And there is another very significant thing that must take place before Antichrist begins his three and one-half year super-evil reign: The devil must give him "his power, his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2) right after the devil is cast down to the earth at the time the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of the seven years (Rev. 12:7-9).

Zechariah 11:8 prophesies of God's judging and "annihilating the three shepherds [three rulers] IN ONE MONTH [my emphasis]." I believe this refers to the same event that

Daniel prophesied in Dan. 7:8, 20, where Antichrist uproots THREE of the ten horns. He undoubtedly will kill (or have killed) three of the ten rulers because they are not in agreement with him and his plans. During that one-month period after the abomination of desolation and before the rapture would be the perfect time for him to deal with the three rulers, shortly before he begins his super-evil three and one-half year reign (cf. Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5). The TEN rulers (horns) are mentioned in the book of Revelation, so the three rulers will be replaced by rulers who fully support Antichrist. Zechariah chapter 11 is discussed verse-by-verse in chapter 14 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture." It is interesting and important that Zech. 11:15-17 prophesy about Antichrist.))

The desolation that will take place after Antichrist enters the temple and is manifested as Antichrist will not come to an end until the Lord Jesus terminates him (and the false prophet) at the end of the seven years (see Rev. 19:20; Dan. 7:11). BY COUNTING BACKWARDS 1,290 DAYS FROM THE END OF THE SEVEN YEARS, WE CAN SEE THAT THE ABOMINATION WILL TAKE PLACE SOME 30 DAYS, A MONTH, BEFORE THE MIDDLE OF THE SEVEN YEARS. (As I mentioned, half of the seven-year period is 1,260 days.) THIS IS SUPER-IMPORTANT INFORMATION! For one thing, it enables us to rightly interpret MATTHEW CHAPTER 24. The information that the abomination of desolation will take place a month before the middle of the seven years leaves time for the short great tribulation (Matt. 24:21, 22) before the return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (Matt. 24:29-31). When we discuss the key passages that speak of the warfare of the short great tribulation (especially the warfare of the sixth trumpet [Rev. 9:13-21]) it will be obvious that this warfare can easily be completed within a one-month period.

As I mentioned, I believe Dan. 9:27 speaks of the middle of the seven years in approximate terms and that Dan. 12:11 shows that that in more precise terms Antichrist will go into the temple a month before the more precise middle. This interpretation is totally reasonable because the Hebrew noun ("chatsi") that is translated middle in Dan. 9:27 is frequently used in very imprecise ways in the Old Testament. For example, in Ex. 12:29; Jud. 16:3; and Ruth 3:8 chatsi is used of things happening in the middle of the night. That is very imprecise terminology! And In Psalm 102:24 the psalmist prays that he may not be taken away (by death) in the midst (chatsi) of his days (also see Jer. 17:11). Again, it is obvious that a precise middle was not intended in these two verses. It is very reasonable to say that Antichrist will go into the temple, etc. in the approximate middle, a month before the more precise middle. A month before the more precise middle is 2.38 percent removed from the more precise middle. If we don't get this detail right, I don't believe we can adequately understand many end-time details, very much including the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22.

**Matthew 24:21, 22 and the Short Great Tribulation.** "for then there will be a [I would skip this "a" with the KJV, NKJV, and the NIV.] **great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall.** [[It's extremely important for us to understand the short great tribulation; however, from my point of view, very few do understand it at the present time. We often hear that the final seven-year period (Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week) is the great tribulation, but that is clearly wrong: Matthew chapter 24 shows that it doesn't start until the time of the abomination of desolation, and it is clear that the abomination doesn't take place until the (approximate) middle of the seven years. As we discussed in the preceding section, I believe it will take place in the approximate middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, a month before the more precise middle. (The word "Then" at the beginning of Matt. 24:21 [and 24:16] refers to the time of the abomination.) Much more reasonable is the widespread viewpoint that the great tribulation refers to the second half of the seven-year period. Baxter (and many others) holds this viewpoint; however, I believe this view is also wrong.

The short great tribulation will begin about the time of the abomination of desolation (cf. Matt. 24:15, 21, 22), which will take place a month before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week and will end before the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of the seven years. Matthew 24:29 shows that the great tribulation (spoken of in 24:21, 22) will be over before the mid-week return of Christ, which is pictured in Matt. 24:29-31. Note that Matt. 24:29 starts with the words "immediately after the tribulation of those days," referring back to the great tribulation spoken of in Matt. 24:21, 22. (The same Greek noun for tribulation is used in Matt. 24:21 and 29.) In Matt. 24:30, 31 we see the mid-week return of Christ with the clouds of the sky with power and great glory; with a great trumpet; and with the gathering of the saints in the rapture.

The primary passage that convinces me that the Lord Jesus will return right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week is Revelation chapters 11-13; these chapters are discussed verse-by-verse in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture" and in less detail in my newer book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." Daniel chapter 12 also strongly confirms the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture. It is discussed in both of my end-time books.

It is significant that the sun and moon's being darkened in Matt. 24:29 will be caused by all of the smoke and dust generated during the intense warfare of the short great tribulation (see Rev. 9:17, 18; Joel. 2:30, 31). It is also quite significant that the stars falling and the powers of the heavens being shaken at that time, right in the middle of the seven years (Matt. 24:29), is explained by Rev. 12:4, 7-9, where we read of Satan

and his angels being cast down to the earth. Satan's angels are called stars in Rev. 12:4.

I consider Rev. 9:13-21 to be the most important of the three cross-references that I'll mention here that enable us to begin to understand the short great tribulation. (I'll briefly discuss the other two cross-references here and discuss them in more detail as we continue. We will come to a verse-by-verse study of Rev. 9:13-21 after we finish "Matthew 24:21, 22 and the Short Great Tribulation.") Revelation 9:13-21 prophesy regarding what will happen when the sixth trumpet of Revelation sounds; they speak of very intense warfare, undoubtedly nuclear (and perhaps chemical and/or biological or advanced weapon systems that we haven't seen before), that will take place in the general region that includes Israel. As I mentioned, the sixth trumpet will sound about the time of the abomination of desolation, about a month before the rapture.

The warfare described in Rev. 9:13-21, which constitutes at least the major part of the warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22, is a war between nations (not an attack against Christians; this is not to say that there won't be any such attacks during those days; such attacks have often taken place throughout the history of the Christian church); this warfare (described in Rev. 9:13-21) seems to start with an attack against Antichrist and his armies by a gigantic army (it could be as large as two-hundred million soldiers) coming against him. This invasion of troops and the intense warfare will certainly include staking out various claims for control of the land of Israel, and especially Jerusalem and the temple mount. We'll say more about this warfare as we continue.

The nation Israel will suffer greatly during the one-month period between the abomination of desolation and the mid-week return of Christ. Apparently they will be reduced to a repentant remnant during this period, ready (at least for the most part) to receive Christ Jesus when He comes. Based on Zech. 13:8 it seems that some two-thirds of the Israelites will be cut off and perish in those days (probably mostly in that one-month period). (See on Zech. 13:7-14:2 [pages 225-229 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture"]; see on Dan. 12:1 [pages 149-159], and see on Zech. 12:1-14 [pages 221-224].)

Daniel 11:40-12:1 are another important cross-reference for the warfare of the short great tribulation. Daniel 11:40-43 apparently deal with the preliminary warfare that leads up to the warfare of Rev. 9:13-21, and Dan. 11:44 apparently deals with the warfare of Rev. 9:13-21 in very brief form. The abomination of desolation will apparently take place at the time of the events of Dan. 11:41. Chapter 9 of "The Mid-Week Rapture" deals with Dan. 11:36-45.

Daniel 12:1 is a very significant verse for the short great tribulation. For one thing, there is widespread agreement that Jesus' words of Matt. 24:21 regarding a time of unequalled great tribulation/distress, though not a word-for-word quotation, derive from the words of Dan. 12:1. See pages 149-151, 155, 156 of "The Mid-Week Rapture" on Dan. 12:1.

Daniel chapter 12 (with Dan. 11:36-45) serves as a very strong confirmation of the fact that the rapture will take place right in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The time of great tribulation/distress mentioned in Dan. 12:1 will be over by the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. Daniel 12:7 shows that three and one-half very difficult years still remain (after the short great tribulation has ended) for the end-time remnant of Israel (cf. Dan. 7:21, 25; Rev. 13:5, 7). Daniel 12:2 speaks of the mid-week resurrection of God's people (not that you could tell that it will take place in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week based on Dan. 12:2 by itself).

Further strong confirmation that the time of short great tribulation is over and the resurrection (and rapture) takes place in the middle of the seven-year period is provided by Dan. 12:6, 7, which speak of "the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river." This apparently refers to the Lord Jesus Christ (the Angel/Messenger of the LORD [Yahweh]), seen in an exalted position above the earth (apparently relating to His coming in the clouds at the time of the rapture), at a time corresponding with the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (in that He says that there are still three and one-half years to go). And last, I'll mention that Dan. 12:11 helps us see that the abomination of desolation will take place a month before the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. To say the least, Daniel chapter 12 is a very important prophetic chapter. (These important points are all discussed in the two chapters of "The Mid-Week Rapture" that deal with Daniel chapter 12.) In my book, there is a section titled "The Time of the Sounding of the Seventh and Last Trumpet," starting on page 293. Under number 10 there, I discussed Daniel chapter 12 somewhat, but that discussion should be modified/expanded a little to include all that I have said in the last two paragraphs.

Revelation 7:14 must also be considered here since this verse speaks of "the great tribulation." These words undoubtedly build on Matt. 24:21. Revelation 7:9-17 are discussed in Article 19 of my e-book (and printed version of the e-book), "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture," for one place.

Joel 2:30, which we'll discuss further below, is a third important cross-reference for the warfare of the short great tribulation. This verse is doubly significant in that it mentions "columns of smoke." This smoke (and the dust) generated during the warfare of the

short great tribulation will undoubtedly cause the darkening of the sun and moon pictured in Matt. 24:29. It's significant that Rev. 9:17, 18 mention smoke too. (As mentioned above, Rev. 9:13-21 are the most important cross-reference for the warfare of the great tribulation.) It's significant that Joel 2:30, 31 specifically mention the darkening of the sun and moon, and that they show that this darkening will take place (just) before the day of the Lord begins. Now we'll continue with MATTHEW 24:22:]] **And unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.**" The "elect" are God's people, the Christians, but the elect here undoubtedly include those who will eventually become Christians (after the rapture), including the end-time remnant of Israel. Because of the intensity of the warfare of the short great tribulation (Revelation 9:15, 18 show that a third of mankind will be killed, which is overwhelming, even if this third probably deals with a third of a population substantially less than the total population of the earth), there wouldn't be any people left alive on the earth if these days weren't cut short in God's end-time plans.

**Revelation 9:13-21.** "Then the sixth angel sounded [his trumpet], and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God [[Revelation 8:3 spoke of the prayers of the saints (of us believers) being offered before God on this golden altar. As we discussed under Rev. 8:2-5, it is significant that the trumpets are sounded (in part) in answer to our prayers (prayers like "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" [Matt. 6:10]). The fact that the voice that gives directions regarding the judgment of the sixth trumpet comes from the horns of this same golden altar reinforces that idea here. The judgments of the trumpets (including the sixth trumpet) are not coming against us (God's people). Revelation 9:20, 21 confirm this important point. It's not clear who actually spoke (ultimately the voice reflects the will of God), but the voice somehow came from the horns of the golden altar. The altar itself could have spoken: Rev. 16:7 says, "And I heard the [sacrificial] altar saying, 'Yes, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.' "]], **(14) one saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, 'Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates.'** [[The sixth angel, who is a high-level good angel of God, does more than sound the trumpet. For one thing, he will release the four evil angels who are bound at the Euphrates River. This angel undoubtedly has the authority to make sure that the four evil angels do exactly what they're supposed to do and at the right time, in accordance with the will of God. The evil angels will be doing the kind of destructive things they like to do with their assigned roles for which they have been prepared (Rev. 9:15), but they (like Satan) certainly have no desire to serve God and do His will, quite the opposite.

The four angels will apparently go forth to gather very large armies of men, maybe four separate armies, from their assigned parts of the world (Rev. 9:15-19). (In Rev. 16:13-16, near the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, demons gather large armies of men to Armageddon under the sixth bowl of wrath.) The total number will be two hundred million (Rev. 9:16). The armies will cross the Euphrates River and come into that part of the world which includes Israel.]] **(15) And the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released, so that they would kill a third of mankind.** [[We aren't given any insight as to when and how these four evil angels had been prepared for their roles. It seems that God has already predetermined exactly when the sixth angel will sound his trumpet, down to the very hour (cf., e.g., Acts 1:7). This means that factors like the faithfulness, or lack of faithfulness, of Christians, even though they are very important, won't affect God's predetermined timing for the trumpets, including the seventh and last trumpet of the return of the Lord Jesus and the rapture. God leaves a lot of room for angels (good and evil) and for men (good and evil) to act, but He keeps things under control - thanks be to God!

The "third" factor, as we have seen, is typical for the trumpets. A third of mankind being killed is obviously a very big deal, even if the total number of those killed will probably be far less than a third of the total population of the earth. I'm certainly not being dogmatic on this point, just giving my opinion. The Bible can speak of a kingdom as a worldwide kingdom when it was understood by everybody that the kingdom didn't begin to cover the dimensions of the earth that were known at that time. I'll give a few examples from the book of Daniel that speak of "world-kingsdoms": Referring to the Greek world-kingdom, Dan. 2:39 speaks of it as a kingdom "which will rule over all the earth" (Dan. 2:39). Referring to Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian world-kingdom, Dan. 4:1 says: "Nebuchadnezzar the king to all the peoples, nations, and *men of every* language that live in all the earth. ...." Those were Nebuchadnezzar's words, but Daniel prophesied the following words to Nebuchadnezzar in Dan. 4:22: "it is you, O king; for you have become great and grown strong, and your majesty has become great and reached to the sky AND YOUR DOMINION TO THE END OF THE EARTH [my emphasis]." Everybody who lived back then understood that only a small part of the entire world/earth/inhabited earth was being spoken of. I'll list several verses from the New Testament which use expressions like "the world," "all the inhabited earth," "to the ends of the world," "all over the world," "throughout the whole world," and "all the earth" where only a rather small part of the entire earth/world (typically the Roman world) was being referred to: Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28; 17:6; 19:27; 24:5; Rom. 1:8; and 10:18. The Roman world-kingdom covered about as much territory as the United States, not including Alaska. The Roman world-kingdom was much larger than the Babylonian world-kingdom.

The judgments of the first six trumpets will probably be centered in that part of the world that includes the revived Roman Empire and not extend outward nearly far enough to directly involve the entire globe. The sixth trumpet warfare will be very extensive; it undoubtedly could be called World War III; but, as I mentioned, I doubt that a third of the total population of the earth will be killed under this trumpet. (The entire world will be very much aware of what is happening during the sounding of the first six trumpets and will be affected by them, even if they aren't directly involved. The darkening of the sun, moon and stars by a third under the fourth trumpet will directly involve the entire world.) Keep in mind that the day of judgment won't officially begin until the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet; a third of mankind being killed is of staggering proportion. If it is true, for example, as I suggested (and I'm not the only one suggesting this), that the sea of the second trumpet (Rev. 8:8, 9) is the Mediterranean Sea, this is a strong basis for suggesting that the first six trumpet judgments probably won't directly involve all the world.

For one important point, I don't believe Antichrist's authority will extend to cover the earth, not even during his super-evil reign throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. Revelation 13:11-18 show that the false prophet will cause everyone who doesn't take Antichrist's mark and worship him to be killed, but Rev. 15:3, 4; 20:3 seem to show that there will be a very large number of people of the nations (people who had not become Christians; it could be more than a billion people) who will still be alive at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (by the merciful plan of God) who will be repentant and will enter the millennial kingdom. These must necessarily be people who had not worshipped Antichrist or taken his mark (see Rev. 14:9-11). If Antichrist's authority extended worldwide he would have been able to kill all these people.

The present population of the earth (2015) is 7.3 billion people. A third of 7.3 billion would be 2.4 billion people killed. Let's briefly consider World War I and World War II to gain some perspective. The total number of deaths, including civilian deaths, attributed to WWI was about 20 million. For WWII the estimates typically run from 50 to 60 million. If only a tenth of a third of the present total population of the earth is killed during the sixth trumpet warfare, that would be 240 million people (a tenth of 2.4 billion), which would be quite awesome, and would greatly shake the world. Not only would 240 million be more than four times more than all those who lost their lives because of WWII, but the warfare of the sixth trumpet will apparently last only a few weeks while WWII lasted more than five years. For one thing, modern weapons systems (including nuclear, laser, biological, chemical, etc.), with their advanced delivery systems (including missiles, the aircraft of our day, and perhaps spacecraft and satellites) are much more potent and lethal than those used in WWII. I assume the number killed under the sixth trumpet will be closer to 240 million than 2.4 billion. One billion is closer to 240 million than to 2.4

billion!]] **(16) The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.** [[This number (which certainly seems to be a literal number; I believe it is a literal number) is rather mind-boggling, but not at all impossible. Such large numbers fit the picture of invading armies being compared to a locust invasion, which was briefly discussed above). With countries like China having a present population of 1.4 billion, and India having 1.3 billion, and with there being some 1.6 billion Moslems in the world today, etc., it's not hard to imagine a literal two hundred million soldiers. Back in the 50s China boasted that they could field an army of two hundred million.]] **(17) And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them: *the riders had breastplates the color of fire [reddish] and of hyacinth [bluish, like smoke; "In its only occurrence in the NT... 'huakinthinos' appears to denote a dusky blue colour as of sulphurous smoke..." ("Vocabulary of the Greek Testament" by J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan [Eerdmans, 1972 reprint], page 647).] and of brimstone*** [[Or, sulfur, which is yellow; cf. Rev. 9:18; 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; and 21:8. It's not clear (nor is it important) whether some of the breastplates were "fiery red" (NKJV), some "hyacinth blue" (NKJV), and some "sulfur yellow" (NKJV), or whether each breastplate had all three colors. The translation of the NIV takes the viewpoint that the horses also had breastplates. These three colors go with the "fire and smoke and brimstone" that proceed from the mouths of the horses, spoken of in the second half of this verse.]]; **and the heads of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke and brimstone.** [[It's clear that we aren't to think of literal horses carrying riders/soldiers; instead of horses we should think of modern weapon systems, like tanks, missile launchers, airplanes, and helicopters. Literal horses don't have heads like lions, and they don't have fire and smoke and brimstone coming out of their mouths. Out of the barrels of guns and out of the warheads of missiles, however, fire and smoke and brimstone do proceed. In John's day there were no words or concepts to describe modern weapon systems.]] **(18) A third of mankind was killed by these three plagues, by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which proceeded out of their mouths.** [See under Rev. 9:15.] **(19) For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents and have heads, and with them they do harm.** [On the mouths of the horses, see Rev. 9:17. Their "tails" probably include things like guns coming from the rear of tanks.] **(20) The rest of mankind** [The believers are not included here.], **who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands** [[As I mentioned, these words confirm the important point that the judgments of the sixth trumpet are not coming against God's people. They also confirm that mankind (at that time) is still being called to repent by God (cf., e.g., Rev. 14:6, 7 [These verses speak of the "eternal gospel" being proclaimed worldwide after the mid-week rapture along with a call to fear God (with repentance) and worship Him.]; 16:9, 11, 21). On the works of their hands, which refer to the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can

neither see nor hear nor walk, compare Deut. 4:28; 2 Kings 19:18; Psalms 115:4-8; 135:15-18; Jer. 1:16; Mic. 5:13; Acts 7:41; and 19:26. In our day most of the idolatry is more subtle (i.e., bowing before money, science, fame, the goddess of sex, sports, entertainment, etc.).

I'll quote part of what Philip E. Hughes said here ("Book of the Revelation" [Eerdmans, 1990], page 115), "The much vaunted civilization of our day may be free from graven images, but it is certainly not free from idolatry. As St. Paul explained long since, the person who is covetous is an idolater (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5), and this means that virtually anything can become an idol: money, power, fame, pleasure, sex - in short, humanistic self-centeredness in all its forms. Accordingly, the idolatry of which St. John speaks here is not remote from us and irrelevant to our situation. The worship of false gods, who in fact are no gods, is the expression of ungodliness which goes hand in hand with the breaking of all God's commandments."], **so as not to worship demons** [[Pagan religion/idolatry/sacrifices often involved the worship of demons, whether the worshippers were aware of it, or not (e.g., Deut. 32:17; Psalm 106:35-38; and 1 Cor. 10:14-22). In our modern world many who don't even believe that demons exist are yielding themselves to and being controlled by them to a significant extent. Demons can "help" Christian theologians (and leaders) come up with more "doctrines of demons" if we will accept their "help."]], **and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk; (21) and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries** [[On sorceries, compare Ex. 22:18; Deut. 18:10; Isa. 47:9, 12; Mal. 3:5; Gal. 5:20; Rev. 21:8; and 22:15. I'll quote what John MacArthur said here ("Revelation 1-11" [Moody Press, 1999], pages 273, 274), "John describes a third sin his vision revealed will characterize that tragic time as sorceries, a Greek word ["pharmakon"] from which the English words 'pharmacy' and 'pharmaceuticals' derive. Drugs were and still are believed to induce a higher religious state of communion with deities. (For a discussion of such practices, see "Ephesians," "MacArthur New Testament Commentary" [Chicago: Moody, 1986], 229-34.) Pharmakon can also refer to poisons, amulets, charms, seances, witchcraft, incantations, magic spells, contacting mediums, or any other object that is tied to pagan idolatry to elicit lust or to seduce. People will dive deeper into the satanic trappings of false religion."]] **nor of their immorality nor of their thefts.** [[These words don't mean, I don't believe, that absolutely no people will repent, but the majority won't repent, even though they have every reason to repent. They will continue on in their sins (including unbelief) instead of repenting. These words help demonstrate why judgment day is necessary.]]

**Joel 2:30, 31.** These verses prophesy of this same warfare (the warfare pictured in Rev. 9:13-21, which is the warfare of the short great tribulation of Matt. 24:21, 22). I'll

quote these verses and make some comments: **"I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke. (31) The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the LORD [Hebrew "Yahweh"] comes."** [[The blood, fire, and columns of smoke picture the warfare of the short great tribulation. As I mentioned, the mention of "smoke" here (and in Rev. 9:17, 18) is very important. It explains the sun being darkened and the moon being turned to blood (or being darkened) "before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes" (Joel 2:31). The "day of the LORD" will start when God the Father sends His Son back to the earth to save (starting with the rapture) and to judge. The wording of Joel 2:30, 31 shows that when the Lord Jesus returns the sun will have been turned into darkness and the moon into blood. We see the same sequence of events in Matt. 24:29-31 and Rev. 6:12-17. Most agree that the moon being turned into blood (with an ominous red coloration) in Joel 2:31 (and Rev. 6:12) is the equivalent of the moon's not giving its light in Matt. 24:29.

It is also quite significant that Joel 2:32 goes on to prophesy of the conversion of the elect, end-time remnant of Israel that will take place after the great shaking of the short great tribulation reduces them to a repentant remnant during the one-month period that will start with the abomination of desolation. (At least most of the reduction will take place during that one-month period.) On being reduced to a repentant remnant, see, for example, Zech. 13:8; 14:1, 2; Jer. 30:7 [the time of Jacob's trouble]; and Isa. 10:20-23 with Rom. 9:27-29). On the conversion of this repentant remnant (when they become Christians; see, for example, Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:25-27 [cf. Rom. 9:27-29]; and Rev. 11:13).

**Daniel 11:40-45.** This is another passage that prophesies of the warfare of the short great tribulation. I'll quote these interesting verses and comment on them. (For more details see the verse-by-verse discussion of Dan. 11:36-45 in chapter 9 of "The Mid-Week Rapture.") **"At the end time [I would translate "the time of the end" with the NIV; KJV; and NKJV] the king of the South** [[Throughout Dan. 11:5-35 we read of various kings of the South and kings of the North. Ptolemy, who had been a general under Alexander the Great, was the first "king of the South." He reigned in Egypt from 304-285 BC. There was repeated warfare between the kings of the South and the kings of the North mentioned throughout these verses. The kings of the South were in Egypt, so the "king of the South" in the time of the end will undoubtedly involve Egypt (cf. Dan. 11:42, 43).]] **will collide with him** [The king of the South will take the initiative and collide with the king of the North.], **and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships** [The king of the North, who is Antichrist, will strongly retaliate. The armies will use modern weapon systems.], **and he**

**will enter countries, overflow *them* and pass through.** [We should undoubtedly think of Antichrist coming from the North, and in the light of the countries mentioned in verses 41-43, we should apparently think of him first entering countries like Syria and Lebanon.] **(41) He will also enter the Beautiful Land [Israel], and many *countries* will fall** [[The NASB supplied the word "countries" in italics. I agree with those who believe Daniel was prophesying here that many Israelis will fall, not countries. (See my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture" for the details.) Antichrist's abomination of desolation will apparently take place at this time. He will probably tell Israel that he has come to save them and that they need to worship him. It is quite possible that the way the king of the South will collide with the king of the North (11:40) is that he will attack Israel in some way that will give Antichrist the right "to defend" Israel based on the terms of the seven-year treaty/covenant of Dan. 9:27.

Many Israelis will strongly react against Antichrist's abominable activities, and many will undoubtedly fall at that time. We expect Israel's end-time troubles to begin with Antichrist's abomination of desolation (cf., e.g., Dan. 8:10-14; 9:27; 12:11; Isa. 66:5, 6; Matt. 24:15-22; 2 Thess. 2:3, 4). As we have discussed and will further discuss in this paper, the warfare of the short great tribulation will take place during the one-month period between the abomination of desolation and the mid-week return of Christ and the rapture.]; **but these will be rescued** [I believe "**shall escape**" of the KJV; NKJV, or "**will escape**" is better.] **out of his hand: Edom, Moab, and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.** [[They will probably escape (at least temporarily) because Antichrist will be in a hurry to move South to deal with Egypt (see Dan. 11:40, 42, 43; as I mentioned, the king of the South undoubtedly involves Egypt). Modern Jordan now covers the territory of ancient Edom, Moab, and Ammon; the Jordanians are probably in view here.]] **(42) Then he will stretch his hand out against *other* countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape. (43) But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians *will follow at his heels.*** [[The Libyans and Ethiopians may have been aligned with the king of the South in his initial collision with Antichrist (Dan. 11:40). Anyway, they, like the Egyptians, will submit to Antichrist, including submitting their armies to him. (NOW WE COME TO VERSE 44, WHICH APPARENTLY IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT VERSES IN THE BIBLE THAT PROPHESES OF THE WARFARE OF THE SHORT GREAT TRIBULATION OF MATT. 24:21, 22.))] **(44) But rumors ["reports" with the NIV is better] from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he** [Antichrist, the king of the North of verse 40] **will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.** [[Antichrist will be in the South, having conquered Egypt (verses 42, 43). He will apparently be disturbed by reports of VERY LARGE armies crossing the Euphrates River and coming into that part of the world. Those armies will be coming from "the East" and "the North" of his location. Antichrist's abomination of desolation

and the fact that he has been conquering countries will stir up much opposition to Antichrist, and nations/religions will want to defend their perceived rights (including religious rights) in Israel, especially in Jerusalem.

Apparently the prophecy of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation (Rev. 9:13-21), which we discussed above, enables us to understand the "reports" that will disturb Antichrist. That trumpet will sound about the time of Antichrist's abomination of desolation. The four evil angels who are now bound at the Euphrates River will be released at that time to gather TWO HUNDRED MILLION SOLDIERS who will cross the Euphrates River and come into that part of the world that includes Israel. Reports like that can disturb a person. (The ancient Romans feared attacks from Parthian horsemen who came from the other (northern and eastern) side of the Euphrates River.) Each evil angel may be responsible for gathering an army from his assigned part of the world. Note that demons gather the enemies of God (referring to people) to Armagedon (Har-Magedon) under the outpouring of the sixth bowl of wrath (Rev. 16:13-16).

As this verse (Dan. 11:44) shows (and it is no surprise) Antichrist "will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many." Antichrist will probably be killed during the warfare of the short great tribulation (Matt. 24:21, 22) that will take place in the one-month period that will start with the abomination of desolation (Matt. 24:15) and end before the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of the seven years (Matt. 24:29-31). Antichrist will be killed, but he will come back from the dead (he will come up out of the abyss [Rev. 11:7]) in time to kill the two witnesses three and one-half days before they come back to life (to the fullness of eternal life) before the watching world in the middle of the seven years and are raptured (Rev. 11:7-11). It isn't hard to believe that a third of mankind (but, as I mentioned, not necessarily a third of mankind worldwide) will be killed during those few weeks of warfare that will undoubtedly use nuclear weapons and probably other weapons of mass destruction.]] **(45)** [[This verse is important to help confirm the (apparent) important point that God will not permit Antichrist to have access to Jerusalem (very much including the temple mount) during the second half of the seven years, after the Lord Jesus has returned and the rapture has taken place. It will apparently be controlled by the Lord Jesus and the elect end-time remnant of Israel who will have repented and submitted to Him and become Christians.]] **He [Antichrist] will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him** [Contrast Michael arising to help the end-time remnant of Israel during the days of the (short) great tribulation that is spoken of in the next verse (Dan. 12:1), which (as we have discussed) will start about the time of the abomination of desolation]."] [(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) Antichrist will set up his headquarters in Israel. This may be his primary headquarters from this time (about the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week) to the

time "he will come to his end" at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (cf., e.g., Dan. 7:11; Rev. 19:20).

I believe the reading in the margin of the NIV ("the sea," instead of "the seas") in Dan 11:45 conveys the intended meaning. The Hebrew noun for "sea" is plural here, but it is quite common for Hebrew (unlike English) to use the plural when no plurality is intended. The Hebrew plural can be used to amplify the idea of majesty, extension, fullness, etc. I believe C. F. Keil (Keil and Delitzsch, "Commentary on the Old Testament," Vol. 9, 1978 reprint, pages 473, 474) says it well: The plural "is only the poetic plural of fullness, as a sign of the great Mediterranean Sea." Compare the size of that sea with the Sea of Galilee or the Dead Sea. The Mediterranean Sea is a common view in the commentaries.

So, Antichrist's headquarters will apparently be located between the Mediterranean Sea and Jerusalem, which is the "Holy Mountain" (cf. Dan. 9:16, 20). Within Jerusalem was the Temple Mount, which can certainly be called the "Holy Mountain." It seems certain that Antichrist would like to control Jerusalem and have access to the temple from the time he begins his super-evil reign in the middle of the seven years (cf., e.g., Rev. 13:2, 5), but apparently the Lord Jesus will claim Jerusalem as His city when He returns in the middle of the seven years.]]

**REVELATION 10:7 AND THE TIME OF THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET.** I'm taking this excerpt from Article 21 of my book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." All of Revelation chapter 10 is discussed there.

REVELATION 10:7. **"but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound [better, when he sounds, or the equivalent], then the mystery of God is finished, as He preached to His servants the prophets."** I can't live with the translation **"when he is about to sound"** of the NASB. The **"mystery of God"** will not be finished when the seventh trumpet is *about* to sound; nor will it be finished when the seventh trumpet *begins* to sound (with the KJV). The mystery of God will not be finished until the days associated with sounding of the seventh and last trumpet will have been completed. The days of the seventh trumpet will not be completed until God has finished His promised work of saving, judging, and fully establishing His kingdom at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. The seventh trumpet will sound right in the middle of the seven-year period (Baxter believes it will sound at the end of the seven years), and the Lord Jesus will return, the rapture will take place, and the day of judgment will begin, starting with the casting down of Satan and his angels.

The Greek verb "mello" is often translated "about to" (and the NKJV and the NIV also include the words "about to" in this verse), but quite often there is no idea of "about to" in the meaning of this verb, and I am quite sure that applies here in Rev. 10:7. As I mentioned, I would translate, "**but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel when he sounds,**" or the equivalent. Quite a few Bible translations and quite a few Bible commentators agree that there is no idea of "about to" here in verse 7. Also, the BAGD Greek Lexicon (and other Greek Lexicons) lists many verses (under the Greek verb "mello") where there is no idea of "about to." The NASB very often translates mello with no idea of "about to." Nineteen places they translate "going to," for example.

This is very important, so I'll take the time to read a few other translations of Rev. 10:7. I'll just read the relevant part of the translations. I'll read the "New Revised Standard Version," "but in the days when the seventh angel is to blow his trumpet, the mystery of God will be fulfilled...." I'll read "The New Testament in Modern English" (by J. B. Phillips), "In the days which shall soon be announced by the trumpet blast of the seventh angel the mysterious purpose of God [or, the mystery of God] shall be completed...." I'll read the "New American Bible," "When the time comes for the seventh angel to blow his trumpet, the mysterious plan of God [or, the mystery of God]...shall be accomplished in full." And, lastly, I'll read "The New Living Translation," "But when the seventh angel blows his trumpet, God's mysterious plan [or, the mystery of God] will be fulfilled. ...."

We read at the end of verse 6 that there will be delay no longer. That is, under the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet (and that trumpet will be on the verge of sounding at that time), God the Father will send His Son to fully save His elect, which includes their glorification; to judge the world, including the devil and all who follow him; and to fully establish His everlasting kingdom. These things are all included in the "mystery of God" that is spoken of in this verse. God has revealed these things to us by His spokesmen (these things that were formerly hidden in Him), so now we can understand this all-important mystery. Understood in the fullest sense, God's plans include the great-white-throne judgment at the end of the millennial kingdom and the bringing forth of the new heaven and new earth, with its new Jerusalem, of the eternal state. God has revealed these details to us through the apostle John, and a whole lot more, in the book of Revelation.

**THE 144,000 OF REVELATION 7:1-8 AND 14:1-5 AND A WHOLE LOT MORE, INCLUDING REVELATION 12:5 AND THE BIRTH INTO THE FULLNESS OF ETERNAL LIFE AND GLORY AND THE RAPTURE.**

I'll comment briefly on what Baxter says on this topic on pages 38-41. For one thing, Baxter (in agreement with many) believes that the same people are being spoken of in Rev. 7:1-8 and 14:1-5. I am confident that two very different groups are spoken of in these verses. The first group is the end-time remnant of Israel, who will ultimately become Christians, but not until right after the mid-week rapture, when they will look upon Him who they have pierced (Zech. 12:10) and submit to Him (cf., e.g., Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:25-27). They will be sealed for protection. This seal will keep them alive through the days of the sounding of the first six trumpets that will be sounding during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, especially during the days of the sounding of the sixth trumpet of the book of Revelation during which so many people (a third of mankind, but not necessarily a third of mankind worldwide) will die. Rev. 9:4 shows that the demonic locusts of the fifth trumpet will not be able to touch those who are sealed. (That includes the true Christians who will be living on the earth at that time; we have already been sealed by the blood of the Lamb and by the Spirit of God [cf. Rev. 14:1].) The number of those sealed in Rev. 7:1-8 will be in the millions, not 144,000. Baxter doesn't say that the number will be a literal 144,000 (or that it won't be), but he gives me the impression that it will be a number not too far removed from 144,000.

Baxter says that "There is another account of the sealing of the 144,000 in the Old Testament. Ezekiel 9:4 [King James version] says, 'And the Lord [This "LORD" is "Yahweh" in the Hebrew; the KJV and NASB (and other translations) have four capital letters for the word "LORD."] said unto him, go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.' " The man dressed in linen (Ezek. 9:2, 11; 10:2, 6, 7; and Dan. 10:5; 12:6, 7) was the one/One who sealed the true believers in Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:4-6) before He initiated the judgment of Jerusalem (Ezek. 10:2, 6, 7); that judgment came through the Babylonians in 587/586 BC.

One thing that makes Ezekiel chapters 9 and 10 so interesting and important is that apparently the man dressed in linen, who plays such a significant role in these chapters, was the eternal Son of God who appeared quite a few times in the Old Testament as the Angel/Messenger of Yahweh. (See my paper, "The Name Yahweh and God the Father and God the Son.") These chapters are discussed on pages 165-180 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture." Ezekiel 9:4 did not prophesy of the sealing of Revelation chapter 7, as Baxter said (it was prophesying of God's judging Jerusalem in the days of Ezekiel through the Babylonians, who even destroyed the temple at that time), but it set an important precedent for the sealing of Revelation chapter 7. I believe it is quite possible (even probable) that the same Person, God the Son, also does the sealing in Revelation chapter 7. See on Revelation chapter 7 on pages 174-179 of "The Mid-Week Rapture."

I Am Going to Excerpt Most of the Nine Pages that Deal with the 144,000 of Revelation Chapters 7 and 14 from a Paper that I Wrote Recently Titled "Some Comments on John Shorey's Teaching on the Mid-Week (Mid-Trib) Rapture." That thirty-one page paper is on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching):

((I discussed Rev. 7:1-8 on pages 176-179 and Rev. 14:1-5 in chapter 23 of my "The Mid-Week Rapture" and under Rev. 7:1-8 in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on my internet site (Google to Karl Kemp Teaching). Revelation 7:1-3, which deal with the sealing of the 144,000, are quite important and interesting, but I won't deal with those verses in this paper. I'll just deal, for the most part, with the number 144,000, which is, I believe, a symbolic number of completeness. The actual numbers in Rev. 7:4 and especially in 14:1 (and 14:3) will be much higher than a literal 144,000. If the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4 is symbolic, so too are the twelve uses of 12,000 in Rev. 7:5-8. We will also discuss some other symbolic numbers in the book of Revelation. I'll borrow from the writings I mentioned here and supplement them for this paper.))

I don't believe that the 144,000 of Rev. 7:1-8 is to be equated with the 144,000 of Rev. 14:1 (and 14:3). Baxter (and many others) believes both passages refer to the same people. Also, I believe it is necessary to see that 144,000 is a symbolic number for many more than a literal 144,000 in both passages. The book of Revelation contains much symbolic language, including quite a few symbolic numbers. Revelation 5:6 is an obvious example. The Lord Jesus does not literally have seven horns or seven eyes, and the "seven Spirits of God" is a symbolic reference to the Holy Spirit. (We'll discuss Rev. 5:6 in more detail as we continue.) I'll quote the brief discussion that I have on symbolic language at the beginning of Revelation chapter 21 in my paper on Revelation chapters 20-22 on my internet site for a start:

**Symbolic Language.** I'll say quite a bit regarding symbolic language in the book of Revelation before I quote Rev. 7:4-8 and 14:1 and discuss a few details. The book of Revelation contains much symbolic language, including symbolic numbers; chapters 21 and 22 are loaded with symbolic language. Symbolic (figurative) language doesn't mean that we aren't dealing with reality; we are dealing with reality, but symbolic language can help describe the indescribable, like the glories of heaven (including new Jerusalem). I'm confident, however, that the symbolic language used in Revelation chapters 21 and 22 falls far short of communicating the glorious reality. Symbolic language, including symbolic numbers, can communicate much extra information, but we need the wisdom of God to rightly divide and understand God's Word, very much including symbolic language. Quite often the symbols are explained in other parts of the Bible. We don't want to overuse (misuse) the concept of symbolic language, as some do, and take things in a symbolic (non-literal) sense when a literal meaning was intended by God, nor

do we want to underuse this concept, as some do. We shouldn't always take language in a literal sense if it is at all possible to take it in a literal sense like many say. We need the meaning that God intended!

Let's look at an important example of symbolic language from the book of Revelation. Revelation 5:6 speaks of "a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth." The "Lamb" is a symbol for the Lord Jesus Christ, who was slain, bearing our sins with the guilt and the penalties. John sees Him after He has been raised from the dead. It is interesting that in the preceding verse Christ is pictured as "the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah." Well, is He a Lion, or a Lamb? He's both, and many other good things too. Christ is a lion (which is another word used in a symbolic/figurative sense) in His power, authority, and dominion.

The number seven is sometimes used as a symbol for perfection/completeness. A week has seven days, Israel also had a seven-year cycle, and a seven times seven-year cycle, and the book of Revelation has seven churches, seven stars, seven Spirits, seven seals, seven angels with seven trumpets, seven peals of thunder, the dragon and the beast with seven heads, seven angels with seven bowls of wrath, and there are a few other uses of the number seven.

For Christ to have "seven horns" is to communicate the all-important fact that He has perfect/complete authority, dominion, and power. For Christ to have "seven eyes" (cf. Zech. 3:9; 4:10) is to communicate the fact that He has perfect/complete knowledge of what is happening everywhere. We are further shown here that He has this knowledge through the "seven Spirits of God," which is a symbolic way to speak of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is perfect/complete in all of His work and manifestations. On the seven-fold Spirit, which refers to the Person of the Holy Spirit, also see Rev. 1:4; 3:1; and 4:5. We're not supposed to try to think of a picture of Christ, or a Lamb, literally having seven horns and seven eyes - these numbers are being used in a symbolic way here, but they certainly do communicate important information, don't they? We are not supposed to think of a literal seven Spirits of God either.

Regarding the symbolic number twelve and multiples of twelve (12,000; 144; and 144,000), I'll quote REVELATION 21:16, 17 (from the NASB) and then quote most of what I said on these verses in my paper on Revelation 20-22 on my internet site; I briefly commented there on the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4-8 and 14:1 (and 14:3) too: **"(16) And the city is laid out as a square, and its length is as great as its width; and he measured the city with the rod, fifteen hundred miles; its length and width and height are equal.** [[(This double bracket goes on for three paragraphs.) As the NASB

says in the margin, the Greek literally has "twelve thousand stadia." As far as I'm concerned, the NASB made a mistake by converting to miles here. (The NIV, KJV, and NKJV all keep the number twelve thousand.) The problem is that the NASB failed to keep the number "twelve thousand," which I believe is a symbolic number. The number twelve can symbolize completeness, even as there are twelve tribes of Israel, twelve apostles, and twelve months. Note that the number twelve was used repeatedly in 21:12-14, 21 ("twelve gates" with the "*the names* of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel" written on them; "twelve angels"; "twelve foundation stones [in the wall]" with the "twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" written on them; and "the twelve gates were twelve pearls").

When the number twelve is multiplied by a thousand, as it is here, it strengthens the idea of completeness. I believe the dominant idea here is that this city is sized to include/contain all the members of God's true Israel, true Israel in her glorious completeness. I believe it is very unlikely that the city will literally measure fifteen hundred miles. And, as I mentioned, I am quite convinced that the reality of our eternal home will far exceed the symbolic description pictured in Revelation chapters 21, 22.

Under the next verse (21:17) we'll speak further of symbolic numbers; in that verse the symbolic number is probably more obvious, and I'll mention two other very important examples of symbolic numbers related to the number twelve in the book of Revelation (Rev. 7:4-8 and 14:1 [and 14:3]). The next verse and those two examples strongly incline me to see a symbolic number here in 21:16 too. (I remind the reader of our discussion of the symbolic use of language in the book of Revelation at the beginning of Revelation chapter 21, including the obviously symbolic use of the number seven in Rev. 5:6.) A fifteen hundred mile city isn't at all impossible in the heavenly, glorified dimension, even one that is also fifteen hundred miles high. If we think of a literal shape, we probably should think of a cube (most commentators do, but some think of the shape of a pyramid); this was the shape of the holy of holies in Solomon's temple (1 Kings 6:20). There is some correspondence between God's dwelling in the ancient holy of holies and His dwelling in new Jerusalem (cf. Rev. 21:22). One last comment, if we take the fifteen hundred miles literally, and if the gates of the city are equally spaced, the distance between the gates is five hundred miles.]] **(17) And he measured its wall, seventy-two yards, according to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements.** [[As the margin of the NASB shows, the Greek reads one hundred forty-four cubits. The NIV, KJV, and NKJV all translate it that way, which is required. One hundred forty-four is twelve times twelve and can symbolize completeness, as I believe it does here, the completeness of God's people (true Israel) living within this wall, which is the boundary of the city. Taking these numbers in a symbolic sense in 21:16, 17 is the most common viewpoint that I have found in the commentaries, but

many take the numbers literally.

It is significant that the number "one hundred and forty-four thousand" was used two other places in a symbolic sense earlier in the book of Revelation (Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1 [and 14:3]); at least that's the way I understand these numbers, in agreement with many. (As I mentioned, I'll quote these verses and comment on the details as we continue.)

The symbolic use of the number "one hundred and forty-four thousand" for these two distinct groups of people strongly influences me toward the use of symbolic numbers here in Rev. 21:16, 17 too (and vice versa). Here in Revelation chapter 21, the city bounded by the wall (the wall which has the names of the twelve tribes of Israel on its gates and the names of the twelve Christian apostles on its foundation stones) contains all the members of God's true Israel, which includes all the believers from Old Testament days (who are ultimately saved through Christ Jesus) and all true Christians, including those saved after the rapture (which centers in the elect end-time remnant of Israel).

If we took the one hundred forty-four cubits (seventy-two yards; two hundred and sixteen feet) literally, we would most naturally expect this dimension to be the height of the wall, which, to say the least, isn't very high compared to the height of the city. (It's reported that one of the several walls around Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was three hundred feet high.) Anyway, new Jerusalem doesn't need a high wall, or any wall, for protection. The gates in the wall will never be closed (Rev. 21:25). Some say that the seventy-two yards is the thickness, with the height being fifteen hundred miles. (The NIV translates "144 cubits thick," but in the margin says, "or high.") I consider it very unlikely that we are to think of a wall fifteen hundred miles high and seventy-two feet thick. For one thing, that would be a *very thin* wall, considering its great height.]]

Now I'll Quote REVELATION 7:4-8 and we will discuss these verses:

**"(4) And I heard the number of those who were sealed, one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed from every tribe of the sons of Israel: (5) From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand were sealed, from the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand, from the tribe of Gad twelve thousand, (6) from the tribe of Asher twelve thousand, from the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand, from the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand, (7) from the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand, from the tribe of Levi twelve thousand, from the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand, (8) from the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand, from the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand, from the tribe of Benjamin, twelve thousand were sealed."** On the numbers "twelve thousand" and "one hundred and forty-four thousand," I agree with those who believe

that these are symbolic numbers of completeness. We'll discuss this important point further as we continue. There are a few peculiarities in the listing of the twelve tribes of Israel here, but I doubt that there is any major significance. There are many differences in the various listings of the twelve tribes in the Bible, including the omission of the names of various tribes. For one thing, when the tribe of Levi is included, as it is here, there are thirteen tribes, because both of the sons of Joseph (one of the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel), Ephraim and Manasseh, became tribes of Israel. The tribe of Levi was different in that it wasn't allotted a tract of land in the holy land as the other tribes were; the high priest, priests, and Levites came from this tribe.

It's obvious why the tribe of Judah was listed first (e.g., Rev. 5:5). The tribe of Dan isn't listed. Rather than mention the reasons that have been suggested for the omission of the name of this tribe, I'll just mention that Dan was mentioned in the end-time-oriented listing of Ezekiel chapter 48. It's unusual that Joseph, the father of Ephraim and Manasseh, was listed along with Manasseh. It's possible that there was a conscious effort to omit listing Ephraim (and Dan), but I doubt it. Ephraim (which was a very important tribe) was also listed in Ezekiel chapter 48.

I believe that the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4-8 embraces all the elect people of Israel who will be living on the earth during the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week who will not be converted (become Christians) in time to be taken in the mid-week rapture. They will need this special seal for protection that will keep them alive throughout the events that take place throughout the first half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, especially during the events of the sixth trumpet that will sound about a month before the rapture, about the time of the abomination of desolation. ((In Dan. 12:1 Michael stands up to protect the end-time remnant of Israel during the days of the short great tribulation, which will come to pass in the days that start with the abomination of desolation and come to an end before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture take place in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (cf. Matt. 24:15-31). Daniel chapter 12 is discussed in some detail in chapters 10 and 11 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture."))

They will be sealed for protection about the time of the beginning of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. This sealing will be part of God's saving the elect end-time remnant of Israel that is so often mentioned in prophecy (cf., e.g., Deut. 32:19-43; Isa. 10:20-22; Ezek. 34:11-31; 36:22-37:28; Joel 2:32-3:21; Mic. 2:12, 13; 4:6-9; 5:3-15; much of the book of Zechariah; Rom. 9:27-29; 11:11-32; Rev. 11:19; 12:6, 13-17; 15:2-4). See under Rev. 7:1-3 in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," and in my paper on Revelation chapters 1-10 on my internet site for many VERY IMPORTANT details on this sealing.

The actual number of those sealed in Rev. 7:1-8 will be much higher than a literal 144,000. Based on Zech. 13:8, 9 it seems that two-thirds of the people of Israel will be cut off in the last days before the Lord Jesus returns and the rapture takes place; the end-time remnant of Israel will submit to the Lord Jesus, starting at the time of His return, but not in time to be taken in the rapture. The third that will remain and come into the refining "fire" (Zech. 13:9) of the second half of the seven-year period (when the devil and his angels have been cast down to the earth and Antichrist has begun his super-evil three and one-half year reign) will number in the millions, probably more than four million.

The end-time remnant of Israel will need this special seal because they will not become Christians until after the rapture, at the earliest. God knows who the elect are, very much including the elect end-time remnant of Israel, before they become Christians (cf., e.g., Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:4; Rev. 13:8 and 17:8). (I assume that the elect Gentiles who will become Christians after the rapture will also be sealed for protection along with, or as part of, the end-time remnant of Israel of Rev. 7:1-8, but there is no need to be dogmatic on a detail like this. Those Gentiles will be part of God's true Israel, the woman of Revelation chapter 12, even as we Gentiles who become true Christians throughout this present age are grafted into, and become part of, God's true Israel, the woman of Revelation chapter 12.)

The Christians who will be living on the earth during the first half of the seven-year period (which could include most of us) will not need a special seal because they (we) have already been sealed through the Lord Jesus (cf., e.g., Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:22; and Rev. 14:1). They will be protected during the days of the sounding of the first six trumpets and the other things that will be happening during those days; then they (unlike the end-time remnant of Israel) will be glorified and raptured at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet right in the middle of the seven years.

None of the events of the seven trumpets are coming against true Christians, and the end-time elect remnant of Israel will have been sealed for protection; none of them will die; it is important for them to remain alive to become Christians, starting at the time of the rapture, but too late to be taken in the rapture. At the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet our rapture and glorification will take place. Revelation 9:13 seems to indicate that the sounding of the sixth trumpet comes in answer to the prayers of the saints (on the golden altar of incense mentioned in Rev. 9:13, where our prayers are offered before God, see Rev. 8:3, 4), prayers like "Your kingdom come, Your will be done!" God's kingdom cannot fully come to the earth until after God fully takes over the earth, which will include the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls of wrath.

During the five-month period when the demonic locusts are stinging people under the sounding of the fifth trumpet (Rev. 9:1-11), they will not be able to sting those who are sealed, including all true Christians, but the seal will be especially needed under the events of the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:13-21) when a third of mankind (but probably far less than a third of the total population of the earth) will be killed. The singling out of the people of God for protection will help amplify God's message to the world: There isn't much time left to repent and submit to the gospel before the Lord Jesus returns and the Day of Judgment officially begins right in the middle of the seven years. The two witnesses (prophets) will send forth this message with power, and they may announce the first six trumpets before they sound (even as Moses announced the ten plagues before they came to pass). If the two witnesses don't announce them they will certainly speak of them before the world. They may announce the seventh and last trumpet before it sounds too, but if they do, they will have to announce it at least three and one-half days before it sounds, because they will be killed some three and one-half days before that trumpet sounds.

As I mentioned, many take the 144,000 of Rev. 7:4 literally. I'll quote part of what Henry Alford said regarding this 144,000 ("New Testament for English Readers," Vol. 4 [Baker 1983 reprint; published in 1868 according to Wikipedia], page 1839, under Rev. 7:4). Alford (AD 1810-1871) was an English Christian scholar, who was well acquainted with early Christian writings. "The number is symbolical of fixedness and full completion, 12x12 taken a thousand fold. NO ONE THAT I AM AWARE OF HAS TAKEN IT LITERALLY [my emphasis]...." John Darby (AD1800-1882) would have been one exception. He took the number literally, as do those who follow him. Many consider him to be the originator of dispensationalism, which (for one thing) makes a continuing distinction between God's dealings with Israel and the Christian church. He was one of the first to ever teach the pre-week (pre-tribulation) rapture.

Now I'll quote REVELATION 14:1 and discuss this verse. I won't quote or discuss Rev. 14:2-5 here, but these verses go with 14:1 and are quite important, even as Rev. 7:1-3 are quite important, but getting into all those details goes beyond the scope of this paper. Revelation 14:3 mentions the same "one hundred and forty-four thousand" spoken of in 14:1. Chapter 23 of my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," is a verse-by-verse discussion of Rev. 14:1-5.

**(Rev. 14:1) "Then I looked and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mt. Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads."** Here we see the raptured, glorified saints in company with the Lord Jesus at a time shortly after the mid-week rapture. The raptured saints include all the true Christians who have ever lived up until the time of the rapture,

and I believe it includes all of the believers from the days of the Old Testament. The number of these raptured saints will clearly exceed a literal 144,000. If the elect end-time remnant of Israel who are sealed in Rev. 7:1-8 includes the elect Gentiles who will be saved after the rapture (which is a reasonable assumption since those Gentiles will be part of God's true Israel, part of the glorious woman who is often mentioned in Revelation chapter 12), the 144,000 of Rev. 7:1-8 added to the 144,000 of Rev. 14:1-5 will embrace all the people of God's true Israel; they will all reign with Him forever. One thing they all have in common is that they were (when they lived on the earth) believers (God's people).

In REVELATION 12:5 we read of the large number of believers (including those who will have died before the Lord Jesus returns and the true Christians who will still be living on the earth at that time) being born into the fullness of eternal life and raptured at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet (Rev. 11:15). The "male child" of Rev. 12:5 equals the 144,000 of Rev. 14:1. (Revelation 12:5, along with all the verses in Revelation chapters 11-13, is discussed in substantial detail in my book, "The Mid-Week Rapture," and in some detail in my book, "Introduction to the Mid-Week Rapture." Both books are available at amazon.com.)

As we have discussed, we have already been given an early picture in the book of Revelation (before the all-important scroll has been opened) of the saints who have been raptured from the earth to heaven in the middle of the seven years in Rev. 7:9-17. It is significant that we can also see the glorified, raptured saints with the Lord Jesus during the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week in Rev. 17:14; 19:14, 19; and probably Rev. 14:14-16; cf. Rev. 13:6 (in 13:6 those saints are called "His [God's] tabernacle, *that is*, those who dwell in heaven [after the rapture]").

Baxter discusses Rev. 12:5 on pages 70-72. He says, "It is obvious that the man child was Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:15-16 tells us who will rule the nations with a rod of iron." Revelation 19:15 speaks of the Lord Jesus ruling with a rod of iron as the judges the world at the end of this age. However, and this is extremely important, REVELATION 2:26, 27 SHOW THAT WE (the glorified saints) WILL RULE WITH A ROD OF IRON: We will be ruling with a rod of iron as we reign with Christ throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, from the time we are born into the fullness of eternal life and glorified (which is pictured in Rev. 12:5). The words at the end of Rev. 12:5 ("and her child was caught up to God and His throne" speak of the rapture. The Greek verb "harpazo" translated "was caught up" was also used in 1 Thess. 4:17 of the catching up/rapture.

I BELIEVE REVELATION 12:5 IS THE MOST IMPORTANT VERSE IN THE BIBLE TO SHOW WHEN (in relation to Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week) THE LORD JESUS WILL RETURN AND THE RAPTURE WILL TAKE PLACE. The next verse (Rev. 12:6) shows that there will be three and one-half years still to go (the second half of the seven year period) after this birth and rapture of the saints into the fullness of eternal life and glory. Revelation 12:4 and the verses that follow all deal with things that will happen in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week or afterward. Revelation 12:4, 7-9, for example, deal with the casting down of Satan and his angels right in the middle of the seven years (Baxter agrees with this detail [see his pages 74, 75]), and as I mentioned 12:6 shows that there are three and one-half years to go after the birth of the male child into eternal glory.

The only thing that Baxter says regarding "her child was caught up to God and His throne" (page 70) is that Satan and King Herod were not able to kill Jesus in Bethlehem - he says that Jesus is the man-child. Regarding the woman's (Israel's) fleeing in Rev. 12:6, Baxter says (pages 72, 73) that she will flee because of the short great tribulation that he believes will take place throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. (As we have discussed, the short great tribulation will start a month before the middle of the seven years and be finished before the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of the seven years.) I believe she will begin to flee at the time the devil and his angels are cast down to the earth and Antichrist begins his super-evil three and one-half year reign, right in the middle of the seven years.

There is no way that Rev. 12:5 refers to the birth of the Lord Jesus or His escaping from Herod's attempt to kill all of the male children in Bethlehem: As I mentioned everything in the context of Rev. 12:4-17 refers to things that will happen at the end of this age. And we have the strong confirmation that we (who are part of the male child) will rule with Christ (from the time we are glorified and raptured (Rev. 2:26, 27), and the words at the end of Rev. 12:5 about the male child's being caught up to God and His throne perfectly fits our rapture (cf. 1 Thess. 4:16, 17). I should also mention that in my books, when discussing Rev. 12:5, I discuss some super-important cross-references (especially Isa. 66:7; Psalm 2:7; and Micah 5:3) that prophesy of the same birth into the fullness of eternal life that Rev. 12:5 prophesies about. Jesus was the firstborn from the dead (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; cf. Rom. 8:29), and we will all follow Him in that birth when He returns.

On the DVD that goes with Lesson 7, Baxter says that the war in heaven pictured in Rev. 12:7-9 takes place because Satan tries to overthrow God and launches this war in heaven. Actually, this warfare will take place because God will take the initiative and cast Satan and his angels down to the earth at the time the Lord Jesus returns in the middle of the seven years. This casting down of Satan is a significant feature in God's

end-time judgment of the world. Three and one-half years later, Satan will be cast into the abyss for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3), and finally after being released from the abyss for a short while at the end of the millennium, he will be cast into the eternal lake of fire (Rev. 20:7-10).

The Lamb (the Lord Jesus) and the glorified, raptured saints are standing on Mt. Zion in Rev. 14:1 in the middle of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, right after the resurrection, glorification and rapture take place. Revelation 14:2, 3 help show that Mt. Zion is being used here in the heavenly, spiritual sense (cf. Heb. 12:22, 23; Gal. 4:26). It is also true, however, that the Lord Jesus (and the glorified, raptured saints with Him) will be very directly involved with the events taking place on the earth throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week as He judges the world, reigning from earthly Zion, Jerusalem (see Psalm 2:6; 110:2; and Zech. 14:3-7, for example; Psalms 2 and 110 and Zechariah chapters 12-14 are discussed in my "The Mid-Week Rapture"). He (and us with Him) will be reigning mostly, if not entirely, in the spiritual (invisible) dimension throughout the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week. If He were visibly present on the earth throughout much of the second half of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (after He is visible at the time of His coming), it would detract from God's plan to use Antichrist throughout the second half of that seven-year period. (As I mentioned, God will use Antichrist to test mankind [cf. Rev. 3:10 on the "hour of testing"] regarding who they will worship, and He will use him to destroy Babylon the great harlot [cf. Rev. 17:16, 17], which is a major feature in His judging the world after Jesus returns. God devotes some three chapters of the book of Revelation to His judging and destroying Babylon the great harlot because it is a major feature in His end-time judgment of the world. First He will judge and remove Babylon, the devil's city, the devil's worldwide kingdom, through Antichrist and the ten horns (Rev. 17:16, 17). Then He will judge and remove Antichrist and those who follow him to Armageddon.

The 144,000 of Rev. 14:1 are clearly identified as the people of God the Father and God the Son by the words "having His name [the name of the Lamb (God the Son)] and the name of His Father written on their foreheads." Compare Rev. 3:12; 7:2, 3. Contrast the mark (the name of the beast [Antichrist] or the number of His name) on the right hand, or on the forehead, in the verses right before Rev. 14:1 (Rev. 13:16-18).

There is a whole lot more that we could discuss here, but this is a good place to stop this paper." As I mentioned, there will be a second paper coming, "Irvin Baxter on the Harlot of Babylon; Trinity and Oneness."

May the will of God be fully accomplished through this paper and His people be blessed!

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