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# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS” A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY MATTERS**

### **Four Schools of Thought on the Trumpets**

There are four general views on the trumpets among Christian expositors:

#### **Preterist:**

The trumpets depict events relating to the Roman Empire and the Jewish nation in the first centuries of the Christian era. The trumpets are thus simple history and therefore, they are of historical interest but have no relevance for the church today.

#### **Futurist:**

The seven trumpets depict scourges that will afflict humanity after the rapture of the church. Therefore, the trumpets have no relevance for believers in the church today because when the seven trumpeters blow their trumpets, the church will be gone.

#### **Dual Fulfillment:**

Among Adventists, there are those who believe the trumpets have a dual fulfillment, one in the past (throughout the history of the Christian Church) and the other in the future.

## **Historicist:**

The **introductory vision** to the trumpets describes the **starting** and **ending** points of the series. The starting point is the **Day of Pentecost** when Jesus began His intercession at the golden altar of incense in the holy place. The series ends when Jesus throws down the censer, ceases to intercede and **takes over the kingdoms** of the world. Strict historicists do not believe that the trumpets have a **dual fulfillment**.

## **Historicist Principles**

Of all the passages in the book of Revelation, the seven trumpet series is the **most difficult** to understand. For years, I shied away from speaking on these chapters because I always looked at them through the prism of Uriah Smith who gave an interpretation that makes little sense. I well remember that every time that I taught the *Seminars Unlimited* Revelation Seminar, I always skipped lesson #23 on the seven trumpets (*“Trumpets Herald Rome’s Collapse”*).

Then, while serving as pastor of Fresno Central Church, I decided to do a series on the book of Revelation in chronological order. This made it imperative to study the trumpets for myself and apply the same principles of study that I applied to other passages in the book of Revelation. It was indeed an eye-opening experience! These study notes are the result of my personal study.

There are several **interpretative principles** we must remember when we study the book of Revelation:

First, when the book of Revelation does not interpret its own symbols, we must allow the **entire Bible** to explain their meaning.

Second, we must carefully consider the **order of events** or the **literary structure** of the book. The book of Revelation is an **intricately woven** book with **flashbacks**, **foretastes** and **repetition and expansion**. We must remember that God did not reveal the book of Revelation to John in **strict chronological order**. The visions of Revelation run in **repetitive cycles**.

**Example:** The three passages that mention the 144,000 (Revelation 7:1-8; 14:1-5; 15:2-4).

Third, the **introductory scenes** of each of series contain the **beginning and ending** points of the entire series.

- **Revelation 1:1-7:** (**Two points** of time: Introduction to the **seven churches** and the **second coming**).
- **Revelation 3:21** (**two points** of time: when Jesus **sat on the throne** in the past and when the redeemed **will sit with Jesus** on His throne in the future).
- **Revelation 8:2-5** (Jesus officiates with the censer and when probation is over He casts it down).
- **Revelation 11:15-19** contains the **conclusion** to the trumpets, a **summary** of the rest of the book and the **introduction** to the next section, Revelation 12-14
  - ✓ **Revelation 11:15-17:** The **seventh trumpet** (concludes the series).
  - ✓ **Revelation 11:18** the **summary** of the rest of the book:

*"Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that **the wrath of God could not come** until Jesus had **finished His work** in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but **pour out His wrath** on those who have rejected His truth. I saw that the **[1] anger of the nations**, the **[2] wrath of God**, and the **[3] time to judge the dead** were **separate and distinct**, one **following the other**, also that Michael had not stood up, and that the time of trouble, such as never was, had not yet commenced. The **nations are now getting angry**, but when our High Priest has finished His work in the sanctuary, He will stand up, put on the garments of vengeance,*

*and then the **seven last plagues** will be poured out [the wrath of God].” EW, p. 36*

Summary of the **five chronological** states in Revelation 11:18:

Revelation 12-14: ‘The nations were angry’

Revelation 15-19: ‘Your wrath has come’

Revelation 20:4, 11: ‘the time to judge the dead’

Revelation 19:11-21; 22:12: ‘the time to reward your servants’

Revelation 20:14, 15: ‘destroy those who destroy the earth’

✓ **Revelation 11:19:** The introduction to chapters 12-14

## **Serious Questions on Hermeneutical Consistency**

Interpreters of the book of Revelation are frequently **inconsistent** in the way they interpret the book.

For example, the historicist method teaches that the churches and the seals begin in **apostolic times** and end with the setting up of **Christ’s kingdom**. This being the case, why do some interpreters begin the trumpets series with the barbarian invasions and the fall of the Roman Empire in the **fourth century**?

Some Adventist interpreters believe that there is a **dual fulfillment** of the trumpets, one past and the other future. However, is there such a thing as dual fulfillments of **chain prophecies**? Do the **churches** and the **seals** also have a dual fulfillment? Do Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 have dual fulfillments?

Another question: Were the **barbarian** invasions of such **historical importance** that John needed four trumpets to describe them?

Those who interpret the trumpets as a depiction of the barbarian invasions and the growth of Islam and Turkey are many times inconsistent in the manner that they **interpret the symbols**. Sometimes they take the language literally and sometimes symbolically. However, we must apply the same principles to the trumpets that we do to the rest of the book.

For those who see the rise and fall of **Islam** and a role for Turkey in the trumpets one must ask: Where in other prophetic lines of prophecy do we find mention of Turkey and the Muslims?

- Daniel 2: Not there
- Daniel 7: Not there
- Daniel 8, 9: Not there
- The Churches: Not there
- The Seals: Not there
- Daniel 11-12: Not there
- Revelation 12: Not there
- Revelation 13: Not there

## **Introduction to the Trumpets**

We begin by asking a very important question. Are we to understand the trumpets from a **futurist** or from a **historicist** perspective?

Seventh-day Adventist theology has traditionally interpreted the **churches**, the **seals** and the **trumpets** from a historicist perspective. However, in recent times, there has been a tendency among some Adventist writers to interpret the trumpets from a **futurist perspective**. No one has done more to popularize this new view of the trumpets than **Marvin Moore** who for years was the editor of **Signs of the Times**.

As regards the trumpets, there are **two futurist schools** of thought within Adventism today. One school sees the fulfillment of the trumpets in **post-probationary** time. The other school sees their fulfillment as future from our time but occurring mostly **before the close of probation**. Marvin Moore belongs to this second group. As we shall see, there are serious problems with both schools of the futurist scenario.

I believe that the futurist school commits **two mistakes** in their interpretation of the trumpets. First, they often **literalize** the symbolic language and second, they fail to do a serious study of the intricate **literary arrangement** of the book

of Revelation. As we shall see, the literary structure of Revelation is, so to speak, **the skeleton** that holds the entire book together.

Many scholars have concluded that the book of Revelation follows the sequential order of the **Hebrew sanctuary**. In the series on the seven churches, Jesus walks among the **candlesticks**. In the series on the seals, Jesus moves to the table of the **showbread**. In the series on the trumpets, Jesus ministers at the **altar of incense** and in Revelation 11:19 He moves into the **most holy place** to begin His ministration there.

Then, in Revelation 15:5-8 Jesus **closes** His sanctuary ministration after which the **plagues** fall in Revelation 16-19. Next, Revelation 20 portrays the **scapegoat ceremony** and destruction of the wicked. Finally, chapters 21 and 22 describe the **new heavens** and new earth where Jesus will live with the redeemed forever.

Extracting the trumpets from their legitimate context and inserting them into the future destroys the **beautiful sanctuary symmetry** of the book (for more on the literary structure of Revelation see, C. Mervyn Maxwell, *God Cares*, volume 1, p. 33, 37, 48-49).

## **The Normative Seventh-day Adventist Position (DARCOM)**

After **Desmond Ford** came up with his novel ideas on Bible prophecy, the General Conference established the **Daniel and Revelation Study Committee** (DARCOM) to look into his arguments. The result was the publication of seven books on various issues relating to the sanctuary and Bible prophecy. Regarding the seven trumpets, DARCOM gave the following explanation:

*“Today Seventh-day Adventists virtually **stand alone** as exponents of the **historicist method**, since non-Catholic groups in general have abandoned this approach in favor of one of the two methods mentioned above [**preterism and futurism**] . . . The Daniel and Revelation Committee wishes to **reaffirm to the world church** the validity of the **historicist approach to these two apocalyptic books**. The committee sees it as **the only** sound method to use. Our pioneers did not follow ‘cunningly devised fables’ when they searched and preached the truths*



of these prophecies. They have passed on to us a rich heritage.” Frank Holbrook, editor, Symposium on Revelation, volume 1, p. 176. Emphasis supplied

While not providing a **definitive interpretation** of the trumpets, DARCOM did establish some non-negotiable parameters:

- “The literary structure divides the book of Revelation into **two major sections**: (1) a historical section (Rev. 1-14) that emphasizes the experience of the church and related events during the Christian era, and (2) an eschatological (end time) section (Rev. 15-22) that focuses particularly on end-time events and the end of the world.”
- The series of the seals and of the trumpets occur in the historical section of Revelation. Consequently, we should seek for their **fulfillment in historical time**, the Christian era.
- The prophecies of the seals and of the trumpets have **only one prophetic fulfillment**.” Frank B. Holbrook, editor, Symposium on Revelation, volume 1, p. 177

## **The Dangers of Futurism (Ellen G. White)**

Ellen White has warned about the dangers of **extracting prophecies** from their legitimate historical context and applying them to the future:

“There have been one and another who in studying their Bibles **thought they discovered great light**, and **new theories**, but these have not been correct. The Scripture is all-true, however by misapplying the Scripture men arrive at wrong conclusions. We are engaged in a mighty conflict, and it will become more close and determined, as we near the final struggle. We have a sleepless adversary, and he is constantly at work upon human minds that **have not had a personal experience** in the teachings of the people of God for the past fifty years. Some will take the truth applicable to their time, and place it in the **future**. Events in the train of prophecy that **had their fulfillment** away in the past are **made future**, and thus by these theories the **faith of some is undermined**.” 2SM p. 102

Ellen White wrote the following words to **John Bell**, a schoolteacher who had embraced a futurist understanding of prophecies that had already found their fulfillment in the past:

*“From the light that the Lord has been pleased to give me, you are in danger of doing the same work, presenting before others truths which have **had their place** and **done their specific work** for the time, in the history of the faith of the people of God. You recognize these facts in Bible history as true, but **apply them to the future**. They have their force still in their **proper place, in the chain of events** that have made us as a people what we are today, and as such, they are to be presented to those who are in the darkness of error.” 2SM p. 102, 103*

## **Ellen White and the Time Frame of the Trumpets**

There are several indications in the writings of Ellen White that she understood the trumpets within a historicist framework.

### **‘Time no longer’ in the sixth trumpet:**

Ellen White placed **Revelation 10** (a parenthesis within the sixth trumpet) in the context of events that occurred in **1844**:

*“The book that was sealed was not the book of Revelation, but that portion of the prophecy of Daniel which related to the last days. The Scripture says, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” (Daniel 12:4). When the book **was opened**, the proclamation was made, “Time shall be no longer.” (See Revelation 10:6.) The book of Daniel is **now unsealed**, and the revelation made by Christ to John is to come to all the inhabitants of the earth. By the increase of knowledge a people is to be prepared to stand in the latter days.” 2SM p. 105*

*“The message of **Revelation 14**, proclaiming that the hour of God’s judgment is come, is given in the **time of the end**; and the angel of Revelation 10 is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to distant lands, the ocean will be crossed, and the islands of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world.*

*"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer" (Rev. 10:5, 6). This message announces **the end of the prophetic periods**. The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in **1844** was indeed **bitter [Revelation 10]** to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord's order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed. 2SM p. 107, 108*

*"The special light given to John which was expressed in the **seven thunders** was a delineation of events which would transpire under the **first and second angels' messages**. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their **faith must necessarily be tested**. In the order of God, most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels' messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer.*

*This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, **is not the end of this world's history**, neither of **probationary time**, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will **not have another message upon definite time**. After this period of time, reaching from **1842 to 1844**, there can be **no definite tracing of the prophetic time**. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844. 7BC p. 971*

### **The Bittersweet Experience of Revelation 10:**

Ellen White understood that the bittersweet experience of Revelation 10 took place in 1844.

*"The waiting people of God approached the hour when they **fondly hoped their joys would be complete** in the coming of the Savior. However, the time again passed unmarked by the advent of Jesus. Mortality still clung to us; the effects of the curse were all around us. It was hard to take up the vexing cares of life that we thought had been laid down forever. A **bitter disappointment** fell upon the*

*little flock whose faith had been so strong and whose hope had been so high. But we were surprised that we felt so free in the Lord, and were so strongly sustained by his strength and grace.”* LS p. 189

### **The 1260 Days and 42 Months of Revelation 11:**

Ellen White understood that the **papacy fulfilled** the 1260 days and 42 months of Revelation 11 (an interlude in the sixth trumpet) between the years **538 and 1798** AD. She also understood that Revelation 11 describes the **French Revolution**.

Marvin Moore and others believe that we must **reapply** the symbolic 42 months and the 1260 days and **reinterpret** them as **literal future time**. Ellen White, however, explicitly wrote that the 42 months cover the same period as the 1260 days and that both periods apply to the period of **papal supremacy** during the dark ages. She also did a verse-by-verse analysis of Revelation 11 and interpreted it from a historicist perspective. (*“The Bible and the French Revolution”* GC p. 265-88)

*“The periods here mentioned—“forty and two months,” and “a thousand two hundred and threescore days”—are **the same**, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer oppression from Rome. **The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798.** At that time, a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed.”* GC p. 266

*“Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.” And, says the prophet, “I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death.” Again: “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.” The **forty and two months** are **the same** as the **‘time and times and the dividing of time,’ three years and a half, or 1260 days, of Daniel 7**—the time during which the papal power was to oppress God’s people. This period, as stated in preceding chapters, began with the supremacy of the papacy, **A.D. 538, and terminated in 1798.** At that time the pope was made*

*captive by the French army, the papal power received its deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity." GC p. 439*

## **Measuring the Temple:**

Ellen White applied the measuring of the temple (an interlude in the sixth trumpet) to 1844:

***"The grand judgment is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, Measure the temple and the worshipers thereof. Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is measuring you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is measuring you. Remember that your words and actions are being daguerreotyped [photographed] in the books of heaven, as the artist on the polished plate reproduces the face. . . Here is the work going on, measuring the temple and its worshipers to see who will stand in the last day. Those who stand fast shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. When we are doing our work remember there is One that is watching the spirit in which we are doing it. Shall we not bring the Savior into our everyday lives, into our secular work and domestic duties? Then in the name of God, we want to leave behind everything that is not necessary, all gossiping or unprofitable visiting, and present ourselves as servants of the living God (MS 4, 1888). 7BC p. 972***

## **The Relationship between the Seals and the Trumpets**

### **Seals**

The first four horses

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> seals

**Interlude** (Rev. 7 sealing)

The 7<sup>th</sup> seal (silence in heaven)

### **Trumpets**

The first four trumpets

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> trumpets (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> trumpet woes)

**Interlude** (Rev 10, 11: Little book, French Revolution)

The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet (third woe: taking over the kingdom)

**Explanation:** In the historical half of Revelation (Revelation 1-11), the **sixth item** in each series deals with the beginning of the investigative judgment in **1844**.

- ✓ The **sixth church** (the door to the most holy place opens before Philadelphia)
- ✓ The **sixth seal** (signs in the heavens announce the beginning of the judgment)
- ✓ The **sixth trumpet** (the little book episode and the measuring of the temple).

There is a very important link between **Revelation 9:14, 16** (the sixth trumpet) and **Revelation 7:1-3** (parenthesis in the sixth seal). In both, there is a **binding** and **loosing** relating to four angels and there is a **numbering** of people. Revelation 7:1-3 describes the numbering of **God's people** while in Revelation 9:14, 16 describes the numbering of their **evil counterparts**.

Revelation 9:16 and 7:4 are the only two places in Revelation where the expression '*I heard their number*' appears. If the door of probation is open during the period of the sixth trumpet and closes when the seventh is about to sound, then the sixth trumpet is the exact historical counterpart of Revelation 7:1-8.

## **The Relationship between the Trumpets and the Plagues**

The trumpets and the plagues afflict the **same things**, in the **same order**:

- First trumpet and plague: Afflict the **earth**
- Second trumpet and plague: Afflict the **sea**
- Third trumpet and plague: Afflict **rivers and fountains of waters**
- Fourth trumpet and plague: Afflict **heavenly bodies**
- Fifth trumpet and plague: Heavenly bodies **darkened**
- Sixth trumpet and plague: Mention of the **Euphrates**
- Seventh trumpet and plague: Possessing the **Kingdom**

The evidence seems to indicate that the trumpets represent **preliminary and partial** judgments that fell upon the **oppressors** of God's people beginning with the **destruction of Jerusalem** and ending with the setting up of Christ's **everlasting kingdom**. The fact that the trumpets **only fall on thirds** and not on the totality indicates that the trumpet judgments are **preliminary** and **partial**. The trumpets series indicates that **repentance** during the blowing of the trumpets is **possible**.

The **plagues**, on the other hand, describe **final and total** judgments of God upon end time Babylon after the **close of probation**. We can see the irrevocable nature of the plagues by the use of the expression '*in them the wrath of God is complete*'. Each plague is God's judgment upon some particular sin that Babylon has committed. The plagues are **retributive** in character and not **remedial**. **Repentance** is **not possible** once the plagues begin to fall.

A careful study of the trumpets and the plagues reveals that the trumpet judgments **foreshadow** the plague judgments. That is to say, the trumpets are the **type** and the **plagues** are the antitype. This is the reason for the following statement by Ellen White:

*"The battle of Armageddon will be fought and that day must find none of us sleeping. Wide-awake we must be, as wise virgins having oil in our vessels with our lamps. The power of the Holy Ghost must be upon us and the Captain of the Lord's host will stand at the head of the angels of heaven to direct the battle. Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. **Trumpet after trumpet** is to be sounded; **vial after vial** poured out **one after another** upon the inhabitants of the earth." 3SM p. 426*

## **The Meaning of Trumpets**

Trumpets are used in **many contexts** in the Old and New Testaments—**worship**, **sanctuary** and **judgment**. In the case of Revelation's seven trumpets it is clear that the trumpets bear a relationship with the idea of judgment. The purpose of the **feast of trumpets** was to announce the upcoming Day of Atonement (Leviticus 23:23, 24). The trumpets that the priests blew as they

surrounded **Jericho** announced God's upcoming judgment against the city (Joshua 6). Our study will reveal that the blowing of each of the seven trumpets **brings a judgment** against those who have oppressed God's people. Here is the key text:

### **Numbers 10:8-9**

*"The sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow the **trumpets**; and these shall be to you as an ordinance forever throughout your generations. 9 "When you **go to war** in your land against the enemy who **oppresses you**, then you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets, and you will be **remembered** before the Lord your God, and you will be **saved** from your enemies."*

These verses indicate that the priests blew the trumpets so that God would **remember His covenant** and save Israel from their enemies. The trumpets **answer the pleas** of God's people utter in the seals. When the wicked oppress God's people, their pleas ascend to God and He **remembers His covenant** and sends judgments upon their oppressors (for example, Exodus 2:23-25). The trumpets are **God's response** to the powers that have oppressed and persecuted His people; **God hears** their pleas and answers them.

We can better understand the pleas of God's people in the context of the **imprecatory Psalms**. In these Psalms, God's people cry out for God to be **faithful to His covenant** and to deliver them from their enemies. In parallel fashion, the seven last plagues will have the **same moral reason**. God will punish the wicked for oppressing His people. Each of the plagues will be a punishment of God upon Babylon for some particular sin that Babylon has committed against God and His people.

Frequently **God's voice** is depicted as the **sound of the trumpet** (Hebrews 12:19). 1Corinthians 15:51, 52, 1Thessalonians 4:16, 17 tell us that the dead will be raised when the trumpet sounds. However, **John 5:28, 29** explains that it is the voice of Jesus that resurrects the dead. This is why **Revelation 1:10** describes the voice of Jesus as the sound of the trumpet.



Revelation 8:2-5 seems to refer to **two distinct altars**. The first is the **altar of sacrifice** where the wicked have poured out the blood of God's people. That is, the pleas of God's people at the altar of sacrifice (see Revelation 6:9-11) ascend to heaven where Jesus **answers from the altar of incense**. It is in this context that we must understand the imprecatory Psalms (for example, Psalm 34:4-9). Four illustrations will help us understand the relationship between the oppression of God's people by the wicked and God's response:

- ✓ Whoever touches the **head** also touches the body.
- ✓ Whoever touches the **wife** also touches the **husband**.
- ✓ Whoever touches the **sheep** also touches the **shepherd**.
- ✓ Whoever touches the **vassal** also touches the sovereign.

The **exodus pattern** in Scripture illustrates the relationship between God and His covenant people. The **Egyptians oppressed Israel** and they cried out for God to be faithful to His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 2:23-25). In answer, **God remembered His covenant** (Exodus 2:24) with His people and answered their pleas by pouring out plagues upon the Egyptians. However, the Egyptians **did not repent**.

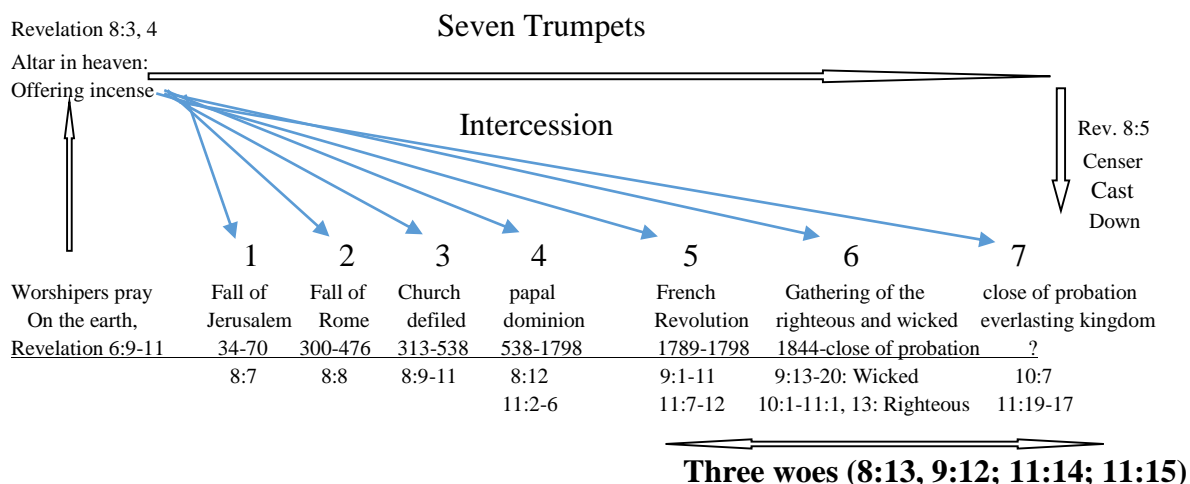
### **Exodus 2:23-25**

*"Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel **groaned** because of the bondage, and they **cried out**; and their **cry** came up to God because of the bondage. <sup>24</sup> So **God heard their groaning**, and God **remembered His covenant** with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. <sup>25</sup> And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them."*

There is a similar pattern in the seven trumpets. God's people **cry out** to God for justice and vengeance from the altar of sacrifice on the earth (see Revelation 6:9-11), **God heeds** their prayer at the altar of incense in heaven and pours out the **preliminary judgments** against those who are oppressing His people.

While God pours out these trumpet judgments, **there is mercy**. However, when probation closes God will send **greater scourges** (the seven last plagues) and there will be no opportunity for repentance.

Here is a summary of the seven trumpets:



## Timeline of the Trumpets

The first six trumpets describe events during probationary time and probation closes when the seventh trumpet is **about to sound** (10:7). When the seventh trumpet blows, Jesus will take over the kingdoms of the world (11:15). This means that the blowing of the previous six trumpets took place during **probationary time**.

Earlier in Revelation God described Himself as the one who **was**, and **is** and **is to come** (Revelation 1:8), but in Revelation 11:17 (when the seventh trumpet sounds) He is spoken of as the one who **is** and who **was** and **has taken** His great power and begun to reign.

Clearly, there is a time interval between when the mystery of God is finished and the seventh trumpet is **about** to sound, and the moment when Jesus takes over the kingdoms of the world at the sound of the seventh trumpet. The finishing of the mystery of God has to do with the **end of the gospel proclamation** (Eph. 3:4; 6:19; Col. 4:3; Rom. 16:25, 26).

The mention of the **golden altar** in the **sixth trumpet** indicates that Christ's intercession is still ongoing during the sixth trumpet (9:13). Furthermore, the **interlude** between the sixth and seventh trumpets (Revelation 10 and 11)

indicates that the proclamation of the gospel is **still transpiring** so probation must still be open. If the church **must prophesy again** (Revelation 10:11) then probation must still be open. During the period of the interlude, people can **still repent and give glory to God** (11:13, cf. 16:9). 11:13: The remnant feared God and gave glory to him. This links with the message of the **first angel** in Revelation 14:6, 7

## **The Importance of the Introductory Visions**

### **The Churches**

- ✓ **Revelation 1:1-6**: The **introduction** to the seven churches.
- ✓ **Revelation 1:7**: The **ending point** toward which the series moves.

### **The Seals**

- ✓ **Revelation 3:21** describes the **beginning** and **ending point** of the seals.
- ✓ Revelation 4 portrays the Father on the Throne and in Revelation 5 Jesus joins His Father on the throne.
- ✓ God's people overcome during the period of the seven seals, and then they will join Jesus on His throne.

### **The Trumpets**

- ✓ **Revelation 8:2-5** provides the beginning and ending points of the trumpet series. The starting point is the when the intercessory work of Jesus begins in the holy place on the Day of Pentecost.
- ✓ The ending point is when Jesus **casts the censer** to the ground, **probation closes**, and the temple **fills with smoke** (Revelation 15:5-8). After this, God pours out the plagues culminating with the earthquake, lightning and thunder (Revelation 16:17-21). The phenomena that occur in the seventh plague are very similar to the phenomena in the introduction to the trumpets.

We should not consider Revelation 11:18, 19 as part of the trumpets series but rather as the beginning of new material:

- ✓ **Revelation 11:18**: Summarizes and introduces the five major parts of Revelation 12-22.
- ✓ **Revelation 11:19**: Introduces the vision of Revelation 12-14.

## **Inauguration and Consummation: Two views of the censer**

### **Revelation 8:2**

The **introductory verse** to the trumpets:

*“And I saw the seven angels who stand before God and to them were given seven trumpets.”*

### **Revelation 8:3, 4**

**First view** of the altar: The censer **intercedes**:

*“Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was **given much incense** that he should offer it **with the prayers** of all the saints upon the golden altar that was before the throne. <sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, **with the prayers** of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.”*

### **Revelation 8:5**

**Second view** of the altar: Intercession **ceases**:

*“Then the angel took the censer, filled it **with fire** from the altar, and **threw it** to the **earth**. And there were **noises**, **thunderings**, **lightnings**, and an **earthquake**.”*

### **The Old Testament Background:**

The book of **Ezekiel** contains the Old Testament background to the introductory vision of the trumpets.

The man clothed in linen takes coals from between the cherubim and scatters them over the city as a sign of divine judgment. This is parallel to the **angel of**

**fire** who pours out God's wrath into the winepress of His fury (Revelation 14:18).

### **Ezekiel 10:1, 2**

*"And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. 2 Then He spoke to **the man clothed with linen**, and said, "Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with **coals of fire** from among the cherubim, and **scatter them** over the city." And he went in as I watched."*

### **Revelation 14:17-19**

*"Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. <sup>18</sup> And another angel came out from the altar, **who had power over fire**, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe." <sup>19</sup> So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the **great winepress of the wrath of God**."*

This introductory scene in Revelation 8 provides **two points** of reference: What Jesus is doing when the **trumpets begin** to sound and when **they end**. That is to say, the ministration of the censer and its throwing down do not take place in immediate succession. There is a **long time interval** in between.

Some have seen the casting down of the censer as a symbol of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (the tongues of fire). This view, however, is untenable because on the Day of Pentecost Jesus began to offer the prayers of the saints mingled with the merits of His perfect life, He did not cast down the censer.

When the angel throws down the censer there is thunder, lightning, voices and an earthquake (Revelation 8:5). **Revelation 15:5-8** describes the moment when the seventh trumpet is about to sound and the mystery of God finished (Revelation 10:7). At this moment, the angel throws down the censer because intercession is finished and probation has ended. **Revelation 16:17-21**

describes the moment when the seventh trumpet ceases to sound and Jesus takes over the kingdoms of the earth (**Revelation 11:15-17**).

Ellen White describes the censer when the trumpets begin:

*“In the holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely cherub, with its wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned toward each other, and they looked downward. **Between the angels was a golden censer.** Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark, and as **the saints' prayers came up to Him**, the incense in the censer would smoke, and He would **offer up their prayers** with the smoke of the incense to His Father.”* **CET** p. 91

*“The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the **temple of God in heaven**, he beheld there ‘seven lamps of fire burning before the throne.’ Rev. 4:5. He saw an angel ‘having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.’ Rev. 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the **first apartment** of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the ‘seven lamps of fire’ and the ‘golden altar,’ represented by the **golden candlestick** and the **altar of incense** in the sanctuary on earth.”* **FLB** p. 202

*“Christ proclaims Himself our Intercessor. He would have us know that He has graciously engaged to be our Substitute. He places **His merit** in the golden censer to offer up **with the prayers** of His saints, so that the prayers of His dear children may be **mingled** with the fragrant merit of Christ as they ascend to the Father in the cloud of incense.”* **HP** p. 79

## **The Incense and the Censer**

The high priest offered only **holy fire** on the golden altar of incense. The high priest alone burned incense on the Golden Altar (Exodus 30:7, 8). The golden altar of incense was **nearest** to the Ark of the Covenant that represents the

throne of God. In fact, its **orientation** was toward the mercy seat in the most holy place (Exodus 30:6). Notably, the book of **Hebrews** places censer and the incense in the most holy place (Hebrews 9:3, 4).

The fire is a symbol of the **Holy Spirit** and the incense represents the **prayers** of the saints mingled the merits of Jesus. The **angels embroidered** on the veil between the holy and most holy place represents the fact that the angels bear our prayers to God and bring God's answers back to us. **Revelation 5:8** refers to this angelic task. Furthermore, **the ladder** that Jacob saw in His dream indicates that the angels have a role in presenting the prayers of the saints as representatives of Jesus. Ellen White wrote:

*"**Angels** offer the smoke of the **fragrant incense** for the praying saints." **Counsels to Teachers**, p. 110*

**Luke 1:8-10** contains the symbol along with its meaning. The incense made the odor sweet.

*"So it was that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to **burn incense** when he went into the temple of the Lord. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the **people was praying** outside at the hour of incense."*

### **Psalms 141:2**

*"Let my **prayer** be set before You as **incense**, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."*

*"The prayer and praise and confession of God's people ascend as sacrifices to the heavenly sanctuary. However, they ascend not in spotless purity. Passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless **purified by the righteousness** of the great High Priest, they are **not acceptable** by God. Christ gathers **into the censer** the **[1]** prayers, the praise, and the sacrifices of his people, and **[2]** with these, he puts the merits of his spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the incense of Christ's propitiation, our prayers, wholly and entirely acceptable, **rise before God**, and gracious answers are returned." **YI April 16, 1903***

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an **inexhaustible fund** of perfect obedience accruing from **His obedience**. In heaven, His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are **treasured as incense** to be offered up with the **prayers of His people**. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, **Christ mingles** with them the merits of His own life of **perfect obedience**. Our prayers are **made fragrant** by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to **intercede** in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son." *SD*, p. 22

"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but **brings us up to Him**." *SC* p. 93

The high priest burned incense **continually**, morning and evening, upon the altar:

"The fire upon this altar was kindled by God Himself and was sacredly cherished. **Day and night** the holy incense diffused its fragrance throughout the sacred apartments, and without, far around the tabernacle." *PP* p. 348

As Jesus lives **ever to intercede** for us, (Hebrews 7:25) so, we are to **pray without ceasing** (1Thessalonians 5:17).

Ellen White describes the censer when the trumpets end:

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who **had been ministering** before the ark containing the Ten Commandments, **throw down the censer**. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, 'It is done.' Then, all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." **[Revelation 22:11]** *EW*, pp. 279, 280 **[in this quotation Ellen White alludes to Ezekiel 9:2, 3; Revelation 16:17; 8:5; 22:11. All these verses are thus describing what will happen when probation closes].**





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 2: THE FIRST TRUMPET**

#### **Revelation 8:7**

*“The first angel sounded: And hail and **fire** followed, mingled with **blood**, and they were **thrown** to the earth. And a **third** of the **trees** were burned up, and all **green grass** was burned up.”*

The constant use of the **passive voice** in the trumpets indicates that God is in control because He is **allowing** (and in some cases, commanding) these things to take place.

It is no coincidence that Ellen White begins the book **The Great Controversy** with a chapter on the **destruction of Jerusalem** because the sounding of the first trumpet refers to this event.

The Bible tells us that judgment must begin at the **house of God** (1Peter 4:17) so the judgment must begin with the **Jewish nation**. In the **first** destruction of Jerusalem, the man clothed in linen commanded the destroying messengers to begin their work at **God’s sanctuary** (Ezekiel 9:6) Fire then **destroyed Jerusalem** (Jeremiah 17:27; 2 Chronicles 34:25) and Nebuchadnezzar **mingled the blood** of the apostate people with the fire.

The book of Ezekiel portrays the divine punishment against Jerusalem as a **throwing down of the censer** and the consequent burning of the city with fire (Ezekiel 10:2, 6, 7, 22, 2 Chron. 36:14-23). The second destruction of Jerusalem parallels the first. I recommend that the student carefully read the first chapter of **The Great Controversy**.

The churches and the seals begin in **apostolic times** and therefore the historicist method requires that the blowing of the trumpets begin **also in apostolic times**. Furthermore, the first trumpet must refer to a judgment that falls upon those who **first oppressed** God's people. What judgment fell upon oppressors of God's people in apostolic times? There is only one possibility—the **destruction of Jerusalem** and its temple.

### **Judgment on the Oppressors**

According to Jesus, the destruction of Jerusalem was due directly to the **persecution against Jesus** and His faithful **followers**:

#### **Matthew 27:24, 25**

*"When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of **the blood** of this just Person. You see to it." <sup>25</sup> And all the people answered and said, "**His blood be on us** and on our children."*

#### **Luke 19:41-44**

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an **embankment around you**, surround you and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup> and **level you**, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will **not leave in you** one stone upon another, because **you did not know the time of your visitation**."*

After Jesus ascended to heaven, the Jewish nation persecuted and shed the blood of the followers of Jesus and became guilty of their blood as well:

## **Matthew 23:34-39**

*“Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will **[future]** kill and crucify, and some of them you will **[future]** scourge in your synagogues and **persecute** from city to city,<sup>35</sup> that on you may come all the **righteous blood** shed on the earth, from the **blood** of righteous Abel to the **blood** of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you **murdered** between the temple and the altar.<sup>36</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.”*

Ellen White wrote:

*“The long-suffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the Jews in their stubborn impenitence. In their **hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus**, they rejected the **last offer** of mercy. Then God **withdrew His protection** from them and removed His restraining power from Satan and his angels, and the nation was left to the control of the leader she had chosen.” GC p. 28*

The **book of Acts** tells us that the Jews repeatedly persecuted the Christians after the ascension of Christ. Stephen, Peter, John, James and Paul all suffered at the hands of the Jewish leaders (Acts 9:22-25; 12:1-3, 11; 13:45, 50; 14:1-6, 19; 16:20-23; 17:5,13; 18:4-6, 12; 21:10, 11, 27, 28; 22:30; 23:12, 13; 24:5, 27; 25:1-3, 7, 15, 24; 26:2, 7, 21).

## **The Symbol of Thirds**

**A third** of the trees means that the trumpets were **partial and preliminary judgments** that point forward to **greater judgments** in the future. The trumpet judgments fell on limited geographical areas and they foreshadow the plagues that will fall globally. Ellen White repeatedly stated that the destruction of Jerusalem foreshadows the final destruction of the world.

**Zechariah 13:8**, King James Version:

*“And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, **two parts** therein shall be cut off and die; but the **third** shall be left therein.”*

**Zechariah 13:8**, Young’s Literal Translation:

*“And it hath come to pass, in all the land, an affirmation of Jehovah, **two parts** in it are cut off — they expire, and **the third** is left in it.”*

The Bible tells us that God cast Satan and **a third of the angels** out of heaven (Revelation 12:4) but according to Ellen White, the word ‘third’ actually means **nearly one half**. Thus a third does not mean 33.3%, not one more or one less, but rather a **fraction** or part of the angels:

*“(Satan) had proved himself unworthy of a place in heaven. Then Satan exultingly pointed to his sympathizers, comprising **nearly one-half** of all the angels, and exclaimed, “These are with me! Will you expel these also, and make such a void in heaven?” He then declared that he was prepared to resist the authority of Christ and to defend his place in heaven by force of might, strength against strength. **SR** p. 18*

A **third of the trees** means that this was a partial judgment that points forward to a greater and complete judgment in the future. Notably, in the seven last plagues God pours out the **fullness** of His wrath:

### **Revelation 15:1**

*“Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous: **seven angels** having the **seven last plagues**, for in them the wrath of God is **complete**.”*

Ellen White wrote that the destruction of Jerusalem (the first trumpet) was the **first draft** of the cup that the wicked will have to **drink fully** during the plagues:

*“In the **temporal** retribution about to fall upon her children, He saw but the **first draft** from that cup of wrath which at the **final judgment** she must **drain** to its dregs.” **GC** p. 21*

*“Christ saw in Jerusalem **a symbol** of the world hardened in unbelief and rebellion, and hastening on to meet the retributive judgments of God.” **GC** p. 22*

*“Jesus, looking down to **the last generation**, saw the world involved in a deception **similar** to that which caused the destruction of Jerusalem. The great sin of the Jews was their **rejection of Christ**; the great sin of the Christian world*

would be their **rejection of the law** of God, the foundation of His government in heaven and earth.” GC p. 22

“The prophecy which He uttered was **twofold** in its meaning; while **foreshadowing** the destruction of Jerusalem, it **prefigured** also the terrors of the last great day.” GC p. 25

“The Savior’s prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have **another fulfillment**, of which that terrible desolation was but a **faint shadow**. In the fate of the chosen city, we may behold the **doom of a world** that has rejected God’s mercy and trampled upon His law. Dark are the records of human misery that earth has witnessed during its long centuries of crime. The heart sickens, and the mind grows faint in contemplation. Terrible have been the results of rejecting the authority of Heaven. However, a scene yet darker is presented in the **revelations of the future**. The records of the past—the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the ‘battle of the warrior . . . with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood’ (Isaiah 9:5)—what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, **no longer to hold in check** the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan’s rule. GC p. 36, 37

## **Fire**

Fire falling from heaven signifies a **judgment** from God against apostate Jerusalem (see Revelation 16:21; 20:10, 14, 15).

**Exodus 9:22-26**: Hail fell because **Egypt oppressed** God’s people:

“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be **hail** in all the land of Egypt--on man, on beast, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.” <sup>23</sup> And Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven; and the LORD sent thunder and **hail**, and **fire darted** to the ground. And the LORD **rained hail** on the land of Egypt. <sup>24</sup> So there was hail, and **fire mingled with the hail**, so very heavy that there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. <sup>25</sup> And the hail struck throughout the whole land of

*Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail struck every herb of the field and broke every tree of the field. <sup>26</sup> Only in the land of Goshen, where **the children of Israel** were, there was no hail.”*

**Psalm 18:12, 13**: Description of God’s judgment at the second coming:

*“From the brightness before Him, His thick clouds passed with hailstones and **coals of fire**. <sup>13</sup> The Lord thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and **coals of fire**.”*

**Psalm 105:32, 33**: The hail and fire afflicted the **trees and vines**:

*“He gave them hail for rain, and **flaming fire** in their land. <sup>33</sup> He struck their vines also, and their fig **trees**, and splintered the **trees** of their territory.”*

Repeatedly, the later prophets of the Old Testament applied the hail and fire to God’s judgments on **apostate Israel** because she had **forsaken the covenant** (Jeremiah 11:16, 17; 21:12-14; Ezekiel 15:6, 7; 20:47, 48; Ezekiel 22:31, 32; Psalm 80:8-11, 15, 16).

**Matthew 22:7** tells us that because the Jewish nation rejected the invitation to Christ’s wedding, the Father sent the Roman armies to **burn the city** of Jerusalem:

*“But when the king heard about it, he was furious and he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and **burned up their city**.”*

It is of interest that just before the destruction of Jerusalem **signs and wonders appeared in the heavens**. One of the signs was the appearance of chariots of fire and men of war gathering for battle:

*“Signs and wonders appeared, foreboding disaster and doom. In the midst of the night an unnatural light shone over the temple and the altar. Upon the **clouds** at sunset were pictured **chariots** and **men of war** gathering for battle.” *GC* p. 29*

The Bible describes God’s chariots as ‘**chariots of fire**’ (2Kings 17:6; Psalm 68:17; Ezekiel 1:4, 5; *EW* 35).

Ellen White described the fiery inferno that destroyed Jerusalem in the year 70:

*"The whole summit of the hill which commanded the city, **blazed like a volcano**. One after another the buildings fell in, with a tremendous crash, and were swallowed up in the **fiery abyss**. The roofs of cedar were like **sheets of flame**; the gilded pinnacles shone like spikes of red light; the gate towers sent up tall columns of **flame and smoke**." GC p. 34*

## **Blood Symbolism**

As we have previously seen, the Jews in Pilate's judgment hall clamored for Christ's crucifixion and cried out, "*His blood be upon us and our children.*" Jesus also predicted that God would require from that generation **all the righteous blood**, shed from the time of Abel.

According to Revelation 16, God will pour out the third plague upon the fountains of fresh water because the wicked shed the blood of His people. Therefore, God will give them blood to drink.

Regarding the shedding of blood in the destruction of Jerusalem Ellen White wrote:

*"The leaders of the opposing factions at times united to plunder and torture their wretched victims, and again they fell upon each other's forces and **slaughtered** without mercy. Even the sanctity of the temple could not restrain their horrible ferocity. The worshipers were stricken down **before the altar**, and the sanctuary was polluted with the **bodies of the slain**." GC p. 29*

*"The Roman leaders endeavored to strike terror to the Jews and thus cause them to surrender. Those prisoners, who resisted when taken, were scourged, **tortured**, and **crucified** before the wall of the city. Hundreds were daily **put to death** in this manner, and the dreadful work continued until, along the Valley of Jehoshaphat and at Calvary, **crosses** were erected in so great numbers that there was scarcely room to move among them. So terribly was visited that awful imprecation uttered before the judgment seat of Pilate: "**His blood** be on us, and on our children." Matthew 27:25." GC p. 32*

*"Like one entranced, he [Titus] looked from the crest of Olivet upon the magnificent temple and gave command that not one stone of it be touched. Before attempting to gain possession of this stronghold, he made an earnest appeal to the Jewish leaders not to force him to defile the sacred place with **blood**."* GC p. 32, 33

*"In the struggle [of the Jews against Titus], a **firebrand** was flung by a soldier through an opening in the porch, and immediately the cedar-lined chambers about the holy house were in a **blaze**. Titus rushed to the place, followed by his generals and legionaries, and commanded the soldiers to quench the flames. His words were unheeded. In their fury the soldiers **hurled blazing brands** into the chambers adjoining the temple, and then with their swords they **slaughtered** in great numbers those who had found shelter there. **Blood flowed down the temple steps like water**. Thousands upon thousands of Jews perished. Above the sound of battle, voices were heard shouting: "Ichabod!"--the glory is departed. GC p. 33*

*"The **slaughter** within was even more dreadful than the spectacle from without. Men and women, old and young, insurgents and priests, those who fought and those who entreated mercy, were hewn down in **indiscriminate carnage**. The number of the **slain exceeded that of the slayers**. The legionaries had to clamber over **heaps of dead** to carry on the work of **extermination**."* Milman, The History of the Jews, book 16. GC p. 35

*"In the siege and the **slaughter** that followed, more than a million of the people perished; the survivors were carried away as captives, sold as slaves, dragged to Rome to grace the conqueror's triumph, thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheaters, or scattered as homeless wanderers throughout the earth."* GC p. 35

## **Tree and Grass Symbolism**

**Six months** before Jesus began His ministry, **John the Baptist** compared Israel to a **tree** and warned that if it did not produce good fruit it would be cut down and thrown into the fire. John was specifically referring to the Jewish nation.



## **Matthew 3:7-12**

*"But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"<sup>8</sup> Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance,<sup>9</sup> and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We **have Abraham as our father**.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones [**the gentiles**].<sup>10</sup> And even now the ax is laid to the root of the **trees**. Therefore **every tree** which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."*

- ✓ In **Luke 13:1**, we find a ruler of Rome **mingling** the blood of the Jews with the sacrifices. Later in the first trumpet, we see Rome mingling the blood of the Jews with fire. In both contexts, the reason for the punishment is the **apostasy of Jerusalem**.
- ✓ **Luke 13:1-6** brings to view the **same tree** that John the Baptist mentioned. **Two and a half years** after Jesus began His ministry the Jewish tree still had **not produced fruit**.
- ✓ One year later, in **Mark 11:12-14, 20**, we meet the tree the final time. The final year of Christ's ministry, the tree still **did not produce** fruit so He cursed it.

Although Mark does not tell us that the fire burned the **dry tree**, a **parallel text** helps us see what happens when a tree does not bear fruit. In Scripture, the **vine is a symbol of Israel** (see the parable below). When a branch of the vine does not produce fruit, the vinedresser cuts it off and throws it **into the fire**. Thus, there is a connection between the **fire** and the **dry tree** in the parable and in the first trumpet.

## **John 15:5-6**

*"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.<sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is **cast out as a branch** and is **withered**; and they gather them and throw them **into the fire**, and they are **burned**."*

Ellen White wrote:

*"Terribly was it realized in the destruction of Jerusalem. Terribly has it been manifested in the condition of the Jewish nation for eighteen hundred years—a branch severed from the vine, a **dead, fruitless branch**, to be gathered up and **burned**. From land to land throughout the world, from century to century, dead, dead in trespasses and sins!" DA p. 739*

The parable of **Matthew 21:33-46** repeats the fact that Israel bore no fruit.

**Luke 23:27-31**: These are the **most important verses** to understand the first trumpet:

*"And a great multitude of the people followed Him, and women who also mourned and lamented Him. <sup>28</sup> But Jesus, turning to them, said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. <sup>29</sup> For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, 'Blessed are the barren, wombs that never bore, and breasts which never nursed!' <sup>30</sup> Then they will begin 'to say to the **mountains**, "Fall on us!" and to the **hills**, "Cover us!"' [Fulfilled finally in Revelation 6:16, 17; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:64; Matthew 23:39] <sup>31</sup> For if they do these things in the **green wood**, what will be done in **the dry**?" [This must be seen in the light of the fig tree that dried up by the roots because they condemned Jesus who is represented by a green tree. The key phrase is 'dried up by the roots'. Thus, the Jewish nation was the dried up tree]*

**Ellen White** explained the meaning of **Luke 23:31**:

*"From the fall of Jerusalem the thoughts of Jesus passed to a wider judgment. In the destruction of the impenitent city, He saw a symbol of the final destruction to come upon the world. He said, "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a **green tree**, what shall be done in the dry?" By the **green tree**, Jesus represented Himself, the innocent Redeemer. God suffered His wrath against transgression to fall on His beloved Son. Jesus was to be crucified for the sins of men. What suffering, then, would the sinner bear who continued in sin? All the impenitent and unbelieving would know a sorrow and misery that language would fail to express." DA p. 743*

The **Methodist** commentator, **Adam Clarke** added these thoughts on the meaning of Luke 23:31:

*"This seems to be a proverbial expression, the sense of which is: If they spare not a tree which, by the beauty of its foliage, abundance and excellence of its fruits, deserves to be preserved, then the **tree which is dry and withered** will surely be cut down. If a people who profess to be governed and directed by divine laws, what desolation, put an innocent man to death in the very face of justice, in opposition to all its dictates and decisions, injustice, and oppression may not be expected, when anarchy and confusion sit in the place where judgment and justice formerly presided? Our Lord alludes prophetically to those tribulations which fell upon the **Jewish people about forty years after.**" (Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft)*

The **Presbyterian** pastor, **Albert Barnes** explained the meaning of Luke 23:31:

*"This seems to be a proverbial expression. A 'green' tree is not easily set on fire; a dry one is easily kindled and burns rapidly; and the meaning of the passage is- 'If they, the Romans, do these things to me, who am innocent and blameless; if they punish me in this manner in the face of justice, what will they not do in relation to this **guilty nation**? What security have they that **heavier judgments** will not come upon them? What desolations and woes may not be expected when injustice and oppression have taken the place of justice, and have set up a rule over this wicked people?" Our Lord alludes, evidently, to the calamities that would come **upon them by the Romans** in the destruction of their **city and temple**. The passage may be applied, however, without impropriety, and with great beauty and force, to the punishment of the **wicked in the future world.**"*

*Thus applied, it means that the sufferings of the Savior, as compared with the sufferings of the guilty, were like the burning of a green tree as compared with the burning of one that is dry. A green tree is not adapted to burn; a dry one is. So the Savior—innocent, pure, and holy—stood in relation to suffering." (Albert Barnes Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft)*

## The Grass Symbolism

### Isaiah 40:6-8

*"The voice said, "Cry out!" and he said, "What shall I cry?" **"All flesh is grass,** and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. <sup>7</sup> The **grass** withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the **people are grass.** <sup>8</sup> The **grass withers,** the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever."*

### Psalms 37:2

*"Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. <sup>2</sup> For they shall soon be cut down **like the grass,** and wither as the green herb."*

### Psalms 90:5-7

*"You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning, they are **like grass** that grows up: <sup>6</sup> In the morning it **flourishes** and grows up; in the evening it is cut **down and withers.** <sup>7</sup> For we have been consumed by Your anger, and by Your wrath we are terrified."*

### Psalms 92:6, 7

*"A senseless man does not know, nor does a fool understand this. <sup>7</sup> When the wicked **spring up like grass,** and when all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever."*



# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 3: THE SECOND TRUMPET**

#### **Revelation 8:8-9**

*“Then the second angel sounded: And something like a **great mountain burning with fire** was thrown into the **sea**, and a third of the sea became **blood**. And a **third** of the **living creatures** in the sea died, and a **third** of the **ships** were destroyed.”*

#### **An Important Principle**

#### **Galatians 6:7**

*“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man **sows**, that he will also **reap**.”*

The principle expressed in this verse not only applies to **individuals** but also to **nations**. Regarding France, Ellen White wrote:

*“Unhappy France **reaped** in blood the harvest she had **sown**. Terrible were the results of her submission to the controlling power of Rome.”*

**Isaiah 10:5, 6, 12** (see Ezekiel 35:5-7 for another example)

**God used Assyria** as His instrument to punish His apostate people and then He **punished Assyria** for treading down His people:

*"Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. <sup>6</sup> I will send him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. . . <sup>12</sup> Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, "I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks."*

### **Jeremiah 27:6, 7**

*"And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. <sup>7</sup> So all nations shall **serve him and his son and his son's son**, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings **shall make him serve them**."*

Nebuchadnezzar was God's servant to punish apostate Israel and then God punished Nebuchadnezzar for treading down His people. Jeremiah chapters 50 and 51 describe how God punished Babylon for oppressing His people:

### **Jeremiah 50:14, 15, 17, 18, 28**

*"Because you were glad, because you rejoiced, you **destroyers of My heritage**, <sup>15</sup> Shout against her all around; She has given her hand, Her foundations have fallen, Her walls are thrown down; For it is the **vengeance of the Lord**. Take vengeance on her. As she has done, **so do to her**. <sup>17</sup> "Israel is like scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away. First the **king of Assyria** devoured him; now at last this **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon** has broken his bones." <sup>18</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: "Behold, I will **punish the king of Babylon** and his land, As I have **punished the king of Assyria**. <sup>28</sup> The voice of those who flee and escape from the land of Babylon declares in Zion the vengeance of the Lord our God, the **vengeance of His temple**."*

### **Jeremiah 51:24, 34, 35, 49, 50**

*"And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea for all the **evil they have done in Zion** in your sight," says the Lord. <sup>34</sup> "Nebuchadnezzar the king of*

*Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me; he has made me an empty vessel, he has swallowed me up like a monster; he has filled his stomach with my delicacies, he has spit me out. <sup>35</sup> Let the violence done to me and my flesh **be upon Babylon**," the inhabitant of Zion will say; "And my **blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea!**" Jerusalem will say. <sup>49</sup> As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at **Babylon the slain** of all the earth shall fall. <sup>50</sup> You who have escaped the sword; get away! Do not stand still! Remember the Lord afar off and let Jerusalem come to your mind."*

## **Who Destroyed Jerusalem the First Time?**

Who destroyed Jerusalem the first time in the year 586 BC? Was it **God**, **Nebuchadnezzar**, or did **Israel** destroy itself?

**Daniel 9:14** explicitly states that **God** destroyed Jerusalem:

*"Therefore **the Lord** has kept the disaster in mind, and **brought it upon us**; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice."*

**2 Chronicles 36:17-19** states that **Nebuchadnezzar** (whom God calls 'my servant' in Jeremiah 27:6) destroyed the city and the temple:

*"Therefore **He** brought against them the **king of the Chaldeans**, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; **He gave them** all into **his** hand. <sup>18</sup> And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all these **he** took to Babylon. <sup>19</sup> Then **they [the Babylonians]** burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. "*

**Daniel 9:11, 14, 15 Israel's sins** brought about the destruction of the city and the temple:

*"Yes, **all Israel has transgressed** Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; **therefore** the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the*

servant of God have been poured out on us, because **we have sinned** against Him.  
<sup>14</sup> **Therefore the Lord** has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. <sup>15</sup> And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day — **we have sinned, we have done wickedly!**”

**Jeremiah 38:23** (also verses 17, 18):

In fact, the prophet Jeremiah told Israel: If you do not submit to the king of Babylon, **‘you shall cause this city to be burned with fire.’**

This is how it all fits together:

Because of Israel’s sins, **God** employed His servant **Nebuchadnezzar** to destroy the city and the temple. However, God would not have used Nebuchadnezzar to destroy them if it had not been for the **sins of the people**. In other words, Israel, because of her own sinful choices, brought destruction upon herself. Now let us consider the second destruction of Jerusalem.

## **The Second Destruction of Jerusalem**

Daniel 9:26 states that *‘the people of the prince’* destroyed Jerusalem the second time in the year AD 70. The prince in Daniel 9 is Christ. If the prince of verse 26 is Jesus, then the **people** of the prince must be the Jews (remember that the word ‘people’ throughout Daniel 9 always refers to Israel (see verses 15, 16, 19, 20, 24)). The critical question then is this: Did the Jews destroy their own city and sanctuary? At first sight, the idea seems absurd and preposterous. After all, the Jews did not destroy their own city and sanctuary, did they? Did not Titus and the Romans destroy the city and the temple?

The parable of the wedding in Matthew 22:1-14 explains clearly who destroyed Jerusalem the second time. Similarly to the parable of the vineyard workers in **Matthew 21:33-46**, God the Father sent servants to Israel to invite them to the marriage of his son (verses 2-3). This first stage of the parable represents the Old Testament period when God sent prophets to prepare Israel for the coming of the Messiah. Israel rejected the invitations of the prophets. Then, after Christ



was sacrificed (verse 4), the Father sent further servants (Peter, John Stephen, Paul, etc.) to extend an invitation to the same people but they rejected these messages as well (verses 5-6). Verse 7 describes the king's reaction to the second rejection:

*"But when the **king** heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth **his** armies, and destroyed those **murderers**, and burned up **their** city."*

Three ideas coalesce in this verse. [1] **God** used the [2] **Roman armies** (spoken of as his armies) to destroy [3] **those** murderers and to burn **their** city.

Clearly, the people, by rejecting the Messiah, brought destruction upon their own city (see also, Hosea 13:9). Although God used Titus and the Roman armies to destroy the city and the temple, the choice of the Jewish nation really determined its fate. Ellen White concurs with this scenario:

*"The Jews had forged **their own fetters**; they had filled for **themselves** the cup of vengeance. In the utter destruction that befell them as a nation, and in all the woes that followed them in their dispersion, they were but reaping the harvest which **their own hands** had sown. Says the prophet: "O Israel, **thou hast destroyed thyself**;" "for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." Hosea 13:9; 14:1. Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, **the Jews had caused** the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will." GC p. 35-36.*

## **The Burning Mountain**

Mountains in Bible prophecy represent **kingdoms** so the fall of a kingdom must be in view in the second trumpet (Daniel 2:35, 44, 45; Isaiah 14:13; Psalm 48:1, 2; Isaiah 2:1-4). This mountain must represent a kingdom that destroyed Jerusalem and persecuted God's people.

**Jeremiah 50:3, 9, 10, 41, 42**: An enemy **from the north**, like the **waves of the sea** came against Babylon and demolished her:

*"For **out of the north** a nation comes up against her, which shall make her land desolate, and no one shall dwell therein. They shall move, they shall depart, both man and beast. <sup>9</sup> For behold, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon **an assembly of great nations** from the **North Country**, and **they** shall array themselves against her; from there she shall be captured. Their arrows shall be like those of an expert warrior; none shall return in vain. <sup>10</sup> And Chaldea shall **become plunder**; all who plunder her shall be satisfied," says the Lord. <sup>41</sup> "Behold, **a people** shall come **from the north**, and a **great nation** and **many kings** shall be raised up from the ends of the earth. <sup>42</sup> They shall hold the bow and the lance; they are cruel and shall not show mercy. Their voice shall **roar like the sea**; they shall ride on horses, set in array, like a man for the battle, against you, O daughter of Babylon."*

**Jeremiah 51:25**: The prophet Jeremiah compared the kingdom of Babylon with a **destroying mountain**. Eventually this destroying mountain became a **burning mountain** that was thrust **into the sea** (the passive voice 'was thrown' indicates that this is God's judgment). This is the **key verse** to understand the second trumpet.

*"And I will **repay Babylon** and all the inhabitants of Chaldea **for all the evil they have done in Zion** in your sight," says the Lord. <sup>25</sup> "Behold, I am against you, O **destroying mountain**, who destroys all the earth," says the Lord. "And I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you a **burnt mountain**."*

The fact that the second trumpet describes the mountain as **GREAT** brings to mind Babylon the Great later on in the book of Revelation (Rev. 16:19; 17:1, 5; 18:2, 21).

## **The Sea**

### **Jeremiah 51:42**

*"The **sea** has come up over Babylon; she is covered with the **multitude** of its **waves**."*

**Note:** The waves of the sea destroyed Babylon and made her desolate. In this case, the sea represents the multitude of nations that arose against Babylon and destroyed her.

### **Isaiah 17:12-14**

*"Woe to the multitude of many people who make a noise like the roar of the seas, and to the rushing of nations that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters! <sup>13</sup> The nations will rush like the rushing of many waters; but God will rebuke them [dry them up] and they will flee far away, and be chased like the chaff of the mountains before the wind [similar to Daniel 2:35], like a rolling thing before the whirlwind. <sup>14</sup> Then behold, at eventide, trouble! And before the morning, he is no more. This is the portion of those who plunder us, and the lot of those who rob us."*

### **Isaiah 60:5**

*"Then you shall see and become radiant, and your heart shall swell with joy; because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the Gentiles ['nations' NIV] shall come to you."*

### **Revelation 17:15**

*"Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."*

### **Jeremiah 51:60-64**

*"So Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that would come upon Babylon, all these words that are written against Babylon. <sup>61</sup> And Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon and see it, and read all these words, <sup>62</sup> then you shall say, 'O Lord, You have spoken against this place to cut it off, so that none shall remain in it, neither man nor beast, but it shall be desolate forever.' <sup>63</sup> Now it shall be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall tie a stone to it and throw it out into the Euphrates. <sup>64</sup> Then you shall say, 'Thus Babylon shall sink and not rise from the catastrophe that I will bring upon her. And they shall be weary.'"*

## **Revelation 18:21**

*"Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it **into the sea**, saying, "Thus with violence the **great city Babylon** shall be **thrown down**, and shall not be found anymore."*

## **Time Frame of the Burning Mountain**

Since the days of Daniel, four major kingdoms have risen to power and fallen. They are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The power that ruled in the days when John wrote the book of Revelation was **Rome**. Literal Babylon had **already fallen** when John saw his vision of the trumpets therefore the mountain of the second trumpet **cannot refer to** the fall of literal Old Testament Babylon.

The **critical question** is this: Which kingdom destroyed Jerusalem, desolated God's people and then in turn suffered the punishment of God? The only answer is Rome.

In **Revelation 17**, we see a dragon beast with **seven heads**. However, the heads are actually **seven mountains**. Each of these heads/mountains represents a kingdom that ruled beginning with Babylon. The burning mountain that cast into the sea at the sounding of the second trumpet was **the fourth** of those mountains or heads of Revelation 17, namely the **Roman Empire**. Someone might wonder whether it is legitimate to take biblical terminology that describes literal Babylon and apply it symbolically to the Roman Empire. The answer is yes for several reasons.

## **The Apocrypha and Rome**

The Jews in the **intertestamental period** understood that the Roman Empire was a 'new Babylon':

*"... then shall come a **great star** from heaven into the **divine sea**, and **shall burn up the deep sea** and Babylon itself, and the **land of Italy** on whose account many faithful saints of the **Hebrews have perished**, and the true people." Sibylline Oracles, lines 158-161*

*“But the **king of Babylon** will arise who has now **destroyed Zion**, and he will boast over the people, and he will speak great things in his heart in the presence of the Most High. But he also shall **fall at last**.” 2 Baruch 67:7, 8*

When the anonymous author wrote the book of **2Baruch** literal Babylon had already fallen and had no king.

### **1 Peter 5:13**

*“She who is **in Babylon**, elect together with you, greets you; and **so does Mark** my son.”*

Many scholars believe that Babylon in this text is a **cryptic reference** to Rome. There is persuasive contextual evidence that this is so. God appointed Peter as His messenger **to the Jews**. Peter wrote his first epistle close to the **end of his life** and we know that at the end of his life he was in Rome where he would die as a martyr by the hand of Nero.

It **hardly makes sense** for Peter to write from Rome and send **greetings to others** from people who lived in Babylon. The words ‘*she who is in Babylon greets you*’ and ‘*so does Mark my son*’ make no sense unless the greeters were in the same place as Peter. Why would Peter, who was in Rome, send greetings from people living in literal Babylon **2,754 miles** away?

There is no evidence that **Peter was ever** in literal Babylon. Mark was certainly in the same place as Peter. Thus, the word ‘Babylon’ must be a **cryptic reference** to Rome. We must remember that the book of **Revelation** refers to Rome as ‘Babylon’.

**Nero died in 68 AD** and Nero martyred Peter so Peter must have died sometime before 68 AD. Most scholars date the first epistle of Peter to sometime between **64 and 68 AD**. Ellen White confirms that Peter, late in life, ministered in Rome and that Nero martyred him:

*“In the providence of God, Peter was permitted to **close his ministry in Rome**, where his **imprisonment** was ordered by the emperor **Nero** about the time of Paul's final arrest. Thus the two veteran apostles, who for **many years** had been*

*widely separated in their labors, were to bear their last witness for Christ in the world's metropolis, and upon its soil to shed their blood as the seed of a vast harvest of saints and martyrs.” AA, p. 537*

## **The Zoroastrian Persians**

In order to understand fully the link between Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon and pagan Rome, we need go back to some events that occurred during the period of the Medo-Persian Empire.

When the Medes and Persians conquered Babylon, they introduced **a new religion**. The name of this new religion is **Zoroastrianism**. Unlike most ancient religions, Zoroastrianism was **monotheistic**. This teaches that there is **one true Almighty God**, whose name is **Ahura-Mazda**, the God of light. However, Ahura-Mazda has an arch-adversary called **Ahriman** who inhabits the realm of **darkness**. According to Zoroastrianism, there is a constant battle or great controversy between Ahura-Mazda and Ahriman (Humphrey Prideaux, **An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments** (London: William Tegg and Co., 1858), pp. 149-150).

Ancient history reveals that almost all nations had an **incurable tendency** toward **polytheism**. We can see this, for example, in the lurid description that the apostle Paul provides in **Romans 1:18-32**. Even **Israel**, before the Babylonian captivity, was obsessed with **foreign gods**. It is indeed unusual to find a nation in a polytheistic environment that suddenly confesses monotheism. I know of only two other cases. One is in Egypt during the reign of **Tutankhamen** (was it because of what the Hebrew God did to Egyptian civilization at the Exodus?) and the other is **Persia**. Why did Persia adopt a strictly monotheistic spirituality?

Shortly after the fall of Babylon, **Daniel** had an **encounter with Cyrus**, King of Persia. The prophet opened up to Cyrus the prophecies of **Isaiah** regarding the role he would play in the fall of Babylon. In fact, Daniel showed Cyrus that God had chosen him **by name** to deliver His people **one hundred years** before his

birth (Isaiah 45:1). When Cyrus heard this, he was deeply impressed. Ezra reveals that Cyrus had great respect for the God of the Hebrews:

### **Ezra 1:1-4**

*“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven **has given me** and **He has commanded me** to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. <sup>3</sup> Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem”.*

Regarding the **encounter** between Daniel and Cyrus, Ellen White made the following enlightening remark:

*“As the king saw the words foretelling, more than a hundred years before his birth, the manner in which Babylon should be taken; as he read the message addressed to him by the Ruler of the universe. . . . his heart was **profoundly moved**, and he determined to fulfill his **divinely appointed mission**.”* PK p. 557.

There is persuasive evidence that the Persian Empire came to know the true God primarily through the contacts of **Darius and Cyrus** with **Daniel**.

Some scholars believe that the **wise men** who came to visit Jesus were from Persia. They were **not idolaters**. Ellen White refers to these wise men from the east as ‘philosophers’. She also states that these ‘*magi studied the starry heavens*’ with the aid of the Hebrew Scriptures. Regarding this, she wrote:

*“Seeking clearer knowledge [***than what they could discern by a study of the starry heavens***] they turned to the **Hebrew Scriptures**. In their own land were **treasured prophetic writings** that predicted the coming of a divine teacher.”* DA, p. 59

Then Ellen White shared a very significant insight:

*“Balaam belonged to the magicians, though at one time a prophet of God; by the Holy Spirit he had foretold the prosperity of Israel and the appearing of the Messiah; and his prophecies had been **handed down** by tradition from century to century. But in the Old Testament the Savior’s advent was more clearly revealed.”* DA, p. 59

Then Ellen White explained about the Star:

*“It was not a fixed star nor a planet, and the phenomenon excited the keenest interest. That star was a distant **company of shining angels**. However, of this the wise men were ignorant. Yet they were impressed that the star was of special import to them. They consulted priests and philosophers, and searched the scrolls of the ancient records.”* DA pp. 59-60.

Finally, Ellen White tells us that they found Balaam’s prophecy of Numbers 24:7.

*“These men [**those who said: ‘we would see Jesus’**] came from the West [**Greece**] to find the Savior at the close of His life, as the wise men had come from the **East** at the beginning.”* DA, p. 621

## **The Slaughter of the Babylonian Priests**

However, even after monotheism took hold in the kingdom, there were still polytheistic **Babylonian priests**, of the **Daniel 2 type**, in the realm. These were angry that their religion had been overthrown and they looked for every opportunity to **reestablish their lost dominion**. Cyrus died in **530 BC** and **Cambyses** who succeeded him governed for seven and one half years.

History tells us that King Cambyses went on an **expedition to Egypt** and when he was in Syria and **on the way back** to Persia, a **herald arrived** from Shushan who rode into the midst of the army and proclaimed that **Smerdis**, the **son of Cyrus**, had been crowned king and that all must obey him.



When Cambyses left for Egypt, he had placed **Patizithes** to tend to governmental affairs in his absence. Patizithes had a brother who **greatly resembled Smerdis**. In fact, he had the same name. Cambyses was jealous of Cyrus' son and had him killed. According to historians, Cambyses was a **lunatic** who was always looking over his shoulder, suspicious of all and murdering any **potential rival**.

For example, Cambyses married his **youngest sister** because she was very beautiful. However, one day he kicked her in the abdomen and killed her because she cried when she heard that Smerdis had died. She was pregnant at the time, and her baby died as well. Cambyses had several of his loyal supporters buried alive for no reason at all!

After Cambyses killed Smerdis, Patizithes placed his **Smerdis look-alike brother** on the throne. Historians refer to him as 'false Smerdis'. Patizithes then informed everyone that false Smerdis was the true son of Cyrus.

This false Smerdis was a **Mede** (not a Persian like Cyrus) and the chief leader of the **Babylonian Magi** who remained after the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus. He **hated the Jews** and gave a decree **halting the rebuilding** of the Jerusalem temple at the bequest of the **Samaritans**. Ellen White described False Smerdis:

*"During the reign of Cambyses the work on the temple progressed slowly. And during the reign of the **false Smerdis** (called Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7) the **Samaritans** induced the unscrupulous impostor to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to rebuild their temple and city." PK, pp. 572, 573*

However, the imposture did not last long. Seven Persians of the nobility entered the royal palace (the name of the leader was Otanes) and **slew false Smerdis** and his **brother Patizithes**. At the same time, there was a great **slaughter of the polytheistic Magi** of the Babylonian type who sympathized with false Smerdis.

Significantly, a remnant survived the carnage and fled to the city of **Pergamum** in **Asia Minor**. Darius the Persian then reestablished the holy temples and monotheistic religion of Ahura-Mazda (for more on this read, Humphrey Prideaux, An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments, volume 1, pp. 145-147, 205-207).

Later in the Persian dynasty, **King Xerxes** (the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther) rose to power. He was a **staunch defender** of the monotheistic religion of Persia and a **detester of polytheism**. In the year **480 BC**, he destroyed the polytheistic temples of the Greeks and also undertook a campaign **to Babylon** where he destroyed the pagan temples there. (See, Humphrey Prideaux, An Historical Connection of the Old and New Testaments, volume 1, pp. 214-215. Once again, the **Babylonian Magi fled to Pergamum** for refuge. In this way, the Babylonian Magi established their polytheistic religion in the city of **Pergamum in Asia Minor**.

## **Pergamum and Pagan Rome**

Historians have documented that the pagan Roman Empire **grew out of Asia Minor**. We know this for several reasons.

First, the Roman poet, **Virgil**, tells us that Roman civilization and culture came from the ancient city of **Troy in Asia Minor**. In his famous epic, *The Aenid* (which he wrote during a period of eleven years, 30-19 BC), Virgil tells about a Trojan prince who was **exiled to Italy** in the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC when Troy was destroyed by the Greeks. According to Virgil, this prince established the **first settlement in Italy**.

The notable work, The Migration of the Etruscans also tells us that Roman civilization and culture grew out of Asia Minor.

Wrote Christopher S. Mackay:

*“ . . . Roman **political** and **religious practices** were strongly influenced by the Etruscans. Early Roman **art and religion** were also strongly influenced by the*

*Etruscans, and the Romans seem to have developed their **writing system** from them. . . Hence, while the Greeks were a strong cultural influence on early Rome, the Etruscans had a **more immediate influence**. Herodotus tells us that before the Trojan War, the Etruscans migrated from Lydia (in western Asia Minor) **to Rome** as a result of a great drought which lasted for 25 years".* ([Http://www.ualberta.ca/~csmackay/CLASS\\_365/Etruscans.html](http://www.ualberta.ca/~csmackay/CLASS_365/Etruscans.html)).

Rome did not only borrow its **civilization and culture** from Asia Minor, they also borrowed their **religion** from there.

Christopher Mackay adds:

*"The Etruscans were considered a very religious people in antiquity, and the **Romans borrowed** many **religious customs** from them."*

In **67 AD**, Roman general **Pompeii** undertook an expedition to do away with a grave problem of **pirates in Asia Minor**. History confirms that Pompeii embraced the religion of the **sun god Mithra** there. In fact, **Mithraism** became the official religion of the **Roman legions**.

**Franz Cumont** who spent a good share of his lifetime studying the religion of the Roman Empire explained the phenomenal growth of Mithraism in Rome:

*"All the original rites that characterized the Mithraic cult of the Romans **unquestionably** go back to **Asiatic origins**. . . . The principal agent of its diffusion was undoubtedly **the army**. The Mithraic religion is predominantly a **religion of soldiers**, and it was not without good reason that the name of milites was given to a certain grade of initiates. . . ." (Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra* (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), pp. 30, 40)*

Cumont explained that 'the **original home of Mithra** was not infrequently placed on the banks of the Euphrates [**Babylon**]. . . .'

He added:

*“Very early the [Babylonian] Magi had crossed Mesopotamia and penetrated to the heart of Asia Minor.” (Franz Cumont, The Mysteries of Mithra, pp. 10-11).*

Clearly, **Asia Minor** was the **link** that connected the religion of **ancient Babylon** with the religion of the **Roman Empire**. This is a pivotal point that we will return to in a few moments.

According to Cumont,

*“It can be proved that all our representations of the tauroctonous [bull like] Mithra, the hieratic figure of which was fixed before the propagation of the Mysteries in the Occident, are more or less faithful replicas of a type created by a sculptor of the school of Pergamum, in imitation of the sacrificing victory which adorned the balustrade of the temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis.” (Franz Cumont, The Mysteries of Mithra (New York: Dover Publications, 1956), p 210.*

Pergamum was the only one of the four Macedonian kingdoms that Rome did **not have to fight** to overcome. King **Attalus II** willed the kingdom of Pergamum to the Roman Senate in the year **133 BC** (See, Encyclopedia Britannica, article, ‘Pergamum’).

The willing of the kingdom of Pergamum to Rome not only gave Rome a **foothold in Asia Minor** from where it could conquer the nations of the East, but it also became **the bridge** that made it possible for Rome to come in contact with **God’s covenant people**, Israel. This led to the fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel 8.

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs describes the strategic importance of Asia Minor (<http://www.ptr.co.nz/turkey/pergamum.htm>):

*“The role played by Asia Minor in Western culture was: primarily determined by its geographical position. Whereas all the Mediterranean peninsulas—Iberian, Italian, Greek—extend from north to south, Asia Minor, alone stretching from east to west forms a unique bridge. It was this which caused the civilizations arising*

*in the East in general, and on its territory in particular, to orient themselves towards the West, by way of the Aegean islands."*

## **Pergamum: The Hinge between Pagan and Papal Rome**

So far, we have traced the transfer of Babylonian idolatrous religion from **Babylon** through **Asia Minor** to **pagan Rome**. However, the story does not end there. According to the book of Revelation, Pergamum is also the link between **pagan Rome** and **papal Rome**. How is this? In order to answer this question, we must turn to Revelation 2 and 3, and the seven churches.

Conservative Bible students believe that the seven churches depict **seven epochs** in the history of the Christian Church. Regarding this, Ellen G. White wrote:

*"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in **different periods** of the Christian era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend **to the end of time**, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at **different periods** in the history of the world." AA p. 585)*

Ellen White is **not alone** in this assessment. In a sermon preached by Ray C. Stedman on November 19, 1989, he described the meaning of the seven churches:

*"The **entire church age** is brought before us in the purview of these letters." (Ray Stedman, 'Smyrna and Pergamum: The Pressured Church and the Compromising Church').*

A careful study of the first three churches (Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamum,) reveals a progression (or 'regression') from the **Apostolic church** to the **Compromising church** in the days of Constantine. The Church of Ephesus symbolizes the apostolic period. Smyrna represents the persecuted church during the rule of the Roman Empire. This is indicated by the 'death language'

that appears in the context of this church (see, Revelation 2:8-11). Stedman described the church during this period:

*“Prophetically viewed, this church [**Smyrna**] is a picture of the period in history from about 160 A. D. to 320 A. D., the **rise of Constantine**, the first so-called Christian emperor. The whole period has been termed the ‘Age of Martyrs’.”*

Stedman then sees the church of **Pergamum** as the period when the church **amalgamated** with the world in the days of **Constantine** preparatory to the full-blown apostasy of the papal church. With respect to this, Stedman said:

*“Prophetically, this is the period from the **accession of Constantine** in 320 A. D. to the rise of **the papacy in the 6<sup>th</sup> century**. During that period were held the great councils of the church... However, it was also the time of the wedding of the **church and the world** under Constantine. . . . Constantine was not really a true Christian. He adopted many **pagan practices** and brought them **into the church** where they were accepted. Christianity was popular in those days, and many **pagan practices** were incorporated into it. This began when the church was viewed as a worldly kingdom, like any other kingdom.”*

Ellen G. White concurred with Stedman’s assessment. In GC p. 49-50 she wrote:

*“The **nominal conversion** of Constantine in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Now the work of corruption rapidly progressed. **Paganism**, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Her spirit controlled the church. Her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were **incorporated** into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.”*

**Revelation 2:13** tells us that Pergamum was the place where Satan’s throne was. A king sits on a throne and therefore we must conclude that Pergamum was the **See of Satan’s kingdom**.

Let us now turn to **Revelation 12:1-5, 7-9**. The dragon in this passage symbolizes **Satan working** through the **Roman Empire**. We know that at this

time, **Satan's throne** was in Rome because **Revelation 13:2** tells us that the dragon then gave his throne to the beast. That is to say, the dragon (symbolic of Satan working through the Roman Empire) gave the beast (papal Rome) *'his power, and **throne** and great authority'*. Thus, Satan's throne moved from the Empire of Rome to Papal Rome. Where was Satan's throne between pagan Rome and papal Rome? In **Pergamum** (Revelation 2:13).

Before we proceed further with this thought, we must consider another expression in Christ's message to the church of Pergamum. Verse 14 tells us that Pergamum holds *'the doctrine of Balaam'* (Revelation 2:14). What is the doctrine of Balaam? To find the answer, we must go back to the place where the Bible mentions Balaam and that is Numbers 22-24.

### **Pergamum and the Doctrine of Balaam**

**Numbers 21:10ff** informs us that Israel had gained **signal victories** over their enemies. They had wiped out the Ammonites and the **Moabites** feared that they would be next. For this reason, **Balak**, king of the Moabites, attempted to persuade and **bribe Balaam** to curse Israel. However, at the time, Israel had a strong covenant relationship with the Lord and Balaam **could not curse** them as long as they remained faithful to God. (Numbers 22:6, 12, 18; 23:8-10, 20-23; 24:5, 9).

We are reminded that according to Ellen White, Balaam **originally belonged** to the group of **faithful wise men** but later sold himself to a group of idolatrous Moabite priests who were experts in the **art of divination** (Numbers 22:7; 23:23). We find here, very early in the history of Israel, the two types of Magi, which later reappear in Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon and in the kingdom of Medo-Persia.

When Balaam failed to curse Israel for Balak, he suggested a **demonic plan**. If he could **entice the Israelite** men to commit **literal** fornication with the daughters of Moab and celebrate their idolatrous rites, God would withdraw His protection and Israel would become easy prey.

This is precisely the strategy that Balaam used, according to **Numbers 25:1-3** (according to Revelation 2:14 Balaam suggested the plan). Just as Balaam expected, Israel forsook the Lord, the Lord withdrew His protection, and Israel lost **24,000 men**. However, not everyone apostatized. **Numbers 25:6-8** tells the triumphant story of how **Phinehas** exalted God's honor.

In this way, spiritual Pergamum became the link between pagan Rome and papal Rome. We have previously seen that papal Rome was a continuation of pagan Rome (see, the document, "*Why Papal Rome is a Continuation of Pagan Rome*"). We have seen that the literal kingdom of Pergamum was the link between ancient Babylon and the Roman Empire and spiritual Pergamum links the Roman Empire with papal Rome. Thus, there is an **unbroken chain** between ancient Babylon and papal Rome.

## **Papal Rome and Protestantism**

However, there is more to this story. The papacy bequeathed the **observance of Sunday** (as well as other heresies) **to Protestants**. John O'Brien, who for many years taught at Notre Dame University described this Sunday link between Catholics and Protestants:

*"But since Saturday, not Sunday, is specified in the Bible, isn't it curious that non-Catholics who profess to take their religion directly from the Bible and not from the Church, observe Sunday instead of Saturday? Yes, of course, it is inconsistent; but this **change** was made about fifteen centuries before Protestantism was born, and by that time the custom was universally observed. They have continued the custom, even though it rests upon the **authority of the Catholic Church** and not upon an explicit text in the Bible. That observance remains as a reminder of the **Mother Church** from which the non-Catholic sects broke away—like a boy running away from home but still carrying in his pocket a **picture** of his mother or a **lock of her hair**." John O'Brien, *The Faith of Millions* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1974) pp. 400, 401.*



The book of Revelation draws a parallel between the conflict that took place in the Valley of Dura in literal Babylon and what will take place once more on a worldwide scale (Revelation 13:11-18).

As in the past, the **beast** (not literal but symbolic) will make an **image** (not literal but symbolic) and command all to **worship** it. Whoever refuses to worship it, will be under a **death sentence**. As I have shown elsewhere, in the days of Daniel, hidden in the dimensions of the image, was the **number 666**. At the end, the number of the beast will be 666. Nebuchadnezzar's image was a **solar symbol** and at the end, the world will worship on the day of the sun, **Sunday**. Furthermore, as in the days of Nebuchadnezzar, God will have a **faithful remnant** that He will deliver from certain death.

Thus, in a very real sense, pagan Rome grew out of Pergamum (Daniel 8) and papal Rome grew out of spiritual Pergamum (Revelation 2:13; Daniel 7:8-9). Finally, Protestantism was born from Catholicism.

## **Papal Rome Continues Pagan Rome**

Historians confirm that Papal Rome is a continuation of Pagan Rome:

*"Within three centuries, the Roman Church had transformed the administrative organization of the Roman Empire into an ecclesiastical system of bishoprics, dioceses, monasteries, colonies, garrisons, schools, libraries, administrative centers, envoys, representatives, courts of justice, and a criminal system of intricate laws all under the direct control of the pope. His Roman Palace, the Lateran, became the new Senate. The new senators were the cardinals. The bishops who lived in Rome and the priests and deacons helped the pope to administer this **new imperium**." (Malachi Martin, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Church*, p. 105).*

*"The Roman Church in this way privily [**secretly**] pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the **actual continuation**; the **empire has not perished**, but has only undergone a **transformation**. . . That is no mere 'clever remark,' but the recognition of the **true state** of the matter historically, and the*

most appropriate and fruitful way of describing the character of this Church. It **still governs** the nations. . . It is a political creation, and as imposing as a World-Empire, because [it is] the **continuation of the Roman Empire**. The Pope, who calls himself “King” and “Pontifex Maximus,” is **Caesar’s successor**.” (Adolph Harnack, *What is Christianity?* pp. 269-270)

“The Empire was falling into decay. The **Barbarians** knew that its life was failing, that the old organism was worn out, and they hastened to take possession of the remains. **From every direction**, they came for the spoils. The Saxons and the Angles settled in Great Britain; the Franks invaded Northern Gaul; the Visigoths made Spain and the region south of the Loire their own; the Burgundians took possession of the upper valley of the Rhone; the Vandals made conquests in Africa. The Ostrogoths and Lombards were waiting for their turn to come. Among these new invaders, some were heretics, others were pagans. What is to become of the Church? Are its days numbered, and is the Empire to bring it down as its companion into an open tomb?

“No, the Church will not descend into the tomb. It will survive the Empire. It will have to pass through days of distress. It will witness calamity after calamity, ruins heaped upon ruins. However, in the midst of the greatest sadness, it will receive precious consolations. One after another, these barbarian peoples will submit to its laws, and will count it a glory to be the Church’s children. The frontiers of the Church will be extended; its institutions, for a moment shaken by the Barbarians, will be consolidated, developed, and will adapt themselves to their surroundings. The papacy, most sorely tried of all, will make a new advance. At length a **second empire** will arise, and of this empire, the Pope will be the master—more than this, he will be the **master of Europe**. He will dictate his orders to kings who will obey them.” (Joseph Turmel, *The Latin Church in the Middle Ages*, p. v, vi.)

“The all-conquering barbarians were storming the gates of Augustine’s city when the saint died in 430. The North African town of Hippo was one of the last imperial outposts to be attacked. Rome had already gone under. Only four years before, St. Augustine’s City of God had laid the theological groundwork for the church to **step**

into the void left by the collapsing Roman Empire.” (Douglas Auchincloss, ‘City of God and Man’, Time, 76 (December 12, 1960), p. 64.

“The removal of the capital of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople in 330 left the Western Church, practically free from imperial power, to develop its own form of organization. The Bishop of Rome, in the seat of the Caesars, was now the greatest man in the West, and was soon forced to become the political as well as the spiritual head. To the Western world Rome was still the political capital—hence the whole habit of mind, all ambition, pride, and sense of glory, and every social prejudice favored the evolution of the great city into the ecclesiastical capital. Civil as well as religious disputes were referred to the successor of Peter for settlement. Again and again, when barbarians attacked Rome, he was compelled to actually assume military leadership. Eastern Emperors frequently recognized the high claims of the Popes in order to gain their assistance. It is not difficult to understand, how, under these responsibilities, the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, established in the pre-Constantine period, was emphasized and magnified after 313 [Edict of Milan]. The importance of this fact must not be overlooked. The organization of the Church was thus put on the same divine basis as the revelation of Christianity. This idea once accepted led inevitably to the medieval Papacy.” (Alexander Clarence Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church), pp. 168, 169).

“During the whole medieval period there was in Rome a single spiritual and temporal authority [the papacy] exercising powers which in the end exceeded those that had ever lain within the grasp of the Roman emperor.” (R. W. Southern, Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages, Vol 2), pp. 24-25.

“The papacy is no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.” (Thomas Hobbes, as quoted in, Dave Hunt, A Woman Rides the Beast, p. 95).

“Christian Rome was the legitimate successor of pagan Rome.... Christ had triumphed [and] Rome was ready to extend its sway to the heavens themselves.” (W. H. C. Frend, The Rise of Christianity, p. 773).

*“The Roman Christian Church was a church of world-wide importance and power, and her bishop the most influential. Out of the ruins of **political Rome** arose the great **moral empire** in the ‘giant form’ of the Roman Church. In the marvelous rise of the Roman Church is seen in strong relief the majestic office of the Bishop of Rome.” (Alexander Clarence Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, p. 150)*

*“When the Western empire fell into the hands of the barbarians, the Roman bishop was the only surviving **heir of this imperial past**, or, in the well-known dictum of Hobbes, “the ghost of the deceased Roman empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.” (Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, p. 287)*

*“Long before the fall of Rome, there had begun to grow up within the Roman Empire an **ecclesiastical state**, which was **shaping itself upon the imperial model**. This **spiritual empire**, like the secular empire, possessed a hierarchy of officers, of which deacons, priests or presbyters, and bishops were the most important. . . . Another consequence of the fall of the Roman power in the west was the development of the Papacy. In the absence of an Emperor in the west, the popes rapidly gained influence and power and soon built up an **ecclesiastical empire** that in some respects took the place of the old empire.” (Myers, *General History for Colleges*, pp. 348, 316)*

*“St. Thomas. . . says that **the Roman Empire has not ceased**, but is **changed** from the temporal into the spiritual. . . the temporal power in the old heathen empire of Rome, and the spiritual power in the supernatural kingdom of God **met together**. . . these two powers were **blended and fused together**; they became **one authority**, the emperor ruling from his throne within the sphere of his earthly jurisdiction, and the Supreme Pontiff ruling likewise from a throne of a higher sovereignty over the nations. . . the material power which once reigned in Rome [was] consecrated and sanctified by the investiture of the Vicar of Jesus Christ with temporal sovereignty over the city where he dwelt. And now for these twelve hundred years the peace, the perpetuity and faithfulness of the Christian civilization of Europe, has been owing solely in its principle to this consecration of the power and authority of **the great empire of Rome**, taken up of old,*

perpetuated, preserved, as I have said, by the salt which had been sprinkled from heaven, and **continued** in the person of the Supreme Pontiff, and in that order of Christian civilization of which he has been the creator.” (Cardinal Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, pp. 123-128).

“If we extend our view over the ruins of the Western Empire, such is the spectacle that meets us on every side. . . . the Pax Romana has ceased; it is universal confusion. But wherever a bishop holds his court, religion protects all that is left of the ancient order. **A new Rome ascends slowly above the horizon.** It is the **heir of the religion** that it has overthrown; it assumes the outward splendors of the Caesars. . . . The emperor is no more. . . . However, the Pontifex Maximus abides; he is now the Vicar of Christ, offering the old civilization to the tribes of the north. He converts them to his creed, and they serve him as their Father and Judge supreme. This is the **Papal Monarchy**, which in its power and its decline overshadows the history of Europe for a thousand years.” (W. F. Barry, The Papal Monarchy, pp. 45, 46)

Along with Revelation 17:1-6, Ellen White repeatedly refers to the papacy as ‘Rome’ and ‘Babylon’:

“The Waldenses were the first of all the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures. Hundreds of years before the Reformation, they possessed the Bible in manuscript in their native tongue. They had the truth unadulterated, and this rendered them the special objects of hatred and persecution. They declared the Church of **Rome** to be the apostate **Babylon** of the Apocalypse, and at the peril of their lives they stood up to resist her corruptions.” GC p. 65

“The woman (Babylon) of Revelation 17 is described as ‘arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness . . . and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, **Babylon** the Great, the mother of harlots.’ Says the prophet: “I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” **Babylon** is further declared to be ‘that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.’ Revelation 17:4-6, 18. The power that for so many centuries maintained despotic sway over the monarchs of Christendom is

**Rome**. The purple and scarlet color, the gold and precious stones and pearls, vividly picture the magnificence and more than kingly pomp affected by the haughty see of **Rome**. Furthermore, no other power could be so truly declared, "drunken with the blood of the saints" as that church which has so cruelly persecuted the followers of Christ. **Babylon** is also charged with the sin of unlawful connection with "the kings of the earth." It was by departure from the Lord, and alliance with the heathen, that the Jewish church became a harlot; and **Rome**, corrupting herself in like manner by seeking the support of worldly powers, receives a like condemnation." GC p. 382

## **The Fish**

### **Habakkuk 1:14-15**

"Why do You make **men like fish** of the sea, like creeping things that have no ruler over them? <sup>15</sup> They take up all of them with a **hook**, they catch them in **their net**, and gather them in their **dragnet**."

### **Ecclesiastes 9:12**

"For man also does not know his time: **like fish** taken in a cruel net, like birds caught in a snare, so the sons of men are snared in an evil time, when it falls suddenly upon them."

### **Ezekiel 29:3-4**

"Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the **midst of his rivers**, who has said, 'My River is my own; I have made it for myself.' <sup>4</sup> But I will put **hooks in your jaws**, and cause the **fish** of your rivers to stick to your **scales**; I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers, and all the **fish** in your rivers will stick to your **scales**.'"

## **Matthew 4:19**

*"And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee saw two brothers Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were **fishermen**.<sup>19</sup> Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you **fishers of men**."*

## **Ships**

In Scripture, ships generally refer to **trading** and **commercial prosperity**.

## **Ezekiel 27:9, 25, 29**

*"Elders of Gebal and its wise men were in you to caulk your seams; all the **ships** of the sea and their oarsmen were in you to **market your merchandise** . . .<sup>25</sup> the ships of Tarshish were carriers of your **merchandise**. You were **filled and very glorious** in the midst of the seas . . .<sup>29</sup> "All who handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea will come down from their ships and stand on the shore.*

## **Revelation 18:17-19**

*"Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as **trade** on the sea, stood at a distance<sup>18</sup> and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What is like this great city?'<sup>19</sup> "They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had **ships** on the sea became **rich by her wealth**! For in one hour she is made desolate.'*

## **Summary of the Second Trumpet**

At the sounding of the second trumpet, instead of temporal prosperity, the **barbarians invaded** the Empire, **destroyed the routes of commerce**, and decimated the prosperity of Rome. The judgment of the second trumpet brought the **collapse** of the entire social and economic order of the Roman Empire.

The barbarians invaded the Empire between **378 and 476 AD**. In **378 AD**, the **Visigoths** wiped out an entire Roman army including the Roman Emperor Valens. In **410 AD**, they ravaged Rome, the first time that anyone had done so in

800 years. In **455 AD**, the **Vandals** ransacked Rome for a second time. They ‘vandalized’ the city for two weeks, systematically and persistently looting everything of value they could lay their hands on. They carried off to Carthage the solid-gold seven branched lampstand, the very one that in 70 AD, Titus had carried off to Rome from the temple in Jerusalem. **Genseric**, the leader of the Vandals was a human predator.

The Roman Empire persecuted the Jews, and Christians such as **Ignatius** and **Polycarp** as well as well as **heretical Christians** such as the Arians. Therefore, when the second trumpet blew, God came in judgment against Rome.

The Barbarians destroyed the routes of commerce, decimated the cities and sacked Rome so that Rome became practically a ghost town.





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 4: THE THIRD TRUMPET**

#### **Revelation 8:10**

*“Then 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 water**. The name of the star is **Wormwood**. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many **men** **died** from the water, **because** it was made **bitter**.”*

#### **The Historical Context**

There can be little doubt that the ‘falling star’ of the third trumpet refers in a primary sense to Satan. Yet this star cannot refer to the original fall of Satan from heaven because that happened **before creation week**. Furthermore, it cannot refer to him falling from heaven **at the cross** (John 12:31-33; Luke 10:18) either because the events of the third trumpet transpire well **into the Christian era** after the fall of Jerusalem (first trumpet) and the fall of the Roman Empire (second trumpet).

Though this trumpet cannot refer primarily to the fall of Satan from heaven at the beginning or at the cross, nevertheless the language is **very reminiscent** of

the fall of Lucifer from heaven as described in Isaiah 14:12-14 and Revelation 12:7-9.

The terminological links between the third trumpet and **Isaiah 14** and **Revelation 12** leave little doubt that the **fall of Satan** stands in the **background** of the third trumpet. Satan, the star of the morning, who was originally perfect, apostatized and became a **fallen star**. He then **defiled and poisoned** Adam and Eve with his **specious teachings** and through them, the entire human race. The result was that the entire race came under the **sentence of death** (Genesis 3:1-6, 19).

The fall of this star portrays the **great apostasy** that defiled the church from within when Papal Rome rose to power **from the shambles** that the barbarians left in the Roman Empire.

The crucial question is this: what principle allows us to say that the fallen star represents Satan, as well as the fall of Papal Rome? The answer is threefold.

- ✓ In the first place, what the Bible attributes to Satan he actually accomplishes through human apostate powers. Revelation 12:4 tells us that the dragon stood next to the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born. Satan did not do this personally but rather through his emissary, Herod. Thus, Ellen White is correct when she wrote:

*“Thus while the **dragon**, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of **pagan Rome**.” GC, p. 438*

Likewise, when pagan Rome gave its throne to the papacy, Ellen White described it as the dragon giving the papacy its throne:

*“In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared the head over the entire church. **Paganism** had given place to the **papacy**. The **dragon had given to the beast** “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” [Revelation 13:2].” GC, p. 54*

At the end of time, Ellen White uses the words 'dragon' and 'kings' interchangeably:

***"Kings and rulers and governors have placed the brand of antichrist upon themselves and are represented as the dragon who goes to make war with the saints--with those who keep the commandments of God and who have the faith of Jesus."*** TM, p. 39

- ✓ Secondly, **Daniel 7** and **Revelation 13** tell us that the little horn/beast persecuted the saints for 3.5 times or 42 months. However, **Revelation 12** presents a parallel, but **different picture**. The text tells us that the work of persecution was the work of the **dragon** for 3.5 or 1260 days (Revelation 12:6, 13-14). Thus, when we compare Daniel 7/Revelation 13 with Revelation 12 we find that Satan ruled during the 1260 years through his emissary, the **Bishop of Rome**.
- ✓ Third, **2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4** explicitly tells us that the man of sin would exalt himself to the height of God even to the point of sitting in the **temple of God claiming to be God**. The language is quite similar to what Satan attempted to do at the very beginning when he was cast out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12-14). In fact, the text tells us that Satan would **energize the man of sin** (2Thessalonians 2:9).

The backdrop to the idea expressed above is that Satan does not accomplish his work in person but rather **through his seed** or body. What he was not able to accomplish in heaven he does on earth through his vice-gerent. As Christ works through His seed or body to accomplish His purposes on earth, so does Satan.

### **Satan's Vice-regent**

On the **Mount of Temptation** Satan attempted to **recruit Jesus** as his vice-gerent by offering him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Jesus **rejected the offer**. However, in the fourth century, Satan offered those same kingdoms to the **Bishop of Rome** and he **accepted** the offer. Thus, when the

papacy accepted the kingdoms of the world with all their attending glory, it became the **vice-gerent** of Satan to do his bidding on earth. Satan does not accomplish his purposes directly but rather by his **alter ego** or other self. Notice how Ellen White describes this:

*“There is one pointed out in prophecy as the man of sin. **He is the representative of Satan**. Taking the **suggestions of Satan** concerning the law of God, which is as unchangeable as His throne, this man of sin comes in and represents to the world that he has changed that law, and that the first day of the week instead of the seventh is now the Sabbath. Professing infallibility, he claims the right to change the law of God to suit his own purposes.” 7BC p. 910*

*“This **compromise** between paganism and Christianity [**in the days of Constantine**] resulted in the development of the man of sin foretold in prophecy as opposing and **exalting himself above** God. That gigantic system of false religion is a **masterpiece of Satan's power**—a monument of his efforts to **seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth** according to his will.*

*“To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth, and having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance to **the representative of Satan—the Bishop of Rome**.” SR p. 327*

## **Pagan and Papal Rome**

It is important to take into account the **chronological sequence** of the second and third trumpets. As we have already studied, Satan's throne was originally in **Pagan Rome** and then his throne was transferred **via the church of Pergamum** to **Papal Rome** in 538 AD (Revelation 2:13; 13:2)

In all the great lines of prophecy **pagan Rome** is always followed by **papal Rome**. This is true of **Daniel 2** (the amalgamation of the iron and clay in the feet follows the iron legs). In **Daniel 7** the dragon beast sprouts ten horns and then is followed by the little horn (Daniel 7:23, 24). In **Daniel 8**, the little horn grows

horizontally (Pagan Rome) and then it grows vertically into heaven (Papal Rome). In **Revelation 12**, the ten-horned dragon attempted to kill the man-child and then the same ten-horned dragon persecuted the woman for 1260 days (Revelation 12:1-6, 13-16). In **Revelation 13:1-10** the ten-horned dragon gave his throne, power and authority (Revelation 13:2) to the beast who then ruled for 42 months and in **2 Thessalonians 2** the man of sin rose to power only after the restrainer, the Roman Empire, was removed. Thus, if the second trumpet represents the fall of the Roman Empire it stands to reason that the next trumpet would be the apostasy that followed.

The prophecy of Daniel 7 leaves no doubt that after the ten horns devastated the Roman Empire another power would arise to subdue and defile them. 2Thessalonians explains that **after the removal** of the restrainer by the ten horns (the barbarian tribes) the man of sin would **reveal himself** sitting in the temple of God (the church) showing himself that he is God much like Satan intended to do when He fell from heaven and said: 'I will be like the Most High.'

## **The Perspective of 2Thessalonians 2**

At this point, we must discuss the meaning of the apostasy, the temple of God and the Son of perdition in 2Thessalonians 2:3, 4. The word 'apostasy' has the definite article so Paul was not referring to **an** apostasy but rather **THE** apostasy.

In his writings, the apostle Paul always identifies the temple of God with the church (Ephesians 2:19-21; 1Corinthians 3:16, 17; 1Corinthians 6:19, 20).

**John 17:12** calls Judas by the identical name as the man of sin, 'the **Son of Perdition**'. Judas was an **insider** who **feigned loyalty** to Christ but secretly betrayed Him with a kiss. These three expressions in 1Thessalonians 2 ('the apostasy', 'the temple of God', and 'the Son of Perdition') clearly indicate that an **enemy from within** would defile and poison the church.

2 Thessalonians 2:6, 7 describes the ‘restrainer’ with both the **masculine** and **neuter** genders. First, Paul tells the Thessalonians: ‘you know **what** is holding back’ and then he refers to, ‘**he** who holds back will be taken out of the way.’

In **Romans 13:1-10**, we see a similar phenomenon. Paul begins by telling the Romans to subject themselves to the **governing authorities** (plural) (verses 1-3). Then in verse 4, he uses the masculine singular ‘**he**’ to refer to the individual rulers (verse 4). It is very clear that the ‘he’ here does not refer to a particular person but rather to whoever is ruling the civil power of Rome at any given moment.

Cardinal **Edward Manning** describes the power that ruled after the removal of the Roman restrainer:

*“Now the abandonment of Rome was the **liberation** of the pontiffs. Whatsoever claims to obedience the emperors may have made, and whatsoever compliance the Pontiff may have yielded, the whole previous relation, anomalous, and annulled again and again by the vices and outrages of the emperors, was finally dissolved by a higher power. The providence of God permitted a succession of **irruptions**, Gothic, Lombard, and Hungarian, to desolate Italy, and to **efface from it every remnant of the empire**. The pontiffs found themselves alone, the sole fountains of order, peace, law, and safety. And from the hour of this providential **liberation**, when, by a divine intervention, the **chains fell off** from the hands of the successor of St. Peter, as once before from his own, no sovereign has ever reigned in Rome except the Vicar of Jesus Christ.”* (Henry Edward Manning, *The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ*, Preface, pp. xxviii, xxix. London: Burns and Lambert, 1862).

I am sure that Manning **did not realize** that his remarks indicted the papacy. History proves that the **removal** of the Roman Empire did indeed lead to the ‘**liberation**’ of the Roman Pontiff. It is noteworthy that Manning describes the fall of the Roman Empire as ‘*chains falling off the hands of the successor of St. Peter*’. From Manning’s own words, we can conclude that the fall of the Roman Empire **removed the chains** that restrained the Bishop of Rome.

The early church Fathers were unanimous in the opinion that the ‘restrainer’ was a reference to the Roman Empire in general and to the individual emperors in particular. Paul made it clear that the Church at Thessalonica knew the identity of the restrainer. However, Paul wrote in veiled language. Why? The answer is that he could not speak openly about the fall of the Empire that was ruling in his day. If he had publicly stated that the Roman Empire would be ‘*taken out of the way*’, the emperors would have had grounds to condemn him for sedition against the Roman government. Therefore, Paul had to be cautious.

If the restrainer was the Holy Spirit, as many futurists believe, why was Paul so cautious? Saying that the restrainer was the Holy Spirit would not be controversial at all. It is clear that Paul could not openly identify the ‘restrainer’. It was not necessary for him to do so because the Thessalonians already knew who the restrainer was.

Let us turn to the writings of the early church Fathers to see how they understood the restrainer.

Tertullian (160-240 AD):

*“For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now hinders must hinder, until he be taken out of the way.” What obstacle is there but the Roman state, the falling away of which, by being scattered into ten kingdoms, shall introduce Antichrist upon (its own ruins)? “And then shall be revealed the wicked one.” “On the Resurrection of the Flesh,” chapter 24; Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. III, p. 563 [New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1908].*

*“The very end of all things threatening dreadful woes is only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman Empire.” (“Apology,” chapter 32; Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III, p. 43)*

**Lactantius** (early fourth century)

*“The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place; except that while the city of Rome **remains**, it appears that nothing of this kind is to be feared. However, when that **capital of the world shall have fallen**, and shall have begun to be a street, which the Sibyls say shall come to pass, who can doubt that the end has now arrived to the affairs of men and the whole world? It is that city, that only, which still sustains all things.”* (“The Divine Institutes,” book 7, chapter 25; Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII, p. 220)

**Cyril of Jerusalem** (318-386 AD):

*“But this aforesaid Antichrist is to come when the **times of the Roman Empire shall have been fulfilled**, and the end of the world is drawing near. There shall rise up together **ten kings of the Romans**, reigning in different parts perhaps, but all **about the same time**; and after those **an eleventh**, the Antichrist, who by his magical craft shall seize upon the Roman power; and of the kings who reigned before him, ‘three he shall humble,’ and the remaining seven he shall keep in subjection to himself.”* (“Catechetical Lectures,” section 15, on II Thessalonians 2:4; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. VII, p. 108 [New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1895]).

**Ambrose** (died in 398):

*“**After the falling or decay of the Roman Empire**, Antichrist shall appear.”* (Quoted in, Bishop Thomas Newton, Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 463 [London: B. Blake, 1840])

**Chrysostom** (died in 407):

*“When the **Roman Empire is taken out of the way**, then he [**the Antichrist**] shall come. And naturally. For as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will willingly exalt himself, but when that is **dissolved**, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government both of man and of God.”* “Homily IV on 2



Thessalonians 2:6-9," Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. XIII, p. 389 [New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1905].

**Jerome** (died 420):

"He that letteth **is taken out of the way**, and yet we do not realize that Antichrist is near." (Letter to Ageruchia, written about 409 A. D. Letter 123, section 16; Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. VI, p. 236 [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912]).

**Ellen G. White** has some interesting statements regarding the restrainer both in history and in prophecy:

"The spirit of compromise and conformity [**of the early Christian church**] was **restrained** for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under **paganism**. But as persecution ceased, and Christianity entered the courts and palaces of kings, she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers; and in place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions." GC p. 49.

"Let the **restraints** now imposed by **secular governments** be **removed** and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution." GC p. 564.

"The vast empire of Rome **crumbled to pieces**, and **from its ruins rose** that mighty power, the Roman Catholic Church. This church boasts of her infallibility and her hereditary religion." 1MR p. 50

## **The Falling Star**

The third trumpet describes the star that fell from heaven as a **burning lamp**. Therefore, we must not only discover the meaning of the word 'star' but also of the expression, 'burning lamp'.

As we have seen, in the first instance, the falling star represents **Satan**. Several texts of Scripture make this clear.

### **Isaiah 14:12-14**

*"How you are **fallen from heaven**, O Lucifer, **son of the morning**! How you are cut down **to the ground**, you who **weakened the nations**! <sup>13</sup> For you have said in your heart: 'I will **ascend** into heaven; I will **exalt** my throne **above** the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the **north**.' <sup>14</sup> I will **ascend above** the heights of the clouds, I will be **like the Most High**.'*

### **Revelation 12:7-9**

*"And war broke out **in heaven**: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, <sup>8</sup> but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was **cast out**, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who **deceives the whole world**; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."*

**Luke 10:18**: Jesus compared Satan and his angels with **flashes of lightning**, serpents and scorpions:

*"Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the **demons** are subject to us in Your name." <sup>18</sup> And He said to them, "I saw Satan **fall like lightning** from **heaven**. <sup>19</sup> Behold, I give you the **authority** to trample on **serpents** and **scorpions**, and over all the power of the **enemy**, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."*

**Ezekiel 1:13, 14** compares the **angels** to **lamps** or **torches** that flash like lighting:

*"As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like **burning coals** of fire, like the appearance of **torches** going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went **lightning**. <sup>14</sup> And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance **like a flash of lightning**."*

As we have already seen, however, the star that falls from heaven at this point **cannot directly** represent Satan because he had already fallen long before both from heaven and at the cross. Then star then must represent something that came later.

Stars do not **only** represent angels in the Bible. They frequently also represent **God's people** who are **agents of God** in preaching the pure gospel.

In **Revelation 1:20** the **seven stars** in the right hand of Jesus represent the **messengers** or **pastors** to the seven churches.

*"The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The **seven stars are the angels** of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."*

The **seven stars in the right hand** of Jesus represents the fact that He **directs the work** of these messengers. The seven churches represent seven consecutive eras of church history so the seven stars must represent the messengers or pastors that proclaim God's message to the church in **each of those eras**. That is to say, each of the seven churches has **one star** and each of those stars represents the **religious leaders** of the particular era represented by that church. These preachers were to keep the truth of the **pure gospel alive**.

In Revelation 12:1, the twelve stars on the crown of the woman represent the **twelve apostles** of the lamb who taught **the truth** as it is in Jesus. In **Zechariah 9:16** the prophet saw the **final remnant** under a symbol of stars on a crown of glory. In **Daniel 8:10, 24** the little horn cast down the stars which represents the fact that he persecuted and killed those who taught righteousness during the 1260 years (see **Daniel 11: 33-36**). **Daniel 12:3** tells us that the wise will shine as stars forever and ever.

Ellen White presents this interesting portrayal of Revelation's seven stars:

*"These things saith He that holdeth the **seven stars** in His right hand." Revelation 2:1. These words are spoken to the **teachers in the church**—those entrusted by God with **weighty responsibilities**. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with **God's ministers**, who are to reveal the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are **under His control**. He **fills them with light**. He **guides and directs** their movements. If He did not do this, they would become **fallen stars**. **So with His ministers**. They are but instruments **in His hands**, and all the good they accomplish is done through **His power**. Through them **His light** is to shine forth. The Savior is to be their efficiency. If they will look to Him as He looked to the Father they will be enabled to do **His work**. As they make God their dependence, He will give them **His brightness** to reflect to the world." AA pp. 586, 587*

When the stars **cease preaching** the gospel and preach human tradition, they become **fallen stars**.

## **Positive Side of the Burning Lamp**

The word 'lamp' (*lampades*) in Revelation 8:8 refers to a **burning torch**. **John 18:3** uses the identical word to describe the Pharisees who came with torches to arrest Jesus. **Acts 20:8** describes the torches that provided light where the apostle Paul was preaching at night.

Scripture not only compares God's people to stars but **also to lamps** or torches that **shed God's light** upon a world in darkness.

**Isaiah 62:1, 2**: The righteous are **like a lamp** that shines in the midst of darkness:

*"For **Zion's** sake I will not hold My peace, and for **Jerusalem's** sake I will not rest, until **her righteousness** goes forth as **brightness**, and her salvation **as a lamp that burns**.<sup>2</sup> The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings **your glory**. You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord will name."*

**2 Corinthians 4:5, 6:** The preaching of the gospel is like a **light shining** in darkness:

*"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. <sup>6</sup> For it is the **God who commanded light to shine out** of darkness, who has **shone in our hearts** to give **the light** of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."*

**Matthew 5:14-16:** The word 'lamp' here is *luchnos* God called **His people** to be lamps in a world of darkness:

*"You are the **light** of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do they **light a lamp [lúchnon]** and put it under a basket, but on a **lampstand [lúchnia]**, and it gives **light [lámpo]** to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> Let **your light so shine** before men, that they may see your **good works** and glorify your Father in heaven."*

**Matthew 25:1-10** uses the word **lampades** for the lamps of the **ten virgins**:

*"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their **lamps** and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup> Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. <sup>3</sup> Those who were foolish took their **lamps** and took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup> but the wise took oil in their vessels with their **lamps**. <sup>5</sup> However, while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. <sup>6</sup> "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' <sup>7</sup> Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their **lamps**. <sup>8</sup> And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our **lamps** are going out.' <sup>9</sup> However, the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' <sup>10</sup> And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut."*

The passage describes **God's people as illuminating** the way to the bridegroom's chamber for the wedding. The idea in this parable is that human beings **shed light** like a lamp.

Ellen White makes this enlightening statement about the meaning of the lamps:

*"So the **followers** of Christ are to **shed light** into the darkness of the world. **Through the Holy Spirit**, God's word is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth **in His followers**. Thus they are to glorify God, to lighten the path to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb." COL, p. 414*

**Revelation 4:5**: This verse uses the word *lampades* to describe the seven lamps of fire that symbolize the seven churches empowered by the Holy Spirit to impart light:

*"And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven **lamps** [**lampades**] of **fire were burning** before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."*

**Psalms 119:105**. The Old Testament Scriptures are also a lesser light or lamp because they give witness to Jesus:

*"Your word is a **lamp** to my feet and a **light** to my path."*

**John 5:35** describes **John the Baptist** as a **shining lamp** who gave witness to Jesus. Although the Greek word here is *luchnos* and not *lampades*, the meaning is synonymous. In Revelation and in this text the words 'burning' and 'lamp' are used.

Ellen White wrote this counsel to the youth of the church:

*"You are God's **light-bearer**. He has placed in your hands **a lamp** that you are to keep trimmed and **burning** for him." YL, June 12, 1902*

## **Negative Side of the Fallen Burning Lamp**

**Revelation 8:10** indicates that the **ministers and teachers** (the angel or star of the church of this period) of the church were supposed to shine as a lamp. Instead, they **fell** from their post and defiled the **waters**.

The same happened with them as with Lucifer. Lucifer was originally loyal to God. Ellen White describes him:

*"Satan had been Lucifer, the **light-bearer**, the sharer of God's glory in heaven." Bible Echo, November 1, 1892*

Before sin, Lucifer was the **light bearer**, a **shining star**, like a **lamp** that brought glory to God. However, when he became proud and sought to bring glory to himself, he defiled and embittered the angels with false accusations against God. As a result, he fell from heaven and he became a **fallen star or lamp**.

Something similar occurred in the **Apostolic Church**. Originally, it reflected the **purity of the gospel** of Jesus. However, in the **course of time** it fell into apostasy, poisoned the pure waters of the gospel, and brought in spiritual death.

**Proverbs 13:9** describes the wicked going out like a lamp:

*"The **light** of the righteous rejoices, but the **lamp** of the wicked will be put out."*

**Jude 11-13** describes wandering stars that have **no anchor** and compares them to three notable apostates in the Old Testament, Cain, Korah and Balaam:

*“Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of **Cain**, have run greedily in the error of **Balaam** for profit, and perished in the rebellion of **Korah**.<sup>12</sup> These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;<sup>13</sup> raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; **wandering stars** for whom is reserved the **blackness of darkness forever**.”*

In contrast to the falling star, in those who study prophecy the Morning Star **ris**es in their hearts (2Peter 1:19, 20). Thus, the **rising star** stands in contrast to the falling star.

### **The act of falling represents apostasy**

Several texts use the word “fall” to describe apostasy.

**Isaiah 14:12**: Lucifer became a fallen star because he did not ‘stand’ in the truth (see John 8:44):

*“How you are **fallen from heaven**, O Lucifer, **son of the morning**! How you are **cut down to the ground**, you who **weakened the nations**!”*

**Revelation 2:5**: Jesus warned the apostolic church about the **danger of falling**. Notice that this text contains the concept of ‘**falling**’ along with ‘**lampstand**’:

*“Remember therefore from where **you have fallen**; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove **your lampstand** from its place — unless you repent.”*

### **Romans 11:11**

*“I say then, have they **[the Jews]** stumbled that they should **fall**? Certainly not! Rather, through their **fall**, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.”*



## **1 Corinthians 10:12**

*"Therefore let him who thinks he **stands** take heed lest he **fall**."*

## **Hebrews 4:11**

*"Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone **fall** according to the same example of **disobedience**."*

Elsewhere in the book of Revelation, the word 'fall' describes the apostasy of end time Babylon.

## **Revelation 14:8**

*"And another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is **fallen**, is **fallen**, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."*

## **Revelation 18:2**

*"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory. <sup>2</sup> And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great **is fallen, is fallen**, and has become a dwelling place of **demons**, a prison for every **foul spirit**, and a cage for every unclean and **hated bird**!"*

It bears repeating that it is impossible to fall unless the person has **stood first**. This means that the church during this period **originally stood** in the truth, but like Lucifer, she then **fell into apostasy**.

## **Rivers and springs of Water**

The fountains of waters are **different** from the **raging waters** of the sea (Isaiah 17:12, 13). The fountains of waters are **life giving waters** that refresh, restore and perpetuate physical and spiritual life. To us in the western world, waters do not mean as much as in Israel in Bible times. We just **turn on the faucet** and

water flows. However, in Israel, water was a **precious commodity** the scarcity of which represented death, and its presence life.

**Psalm 23:2, 3**: When the **Good Shepherd** leads us beside still waters He restores our soul **[life]**:

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. <sup>2</sup> He makes me to lie down in **green pastures**; He leads me beside the **still waters**. <sup>3</sup> He **restores my soul**; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."*

**Deuteronomy 8:7-10**: Springs of waters represent a life of **fruitfulness** and abundant **prosperity**:

*"For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of **brooks of water**, of **fountains and springs**, that **flow out** of valleys and hills; <sup>8</sup> a land of **wheat** and **barley**, of **vines** and **fig trees** and **pomegranates**, a land of **olive oil** and **honey**; <sup>9</sup> a land in which you will eat bread **without scarcity**, in which you will **lack nothing**; a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills you can dig copper. <sup>10</sup> When you have **eaten and are full**, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the **good land** which He has given you."*

**Revelation 7:17**: In the kingdom, God will lead His people to drink from springs of waters and they will **thirst no more**:

*"They shall neither **hunger** anymore nor **thirst** anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; <sup>17</sup> for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to **living fountains of waters**. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

**Revelation 21:6; 22:17**: Jesus will give His people **living waters**:

*"And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the **fountain** of the **water of life** freely to him who thirsts."*

**Psalm 1:3**: The righteous are like a **tree planted** next to **streams of living waters**. They drink the water and bear fruit in its season.

*"He shall be like a tree planted by the **rivers of water**, that brings forth its **fruit** in its season, whose leaf also shall **not wither**; and whatever he does shall **prosper**."*

**Proverbs 13:14**: The **teaching of the wise** is as a fountain of life.

*"The law of the wise is a **fountain of life**, to turn one away from the snares of death."*

**Proverbs 14:27**: The **fear of the Lord** is as a fountain of life. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and it means to depart from evil.

*"The fear of the Lord is a **fountain of life**, to turn one away from the snares of death."*

**Exodus 17:1-8** and **Numbers 20:8-11** describe two 'rock episodes' in the trek of Israel across the wilderness. The Rock is a symbol of Christ (1Corinthians 10:4), the rod that struck the rock represents the Father's judgment that fell upon Jesus and the water that flowed from the Rock represents the Holy Spirit (1Corinthians 12:13; John 4:13, 14; 7:37-39). Notably, when people drink from the Rock, they in turn become living fountains to others.

### **John 4:13, 14**

*"Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again<sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him **will become in him a fountain of water** springing up into everlasting life."*

### **John 7:37-39**

*"On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him **come to Me and drink**.<sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water**." <sup>39</sup> But this He spoke concerning **the Spirit**, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. "*

When we drink of the living waters, we **become fountains** of water. The springs of waters represent the **pure gospel** of Jesus that flows through His people through the power of the **Holy Spirit** to bless the world with life everlasting.

*“The **people of God**, His chosen kingdom, are not as a stagnant pool. **They are as a river**, constantly flowing, and as it advances, becoming deeper and wider, until its **life-giving waters** are spread over all the earth. Whenever the **gospel of God** is received, its grace **heals the maladies** that sin has produced. The Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His beams. Light, strength, and **refreshing** come from the Lord, and the good fruit borne bears witness to a work of righteousness.” Manuscript 33, April 27, 1903, ‘God’s Purpose for His Church.’ UL p. 131*

*“The heart that **receives the word of God** is not as a **pool that evaporates**, not like a **broken cistern** that loses its treasure. It is like the **mountain stream**, fed by unfailing springs, whose cool, **sparkling waters** leap from rock to rock, **refreshing** the weary, the thirsty, the heavy-laden. It is like a **river constantly flowing** and, as it advances, becoming **deeper and wider**, until its **life-giving waters** are spread over all the earth. The **stream** that goes singing on its way leaves behind its gift of **verdure and fruitfulness**. The grass on its banks is a **fresher green**, the trees have a **richer verdure**, the **flowers** are more abundant. When the earth lies bare and brown under the summer’s scorching heat, a line of verdure marks the river’s course.*

***So it is with the true child of God.** The religion of Christ reveals itself as a vitalizing, pervading principle, a living, working, spiritual energy. When the heart is opened to the heavenly influence of truth and love, these principles will **flow forth again** like streams in the desert, **causing fruitfulness** to appear where now are barrenness and dearth.” PK, pp. 233, 234*

*“In casting **salt** into the **bitter spring**, Elisha taught the same spiritual lesson imparted centuries later by the Savior to His disciples when He declared, “Ye are*

*the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13. The **salt mingling with the polluted spring purified its waters and brought life** and blessing where before had been **blighting and death**. When God compares His children to salt, He would teach them that His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may **become agents in saving others**." PK, p. 231*

## **Wormwood and Apostasy**

**Deuteronomy 29:17, 18:** **Gall** and **wormwood** describe the terrible consequences that would ensue if Israel drank from the polluted waters of apostasy.

*"...and you saw their abominations and their idols which were among them **[the Canaanites]** — wood and stone and silver and gold; <sup>18</sup> so that there may not be among you man or woman or family or tribe, whose **heart turns away** today from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations, and that there may not be among you a root bearing **bitterness or wormwood**..."*

**Amos 5:7:** When **righteousness** in the earth is **forsaken**, the result is wormwood:

*"You who turn **justice** to **wormwood**, and lay righteousness to rest in the earth!"*

**Amos 6:12, 13:** When justice and righteousness are **forsaken**, the result is wormwood and gall:

*"Do horses run on rocks? Does one plow there with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into **gall**, and the fruit of righteousness into **wormwood**."*

**Jeremiah 23:15, 16:** When **false prophets** speak in name of God, the result is wormwood and gall:

*"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts concerning the prophets: 'Behold, I will feed them with **wormwood**, and make them drink the water of **gall**; for **[because] from the prophets** of Jerusalem **profaneness** has gone out into all the land.' "Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Do not listen to the words of the prophets*

who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; they speak a vision of their **own heart**, not from the **mouth of the LORD**.”

### **Jeremiah 23:36**

“And the oracle of the LORD you shall mention no more. For every man's word will be his oracle, for you have **perverted** the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts our God.”

### **Jeremiah 9:13-15**

“And the Lord said, “Because they have **forsaken My law** which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice, nor walked according to it, <sup>14</sup> but they have walked according to the dictates of **their own hearts** and after the **Baals**, which their fathers taught them,” <sup>15</sup> therefore thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Behold, I will feed them, this people, with **wormwood**, and give them **water of gall** to drink.”

When Israel forsook the law of God, disobeyed God, and walked after their own hearts the Lord fed them with **wormwood** and gave them **gall** to drink.

### **Proverbs 5:3-5, 15**

“For the lips of an **immoral woman** drip honey, and her mouth is smoother than oil; <sup>4</sup> But in the end she is **bitter as wormwood**, sharp as a two-edged sword. <sup>5</sup> Her feet go down to death, her steps lay hold of hell. . . <sup>15</sup> Drink water from your **own cistern**, and **running water** from your own well.”

God counseled His people not to go after an **adulterer woman** but rather to be satisfied with drinking from their own wellspring. He told his people that to seek after the strange woman would be like drinking **wormwood** or **bitterness**.

It is no coincidence that **Revelation 2** compares the apostate papal church with the adulterer woman Jezebel, who led God’s people into fornication and

idolatry. Thus, the literal counsel of Proverbs applies equally in a spiritual sense to the great harlot of Revelation 17.

## **The Defiled Waters**

The rivers and springs of water **must have been clean** before the fall of the star defiled them. This is another indication that the third trumpet's theme is **apostasy in the church**. When the **star falls**, it **pollutes** the fountains of waters with wormwood and bitterness and many **people die**.

If the pure spring waters represent the Word of God imparted to man through the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit then the defiling of the waters would mean the **corruption of the Word of God**.

By speaking about a falling star and the poisoning of the fresh spring waters, God through John is showing that the third trumpet is **dealing with apostasy**. Both the falling star and wormwood refer directly to apostasy so the third trumpet must center on apostasy. This is precisely what happened with the rise of the papacy in 2 Thessalonians 2 after the fall of the Roman Empire (see Daniel 7 and Revelation 13).

The waters represent the **Holy Spirit** flowing from Jesus **through His church** to the world. However, when a false gospel defiled the living waters preached by the fallen teachers of the papal church, people began **to die spiritually**.

**John 7:37-39** refers to drinking the pure spring water that flows from Jesus through the Holy Spirit in the Word. However, if we drink from the defiled waters, this not only poisons us but it also poisons others who drink from the waters from which we drank. Woe to us if Satan defiles the waters we receive from Jesus by accepting the **traditions and sophistries of men**.

**Proverbs 25:25, 26** A man who gives in to idolatry becomes a polluted spring:

*"As cold water to a weary soul so is good news from a far country. <sup>26</sup> A righteous man who falters before the wicked is like a **murky spring** and a **polluted well**."*

**Jeremiah 2:13:** God's people preferred the **broken cisterns** to the fountains of living waters.

*"For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the **fountain of living waters**, and hewn themselves cisterns — **broken cisterns** that can hold no water."*

**Jeremiah 6:7:** When religious leaders preach a false gospel, the waters are polluted and poisoned:

*"For thus has the Lord of hosts said: 'Cut down trees, and build a mound against Jerusalem. This is the city to be punished. She is full of oppression in her midst. <sup>7</sup> As a fountain **wells up with water**, so she wells up with her wickedness. Violence and plundering are heard in her. Before Me continually are grief and wounds."*

**Acts 8:21-23:** Peter described **Simon Magus** as filled **with bitterness** because he had covetousness of his heart:

*"But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! <sup>21</sup> You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. <sup>22</sup> Repent therefore of this **your wickedness**, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. <sup>23</sup> For I see that you are **poisoned by bitterness** and bound by iniquity."*

**2Kings 2:19-22:** Salt cleanses the **polluted waters** of Jericho that brought about death:

*"Then the men of the city said to Elisha, "Please notice, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord sees; but the **water is bad**, and the **ground barren**." <sup>20</sup> And he said, "Bring me a new bowl, and put **salt in it**." So they brought it to him. <sup>21</sup> Then he went out to the **source of the water**, and cast in the salt there, and said, "Thus says the Lord: 'I have **healed this water**; from it there shall be **no more death or barrenness**.'" <sup>22</sup> So the water remains **healed to this day**, according to the word of Elisha which he spoke."*



*"In casting salt into the bitter spring, Elisha taught the same spiritual lesson imparted centuries later by the Savior to His disciples when He declared, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Matthew 5:13. The **salt mingling with the polluted spring purified** its waters and **brought life and blessing** where before had been **blighting and death**. When God compares His children to salt, He would teach them that, His purpose in making them the subjects of His grace is that they may **become agents in saving others**. The object of God in choosing a people before all the world was not only that He might adopt them as His sons and daughters, but that through them **the world might receive** the grace that bringeth salvation. When the Lord chose Abraham, it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but **to be a medium** of the peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. *PK*, pp. 231, 232*

## **2 Peter 2:18-22**

*"These are **wells without water**, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. For when they speak great swelling **words of emptiness**, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> While they **promise them liberty**, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. <sup>20</sup> For if, after they have **escaped the pollutions** of the world through the **knowledge of the Lord** and Savior Jesus Christ, they are **again entangled** in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been **better** for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, **to turn from** the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup> However, it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog **returns** to his own vomit," and, "a sow, **having washed**, to her wallowing in the mire."*

## **Edwin Thiele and Ellen White**

**Dr. Edwin Thiele** explained the meaning of the polluted waters during the period of the third trumpet:

*“Here a remarkable, revolutionary transformation is depicted. The **once pure, life-giving fountains** become **contaminated and corrupt** as the death-star Wormwood falls upon them, and henceforth men die rather than live as they partake of the **polluted waters**. The **pure church** is a clear stream and a life-giving fountain. When the **enemy enters** the church, it **becomes corrupt**. Henceforth it is a **scourge rather than a blessing** to men. Satan rather than Christ is in control, and the church is to take complete control, a **savor of death** unto death instead of life unto life.” (Edwin Thiele, *Outline Studies in Revelation*, pp. 293, 294.*

**Ellen White** also explained the meaning of the corrupted springs of water:

*“The world needs evidences of sincere Christianity. The **poison of sin** is at work at the heart of society. Cities and towns are steeped in **sin and moral corruption**. The world is full of sickness, suffering, and iniquity. Nigh and afar off are souls in poverty and distress, weighed down with a sense of guilt and perishing for want of a saving influence. The **gospel of truth** is kept ever before them, yet they perish because the example of those who should be a savor of life to them is a savor of death. Their souls **drink in bitterness** because the **springs are poisoned**, when they **should be like a well of water** springing up unto everlasting life.” *PK* p. 232*

*“In unfolding the sins of his life to a priest—an erring, sinful mortal, and too often **corrupted** with wine and licentiousness—his standard of character is lowered, and he is **defiled** in consequence. His thought of God is degraded to the likeness of fallen humanity, for the priest stands as a representative of God. This degrading confession of man to man is the **secret spring** from which has **flowed** much of the evil that is **defiling the world** and fitting it for the final destruction.” *GC* p. 567*

*“The priests and rulers, the scribes and Pharisees, destroyed the living pastures, and **defiled the wellsprings of the water of life**.” *DA* p. 478*

*“Satan was seeking to **corrupt the doctrines** of the Bible. I saw that at last the standard was lowered and that the heathen were uniting with the Christians. Although these worshipers of idols professed to be converted, they brought their*

idolatry with them into the church, only changing the objects of their worship to images of saints, and even of Christ and of Mary His mother. As the followers of Christ gradually united with them, the Christian religion became corrupted and the church lost its purity and power.” EW p. 211

“The Bible is the great educator; for it is not possible prayerfully to study its sacred pages without having the intellect disciplined, ennobled, purified, and refined. . . Those who claim to be Christians, who profess to believe the truth, and yet drink at the polluted fountains of infidelity, and by precept and example draw others away from the cold, snow-waters of Lebanon, are fools, though they profess themselves to be wise.” Counsels on Education p. 103

“Men who turn away from the knowledge of God, have placed their minds under the control of their master, Satan, and he trains them to be his servants. The less the productions expressing infidel views are brought before the youth, the better. Evil angels are ever on the alert that they may exalt before the minds of the youth that which will do them injury; and as books expressing infidel and pagan sentiments are read, these unseen agents of evil seek to impress those who study them with the spirit of questioning and unbelief. Those who drink from these polluted channels do not thirst for the waters of life; for they are satisfied with the broken cisterns of the world.” CE p. 100

“A succession of showers from the living waters has come to you at Battle Creek. Each shower was a consecrated inflowing of divine influence; but you did not recognize it as such. Instead of drinking copiously of the streams of salvation so freely offered through the influence of the Holy Spirit, you turned to satisfy your soul thirst with the polluted waters of human science.” CT pp. 358, 359

“We cannot be complete in Christ and yet be ready to grasp those things that come from the so-called great men of the earth, and place their wisdom before the wisdom of the greatest Teacher the world has ever known. To seek knowledge from such sources is represented in the word as seeking to drink from broken cisterns that can hold no water. Let the truth of God be the subject for

contemplation and meditation. **Read the Bible**, and regard it as the voice of God speaking directly to you. Then will you find inspiration and that wisdom which is divine.” 7T pp. 204, 205.

“It seems wonderfully strange to me, considering all I have written in regard to the reading of exciting stories, to see a recommendation from your pen to read Robinson Crusoe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and Aesop's Fables. My brother, you made a mistake in writing that article. If these books are among those that you have for sale, I beg of you never to offer them again to our youth. It is your duty to **call their attention to the Bible**; do not become their tempter by offering to them attractive storybooks, which will **divert their minds from the study of the Scriptures**. We must ourselves be **drinking of the water of life**, or else we will be constantly hewing out for ourselves **broken cisterns** which can hold no water.” 5T p. 519

### **Jon Paulien Summarizes the Third Trumpet**

“There are really three objects of judgment in the third trumpet: the **star**, the **springs** and **rivers**, and the **people** who drink the water. In a sense, each phrase of this three-fold judgment is the catalyst for the next. It is because the **star falls** that the rivers and springs are **turned into wormwood**. The bitterness of these waters leads, in turn, to the **death of those who drink** the water.” Jon Paulien, Allusions, Exegetical Method, and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12, Doctoral Dissertation available in the James white Library Andrews University, p. 401.

“One would think that the removal of Rome and Judaism as effective opponents of the church would open the way for the church's advancement and growth. However, John does not think in such terms. He warns, instead, that the removal of the church's enemies only **diverts Satan's mode of attack**.” Jon Paulien, Allusions, Exegetical Method, and the Interpretation of Revelation 8:7-12, Doctoral Dissertation available in the James white Library Andrews University, p. 406

As we continue our study, we will see that during the fourth and fifth trumpets, the apostasy that began in the third trumpet will intensify to an increasing darkness that culminates in the French Revolution.





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 5: THE FOURTH TRUMPET**

#### **Revelation 8:12-13**

*“Then the fourth angel sounded: And a **third** of the **sun** was struck, a **third** of the **moon**, and a **third** of the **stars**, so that a **third** of them were darkened. A **third** of the day **did not shine**, and likewise the night.”*

#### **Key Verses**

#### **Genesis 1:16**

*“Then God made two great lights: the **greater light** to rule the day, and the **lesser light** to rule the night. He made the **stars also**.”*

**Note:** We shall find that the use of the words ‘greater’ and ‘lesser’ to refer to the sun and moon are very significant.

#### **Revelation 12:1**

*“Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the **sun**, with the **moon** under her feet, and on her head a garland of **twelve stars**.”*

**Note:** This uses the three key words in the fourth trumpet: Sun, moon and stars. The Sun represents the age of fulfillment. The moon represents the age of symbols, types and shadows that pointed to the time of fulfillment. The stars represent the founders of the Old Testament and New Testament Church.

## **Jesus in Person is the Greater Light**

### **The Old Testament**

**Psalm 27:1:** The Lord is my Light:

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life of whom shall I be afraid?"*

**Psalm 84:11**

*"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly."*

**Malachi 4:2**

*"But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves."*

### **New Testament**

**John 8:12:** Jesus is the light of the world:

*"Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."*

*"It was morning; the sun had just risen above the Mount of Olives, and its rays fell with dazzling brightness on the marble palaces, and lighted up the gold of the temple walls, when Jesus, pointing to it, said, "I am the light of the world." DA pp. 463, 464*

**John 9:5:** Jesus is the light of the world:

*"As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."*



**Revelation 1:16:** The face of Jesus shines like the sun:

*“He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”*

**John 1:4-9:** Jesus is the light of men:

*“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. <sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light that all through him might believe. <sup>8</sup> He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. <sup>9</sup> That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.”*

**Matthew 4:16:** When Jesus came, the people saw a great light:

*“The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”*

**Luke 1:76- 79:** Zechariah described the birth of Jesus as the rising of the sun:

*“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, <sup>77</sup> to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, <sup>78</sup> through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring [literally: ‘rising sun’] from on high has visited us; <sup>79</sup> to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

**2 Corinthians 4:6:** The glory of the sun shines on the face of Jesus:

*“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*

**1 John 1:5:** God is light and there is no darkness in Him:

*"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that **God is light** and in Him is no darkness at all."*

**1 Peter 2:9**: God called His people out of darkness into **His** marvelous light:

*"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into **His marvelous light**."*

### **The Spirit of Prophecy:**

*"God makes His sun to shine on the just and on the unjust, and **this sun represents Christ**, the Sun of Righteousness, who **shines as the light** of the world, giving His blessings and mercies, seen and unseen, to rich and poor alike." TM p. 280*

Where Jesus does not shine, the people live in darkness:

*"Were the **Sun of Righteousness** to withdraw his **beams of light** from the world, we should be left in the darkness of eternal night. Jesus spake as never man spake. He poured out to men the whole treasure of heaven in wisdom and knowledge. **He is the light** that lighteth every man who cometh into the world." CE pp. 78, 79*

*"We should ask the Lord to open our understanding, that we may comprehend divine truth. If we humble our hearts before God, empty them of vanity and pride and selfishness, through the grace abundantly bestowed upon us; if we sincerely desire and unwaveringly believe, **the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness** will shine **into our minds**, and illuminate our **darkened** understanding. **Jesus is the Light** that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. **He is the Light** of the world, and He bids us come unto Him, and learn of Him." EE pp. 183*

*"Christ makes no apology when He declares, "I am the light of the world." He was, in life and teaching, **the gospel**, the foundation of **all pure doctrine**. Just as the sun compares with the lesser lights in the heavens, so did **Christ, the Source of light**, compare with the **teachers of His day**. He was before them all, and shining*

with the brightness of the sun, He diffused His penetrating, gladdening rays throughout the world. . . . TMK pp. 97

## **John the Baptist was a Lesser Light**

John the Baptist and the Old Testament were lesser lights [represented by **the moon**] whose purpose was to lead to the greater light, the person of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist was not '**THE**' light but he was 'a' light to bear witness to **THE** light (John 1:6-8).

Ellen White explained the relationship between the witness of Jesus and the witness of John:

*"The prophet John was the connecting link between the two dispensations. As God's representative, he stood forth to show the relation of the law and the prophets to the Christian dispensation. He was the lesser light, which was to be followed by a greater. The mind of John was illuminated by the Holy Spirit that he might shed light upon his people; but no other light ever has shone or ever will shine so clearly upon fallen man as that which emanated from the teaching and example of Jesus. Christ and His mission had been but dimly understood as typified in the shadowy sacrifices [**the Old Testament**]. Even John had not fully comprehended the future, immortal life through the Savior." DA pp. 220*

*"The religion of the Jews, in consequence of their departure from God, consisted mostly in ceremony. John was the lesser light, which was to be followed by a greater light. He was to shake the confidence of the people in their traditions, and call their sins to their remembrance, and lead them to repentance; that they might be prepared to appreciate the work of Christ. God communicated to John by inspiration, illuminating the prophet that he might remove the superstition and darkness from the minds of the honest Jews, which had been, through false teachings for generations, gathering upon them." RH April 8, 1873*

## **The Scriptures and God's People Are Lesser Lights**

### **Isaiah 8:19-20**

*"And when they say to you, "Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter," should not a people **seek their God**? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? <sup>20</sup> To the **law [the writings of Moses]** and to the **testimony!** **[The writings of the prophets]** If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is **no light in them.**"*

**Psalms 119:105**: The word of God is like a light

*"Your **word** is a **lamp** to my feet and a **light** to my path."*

**Micah 3:6, 7**: The Word of God is light. When there is no prophetic voice, the result is darkness.

*"Therefore you shall have night without vision, and you shall have darkness without divination; **the sun** shall go down on the prophets, and the **day shall be dark** for them. <sup>7</sup> So the seers shall be ashamed, and the diviners abashed; indeed they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer from God."*

**John 5:35, 36, 39, 40, 45-47**: The **Old Testament** Scriptures are a **lesser light** that lead to the Greater light, **Jesus**:

*"He **[John the Baptist]** was the **burning and shining lamp**, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in **his light**. <sup>36</sup> But I have a **greater witness** than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish — the very works that I do — bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. <sup>39</sup> You search **the Scriptures**, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which **testify of Me**. <sup>40</sup> But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. <sup>45</sup> Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you — Moses, in whom you trust. <sup>46</sup> For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for **he wrote about Me**. <sup>47</sup> But if you do **not believe his writings**, how will you believe My words?"*

**Luke 24:25-27; 44-46:** The Old Testament Scriptures **give witness** to Jesus, the Greater Light:

*"Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! <sup>26</sup> Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" <sup>27</sup> And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things **concerning Himself**. . . Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." <sup>45</sup> And He opened their understanding, that they might **comprehend the Scriptures**."*

Not only did John give witness to Jesus but the Scriptures do as well. In this sense, both John the Baptist and the Old Testament Scriptures are **lesser lights** that give witness to the Greater Light, Jesus Christ. No individual or **book can reveal Jesus** in the fullness of His glory.

*"In every page, whether history, or precept, or prophecy, the Old Testament Scriptures are **irradiated** with the glory of the Son of God. So far as it was of divine institution, the entire system of Judaism was a compacted prophecy of the gospel. To Christ "give all the prophets witness." (Acts 10:43) DA p. 211*

*"With the first advent of Christ there was ushered in an era of **greater light and glory**; but it would indeed be sinful ingratitude to despise and ridicule the lesser light because a fuller and more glorious light had dawned. Those who despise the blessings and glory of the Jewish age are not prepared to be benefited by the preaching of the gospel. The brightness of the Father's glory, and the excellence and perfection of His sacred law are only understood through the atonement made upon Calvary by His dear Son; but even the atonement loses its significance when the law of God is rejected. This Day with God, p. 246*

*"What speech is to thought, so is Christ to the invisible Father. He is the manifestation of the Father, and is called the Word of God. God sent His Son into the world, His divinity clothed with humanity, that man might bear the image of*

*the invisible God. He made known in His words, His character, His power and majesty, the nature and attributes of God. Divinity flashed through humanity in **softening, subduing light**. He was the **embodiment of the law of God**, which is the **transcript of His character** (Manuscript. 77, 1899)." 5BC p. 1131*

The Bible is like a **photograph** of Jesus, a **map**, a **scale model** or a **shadow**. The shadow, the map, the scale model and the picture are miniature descriptions of a far greater reality.

## **The New Testament gives Witness to Jesus**

### **John 21:24, 25**

*"This is the disciple who **testifies [gives witness]** of these things, and **wrote** these things; and we know that his **testimony** is true. <sup>25</sup> And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were **written** one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the **books** that would be written. Amen."*

## **The Spirit of Prophecy is a Lesser Light**

*"The Lord has sent his people much instruction, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a **lesser light** to lead men and women to the **greater light**. O, how much good would be accomplished if the books containing **this light** were read with a determination to carry out the principles they contain!" RH January 20, 1903*

## **God's People are 'Moons' Reflecting the Light of Jesus**

**John 12:34-36**: Jesus is the light and his followers **should reflect** His light:

*"The people answered Him, "We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" <sup>35</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer **the light** is with you. Walk while you have **the light**, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in*

darkness does not know where he is going. <sup>36</sup> While you have **the light**, believe **in the light**, that you may become **sons of light**." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them."

**Ephesians 5:8-14**: Those who accept Jesus **reflect His light** and they expose the works of darkness:

"For you were once darkness, but now **you are light in the Lord**. Walk as **children of light** <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), <sup>10</sup> finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather **expose them**. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. <sup>13</sup> But all things that are exposed are made **manifest by the light**, for whatever makes manifest is **light**. <sup>14</sup> Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and **Christ will give you light**."

"As the **moon** and the **stars** of the solar system shine by the **reflected light** of the **sun**, so, as far as their **teaching is true**, do the world's great thinkers reflect [**lesser lights**] the rays of the **Sun of Righteousness**. Every gem of thought, every flash of the intellect, is **from the Light of the world**." *DA* p. 465

"Ye are the light of the world," said Christ to His disciples. As the sun goes forth in the heavens, dispelling the shades of night, and filling the world with brightness, so must the **followers of Jesus let their light shine** to dispel the moral darkness of a world lying in sin. However, they have **no light of themselves**; it is the light of Heaven that they are to reflect to the world." *Reflecting Christ*, p. 379

## **The Meaning of the Stars**

**Daniel 12:3; 12:10**: The wise who understand Bible prophecy are like stars:

"Those who are **wise shall shine** like the brightness of the **firmament**, and those who turn many to righteousness **like the stars** forever and ever. . . Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the **wise shall understand**."

*"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. **Like the stars of heaven**, which appear **only at night**, these **faithful ones will shine** forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve **a firmament of chosen ones** that will yet **shine forth amidst the darkness**, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of **deepest apostasy**, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond," to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke," will **"shine as lights in the world."** Revelation 13:16; Philippians 2:15. The **darker the night**, the more **brilliantly will they shine.**" PK pp. 188, 189*

*"The contest is between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. In this time the gold will be separated from the dross in the church. True godliness will be clearly distinguished from the appearance and tinsel of it. **Many a star** that we have **admired for its brilliancy** will then **go out in darkness**. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness. Mar p. 200*

Ellen White referred to **John Wycliffe** as the 'morning star of the Reformation'. **Revelation 22:16** tell us that Jesus is the bright and morning star. How then can Wycliffe be the morning star? Here is the answer:

*"Every true believer **catches the beams** from the Morning Star and **transmits the light** to those who sit in darkness. Not only do they shine amid the darkness of their own neighborhood, but as a church **they shine forth** to regions beyond. The Lord expects every man to do his duty. Everyone who unites with the church*



is to be one with Christ to diffuse the beams of the Morning Star, and becoming the light of the world, Christ and His people are to be copartners in the great work of saving the world." Manuscript 51, Nov. 14, 1894. This Day with God, p. 327.

Regarding the seven stars in the right hand of Jesus, Ellen White explained:

*"These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand." Revelation 2:1. These words are spoken to the teachers in the church--those entrusted by God with weighty responsibilities. The sweet influences that are to be abundant in the church are bound up with God's ministers, who are to reveal the love of Christ. The stars of heaven are under His control. He fills them with light. He guides and directs their movements. If He did not do this, they would become fallen stars. So with His ministers. They are but instruments in His hands, and all the good they accomplish is done through His power. Through them His light is to shine forth. The Savior is to be their efficiency. If they will look to Him as He looked to the Father, they will be enabled to do His work. As they make God their dependence, He will give them His brightness to reflect to the world." AA, pp. 586, 587*

## **Eclipse of the Two Witnesses: 1260 Years of Darkness**

### **Revelation 11:3**

*"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."*

### **Isaiah 50:3**

*"I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering."*

### **Revelation 6:12**

*"I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood."*

The two witnesses (**the lesser lights, Old and New Testaments**) were clothed in **sackcloth** during the 1260 years. Sackcloth is a **black fabric** that symbolizes darkness, affliction and death.

As we have seen, the Old Testament **gives witness** to Jesus (John 5:39, 40, 45-47; Luke 24:25-27, 44-46) as does the New Testament (see John 21:24, 25). In this sense, the two witnesses **give witness** to Jesus.

*“The **two witnesses** represent the Scriptures of the **Old and the New Testament**. Both are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. Both are witnesses also to the **plan of salvation**. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament **point forward** to a Savior to come. The **Gospels and Epistles** of the New Testament tell of a Savior who has come in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.” GC p.267*

Ellen White described how the **two witnesses** gave their testimony **dimly** during the 1260 years of papal supremacy. The Greater and lesser lights pointed to Jesus **dimly** because the **papacy** partially **eclipsed them**:

*“The period when the two witnesses [**the lesser light**] were to prophesy clothed in **sackcloth** ended in 1798. As they were approaching the termination of their work in **obscurity [darkness]**, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.” In many of the nations of Europe the powers that ruled in Church and State had for centuries been controlled by Satan, through the medium of the papacy. But here is brought to view **a new manifestation of Satanic power [the fifth trumpet or first woe]**.” GC p. 269*

The fourth trumpet darkness was a **precursor** to the fifth trumpet where the darkness became even more intense to the point of a total eclipse of the light of the two witnesses in the French Revolution:

*“According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some **power of satanic origin** and character would rise to make war upon the Bible.*

*And in the land where the testimony of God's two witnesses should thus be silenced, there would be manifest the atheism of the Pharaoh, and the licentiousness of Sodom.” GC p. 269*

## **The Darkening of the Sun and Moon**

Significantly, Ellen White titled the chapter in *The Great Controversy* on the period of papal supremacy with the words: “An Era of Spiritual Darkness.” She wrote repeatedly about the darkness that characterized this period:

*“The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness deepened. Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome [Christ, the Greater Light was eclipsed]. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator and that none could approach God except through him; and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Thus, the minds of the people were turned away from God to fallible, erring, and cruel men, nay, more, to the prince of darkness himself, who exercised his power through them. Sin was disguised in a garb of sanctity. When the Scriptures are suppressed, and man comes to regard himself as supreme, we need look only for fraud, deception, and debasing iniquity. GC p. 55*

*“About the close of the eighth century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome had possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed [she then discusses the doctrine of apostolic succession]. . .” GC, pp. 56, 57*

*“. . . The darkness seemed to grow more dense. Image worship became more general. Candles were burned before images, and prayers were offered to them. The most absurd and superstitious customs prevailed. The minds of men were so*

completely controlled by superstition that reason itself seemed to have lost its sway. While priests and bishops were themselves pleasure-loving, sensual, and corrupt, it could only be expected that the people who looked to them for guidance would be sunken in ignorance and vice.” GC, p. 57

“The advancing centuries witnessed a constant increase of error in the doctrines put forth from Rome. . .” GC, p. 58

“In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy—the Inquisition. The prince of darkness wrought with the leaders of the papal hierarchy. In their secret councils Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men, while unseen in the midst stood an angel of God, taking the fearful record of their iniquitous decrees and writing the history of deeds too horrible to appear to human eyes.” GC, p. 59

“But “the noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world.”—J. A. Wylie, The History of Protestantism, b. 1, chapter 4. The Holy Scriptures were almost unknown, not only to the people, but to the priests. Like the Pharisees of old, the papal leaders hated the light which would reveal their sins.” GC, p. 60

“The condition of the world under the Romish power presented a fearful and striking fulfillment of the words of the prophet Hosea: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee: . . . seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” “There is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.” Hosea 4:6, 1, 2. Such were the results of banishing the word of God.” GC pp. 55-60

“The iniquity and spiritual darkness that prevailed under the supremacy of Rome were the inevitable result of her suppression of the Scriptures. . . GC p. 586

*“Satan well knew that the **Holy Scriptures** would enable men to discern his deceptions and withstand his power. It was by the word that even the Savior of the world had resisted his attacks. At every assault, Christ presented the shield of eternal truth, saying, ‘It is written.’ To every suggestion of the adversary, He opposed the wisdom and power of the word. In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in **ignorance of the Scriptures**. The **Bible** would exalt God and place finite men in their true position; therefore its sacred truths must be **concealed and suppressed**. This logic was adopted by the Roman Church. For hundreds of years the **circulation of the Bible was prohibited**. The people were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over church and state.” GC p. 51*

*“Mr. Miller and those who were in union with him supposed that the cleansing of the sanctuary spoken of in Daniel 8:14 meant the purifying of the earth by fire prior to its becoming the abode of the saints. This was to take place at the second advent of Christ; therefore, we looked for that event at the end of the 2300 days, or years. But after our disappointment the **Scriptures were carefully searched**, with prayer and earnest thought; and after a period of suspense, **light poured in upon our darkness**; doubt and uncertainty were swept away.” CET p. 56*

*“Dear brethren and sisters: As **error** is fast progressing, we should seek to be awake in the cause of God, and realize the time in which we live. **Darkness** is to cover the earth, and **gross darkness** the people. Nearly all around us are being enveloped in the **thick darkness of error and delusion**, it becomes us to shake off stupidity and live near to God, where we can draw divine **rays of light** and glory from the countenance of Jesus. As **darkness thickens** and error increases, we should obtain a more thorough knowledge of the truth and be prepared to maintain our position **from the Scriptures**.” EW, pp. 104, 105*

*"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is **no light** in them." Isaiah 8:20. The people of God are directed to the **Scriptures** as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of **darkness**." GC p. 593*

## **The Papacy Darkened the Sun and Moon**

### **Darkening the Sun and the Moon**

In order to understand the darkening of the sun and moon during the fourth trumpet we must study the '**daily**' that the little horn removed from the Prince of the Host. What does the word 'daily' mean?

It is difficult to interpret the word unless we go to **other places** in Scripture that explain it. The word is an **adjective** that has **no noun** to qualify. So the question is: The little horn took away the daily **what**? The meaning of the word *tahmid* is simply "*something which goes on continuously without interruption*." However, what is it that '*goes on continuously without interruption*' in Daniel 8?

It is important to keep in mind that the word *tahmid* has the **definite article** 'the'. It is **THE** daily (*hatamid*) that the little horn took away (see also Daniel 11:31; 12:11). The **King James Version** translators added the word 'sacrifice,' thinking that *tahmid* refers to the morning and evening sacrifice. However, this is only partially true. There is a Hebrew expression for the daily sacrifice, *olat tahmid*. Regarding the *King James Translation* Ellen White wrote:

*"Then I saw in relation to the "daily" (Daniel 8:12) that the word 'sacrifice' was supplied by man's wisdom, and does **not belong to the text**, and that the Lord gave the correct view of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry." EW, pp. 74, 75.*

What, then, does this word mean? We must allow other Old Testament texts to explain. The Old Testament makes it abundantly clear that this word refers to the **daily ministration** of the priest in the **court** and in the **holy place** of the sanctuary. This means that the little horn was going to attempt to take away

from the Prince of the host His ministration in the court and in the holy place of the sanctuary.

In order to comprehend how the little horn did this, we need to answer two fundamental questions:

- 1) In **which sanctuary** did the prince minister at this point in the vision of Daniel 8?
- 2) What does **each piece of furniture** in the court and in the holy place represent? What did the altar of sacrifice, the candlestick, the table of showbread and the altar of incense **represent**?

If we can find the answer to these questions, then we will be able also to determine what the little horn attempted to take away from the Prince and when.

Let us look for an answer to the first question. **Joshua 5:13-15** identifies the Prince of the host as Jesus. So, where does Jesus minister today? The evidence from the New Testament clearly indicates that during the Christian era Jesus was ministering in the **heavenly sanctuary** (Hebrews 8:1, 2).

**Matthew 21:12-13** tells us that at the end of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, He entered the **temple of God** and called it '**My Father's house**'. However, a short while later, when Jesus departed from the Jewish temple, He announced to the Jewish leaders, "**your house** is left unto you desolate." (Matthew 23:38). Clearly, the Jerusalem Temple was **no longer** the 'Father's house' nor the 'temple of God' because Jesus, the 'living Shekinah' had forsaken it. The rending of the veil indicated that the functions of the earthly sanctuary had concluded and the system of earthly types and shadows had concluded (Matthew 27:51).

Because the **Jewish nation rejected** Christ, in AD 70 the **Romans destroyed** the Jerusalem Temple (Luke 19:41-44) and it has never been rebuilt. For this

reason, it is not possible to conclude that the sanctuary the little horn trampled upon during the Christian era was the Jerusalem Temple. During the Christian dispensation when the little horn did its work, there was **no earthly Jerusalem** Temple in existence!

However, if the little horn did not do its work in the Jerusalem Temple, then which one? The answer is two-fold.

- ✓ First, upon His ascension, Jesus began His ministry as High Priest in the **literal** heavenly sanctuary personally and **physically** (Hebrews 8:1-2). He is the genuine High Priest who ministers in the **literal** heavenly temple on the **literal** heavenly Mt. Zion in the **literal** heavenly Jerusalem. He is the minister of a better covenant because He presents before His Father His own **better blood** that runs through His veins. He is the living Shekinah in the heavenly temple.
- ✓ Secondly, Jesus is also ministers in the spiritual temple on earth and that temple is the Christian Church. This spiritual temple has **spiritual** foundations, a **spiritual** Cornerstone, **spiritual** building stones and a **spiritual** Shekinah (the Holy Spirit) who entered it on the Day of Pentecost (see, Ephesians 2:20-22; 1Peter 2:1-10; 1Corinthians 3:16-17; 2Corinthians 6:14-18; 2Thessalonians 2:3-4). In other words, Jesus ministers in two places at the same time: **Physically in heaven** and **spiritually on earth** through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. His heavenly hosts are the **angels** and His earthly hosts are His **faithful followers**.

So what does Daniel 8 mean when it states that the little horn took away the 'daily' from the Prince and killed His hosts? Obviously, it **cannot mean** that the little horn literally and personally traveled **to heaven deposed Jesus**, sat in the temple and destroyed the angels.

What, then, does it mean? We find the answer in **Daniel 8:11** where the text tells us that the little horn cast down the **place** of the Prince's sanctuary to the



earth. We have already shown that the place of the Prince's sanctuary is in the literal heavenly Temple and in His Church on earth.

The word '**place**' (*makon*) in the text is unusual. There are some very **common Hebrew words** for 'place' in the Old Testament but this is not one of them. The word *makon* appears only **17 times** in the Hebrew Bible and in **16** of those references the word denotes the **heavenly sanctuary** as God's dwelling place (for example, Exodus 15:17).

Perhaps it would be good to consider some of those references. In 1Kings 8:37-50 (and parallel passages in 1Chronicles 6:30, 33, 39; study also Psalm 89:14; 97:2 where *makon* is translated, 'habitation') tells us that God hears our prayers, forgives our sins, saves us and metes out His justice from His heavenly **place** (*makon*).

### **1 Kings 8:37-50**

*"When there is famine in the land, pestilence or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers; when their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness there is; <sup>38</sup> whatever **prayer**, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows the plague of his own heart, and spreads out his hands **toward this temple**: <sup>39</sup> then **hear in heaven** Your **dwelling place**, and **forgive, and act**, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men), <sup>40</sup> that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You gave to our fathers. <sup>41</sup>"Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but has come from a far country for Your name's sake <sup>42</sup> (for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your outstretched arm), when he comes and **prays toward this temple**, <sup>43</sup> **hear in heaven** Your **dwelling place**, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name. <sup>44</sup> "When Your people go out to battle against*

their enemy, wherever You send them, and when they pray to the Lord toward the city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name, <sup>45</sup> then **hear in heaven** their **prayer and their supplication**, and maintain their cause. <sup>46</sup> "When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to the land of the enemy, far or near; <sup>47</sup> yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and **repent**, and **make supplication to You** in the land of those who took them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and done wrong, we have committed wickedness'; <sup>48</sup> and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who led them away captive, and **pray to You toward their land** which You gave to their fathers, **the city** which You have chosen and **the temple** which I have built for Your name: <sup>49</sup> then **hear in heaven Your dwelling place** their **prayer** and their **supplication**, and maintain their cause, <sup>50</sup> and **forgive** Your people who have sinned against You, and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against You; and grant them **compassion** before those who took them captive, that they may have **compassion** on them."

There is a **paradox** in this passage. Although God's people utter their prayers toward the **earthly temple**, God hears their prayers and answers **from heaven**:

### **1 Kings 8:30**

*"Hear the plea of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward **this place**: O hear **in heaven** your **dwelling place**, heed and forgive." (See also Daniel 6:10).*

Thus, there is an **intimate connection** between the **earthly and heavenly** temples. In a sense, **God dwells in both**! For our purposes here, it is important to remember that when Nebuchadnezzar came and destroyed the Jerusalem Temple, he was not able to touch the heavenly! In similar fashion, the little horn was able to take over the sanctuary functions of the Prince and kill His hosts **on**

**earth** but it was not able to take away the functions of the Prince **in heaven** nor destroy His angels.

The act of casting down the place of the Prince's sanctuary does not mean that the little horn demolished the **mortar and stones** of the heavenly sanctuary. The meaning is that the little horn **usurped** and placed on earth the 'daily' or 'continual' ministration of the heavenly Prince. In other words, that which belonged to the Prince in heaven, the little horn usurped and **set up on earth**.

Significantly, at this point in the flow of Christian history, the little horn attempted to interfere mainly with the 'daily' ministry of the Prince in the court and in the holy place. This is understandable in that during the period of papal dominion, Jesus had not yet entered the most holy place

The **central issue** at hand is this, **who will control** the sanctuary service in the court and in the holy place, the Prince or the little horn? Further, why is control of the sanctuary such a vital issue?

We find the answers to these questions by considering the meaning of the altar of sacrifice in the court and the candlestick, the table of showbread and the altar of incense in the holy place.

### **The Altar of Sacrifice**

Morning and evening the priest offered a lamb upon this altar for the sins of Israel. As long as the Hebrew sanctuary and temple stood, there was never a time when the fire was not burning. This was the **daily** burnt offering.

### **Exodus 29:39**

*"Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, day by day **continually** [tahmid]. <sup>39</sup> One lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight."*

The sacrifice of the lamb, of course, represented the death of Jesus Christ on the cross (John 1:29; 1Peter 1:19; Revelation 13:8). The priest offered the sacrifice

**daily**, morning and evening, thus indicating that the death of Jesus has **enduring value**. He died **once-for-all** and **never needs to die again!**

**Hebrews 7:26, 27** brings out the enduring benefits of this one and only sacrifice of Christ:

*“For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; <sup>27</sup> who does not need **daily**, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did **once for all** when He offered up Himself.”*

**Hebrews 9:25-26, KJV** underlines the same fact:

*“Not yet that he should offer himself **often**, as the high priest entereth into the **holy place** every year with the blood of others; for then must he **often** have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now **once** in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men **once** to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was **once** offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”*

The Roman Catholic dogma of the sacrifice of the mass counterfeits the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross. According to Roman Catholic dogma, the priest sacrifices Jesus repeatedly in every sacrifice of the Mass. Instead of looking to the Lamb of God who presents the blood of His once-for-all sacrifice in heaven, the Roman Catholic Church teaches believers to look at the wafer host where, supposedly, the real body of Jesus in its **totality** (ubiquity) is present. Instead of coming boldly to Jesus at the throne of grace **in heaven** to claim His once-for-all and sufficient sacrifice, Roman Catholic priests teach the faithful that the host nourishes them because they are feeding on the literal body of Jesus on earth.

In fact, the priests store the host in a flower-like artifact called the Tabernacle. At the center of the artifact is the **circular** wafer host, and coming forth from

the edges of the host are the rays of the sun. When the priest brings the Tabernacle before the congregation, he teaches them to bow and worship the host. This is simply a deceitful system of sun worship.

Furthermore, Roman Catholic theology teaches that the priest on earth takes over the power and prerogatives of Jesus. When the priest pronounces the words of consecration *hoc est corpus meum* ('this is my body') the wafer is no longer a wafer but rather the real physical body of Jesus. Roman Catholic theology teaches that when these words are pronounced, the earthly priest has the power to **transubstantiate** the wafer into the real body of Jesus. That is to say, the earthly priest supposedly has the power to **create His Creator!** This is blasphemy to the fullest degree.

St. Alphonsus Liguori, one of the 33 theological doctors in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, wrote about the transubstantiating power of the priest:

*"Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called **the creator of his Creator**, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates, as it were, Jesus in the sacrament, by giving him a sacramental existence, and produces him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father. As in creating the world it was sufficient for God to have said, Let it be made, and it was created—He spoke, and they were made—so it is sufficient for the priest to say, 'Hoc est corpus meum,' and behold the bread is **no longer bread**, but the body of Jesus Christ. 'The power of the priest,' says St. Bernardine of Sienna, 'is the power of the **divine person**; for the transubstantiation of the bread requires **as much power as the creation of the world**.'" St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva*, pp. 33-34.*

### **The Table of Showbread**

The table of the showbread contained two stacks of unleavened bread, each with six loaves for a total of twelve. The number twelve indicated that there was sufficient bread to feed every person of the twelve tribes of Israel. God called

this bread the '**continual** bread' (*tahmid*) because it was available continually to satisfy the spiritual needs of Israel.

### **Numbers 4:7, KJV**

*"And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the **continual** [*tahmid*] bread shall be thereon."*

What does the showbread in the holy place of the sanctuary represent?

**Isaiah 55:10-11**: Bread is a symbol of the Word of God:

*"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and **bread** to the eater, <sup>11</sup> So shall **My word** be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."*<sup>5</sup> When Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones to bread in the wilderness Jesus compared His bread with the Word:

### **Matthew 4:4**

*"Man shall not live by **bread** alone, but by every **word** that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4; see also Deuteronomy 8:3-4).*

After Jesus fed **five thousand** men with only five loaves of bread and two fishes, He made a very controversial remark:

### **John 6:53**

*"Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you **eat the flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink His blood**, you have no life in you.'"*

Roman Catholics use this text to teach that in each mass believers eat the real flesh of Jesus and the priest drinks His real blood! Is this what Jesus meant? Of course not! Jesus explained the meaning of His own remark:

### **John 6:63**

*"It is the Spirit who gives life; the **flesh profits nothing**. The **words that I speak** to you are spirit, and they are life."*

That is to say, the **words of Jesus** have power to nourish our **spiritual life**. As literal bread sustains physical life, the Word of God sustains spiritual life. Spiritually speaking, when we study the Word we assimilate Jesus and he becomes flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones.

The 'ingested' Word of God cleanses our life and gives us the victory over sin. David understood this when he exclaimed:

### **Psalms 119:9-11**

*"How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to **Your word**.  
<sup>10</sup> With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from **Your commandments**! <sup>11</sup> **Your word** I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You."*

Jesus taught the same truth to His disciples:

### **John 15:3**

*"You are already **clean** because of the **word** which I have spoken to you."*

The apostle Paul added his testimony when he stated that the Word cleanses and sanctifies the church:

### **Ephesians 5:25, 26**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify and **cleanse her** with the washing of water **by the word**."*

Eating a literal wafer certainly has no power to spiritually feed and transform us. The 'ingested' Word cleanses our lives from sin.

So, what does the table of the showbread teach us? There are at least three lessons:

- The bread represents Jesus as contained in the **written Word** of God.
- The bread is **continually available** for all of God's people.
- If assimilated, the word will **nourish** our spiritual life and provide victory over sin.

In what sense did the little horn cast down the meaning of the table of the showbread? The answer is not difficult to find. Roman Catholicism substituted the **traditions and philosophies** of men in place of the Word of God. The word of a supposedly infallible **magisterium** was placed above a 'thus saith the Lord'. The number of unbiblical and anti-biblical traditions in Roman Catholicism is legion. Here are some: Purgatory, limbo, celibacy, auricular confession, the immortality of the soul, an eternally burning hell, lent, processions, the mass, relics, canonization of saints, the rosary, bowing before images, the immaculate conception, the assumption of Mary, baptism of infants by aspersion, novenas, the observance of Sunday, etc.

What was the result of these traditions replacing the Word of God? **Spiritual malnutrition** and a **moral laxity** that made the pagan Romans look like saints! It is no coincidence that the **third and fourth seals** of Revelation describe this period as one of famine for the Word of God (see, Revelation 6:5-8). In effect, during the period of the third horse (the period of **Constantine**) the Church assimilated the **unbiblical teachings** and practices of the pagans and the result under the fourth horse (the 1260 years of papal dominion) was a life threatening scarcity of bread—famine!

This is also the period of the **fourth church of Revelation**. Under this church, Jezebel the harlot was in control. During this period of 1260 years, there was **no dew or rain** and as a result, there was **famine for the word** of God. (Revelation 2:20; 11:3, 6; 12:6, 14; cf. Amos 8:11-12).



## **The Candlestick**

According to Leviticus 24:1-4, one of the roles of the High Priest was to trim the wicks and replenish the oil in the seven-branched candlestick in the holy place. Thus, he would make sure that the light of the candlestick burned continually.

### **Leviticus 24:1-4**

*"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> "Command the children of Israel that they bring to you pure oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn **continually**. <sup>3</sup> Outside the veil of the Testimony, in the tabernacle of meeting, Aaron shall be in charge of it from evening until morning before the Lord **continually**; it shall be a statute forever in your generations. <sup>4</sup> He shall be in charge of the lamps on the pure gold lampstand before the Lord **continually**."*

What did the seven-branched candlestick symbolize? Let us interpret the symbols:

- The number seven represents **fullness**.
- The **Oil** is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- The **candlesticks** represent the seven churches.

What does the candlestick itself represent? Revelation 1 provides the clear answer. The seven-branched candlestick represents seven stages in the history of the Christian church from the days of the apostles until the end of time:

### **Revelation 1:20**

*"The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the **seven lampstands** which you saw are the **seven churches**."*

**Ellen White** explained the meaning of the seven candlesticks:

*"The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates **completeness**, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages **extend to the end of time**, while the symbols used reveal*

*the condition of the church at **different periods** in the **history of the world**.” AA, p. 585*

Thus, the candlestick represents the **witness of the church** to the world through the power of the **Holy Spirit** in **different periods** of Christian history. The period of papal dominion was one of darkness. The light of the church shone' but dimly for it was 'the dark ages'. At times, it looked like the light of the church was about to be extinguished. Particularly during the period of Thyatira, the light burned dim.

### **The Golden Altar of Incense**

The incense that the priest offered upon the golden altar was 'the altar of **perpetual** (*tahmid*) incense' because the High Priest was to burn it on the altar morning and evening **continually**.

What did the incense represent? The answer is that the incense upon the altar bears a relationship with the **prayers** of the congregation.

**Luke 1:8-11**: These verses tell us that while Zacharias went into the holy place of the temple to offer incense, the people were praying to God outside:

*“So it was that while he [**Zacharias**] was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to **burn incense** when he went into the temple of the Lord. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the **people was praying** outside at the **hour of incense**. <sup>11</sup> Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the **altar of incense**.”*

### **Psalms 141:2**

*“Let my **prayer** be set before You as **incense**, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”*

**Revelation 8:3-4**: The incense bears a **relationship** with our prayers. However, the incense is not symbolic of our prayers.

*“Then another angel, having a **golden censer**, came and stood **at the altar**. He was given **much incense**, that he should offer it **with** the prayers of all the saints upon the **golden altar** that was before the throne. <sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, **with** the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand. ”*

*“There is an inexhaustible fund of **perfect obedience** accruing from **his obedience**. In heaven, **his** merits, **his** self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured up **as incense** to be offered up **with the prayers** of his people. As the sinner's sincere, **humble prayers** ascend **to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of his** life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant **by this incense**. Christ has pledged himself to **intercede** in our behalf, and the Father always **hears his Son**. Pray then; pray without ceasing; an answer is sure to come. *RH*, October 30, 1900.*

The incense represents the merits of Jesus' obedience that He **mingles** with the prayers of His people. The incense makes our **prayers acceptable** before the Father.

Significantly, the **veil** that divided the holy from the most holy place was directly **behind the altar**. Behind the veil stood the **ark of covenant**, a symbol of the throne of God. When the priest burned the incense on the golden altar, the smoke ascended **over the curtain** and entered the presence of God beyond the veil. For this reason, there were **angels embroidered** upon the veil. The angels take our prayers to Jesus and combined with His merits, they enter the very presence of God. This is the meaning of **the ladder** that Jacob saw in his dream (see, Genesis 28:11-12 and John 1:51).

In what sense, then, did the little horn take away this function from the Prince? Roman Catholicism has established a **counterfeit priesthood** to whom the faithful confess their sins. That is to say, instead of the faithful directing their prayers to Jesus in heaven for forgiveness, they utter them **to a human priest** on earth who cannot forgive. In this way, the little horn casts down the intercessory ministry of Jesus in heaven and places it on earth! Even further,

the faithful in Roman Catholicism offer their **petitions to Mary** and the saints instead of to Jesus. In consequence, the attention of the faithful shifts away from Jesus who can truly hear their petitions and forgive their sins.

The Bible is clear that there is **'one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus'** (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus assured us that He is *'the way, the truth and the life'*, and that no man comes unto the father except **by Him** (John 14:6). The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:34 that Jesus **'makes intercession for us.'** Furthermore, in words that are impossible to misunderstand, the book of Hebrews tells that Jesus *'is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make **intercession for them.**'* (Hebrews 7:25). 1John 2:1 tells us that *'we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.'* Why do we need mere human intermediaries when we can come boldly to the throne of grace through Jesus, the God-Man? The **confessional** in Roman Catholicism focuses the attention of people upon a man on earth instead of directing them to Christ in heaven.

In summary, **two princes** are struggling **for the souls** of human beings. One Prince, Jesus, performs a continual ministry of salvation in the **heavenly sanctuary** by pleading the blood of His one and only sacrifice before the Father (the altar of sacrifice). That Prince **feeds** His people with the Word of God (the table of showbread), keeps the **light** of the church burning by the power of the Holy Spirit (the candlestick) and **forgives** those who come to Him in penitence and prayer (the golden altar of incense).

The other prince, Satan, unable to overthrow the heavenly ministry of the Prince, establishes a counterfeit continual ministry (the mass, tradition, the confessional, the pope) in the earthly temple—the church (see 2Thessalonians 2:3-4). By shifting the attention of the people from heaven to earth, he casts down the place of the sanctuary and prevents human beings from discerning the saving work of Christ in heaven! Not being able to discern the saving work of Christ in heaven, souls perish in sin!

### **Darkening the Stars**

The vision of Daniel 8 portrays a **ram** with two horns (verses 3-4), a **he goat** with a **notable horn** and **four horns** that came out after the notable horn was

broken (verses 5-8). Then a **little horn** attacked the **host** (verse 10) and finally the **Prince of the host** (verse 11).

The angel interpreter at the end of the vision explained that the two-horned ram represents the **Medes and Persians** (verse 20). He then stated that the he-goat represents **Greece** and its notable horn its **first king** (verse 21). Next, he informed us that the four horns represent the **divisions of Greece** after the death of its first king (verse 22). Finally, he explains that a **king will arise** (verse 23) who will “*destroy the mighty and the holy people*” (verse 24) and ‘*stand up against the Prince of princes*’ (verse 25).

Even a passing glance at Daniel 8 indicates that “*the host and the stars of heaven*” in the **vision** is found in the same identical place as “*the mighty and holy people*” in the **explanation** of the vision. Thus, the ‘stars’ represent God’s people.





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 6: THE FIFTH TRUMPET**

In order to understand the fifth trumpet, it is helpful to review some details from the seven churches series.

#### **The Elijah Typology**

##### **Foundational Principle**

The seven churches, seven seals and seven trumpets cover the same basic historical events from different perspectives. The churches provide the chronological sequence for the rest of the book of Revelation. That is to say, the seven churches are to Revelation, what Daniel 2 is to Daniel.

- The first church, seal and trumpet describe the period of the apostolic church.
- The second church, seal and trumpet describe the period when the emperors of the pagan Roman Empire persecuted the church.
- The third church, seal and trumpet describe the period when paganism penetrated the Christian church during the reign of Constantine.
- The fourth church, seal and trumpet describe the period when the apostate papal church eclipsed the Bible and the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

Regarding the seven churches, Ellen White wrote:

*“The names of the seven churches are symbolic of the church in different periods of the Christian Era. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that the messages extend to the end of time, while the symbols used reveal the condition of the church at different periods in the history of the word.” AA p. 585*

Futurist expositors of Bible prophecy such as **Hal Lindsey** and **Dave Hunt** agree with Ellen White that the seven churches represent seven **consecutive periods** of Christian Church history. They also agree that the fourth church represents the period of papal apostasy.

The central protagonist of the fourth church is **Jezebel**. It is clear that the Jezebel in the fourth church **cannot be the literal** person because during the dark ages, literal Jezebel was **already dead**. It is obvious that Old Testament Jezebel did not live **1260 years**.

### **Fourth, fifth and sixth Church: Apostasy, French Revolution, and Judgment**

The **mention of Jezebel** in the church of Thyatira makes it necessary to study the **Elijah** story in the Old Testament. Let us compare the Old Testament story with the period of the **fourth church**, Thyatira. Here is the description of the fourth church with my own explanatory notes in brackets. We will notice that the fourth church actually **summarizes** the central events of the fourth, fifth and sixth trumpets:

- ✓ The 1260-year persecution
- ✓ The French Revolution
- ✓ The period of the judgment

### **Revelation 2:20-23**

- *“Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you **[the church of Thyatira]** allow that woman **Jezebel** **[the beast of Revelation 13 and harlot of Revelation 17]**, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit **sexual immorality** **[fornication, union of Church and state]** and eat things sacrificed to **idols** **[idolatry]**. And I gave*



her time [1260 years] to repent of her sexual immorality [fornication with the civil powers], and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed [the deadly wound], and those who commit adultery with her [France] into great tribulation [the French Revolution], unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children [the apostate Protestant churches] with death, and all the churches [all seven of them] shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts [the investigative judgment]. And I will give to each one of you according to your works [the moment when the reward is given to the harlot and her lovers].

## The Elijah Story

In the Old Testament story (that is parallel to the fourth trumpet), Jezebel the pagan priestess introduced a syncretistic, hybrid religion that led God's people, Israel, into apostasy. In Revelation, Thyatira represents the period of history when the Christian church blended paganism with Christianity and behaved like Jezebel. This period is the same as the fourth trumpet. Let us compare historical Jezebel with prophetic Jezebel.

- ✓ **1A Historical Jezebel:** Jezebel led Israel into false worship of the sun god Baal and idolatry:

### 1 Kings 16:30, 31

*"Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians and he went and served Baal and worshiped him."*

*The sun god, under the general title of Baal, or 'lord,' was the chief object of worship of the Canaanites. Each locality had its special Baal, and the various local Baals were summed up under the name of Baalim, or 'lords.' Each Baal had a wife, who was a colorless reflection of himself [therefore the moon goddess Asherah]." Easton's Bible Dictionary, PC Study Bible; Copyright © 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)*

*"Though in a different form, idolatry exists in the Christian world today as verily as it existed among ancient Israel in the days of Elijah. The god of*

many professedly wise men, of philosophers, poets, politicians, journalists-- the god of polished fashionable circles, of many colleges and universities, even of some theological institutions--is little better than Baal, the **sun-god of Phoenicia**." GC, p. 583.

✓ **1B Prophetic Jezebel**

**Revelation 2:20**

"Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow **that woman Jezebel**, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and **seduce My servants** to commit **sexual immorality** and eat things sacrificed to **idols**."

"The spirit of concession to **paganism** opened the way for a still further disregard of Heaven's authority. Satan tampered with the fourth commandment also, and essayed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified, [Genesis 2:2, 3.] and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the **heathen** as "**the venerable day of the sun**."

✓ **2A Historical Jezebel:**

**2 Kings 9:22**

Jezebel was a **mother** who had an **adulterous** relationship with the **king** and was involved in the **occult**.

"Now it happened, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, "Is it peace, Jehu?" So he answered, "What peace, as long as the **harlotries** of your **mother** Jezebel and her **witchcraft** are so many?"

✓ **2B Prophetic Jezebel**

**Revelation 17:1, 2, 5**

"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the **great harlot** who sits on many waters, with whom the **kings** of the earth **committed fornication**, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication. . . And on her forehead a name was written:

MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, **THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS** AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

### **Revelation 18:23**

*"For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your **sorcery** all the nations were deceived."*

### ✓ **3A Historical Jezebel:**

The **issues** in the Old Testament story involved:

- God's own professed people forsook the **law** of God.
- God's own professed people practiced false **worship**.
- God's own people forsook the **true Gospel** and embraced a false one.

### **1 Kings 16:30, 31: Worship:**

*"Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians and he went and **served Baal** and **worshiped him**."*

### **1 Kings 18:18, 18: The Law:**

*"Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah that Ahab said to him: "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the **commandments** of the LORD and you have followed the Baals."*

### **1 Kings 18:30, 31, 36, 37: The Gospel:**

*"Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he **repaired the altar** of the LORD that was **broken down**. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name"... And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the **evening sacrifice**, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "LORD God of **Abraham, Isaac, and Israel**, let it be known this day that You are God*

*in Israel and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You are the LORD God, and that You have **turned their hearts back to You again.**"*

✓ **3B Prophetic Jezebel:**

The **same three issues** faced the church of Thyatira: Worship, the law and the Gospel.

**Revelation 13:4** (also the little horn of Daniel 8): **Worship**

*"So they **worshiped** the dragon who gave authority to the beast [symbol of the papacy]; and they **worshiped** the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?"*

**Daniel 7:25**: The **Law**:

*"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and **law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time."*

During the fourth stage of the church, the Jezebel power bears the name, man of sin (which is transgression of the law) and the mystery of lawlessness.

**Daniel 8:11**: The true **Gospel**:

*"He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the **daily** sacrifices were **taken away**, and the place of His sanctuary was **cast down**."*

✓ **4A Historical Jezebel: No rain**

**1 Kings 17:1**

*"And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall **not be dew nor rain** these **years**, [see James 5:17] except at my word."*

✓ **4B Prophetic Jezebel: No rain**

**Revelation 11:6**

*"These [**the two witnesses**] have power to shut heaven, so that **no rain** falls in **the days** [1260] of their prophecy."*

Apostasy shut up the heavens so that it would **not rain**:

**2 Chronicles 7:13, 14**

*"When I shut up heaven and there is **no rain**, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, <sup>14</sup> if My people who are **called by My name** will **humble** themselves, and **pray** and seek My face, and **turn from their wicked ways**, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

**Amos 8:11, 12**

**Hunger and famine** occurs when there is scarcity of God's Word:

*"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a **famine** on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of **hearing the words of the LORD**. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall run to and fro, seeking the **word of the LORD**, but shall not find it."*

✓ **5A Historical Jezebel: three and one half** literal years:

**James 5:17**

*"Elijah was a man with a nature like ours and he prayed earnestly that it would **not rain**; and it did not rain on the land for **three years and six months**."*

✓ **5B Prophetic Jezebel: Three and one half** **symbolic years**:

*"And I gave her **time** [**chronos**] to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent." Rev. 2:21*

*"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**, clothed in sackcloth." Rev. 11:3*

**Daniel 7:25**: The 1260 days equal three and one half times:

*"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for **a time and times and half a time.**"*

God gave the Jezebel of the middle Ages **time to repent** of her fornication. How much time? 'Time, times and the dividing of time', or '1260 days', a period that reached from 538 to 1798 AD. If the 1260 days are years, then Elijah, Jezebel and Ahab cannot be literal persons, but rather **groups** of people who went through an experience similar to Elijah.

- ✓ **6A Historical Jezebel**: A **faithful remnant** within apostate Israel who went into **hiding**:

**1 Kings 19:18**

*"Yet I have reserved **seven thousand** in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."*

- ✓ **6B Prophetic Jezebel**: A faithful remnant within the apostate church who went into hiding:

**Revelation 2:24, 25**

*"Now to you I say, and to **the rest [loipos, the remnant]** in Thyatira, as many as **do not have** this doctrine, who **have not known** the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come."*

- ✓ **7A Historical Jezebel**

Ahab and Jezebel **blamed Elijah** for the calamities and **hunted for Elijah** everywhere:

**1 Kings 18:17**

*"Then it happened, when Ahab saw Elijah that Ahab said to him: **"Is that you, O troubler of Israel?"**"*

### **1 Kings 18:10, 17**

*"As the LORD your God lives, there is no nation or kingdom where my master has not sent someone **to hunt for you**; and when they said, 'He is not here,' he took an oath from the kingdom or nation that they could not find you."*

#### ✓ **7B Prophetic Jezebel**

The apostate papal church hunted for the faithful **remnant** everywhere. Groups like the **Waldensians** had to **flee** for their lives because the papacy organized crusades against them.

### **Revelation 12:6**

*"Then the woman **fled** into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days."*

#### ✓ **8A Historical Jezebel**

Elijah fled **to the wilderness** from Jezebel's wrath:

### **1 Kings 17:3**

*"Get away from here and turn eastward, and **hide** by the Brook Cherith that flows into the Jordan."*

#### ✓ **8B Prophetic Jezebel**: The faithful remnant fled to the wilderness from the harlot's wrath:

### **Revelation 12:6, 14**

*"Then the woman fled into the **wilderness**, where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. . . However, the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the **wilderness** to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the presence of the serpent."*

#### ✓ **9A Historical Jezebel**: God **nourished** the persecuted faithful in the wilderness:

### **1 Kings 17:4**

*"And it will be that you shall drink from the brook, and **I have commanded** the ravens to **feed you** there."*

**1 Kings 17:6**: God used the **ravens** to feed Elijah

*"The ravens brought him **bread and meat** in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening; and he drank from the brook."*

- ✓ **9B Prophetic Jezebel**: God fed the faithful remnant when they fled to the wilderness:

### **Revelation 12:6, 14**

*"Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God that they should **feed her there** one thousand two hundred and sixty days. . . However, the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place where **she is nourished** for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent."*

- ✓ **10A Historical Jezebel**: Jezebel was a **murderer** of God's prophets:

### **1 Kings 18:4**

*"For so it was, while Jezebel **massacred the prophets** of the LORD, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water."*

### **2 Kings 9:7**

*"You shall strike down the **house of Ahab** your master, that I may avenge the blood of My servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, **at the hand of Jezebel**."*

### **1 Kings 19:1, 2**

*"Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." And when he saw that, he arose and **ran for his***



***life**, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there."*

- ✓ **10B Prophetic Jezebel**: The apostate harlot church killed many of God's faithful:

**Daniel 7:25**

*"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for **a time and times and half a time**."*

**Revelation 17:6**

*"I saw the woman, **drunk with the blood** of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement."*

**Revelation 18:24**

*"And in **her** was found the **blood** of **prophets and saints**, and of all who were slain on the earth."*

- ✓ **11A Historical Jezebel**

Jezebel fed the **false prophets** of Baal and they did her bidding:

*"Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who **eat at Jezebel's table**."*

Jezebel **had a daughter** who was an image of her mother:

*"With her **seductive arts**, Jezebel made Jehoshaphat her friend. She arranged a marriage between her daughter Athaliah and Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat. She knew that her daughter, brought up under her guidance and as **unscrupulous as herself**, would carry out **her designs**."*  
*2BC, p. 1038*

- ✓ **11B Prophetic Jezebel**: The end time harlot has a **false prophet** or daughters that do her bidding.

### **Revelation 16:13**

*"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**."*

**Revelation 17:5**: The harlot has **daughters** that are the spitting image of their mother:

*"And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT THE **MOTHER OF HARLOTS** AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

**Revelation 2:23**: Jezebel had **children** who were born from her toward the end of the 1260 years who will do her bidding.

*"I will kill **her children** with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works."*

**John XXIII** at the opening of **Vatican Council II** (1962-1965):

*". . . She [**the Roman Catholic Church**] to be an affectionate, kind and patient **mother**, she is moved by compassion and goodness towards **her alienated children**." (Ernesto Balducci, *John: The Transitional Pope*, transl., Dorothy White [New York: Hill Book Company, 1964], p. 269.*

Words of **Pope Paul VI** during Vatican Council II:

*"Because of their position, separated brethren are the object of deep and tender affection on the part of the **Mother Church**. . . It is a love that feels grief and sadness, the love of a heart wounded by estrangement, because the estrangement prevents our brethren from enjoying so many privileges and rights, and makes them lose so much grace. But perhaps for this very reason its love is all the deeper and more burning. . ." Cardinal Augustin Bea, *The Unity of Christians*, ed., Bernard Leeming [New York: Herder and Herder, 1963], p. 140*

*"Babylon is said to be 'the mother of harlots.' By her daughters must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world." GC, pp. 382, 383*

*"Then I saw the Mother of Harlots; that the mother was not the daughters, but separate and distinct from them. She [the mother] has had her day, and it is past, and her daughters, the Protestant sects, were the next to come on the stage and act out the same mind that the mother had when she persecuted the saints." Spaulding-Magan Collection, p. 1.*

## **The End Time Elijah**

The Elijah of the 1260 years was not the final Elijah. The conclusion of the story is still in the future. We know this for several reasons:

- ✓ At the end of the 1260 years, the civil powers mortally wounded Jezebel but did not totally annihilate her.
- ✓ The daughters of Jezebel are still alive and well.
- ✓ The great and terrible day of the Lord has not yet come.
- ✓ God did not yet translate the church to heaven.

We are to expect the final Elijah to complete the story.

**Malachi 4:1-6**: The two witnesses will rise again, Moses and Elijah:

*"For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up." Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch.<sup>2</sup> However, to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; and you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.<sup>3</sup> You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this," says the LORD of hosts.<sup>4</sup> "Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.<sup>5</sup> Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.<sup>6</sup> And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

**Revelation 6:9-11:** The post-apostolic church has **two stages** of existence because the **harlot has two stages** of existence.

*"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. 10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You **judge** and **avenge** our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'" <sup>11</sup> Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should **rest a little while longer**, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who **would be killed** as they were, was completed."*

The harlot Jezebel has **two stages** of existence, one past and the other future. **Elijah**, Jezebel's **children** and **Ahab** also exist in two stages.

**Revelation 2:22:** God cast Jezebel into a **sickbed** and great tribulation in 1798 AD along with those who **fornicated with her**. The **French Revolution** was a cataclysmic event for the papacy.

*"Indeed I will cast her into a **sickbed**, and those who commit **adultery with her** into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds."*

The **Arndt and Gingrich Greek Lexicon**, p. 436 explains that this means 'to lay someone on a sickbed i. e. strike her with an illness Rv. 2:22 a lingering illness as a **divine punishment**.'

**Revelation 13:3:** The deadly wound of the papacy **will heal** and she will rule for a second stage:

*"And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his **deadly wound was healed** and all the world marveled and followed the beast."*

The Elijah story **broadens** from Israel to **Western Europe** during the 1260 years to the **world** at the end of time.

**Revelation 12:17:** After the 1260 years, God will **raise up an Elijah-like** remnant to proclaim the final message to the world:

*"And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*

After the three and a half times God raised up a people who keep the commandments of God, have the gift of prophecy, preach true worship to the creator on His holy Sabbath, restore and proclaim the everlasting gospel, denounce Babylon and lead the world to take a stand for the seal of God or the mark of the beast. This end time Elijah will enlighten the world with the loud cry (Revelation 18:1).

## **Summary of the Three Woes**

Revelation 9:1-11: The fifth trumpet and the first woe.

Revelation 11:2-12: Further expansion of the period of the fifth trumpet and the first woe.

Revelation 11:13 (the enemies and those who fear God and give Him glory) then briefly introduces the period of the sixth trumpet.

Revelation 9:13-21: The sixth trumpet and the second woe.

Revelation 10:1-11:1: Further expansion of the sixth trumpet and the second woe.

Revelation 11:15-17: The seventh trumpet and the third woe. When this trumpet blows, probation closes, the plagues fall and the second coming of Jesus occurs.

Revelation 15-19 further expands the third woe.

## **The Meaning of the word ‘woe’ or ‘alas’**

The Greek word *ouai* is an exclamatory interjection that portends pain, calamity, suffering and sorrow. The LXX and the New Testament use the word to describe divine retribution upon those who are unfaithful to the covenant.

### **In the LXX:**

- ✓ Isaiah 3:11 (an oracle against Jerusalem)
- ✓ Jeremiah 4:13 (an oracle against Jerusalem; also Jeremiah 4:30)
- ✓ Jeremiah 10:19 (an oracle against Jerusalem)
- ✓ Jeremiah 50:27 (an oracle against Babylon)
- ✓ Ezekiel 2:10 (an oracle against Jerusalem)
- ✓ Nahum 3:1-4 (an oracle against Nineveh)
- ✓ Zephaniah 3:1-4 (an oracle against Jerusalem)

- ✓ Zechariah 11:17 (and oracle against the false shepherds)

## **In the New Testament:**

- ✓ Matthew 18:7 (woe to one who mistreats a child)
- ✓ Matthew 23:13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29 (woes on the Scribes and Pharisees)
- ✓ Matthew 24:19 (woe to those who are alive during the tribulation)
- ✓ Matthew 26:24 (woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man)
- ✓ Revelation 12:12 (woe to those who dwell on the earth)
- ✓ Revelation 18:10, 16, 19 (woes upon the final fall of Babylon)

## **Textual Location of the Three Woes**

### **Revelation 8:12, 13**

*"Then the **fourth angel** sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. <sup>13</sup> And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "**Woe, woe, woe** to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the **remaining blasts of the trumpet** of the three angels who are about to sound!"*

**Revelation 8:12** describes the end of the **fourth trumpet**.

**Revelation 8:13**: When the fourth trumpet has blown, there is an announcement of **three woes** to come.

**Revelation 9:1-11**: The **first woe** are the events of the **fifth** trumpet.

**Revelation 9:12**: When the events of the fifth trumpet conclude the text tells us that the **first woe was finished**.

*"**One woe is past**. Behold, still **two more** woes are coming after these things."*

**Revelation 9:13-21**: A description of the sixth trumpet. When this trumpet concludes in verse 21 there is **no reference** to the second woe passing (this seems to indicate that chapters 10 and 11 will have **more to say** about the period of the sixth trumpet).

**Revelation 10:1-11:13**: This passage further amplifies certain aspects of the periods of the fourth, fifth and sixth trumpets:

- **Revelation 11:2-6** takes us back to period of the **1260 years** (**538-1798**: the fourth trumpet)
- **Revelation 11:7-10** describes the **French Revolution** when the two witnesses were killed (**1793-1797**: the fifth trumpet and the first woe)
- **Revelation 11:11-12** describes the **resurrection of the two witnesses** after the French Revolution. They no longer testify in sackcloth but rather enjoy great power and prestige. This miraculous resurrection of the Bible not only describes the establishment of **multiple Bible societies** in the aftermath of the French Revolution; it also portrays the great Advent Awakening and the renewed study of Bible prophecy because the little book of Daniel was opened at the time of the end and knowledge of prophecy increased.
- **Revelation 11:13** introduces the **two groups** that will exist in the end time:

The first group are the **enemies** of the two witnesses. The **enemies** were two. The previous context identifies the first enemy as the **Gentiles**. The second enemy is the beast from the **bottomless pit**.

Revelation uses the word 'enemies' **only twice** and both references are in **chapter 11** (verses 5 and 12). In the first instance, the enemies **obscured the two witnesses** (by forbidding the Bible) during the 1260 years. In the second instance, the enemies **killed the two witnesses** at the end of the same period.

The second group is the **remnant** who **fear God** and **give glory** to Him, a clear literary link to the **three angels' messages** (Revelation 14:7; Luke 7:16; Acts 2:43; Acts 13:16; 19:17, 18; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Revelation 11:18; 15:4).

- **Revelation 11:14**: After the resurrection of the Bible and the mention of the enemies and the remnant, the text tells us that the **second woe is past**.

*“The **second woe** is past. Behold, the **third woe** is coming quickly.”*

- The sixth trumpet presents the **negative side** (the perspective of the enemies) of end time events and Revelation 10 presents the **positive side** (the perspective of the remnant) of the same period.

Expressed another way, the sixth trumpet describes the attitude of the **enemies** of the two witnesses in the end time while Revelation 10 describes the attitude of the **faithful remnant** during the same period.

- The sixth trumpet carries us from **1844** all the way to the **close of probation** when the **mystery of God** is finished (Revelation 10:7). This occurs when the seventh trumpet is about to sound. When the seventh trumpet sounds, Jesus takes over the kingdoms of the world at His coming. The blast of the **seventh trumpet is the third woe**.

## **Perspective of Revelation 12**

Revelation 12 provides a **recapitulation** and **further amplification** of the periods of the fourth, fifth and sixth trumpets.

- This chapter begins with the **1260-year period** (the fourth trumpet).
- The chapter continues with the period when the **earth helped** the woman (the period during which the deadly wound is kept in place by the civil powers of the world).
- The end of the chapter describes the **same two groups** that **Revelation 11:13** introduced: the enemies and the remnant. The **remnant** of the woman's seed (the remnant of Jesus) keeps the commandments of God while the other group (the enemies) manifests the wrath of the dragon (Revelation 12:17).
- Revelation 12:17 is a further description of the **two groups** that exist during the period of the sixth trumpet.

## **Perspective of Revelation 13**

Revelation 13 provides a further **amplification** of the fourth, fifth and sixth trumpets:



- **Revelation 13:1-8** describes the 1260 years (the **fourth trumpet**) when the beast persecuted the saints of the Most High (notably described as 42 months thus linking it with Revelation 11:2).
- **Revelation 13:9** portrays the **deadly wound** that was given to the papacy with the sword beginning in 1793 and culminating in 1798 (the **fifth trumpet** and the first woe).
- **Revelation 13:11-18** then describes the **end time conflict** between those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (the enemies) and those who receive the seal of God (those who fear God and give Him glory).
- The 144,000 of Revelation 14:1-5 stand in contrast to the apostate worshipers in the previous chapter. This period of the **sixth trumpet**, culminates with the **second woe**.

**See Revelation 12-22 Chart  
On Next Page**

## The Literary Structure of Revelation 12-22

Chapter



Second Coming

∞  
New  
Earth  
21:9-22:21

21: 2-8						21: 2-8 After	Life with God
20: 11-15; 21: 1						20: 11 Beginning 20: 12 During 20: 13 - 21: 1 After	
20: 4-10						20: 4 Beginning 20: 5-6 During 20: 7-10 After	View of the Saints
20: 1-3						20: 1-2 Beginning 20: 3a During 20: 3b After	Satan/Earth
19					19: 11-21 Seventh Plague		
18				18: 1-5 Flashback Warning	18: 6-24 Sixth and Seventh Plagues	19: 1-10 Climax Mt. Zion	Political/Economic Perspective
17					17: 1-18 Sixth and Seventh Plagues		Religious/Political Perspective
16					16: 1-21 Seven Last Plagues		
15					15: 1, 5-8 Close of Probation; Time of Trouble		
14					14: 6-17 Three angel's messages gather God's Remnant	14: 18-20 Probation closes-final war on remnant-Winepress	15: 2-4 Climax Mt. Zion
13	13: 1-2 Lion, Bear, Leopard	13: 2 Imperial Rome	13: 3-10 1260 years Beast Papal Rome	13: 11a Lamb-like beast from Earth-USA	Lamb-like beast gives freedom so as to gather God's Remnant	13: 11b-18 Lamb-like beast speaks as Dragon	14: 1-5 Climax Mt. Zion
12	12: 7-9 Heaven	12: 1-2 Old Testament	12: 3-5, 10-12 Jesus' birth and death-Imperial Rome	12: 6, 13-15 1260 years Papal Rome	12: 16 Earth helps Woman-USA	12: 17 Remnant gathered who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus	12: 17 Dragon unleashes final war against remnant
?	?	1875-4 BC	4 BC - 31 AD	538-1798 AD	1798 AD	1833 AD FF	?
Dates							

## **The Perspective of Revelation 14**

In Revelation 14:6-13, the **fourth and fifth trumpets have faded** from view (because the 1260 years and the French Revolution are in the past at this point). The emphasis now will fall upon the message that the **remnant will proclaim** while the **sixth trumpet is blowing**. This is the 'prophesying again' of Revelation 10:11.

In other words, **Revelation 14:6-13** takes us back to the time when the remnant began to proclaim first angel's message to the world (beginning in 1798) after the fifth trumpet and first woe ended in 1798.

This is the period when the **two witnesses resurrected** and no longer gave their testimony in sackcloth (after 1798 when the God **removed the seal** from the book of Daniel and the time of the end began).

While the sixth trumpet is blowing, the **world polarizes into two groups**, those who have the seal of God and those who receive the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11). Those who have the mark of the beast are in verses 9-11 and those who have the seal of God are in verse 12.

When the three angels' messages have divided the world into **two groups**, the mystery of God finishes followed shortly thereafter by the sounding of the **seventh trumpet**. Revelation 14:14-20 describes this as the harvest of the earth and the grapes of the earth being ripe. At this point the remnant is inside spiritual Jerusalem while the enemies gather on the outside intent on destroying the remnant (Revelation 14:18-20; see the background of Joel 3).

Notably, **Revelation 16:14** portrays the negative side where **three counterfeit angels** go to the kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them in apostasy against God for a final battle against God's people! Thus the sixth trumpet (Revelation 9:13-21) describes the gathering of the **wicked forces** against God's people and Revelation 10 and 14:6-13 describes the gathering of **God's people** by the three angels' messages.

## Ellen White on the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Trumpets

### The First Trumpet (GC p. 17-38):

As noted previously, Ellen White began the book *The Great Controversy* with the chapter titled “*The Destruction of Jerusalem.*” We have already shown that this historical event fulfilled the first trumpet.

### The Second Trumpet (GC p. 39-49):

The second chapter of *The Great Controversy* bears the title, “*Persecution in the Early Centuries.*” Ellen White here describes the persecution of Christians by the Roman Empire and then briefly describes the removal of its restraining influence:

*“The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism [the Roman Empire].”*  
GC p. 49

The second trumpet certainly includes the incursion of the barbarian tribes into the Roman Empire because they were the catalyst that to the removal of the restrainer.

It is noteworthy that Uriah Smith dedicated the first four trumpets to the barbarian invasions and even mentions some of the barbarian leaders by name. However, Ellen White never mentions the barbarian invasions directly in *The Great Controversy*. If the invasions merited four trumpets, why did she not mention them directly, even once? However, she was aware of the breakup of the Roman Empire as we can see from the following quotation:

*“The vast empire of Rome crumbled to pieces, and from its ruins rose that mighty power, the Roman Catholic Church. This church boasts of her infallibility and her hereditary religion.”* RH, February 6, 1900

### The Third Trumpet (GC p. 49-60):

The title of the third chapter of *The Great Controversy* is, “*An Era of Spiritual Darkness*”. In this chapter, Ellen White describes how the disintegration of the Roman Empire led to incipient apostasy and eventually to the rise of the papacy.

The **barbarian invasions** brought **chaos and disorder** to the Empire and as a result, the people sought someone who could bring about order. That someone was the **Bishop of Rome**. Thus, while one Rome fell, the other rose to power. The barbarian invasions, which led to the fall of pagan Rome, provided the **papacy** with the **excellent opportunity** to bring about order and take over the reins of the disintegrated Empire. The fourth trumpet marks the beginning of the period of papal supremacy. Regarding this, Ellen White stated:

*"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. **Paganism had given place to the papacy.** The **dragon had given** to the beast "his power, and his seat, and great authority." Revelation 13:2. Then **began the 1260 years of papal oppression** foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7." GC p. 54*

During this period, a **fallen star poisoned** the waters. As we have seen, the star represents the church that became the **vice-gerent of Satan** and defiled the pure teachings of Jesus Christ. Notably after Ellen White described the accession of the papacy to power, she then went on to **delineate the errors** (the pollutants) that this apostate power introduced.

**The Fourth Trumpet** (GC p. 55-264):

The apostasy under the third trumpet **intensified** as the Dark Ages transpired. Under the fourth trumpet the **sun**, the **moon** and the **stars** experienced a partial **eclipse**. As we have already noted, the sun represents Jesus (the Greater Light), the moon represents the Bible (the lesser light) and the stars symbolize God's people.

*"The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the **Dark Ages**. As her power increased, the **darkness deepened**." GC p. 55*

During this period, the church had to present the testimony of the two witnesses (described as the two candlesticks) in **sackcloth** (darkness, obscurity) or exile. Regarding this period, Ellen White wrote:

*"In order for Satan to maintain his sway over men, and establish the authority of the papal usurper, he must keep them in **ignorance of the Scriptures**. The Bible would exalt God and place finite men in their true position, therefore its sacred*

truths must be **concealed** and **suppressed**. The Roman Church adopted this policy. For hundreds of years the circulation of the **Bible was prohibited**. The people were **forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses** and unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over church and state.” GC p. 51

After this quotation, Ellen White (in GC p. 53-60) goes on to describe all the **errors and heresies** that entered the church during the period of the dark ages. She identifies darkness as the **prevalence of heresy and error**. It bears noting, however, that the eclipse of the Scriptures and the work of Christ during this period was partial as indicated by the **expression ‘one third’**.

Ellen White described darkness as ‘heresy’ and ‘error’:

*“In the work of educating the youth in our schools, it will be a difficult matter to retain the influence of God's Holy Spirit, and at the same time hold fast to erroneous principles. The **light shining** upon those who have eyes to see, cannot be mingled with the **darkness of heresy and error** found in many of the textbooks recommended to the students in our colleges.” CE, p. 98*

The title of the next chapter in *The Great Controversy* is, ‘The Waldenses’ where she describes how these valiant people had to spread the Scriptures in exile or sackcloth. Repeatedly in this chapter, Ellen White uses words that describe **light and darkness** and refers to the faithful with the word ‘witness’:

*“Satan had urged on the papal priests and prelates to bury the Word of truth beneath the rubbish of **error, heresy, and superstition**, but in a most wonderful manner it was preserved uncorrupted through all the **ages of darkness**.” GC p. 68*

*“As the **light illuminated** their understanding and made glad their hearts, they longed to shed its **beams** upon those who were in the **darkness** of papal error. GC p. 72*

*“Amid the **gloom** that settled upon the earth during the long period of papal supremacy, the **light** of truth could **not be wholly extinguished [the heavenly bodies were only partially obscured in the fourth trumpet]**. In every age, there were **witnesses** for God—men who cherished **faith in Christ [the Greater***

***Light]** as the only mediator between God and man, who held the Bible [the lesser light] as the only rule of life, and who hallowed the true Sabbath. How much the world owes to these men, posterity will never know. They were branded as heretics, their motives impugned, their characters maligned, their writings suppressed, misrepresented, or mutilated [**prophesying in sackcloth**]. Yet they stood firm, and from age to age maintained their faith in its purity, as a sacred heritage for the generations to come. GC p. 61*

*“Behind the lofty bulwarks of the mountains--in all ages the refuge of the persecuted and oppressed—the Waldenses found a hiding place. Here the light of truth was kept burning amid the darkness of the middle Ages. Here, for a thousand years, witnesses for the truth maintained the ancient faith. GC p. 65, 66*

*“In the schools whither they went, they were not to make confidants of any. Their garments were so prepared as to conceal their greatest treasure—the precious manuscripts of the Scriptures. These, the fruit of months and years of toil, they carried with them, and whenever they could do so without exciting suspicion, they cautiously placed some portion in the way of those whose hearts seemed open to receive the truth.” GC p. 70*

*“They secretly carried about with them copies of the Bible, in whole or in part; and whenever an opportunity was presented, they called the attention of their customers to these manuscripts. Often an interest to read God's word was thus awakened, and some portion was gladly left with those who desired to receive it.” GC p. 71*

*“It was his greatest joy to give hope to the conscientious, sin-stricken soul, who could see only a God of vengeance, waiting to execute justice. With quivering lip and tearful eye did he, often on bended knees, open to his brethren the precious promises that reveal the sinner's only hope. Thus the light of truth penetrated many a darkened mind, rolling back the cloud of gloom, until the Sun of Righteousness shone into the heart with healing in His beams.” GC pp. 73, 74*

*“They were hunted to death; yet their blood watered the seed sown, and it failed not of yielding fruit. Thus, the Waldenses witnessed for God centuries before the birth of Luther. Scattered over many lands, they planted the seeds of the Reformation that began in the time of Wycliffe, grew broad and deep in the days*

of Luther, and is to be carried forward to the close of time by those who also are willing to suffer all things for "the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 1:9 [notice this text in the light of the two witnesses]." GC p. 78

The next chapter is on John Wycliffe. Ellen White begins the chapter by appealing once more to the metaphor of light and darkness:

*"Except among the Waldenses, the word of God had for ages been locked up in languages known only to the learned; but the time had come for the Scriptures to be translated and given to the people of different lands in their native tongue. The world had passed its midnight. The hours of darkness were wearing away, and in many lands appeared tokens of the coming dawn."* GC p. 79

The next chapter is on Huss and Jerome. I will provide only one statement where Ellen White expounds upon the theme of light and darkness in this chapter:

*"God permitted great light to shine upon the minds of these chosen men, revealing to them many of the errors of Rome; but they did not receive all the light that was to be given to the world. Through these, His servants, God was leading the people out of the darkness of Romanism; but there were many and great obstacles for them to meet, and He led them on, step by step, as they could bear it. They were not prepared to receive all the light at once. Like the full glory of the noontide sun to those who have long dwelt in darkness, it would, if presented, have caused them to turn away. Therefore, He revealed it to the leaders little by little, as the people could receive it. From century to century, other faithful workers were to follow, to lead the people on still further in the path of reform."* GC p. 103

In the first paragraph of the first chapter on the work of Martin Luther, Ellen White once again underlined the theme of light and darkness:

*"Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Zealous, ardent, and devoted, knowing no fear but the fear of God, and acknowledging no foundation for religious faith but the Holy Scriptures, Luther was the man for his time; through him God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world."* GC p. 120



In the next several chapters, Ellen White describes the **Protestant Reformation** in the various countries of Europe and repeatedly appeals to the metaphor of **light and darkness**.

### **The Fifth Trumpet and the first woe** (GC p. 265-288)

As we shall see later on in this study (when we study Revelation 11:2-12), both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy clearly indicate that the **French Revolution** fulfilled the **fifth trumpet** and the **first woe**.

### **The Sixth Trumpet and the second woe** (GC pp. 299-612)

The **sixth trumpet** and the **second woe** give us a view of the **righteous** and a view of the **wicked**.

- ✓ GC p. 299-491: Emphasis on the **righteous** and God's gathering message.
- ✓ GC p. 500-612: Emphasis on the **wicked** and Satan's gathering errors.

Immediately after the chapter on the French Revolution Ellen White **goes back** in time to **1620** AD and describes the arrival of the **Pilgrim Fathers** in America searching for **civil and religious liberty** (GC p. 289-298). This prepared a place for the preaching of the three angel's messages with power to the world thus gathering of God's people.

Notably, Revelation 12 describes how the dragon was **spewing waters** out of his mouth during the 1260 years with the intention of **drowning the woman**. However, the text tells us that the **earth came to her rescue** and swallowed up the waters of persecution. The 'earth' here refers to the **territory of the United States** that provided refuge for those who were suffering persecution in Europe. The United States became **the beacon** for other western nations to establish secular governments. Thus, James Madison wrote in 1822:

***"We are teaching the world the great truth that Governments do better without Kings and Nobles than with them [republicanism]. The merit will be doubled by the other lesson that Religion flourishes in greater purity, without than with the aid of Government [Protestantism]."*** James Madison, Letter to Edward Livingston, July 10, 1822; Gaillard Hunt, **The Writings of James Madison**.

It is remarkable that both **Revelation 12** and **Ellen White** describe the **1260** years, the **French Revolution** and then **go back** in time to describe the arrival of the **Pilgrims**.

In the following chapters, Ellen White wrote about the Great **Second Advent Awakening** after 1798, the **Millerite Movement**, the **Great Disappointment** and the opening of the **heavenly temple** for the judgment.

The following chapters describe the **resurrection of the two witnesses** and the **opening of the little book** of Daniel in Revelation 10. This is the **positive side of the sixth trumpet**. God musters His forces with His three angels' messages to gather His remnant on His side:

- ✓ *'Heralds of the Morning'* (**GC**, pp. 299-316):

The signs in the sun, moon and stars as an announcement of the coming **message of judgment** and the second coming.

- ✓ *'An American Reformer'* (**GC**, pp. 317-342):

The call of **William Miller** and his intense study of Bible prophecy. The two witnesses have resurrected at this point and the Millerites and others study and proclaim the Bible prophecies.

- ✓ *'Light through Darkness'* (**GC** 343-354):

The **disciples' misunderstanding** of prophecies concerning the first coming sets the stage to explain the misunderstanding of prophecies regarding the judgment hour message in 1844.

- ✓ *'A Great Religious Awakening'* (**GC**, pp. 355-374):

The proclamation of the first angel's message by **Joseph Wolff** in Asia, by seven hundred **Anglican ministers** in England, **Emanuel Lacunza** in South America, **Johann Albrecht Bengel** in Germany, **Francois Samuel Robert Louis Gaussen** in Switzerland, **child preachers** in Scandinavia and **William Miller** and his associates in North America. This is a vivid description of the resurrection of the two witnesses in the time of the end.

- ✓ *'A Warning Rejected'* (GC, pp. 375-390):

The proclamation of the **second angel's message** because the first message was rejected by the Protestant churches. The **fall apostate Protestantism** leading up to 1844 follows the **final and irrevocable fall** of Roman Catholicism in 1798. Not yet at this point, however, was Babylon **filled with demons**. This will happen in the future under the proclamation of the Loud Cry. Revelation 18:2, 3 describes the time during the sixth trumpet when the fall of Babylon is complete and the demons come forth **unrestrained from the bottomless pit**. This is the bizarre imagery that appears in the sixth trumpet (Revelation 9:13-21).

- ✓ *'Prophecies Fulfilled'* (GC, pp. 391-408):

A series of prophecies that pointed to the **Great Advent Awakening** in the 1840's.

- ✓ *'What Is the Sanctuary?'* (GC, pp. 409-422):

An introduction to the sanctuary service with a view to discuss the **investigative judgment** in the most holy place in 1844.

- ✓ *'In the Holy of Holies'* (GC, pp. 423-432):

The opening of the **most holy place** for the judgment in 1844.

- ✓ *'God's Law Immutable'* (GC, pp. 433-450):

The remnant understood the **importance of the law** when the most holy place opened in 1844.

- ✓ *'A Work of Reform'* (GC, pp. 451-460):

When the most holy place opened in 1844, the remnant perceived the importance of **the Sabbath**.

- ✓ *'Modern Revivals'* (GC, pp. 461-478):

Ellen White discussed how to **distinguish a counterfeit** revival from a genuine one.

✓ 'Facing Life's Record' (GC, pp. 479-491):

A description of the **Investigative Judgment** that began in 1844.

After describing how God **raised up a remnant** with a special message for the world in the end time, she shifts the emphasis to the **deceptions of Satan** who will gather the wicked for the final battle through the **three counterfeit angels' messages**. Thus, immediately after the chapter on the French Revolution Ellen White describes how the **battle lines** will form for the final conflict.

We can make a strong argument that the following chapters in *The Great Controversy* all describe the period of the sixth trumpet. The sixth trumpet presents a view of **the wicked** in Revelation 9:13-21 and a view of **the righteous** in Revelation 10 and 14:6-13. These are the same two groups that **Revelation 11:13** describes as the enemies and the remnant and those who fear God and gives Him glory.

- ✓ *The Origin of Evil* (GC, pp. 492-504)
- ✓ *Enmity Between Man and Satan* (GC, pp. 505-510)
- ✓ *Agency of Evil Spirits* (GC, pp. 511-517)
- ✓ *Snares of Satan* (GC, pp. 518-530)
- ✓ *The First Great Deception* (GC, pp. 531-550)
- ✓ *Can Our Dead Speak to Us?* (GC, pp. 551-562)
- ✓ *Liberty of Conscience Threatened* (GC, pp. 563-581)
- ✓ *The Impending Conflict* (GC, pp. 582-592)
- ✓ *The Scriptures a Safeguard* (GC, pp. 593-602)
- ✓ *The Final Warning* (GC, pp. 603-612)

Regarding the gathering of the righteous and the wicked in Revelation 10, Ellen White wrote:

*"The mighty angel who instructed John was no less a personage than Jesus Christ. Setting His **right foot** on the sea, and His **left** upon the dry land, shows the part which He is acting in the **closing scenes of the great controversy with Satan**.*

*This position denotes His supreme power and authority over the whole earth. The controversy had waxed stronger and more determined from age to age, and will continue to do so, to the concluding scenes when the **masterly working of the powers of darkness** shall reach their height. **Satan, united with evil men**, will deceive the **whole world and the churches** who receive not the love of the truth. However, the **mighty angel demands attention**. He cries with a loud voice. He is to show the power and authority of His voice to those who have **united with Satan to oppose the truth**. 7BC p. 971*

*“Satan has been persevering and untiring in his efforts to prosecute the work he began in heaven, to change the law of God. He has succeeded in making the world believe the theory he presented in heaven before his fall, that the law of God was faulty, and needed revising. A large part of the professed Christian church, by their attitude, if not by their words, show that they have accepted the same error. However, if in one jot or tittle the law of God has been changed, Satan has gained on earth that which he could not gain in heaven. **He has prepared his delusive snare, hoping to take captive the church and the world**. However, not all will be taken in the snare. A **line of distinction** is being drawn between the **children of obedience** and the **children of disobedience**, the **loyal and true** and the **disloyal and untrue**. **Two great parties** are developed, the worshipers of the beast and his image, and the worshipers of the true and living God.” 2SM, p. 107*

Ellen White immediately goes on to speak about the angel of Revelation 10 and its connection with the first angel of Revelation 14:

*“The **message of Revelation 14**, proclaiming that the hour of God's judgment is come, is given in the time of the end; and the angel of **Revelation 10** is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to **distant lands**, the **ocean** will be crossed, and the **islands** of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world.”*

Ellen White then goes on to explain the meaning of time being no longer:

*“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer” (Rev. 10:5, 6). This message announces the **end of the prophetic periods**.*

The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in 1844 was indeed bitter to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord's order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed." 2SM, pp. 107, 108

In GC p. 603, 604 Ellen White describes the final unleashing of the satanic powers in the end time under the sixth trumpet:

"This scripture [Revelation 18:1-5] points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14 (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844. A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches." GC, p. 603

"We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God's mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. However, when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but he leaves the rejecters of his mercy to themselves, to reap that which they have sown. Every ray of light rejected, every warning despised or unheeded, every passion indulged, every transgression of the law of God, is a seed sown, which yields its unfailing harvest. The Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn from the

sinner, and then there is left no power to control the evil passions of the soul, and no protection from the malice and enmity of Satan." GC p. 36

**Probation closes** when the seventh trumpet is **about** (Revelation 10:7) to sound. The chapter that deals with the **close of the mystery of God** (when the seventh trumpet is about to sound) is in GC p. 613, 614 at the beginning of the chapter titled: *'The time of Trouble'*. Ellen White begins this chapter by commenting about the close of probation:

*"When the **third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads** for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' Then Jesus **ceases His intercession** in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands and with a loud voice says, 'It is done;' and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' Revelation 22:11. Every case has been **decided for life or death**. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **number of His subjects is made up**; 'the **kingdom** and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to **reign as King of kings and Lord of lords** [Revelation 11:15]. GC pp. 613, 614*

### **The Seventh Trumpet and the Third Woe (GC, pp. 613-661)**

Revelation 10:7 explains that the mystery of God finishes shortly before the blowing of the seventh trumpet so the **sixth trumpet** must blow during **probationary time** and it must describe the gathering of the wicked for the final battle against God's people.

The **seventh trumpet** must be the **third woe**. **Revelation 18:10, 16, 19** actually uses the word '**woe**' to describe the **final fall of Babylon** when God punishes her with the seven last plagues as Jesus removes the kingdom from the hands of Satan.

## Ellen White helps us locate the timeframe of the fifth trumpet

The key to understanding the fifth trumpet is in the details of Revelation 9.

A **fallen star** rises from the **bottomless pit** and his name is *Abaddon* in Hebrew and *Apollyon* in Greek. Both of these words mean ‘the destroyer’.

- This star is the **leader** of a **vast host** of locusts who have the tails of **scorpions** that come out of the **bottomless pit** and cause a **dense darkness**.
- This star **did not fall at the time of the fifth trumpet**. There is a distinction between **Revelation 8:10** where John saw a star **fall** (second aorist, active, indicative in Greek) from heaven and **Revelation 9:1** where the NIV correctly translates the tense of the verb (perfect, active participle), ‘*I saw a star that **had fallen** from the sky to the earth.*’ That is to say, this star had **already fallen** when the fifth trumpet sounded.
- **Revelation 11** explains the chronological time frame when the **shaft of the abyss** was opened during the **fifth trumpet** to release this hoard of demons:

### **Revelation 11:7-9**

*“Now when they finish their **[the two witnesses in sackcloth]** testimony, the beast that **ascends out of the bottomless pit** will make war against them, overcome them, and **kill them** **[total darkness ensues]**. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”*

- Ellen White adds some clarifying information on **when** the shaft of the bottomless pit was opened when the fifth trumpet blew:

*“As they **[the two witnesses]** were approaching the termination of their work in **obscurity** **[because the sun, moon and stars were partially eclipsed]**, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as ‘the beast that **ascendeth out of the bottomless pit**.’ In many of the nations of Europe, the powers that ruled in church and state had for centuries been **controlled by Satan through the medium of the papacy**. However, here*



is brought to view a **new manifestation of satanic power.**” GC pp. 268, 269

- Ellen White clearly links the **fourth trumpet** (the work of the papacy during the 1260 years) and **fifth trumpet** (the French Revolution):

*“It was **popery** that had begun the work which atheism was **completing**. The policy of Rome had wrought out those conditions, social, political, and religious, that were hurrying **France** on **to ruin**.” GC p. 276*

*“It had been Rome's policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it **locked up in an unknown tongue** and **hidden away** from the people. Under her rule, the witnesses prophesied ‘clothed in sackcloth.’ However, another power—another **beast from the bottomless pit**—was to arise to make **open, avowed war** upon the word of God.” GC p. 26*

*“According to the words of the prophet, then, a **little before** the year 1798 some power of **satanic origin and character** would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God's two witnesses should thus be **silenced**, there would be manifest the **atheism** of the Pharaoh and the **licentiousness** of Sodom.” GC p. 269*

- A striking parallel to what occurred in France transpired in the **destruction of Jerusalem**. The Jewish nation rejected the light and embraced the darkness (see John 1:5-11):

*“Then God **withdrew His protection** from them and **removed His restraining power** from **Satan and his angels**, and the nation was left to the **control of the leader she had chosen**. Her children had spurned the grace of Christ, which would have enabled them to subdue their evil impulses, and now these became the conquerors. **Satan** aroused the **fiercest** and most **debased** passions of the soul. Men **did not reason**; they were **beyond reason**—controlled by impulse and **blind rage**. They became **satanic** in their cruelty. In the family and in the nation, among the highest and the lowest classes alike, there was suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder. There was **no safety anywhere**. Friends and kindred betrayed one another. **Parents slew** their children and children their parents. The rulers of the people had no power to rule themselves.*

Uncontrolled passions made them **tyrants**. The Jews had accepted false testimony to condemn the innocent Son of God. Now false accusations made their own lives uncertain. By their actions, they had long been saying cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.' Isaiah 30:11. Now God granted their desire. The fear of God no longer disturbed them. **Satan was at the head of the nation**, and the highest civil and religious authorities were under **his sway**. GC p. 28

- “When France publicly rejected God and set aside the Bible, **wicked men and spirits of darkness** exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired—a kingdom free from the restraints of the law of God . . . **Centuries of apostasy [the fourth trumpet]** and crime had been treasuring up wrath against the day of retribution; and when their **iniquity was full**, the despisers of God learned too late that it is a fearful thing to have worn out the divine patience. The **restraining Spirit of God**, which **imposes a check upon the cruel power of Satan**, was in a **great measure removed [by the angel who had the key to the bottomless pit; the fifth trumpet]**, and he whose only delight is the wretchedness of men was **permitted to work his will**. Those who had chosen the service of rebellion were left to reap its fruits until the land was filled with crimes too horrible for pen to trace. From devastated provinces and ruined cities a terrible cry was heard—a cry of bitterest anguish. **France** was shaken as if by an earthquake. Religion, law, social order, the family, the state, and the church were smitten down by the impious hand that had been lifted against the law of God.” GC p. 286

Ellen White linked the fourth and fifth trumpets:

“In the sixteenth century the Reformation, presenting an open **Bible** to the people, had sought admission to all the countries of Europe. Some nations welcomed it with gladness, as a messenger of Heaven. In other lands, the papacy succeeded to a great extent in preventing its entrance; and the **light of Bible knowledge**, with its elevating influences, was **almost** wholly excluded. In one country, though the **light** found entrance, it was not comprehended by the **darkness**. For centuries, truth and error struggled for the mastery. At last the **evil triumphed**, and the **truth of Heaven was**

**thrust out.** "This is the condemnation, that **light** is come into the world, and men loved **darkness** rather than light." John 3:19. The nation was left to reap the results of the course that she had chosen. The **restraint of God's Spirit was removed** [God released Satan and his hosts from the bottomless pit and they exerted full control in France like in the destruction of Jerusalem] from a people that had despised the gift of His grace. Evil was permitted to come to **maturity**. And all the world saw the fruit of **willful rejection of the light.**" GC p. 265

"The **war against the Bible**, carried forward for so many centuries in France, culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. That terrible outbreaking was but the **legitimate result** of Rome's **suppression of the Scriptures**. It presented the most striking illustration that the world has ever witnessed of the working out of the papal policy—an illustration of the results to which for more than a thousand years the teaching of the Roman Church had been tending." GC p. 265

"During the greater part of this period [**the 1260 years**], God's witnesses remained in a state of **obscurity** [**darkness**]. The papal power sought to **hide from the people the word of truth**, and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. When the Bible was proscribed by religious and secular authority; when its testimony was perverted, and every effort made that men and demons could invent to turn the minds of the people from it; when those who dared proclaim its sacred truths were **hunted, betrayed, tortured, buried** in dungeon cells, martyred for their faith or compelled to flee to mountain fastnesses, and to dens and caves of the earth--then the **faithful witnesses** prophesied in sackcloth. Yet they continued their **testimony** throughout the entire period of 1260 years. In the **darkest times** there were faithful men who loved God's word and were jealous for His honor. To these loyal servants were given wisdom, power, and authority to declare His truth during the whole of this time." GC p. 267, 68

# The Binding and Unbinding of Satan

## Matthew 12:29

*“But if I cast out demons by the **Spirit of God**, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.”*

Jesus cast out demons by the Spirit of God or finger of God (Luke 11:20). By doing this, Jesus was giving indications that the ruler would be cast out and this happened when Jesus **died on the cross** (John 12:31-33). At the cross, Jesus **cast out the devil as the ruler** of this world and on the Day of Pentecost, he sent His **disciples to plunder** the kingdom of Satan. **Luke 10:18** makes it clear that Jesus gave the disciples permission **to trample** on scorpions after the Day of Pentecost.

*“In the conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness of temptation the destiny of the human race was at stake. However, Christ was conqueror, and the tempter left him for a season. He had now returned for the **last fearful conflict**. Satan had been preparing for this final trial during the three years of Christ's ministry. Everything was at stake with him. If he failed here his **hope of mastery** was lost; the kingdoms of the earth would **finally become Christ's who would 'bind the strong man' (Satan), and cast him out.**” 3SP, p. 96*

## Romans 10:7

*“Who will descend into the **abyss**? That is, to bring Christ **up from the dead**.”*

While Jesus was dead, the fetters of the tomb (the abyss) bound Him. He could **do no work**. However, He did not go literally to the deep or the abyss! This is **metaphorical language**.

## Luke 8:30, 31

*“Jesus asked him, saying, ‘What is your name?’ And he said, ‘Legion,’ because **many demons** had entered him. <sup>31</sup> And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out **into the abyss**.”*

The demons at Gadara requested that Jesus **not send them to the abyss**. This does not mean that Jesus was going to send them to a place with **literal bars and chains**. They requested that Jesus would not **prevent them from**

**working.** Revelation 20 defines the word ‘deep’ as not having anyone to tempt. In other words, the demons did not want Jesus to curtail **their ability to work** on earth.

### **Matthew 8:29**

*“And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us **before the time?**”*

Ellen White wrote some choice statements on the binding and unbinding of Satan and his angels from the abyss:

*“All Heaven rejoiced when Christ rose from the dead. **He had power to bind the strong man, and to despoil him of his goods.**” ST, September 23, 1889*

*“All heaven is working to resist Satan's power, to bind the strong man. The **angels of God** are working to **put restrictions upon the power of the enemy** until man shall be fully tested and tried.” 18MR p. 354*

*“Mercy had ceased its pleadings for the guilty race. The beasts of the field and the birds of the air had entered the place of refuge. Noah and his household were within the ark, ‘and the Lord shut him in’ . . . The massive door, which it was impossible for those within to close, was slowly swung to its place by unseen hands. Noah was shut in, and the rejecters of God's mercy were shut out. The seal of Heaven was on that door; God had shut it, and God alone could open it. Likewise, when Christ shall cease His intercession for guilty men, before His coming in the clouds of heaven, the door of mercy will be shut. Then divine grace will **no longer restrain the wicked**, and Satan will have **full control** of those who have rejected mercy. They will endeavor to destroy God's people; but as Noah was shut into the ark, so the righteous will be shielded by divine power.” CC p. 39*

*“When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The **restraint that has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control** of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; **the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn**. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have **no protection from the wicked one**. Satan will then plunge the*

inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the **angels of God cease to hold in check** the fierce winds of human passion, **all the elements of strife will be let loose**. The whole world will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon **Jerusalem of old**.” *GC* p. 614

“Four mighty angels are **still holding** the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is **forbidden to come in full**. The accidents by land and by sea; the loss of life, steadily increasing, by storm, by tempest, by railroad disaster, by conflagration; the terrible floods, the earthquakes, and the winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, while the **angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury** until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. *ML* p. 308

“Angels are **holding** the four winds, which are represented as an **angry horse seeking to break loose** and rush over the face of the whole earth, bearing destruction and death in its path.” *ML* p. 308

“A terrible conflict is before us. We are nearing the battle of the great day of God Almighty. That which has been **held in control is to be let loose**. The angel of mercy is folding her wings, preparing to step down from the throne and leave the world to the **control of Satan**.”

I tell you in the name of the Lord God of Israel that all injurious, discouraging influences are **held in control by unseen angel hands**, until everyone that works in the fear and love of God is sealed in his forehead.” *Letter 138*, 1897. *3SM* p. 409

“I asked my accompanying angel the meaning of what I heard, and what the four angels were about to do. He shewed me that it was God that **restrained the powers**, and that he gave his **angels charge over things on the earth**, and that the four angels had power from God to **hold the four winds**, and that they were about to let the four winds go, and while they had **started on their mission to let them go**, the merciful eye of Jesus gazed on the remnant that were not all sealed, then he raised his hands to the Father and plead with him that he had spilled his blood for them.—Then another angel was commissioned to fly swiftly to the four angels, and bid them hold until the servants of God were sealed with the seal of the living God in their foreheads.” *RH*, August 1, 1849

*"Four mighty angels hold back the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The nations of the world are eager for conflict, but they are **held in check by the angels**. When this **restraining power is removed** there will come a time of trouble and anguish. Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels with their living cargo will be entombed in the great deep. All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of **satanic agencies**, but they are to be **kept under control** till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon." ZBC, p. 967 (1900) LDE pp. 238, 239*

*"At the same time **anarchy** is seeking to **sweep away all law**, not only divine, but human. The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer classes for the defense of their interests and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; the world-wide dissemination of the same teachings that led to the **French Revolution**--all are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France." Ed p. 228*

*"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God," but he can advance no evidence to sustain his claims; he can only take the position of an objector to the purposes of an all-wise God. Atheism can shed **no ray of light** into the grave. It cannot restrain crime or quicken the moral energies. It has no power to **elevate the character** or purify the soul. On the contrary, it always tends to **degenerate the human race**; it leads away from **purity and peace**. An instance of this is given in the history of the **French Revolution**. That period, when the existence of God was denied, and his commandments were abolished, was the most revolting that is recorded on the pages of human history. YI, December 24, 1896*

## **An Exegesis of the Fifth Trumpet**

### **Revelation 9:1-12**

*"Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a **star fallen** from **heaven to the earth**. To him was given the **key** to the **bottomless pit**.<sup>2</sup> And he **opened** the bottomless pit, and **smoke** arose out of the pit like the smoke of a **great furnace**. So the **sun** and the air were **darkened** because of the smoke of the pit [**even greater darkness than the fourth trumpet**].<sup>3</sup> Then out of the smoke **locusts** came upon the **earth**. And to them **was given power**, as the **scorpions** of the earth **have***

**power.** <sup>4</sup> They **were commanded** not to harm the **grass** of the earth, or any **green thing**, or any **tree**, but only those men who **do not have** the seal of God on their foreheads. <sup>5</sup> And they were **not given authority** to kill them, but to **torment them for five months**. Their torment was like the torment of a **scorpion** when it strikes a man. <sup>6</sup> In those days men will **seek death** and will **not find it**; they will **desire to die**, and death will flee from them. <sup>7</sup> The shape of the locusts was like **horses prepared for battle**. On their heads were **crowns** of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. <sup>8</sup> They had hair like **women's hair**, and their teeth were like **lions' teeth**. <sup>9</sup> And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their **wings** was like the sound of **chariots** with many horses running into **battle**. <sup>10</sup> They had **tails like scorpions**, and there were **stings** in their tails [**the tail represents lies**]. Their power was to **hurt men five months**. <sup>11</sup> And they had as **king** over them the angel of the **bottomless pit**, whose name in Hebrew is **Abaddon**, but in Greek he has the name **Apollyon**."

### **Comments on verse 1:**

"The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that **had fallen** from the sky to the earth. The star **was given** the **key** to the shaft of the **Abyss**."

The description of the fifth trumpet contains a series of '**divine passives**' (expressions such as '**was given** the key,' '**were given** power,' 'it **was commanded** them') where God is releasing and allowing the **powers of the abyss** to perform their work. We will see in our detailed study of Revelation 11 that God allowed the shaft of the abyss to open because of the treatment that **the two witnesses** received during the 1260 years.

The tense of the verb '**had fallen**' clearly indicates that the star **did not fall** when the fifth trumpet blew. It had **already fallen** before the fifth trumpet began to sound. How else could the star come out of the Abyss **unless it had fallen into the abyss** before?

There can be little doubt that this star represents **Lucifer** who originally fell from heaven and at the cross (Isaiah 14:12-14; Revelation 12:7-9). The abyss is the **abode of Satan** and his angels and they are the rulers of the **underworld** (Revelation 20:1-3; Isaiah 24:21-23; Romans 10:7; Luke 8:31; Jude 6; 2Peter 2:4)



### Comments on verse 2:

*“And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit [even greater darkness than the fourth trumpet].”*

When the ‘star’ (notice that the star is a ‘he’) opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a massive furnace. The smoke eclipsed the sun and the sky. There is no indication that the smoke eclipsed only a third part of the earth (as in the fourth trumpet)—the text seems to indicate that the darkness was total!

### Comments on verse 3:

*“Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.”*

When the shaft of the abyss opens, ‘all hell breaks loose.’ As we have previously seen when we studied the fourth trumpet, the sun (the greater light) is a symbol of Jesus and the moon (the lesser light) is a symbol of the Scriptures that give witness to Him. The partial darkness of the fourth trumpet (when the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth or obscurity) becomes complete darkness in the fifth trumpet. A comparison of verse 2 with Exodus 10:15 seems to indicate that the smoke was really composed of a huge cloud of locusts that eclipsed the sun.

### Exodus 10:15

*“For they [the locusts] covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.”*

France had the bright light of the reformation and rejected it and the result was a great darkness:

*“I saw that the greater the light which the people reject, the greater will be the power of deception and darkness which will come upon them. The rejection of truth leaves men captives, the subjects of Satan's deception.” 1T p. 232*

The words of Jesus are a fit description of how the rejection of the light of the Reformation led to the pitch darkness of the French Revolution:

### **Matthew 6:22-23**

*"The **lamp** of the body is the eye. If therefore your **eye is good**, your whole body will be **full of light**.<sup>23</sup> But if your **eye is bad**, your whole body will be **full of darkness**. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, **how great is that darkness!***

In Scripture God's points of the compass are the **north and the east**. When Jesus came the first time, he came by **way of the east** (Luke 1:78, 79). When Jesus went to heaven (north is up) it was by way of the Mount of Olives on the **east side of Jerusalem** (Zechariah 14:4). The **sealing** angel comes from the east (Revelation 7:1, 2). When Jesus comes again with His armies it will be **from the east** (Matthew 24:27; Revelation 16:12; Isaiah 41:25). The east is **God's point of the compass** because of the position of the sun. He is a God of light and sunlight originates in the east (Malachi 4:3; Psalm 84:11).

Furthermore, according to **Isaiah 14:13, 14** and **Psalms 48:1, 2** God's throne is in the sides of the north because the sun reaches its brightest intensity when it is directly overhead. In Ezekiel 1, when God comes to Jerusalem for judgment He comes **from the north** (Ezekiel 1:4)

On the other hand, the **west** is the place where darkness begins and the **south** (underworld) is the place where darkness reaches its **deepest intensity** at midnight. The ancients considered the south the realm of the **underworld where demons** thrive because it was the place of **deepest darkness**. For this reason, darkness in the fifth trumpet comes from the **abyss**, which is in the underworld.

**Amos 8:11, 12** tells us that after the close of probation people will run to the north and to the east **seeking the Word** of God because the Word of God is light (John 1:4, 5, 9; Psalm 119:105). The ancients would never think of going to the **west and to the south** because these directions are the realm of darkness.

You might wonder what the directions of the compass have to do with the fifth trumpet. Well, **Egypt was literally south** of Israel and therefore it was the **king of the south**. As we will notice later in this study, it is not accidental that

Revelation 11:8 refers to the demons that rose from the abyss in the **French Revolution** as 'Egypt'. **Darkness became notorious in Egypt** at the time of the **tenth plague**. This is persuasive evidence that there is a connection between the fifth trumpet and the French Revolution as described in Revelation 11:7-10.

It is also significant that **Daniel 11:40** describes the **king of the south** (atheism, spiritual Egypt) rising against the **king of the north** (apostate Christianity, the papacy) at the beginning of the **time of the end** (1798). As I have noted in my notes on Daniel 11, this attack of the king of the south against the king of the north is a depiction of the **French Revolution**. Thus, the fifth trumpet (Revelation 9:1-12), **Revelation 11:7-10** and **Daniel 11:40** are all describing the **same historical event**: The French Revolution.

**Kitto's Encyclopedia** describes the nature of the locust:

*"Locusts seem to devour not so much from a ravenous appetite as from a **rage for destroying**. Destruction, therefore, and not food, is the **chief impulse** of their devastations and in this consists their utility; they are, in fact, **omnivorous**. The most poisonous plants are indifferent to them; they will prey even upon the crowfoot, whose causticity burns even the hides of beasts. They simply **consume everything**, without predilection—vegetable matter, linens, woollens, silk, leather, etc.; and Pliny does not exaggerate when he says, *fores quoque tectorum*—'even the doors of houses'—for they have been known to consume the very **varnish** of furniture. They reduce everything **indiscriminately** to shreds, which become manure" *Kitto's Encyclopedia*, volume 2, p. 263*

Exodus describes the **devastating destruction** caused by the locusts in Egypt:

### **Exodus 10:15**

*"For they covered the face of the **whole earth**, so that the land was **darkened**; and they ate **every herb** of the land and **all the fruit** of the trees which the hail had left. So there **remained nothing green** on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout **all the land** of Egypt.*

Revelation 9:11 tells us that this cloud of locusts **had a king** who led them whose name was *Abaddon* or *Apollyon*. Normal locusts have **no king** over them (Proverbs 30:27) so these must be unusual and supernatural locusts.

Some interpreters have seen in this plague of locusts a depiction of the devastations caused by **Mohammed** and the Muslims in Arabia. However, in his commentary on the book of Revelation Seiss provides a multiplicity of reasons why this interpretation cannot be accurate:

*“Nor yet will this vision apply, except in a very dim and imperfect way, to the mighty Saracenic invasion, in which **so many moderns locate** its fulfillment. If Muhammed was this star, it is impossible to show wherein he experienced **the fall** ascribed to this star. If he was the star, he was also the king of the powers he set in motion; but the record plainly shows that the star and the king of the locusts are **two distinct personages**. If the **cave of Hera** was the mouth of the pit, the followers of Muhammed did not come out of that cave, as the locusts are said to come out of the abyss. If his flight **from Mecca** was his fall, then the pit was open and the smoke had begun to issue and breed locusts before the star's fall, which is again contrary to the record. If the smoke were **Muhammed's false doctrines**, then neither smoke nor locusts existed before the pit was opened, for the Arabians were not Muslims before Muhammed, but the vision represents the locusts as dwelling in the pit and in the smoke long ere the pit was opened or the smoke issued. It was after the smoke had already gone forth, and followers had been won, that Muhammed professed to have received the key from God; he had therefore opened the pit before he got the key with which to open it; neither was it ever pretended that this key of his was the key of hell. However, this is not all.*

*The locusts were forbidden to touch anyone upon whose forehead the seal of God was impressed; but the wrath and fury of the Muslim hordes were directed mainly and above all **against Christians** and Christendom. The locusts were to torment all who had not the seal of God upon them; but the Saracen invasion struck a very small part of the world outside of Christendom. The locusts were not allowed to take people's lives; it was the work of Mohammedanism to kill both body and soul—the bodies of those who refused to accept it, and the souls of those who embraced it. It was the command of Muhammed to all his devotees, and delivered in the name of his god: ‘When ye encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads, until ye have made a great slaughter among them... As for the infidels, let them perish’ (Koran 47). So they killed 50,000 in one battle, and 150,000 in another, and spread death and slaughter wherever they went.*

Does this look like the **absence of power to kill**? The locusts were to do no injury to trees, crops, and vegetation.

The Muslims destroyed with fire and sword the countries they invaded. The locusts were so to torment people that they would seek to **destroy their own lives**, and yet should not be able to do it; but neither of these things occurred under the Muslims. People **loved to live** then as now, and fought to defend themselves, and paid tribute to be permitted to live, and could easily find death if they wished.

The locusts were in shape like horses, prepared for war; Muslims had this appearance no more than any other armed hosts. The locusts wore seeming **golden crowns**; but 'turbans of linen' very poorly meet the description, while, if the creatures are symbolical, the crowns are symbolical also. What, then, is the prophetic import of a turban? The locusts had **breastplates**, which are said to be symbols of invulnerability; but the Muslims were not invulnerable; they never went into battle without losing some of their number, and they were more than once defeated with great slaughter. The locusts have **wings**, and **tails**, and **stings** in their tails, and poison in their stings like the poison of scorpions; but, in no respect was this true of the Muslims, any more than of any other conquering hordes. The locusts have power to operate only for the space of 'five months'—on the year-day theory, one hundred and fifty years—but the warlike expeditions of the Saracens ranged through more than four hundred years, and their power is not yet taken away.

The king of the locusts is **named** Abaddon and Apollyon, but neither of these was the name of the Muslim prophet, nor do they describe him anymore than many others who have acted a like part in the world. Smoke may very well represent **false doctrine**, but what was the **sun and air obscured** by Mohammedanism, when those who see only Mohammedanism in this vision are obliged to consider the Christianity and churches which the Saracens overrun, as even worse than Islamism itself? Besides, if Arabia, whence the Saracens came, is the well-pit of the abyss, as some seem to affirm, then it is into **Arabia that the Devil is to be cast**, and shut up, and sealed in, for the thousand years, if not also the place into which all the finally lost are to be consigned!" Joseph Seiss, *The Apocalypse: Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1998, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.

The Old Testament uses locusts to describe God's judgments against people who are **in rebellion against Him**.

These locusts make a raging **noise like fire** (the locusts come from the abyss where fire is), they look like **horses ready for battle**, and they **devour like lions** (Joel 2). This bizarre symbolism describes the almost absolute destructive power of **Satan and his angels** in France during the French Revolution.

These locusts are clearly **symbolic** because they are a **hybrid combination** of **locust** and **scorpion** and they **attack people**, not plants. According to Jesus, the scorpion represents **Satan** (Luke 10:18, 19). The most dangerous body part of a scorpion is **its tail** and the tail represents **lies** (Isaiah 9:15; John 8:44). This is why **Satan's tail** drew a third part of the angels and cast them to the earth (Revelation 12:4).

In brief, this army has all the Biblical characteristics that apply to Satan and his angels: **scorpions**, **serpents**, **lions**, **locusts**, **sulphur**, **bottomless pit**, etc. The fifth trumpet is clearly a description of an extraordinary manifestation of satanic power.

#### **Comments on Revelation 9:4**

*"They **were commanded** not to harm the **grass** of the earth, or any **green thing**, or any **tree**, but only those men who **do not have** the seal of God on their foreheads."*

This language is **highly unusual**. Grass, green things and trees are what locusts eat and yet they receive the **command to spare** the grass, the plants, and the trees. They are to attack only those humans who **do not have the seal** of God on their foreheads.

It is clear that green, living vegetation here represents the **faithful people** of God (Psalm 1:1-3; Jeremiah 17:8; Psalm 92:12). Not hurting the vegetation is **synonymous** with **sparing** those who have the seal on their forehead. We are not to understand this seal as the end-time seal of God but rather as the **gospel seal** (Ephesians 1:13, 14; 4:30; 2Timothy 2:19; 2Corinthians 1:22) that all who believe receive upon baptism. The book of Revelation makes it very clear that God will place His end time seal upon the 144,000 **living** saints (Revelation 14:1; 7:1-3).

By way of example, Ellen White wrote that only the 144,000 would have the final eschatological seal. However, she wrote that **Sister Hastings**, who died in **1850**, was sealed (**2SM**, p. 263). Ellen White recognized that at baptism all faithful believers receive the seal of the Holy Spirit:

*“Those who thus unite with the church by baptism **are sealed** as men and women who have been born again, of water and of the Spirit. They have entered upon a new life.” **6MR**, p. 28*

### **Comments on Revelation 9:5**

*“And they were **not given authority** to kill them, but to **torment them** for **five months**. Their torment was like the torment of a **scorpion** when it strikes a man.”*

Scorpions rarely kill human beings when they sting them but they do cause **excruciating pain**, swelling and suffering, even to the point of **wanting to die!**

Applying the year/day principle, the five months would be equivalent to one hundred and fifty years. Notably the **Age of Reason** or the **Enlightenment** began in the **early 17<sup>th</sup> century** with the work of **Rene Descartes**: Contemporary, Blaise Pascal wrote:

*‘I cannot forgive Descartes; in all his philosophy he did his best to **dispense with God**. But he could not avoid making Him set the world in motion with a flip of His thumb; after that he had **no more use for God**.’*

Descartes’ most famous book was *A Discourse on Method*, published in **1637** some 150 years before the beginning of the **French Revolution**. The Age of Reason eventually **jettisoned the need for faith** and the miraculous in religion. It supplanted faith in God with human wisdom. During this period, the sciences would come to believe that all could be resolved through **human ingenuity** without the need of an ever-interfering God. Notably these philosophies would not kill people but they would make them **existentially miserable**. The Age of Reason inspired the French Revolution.

### **Notes on Revelation 9:6**

*“In those days men will **seek death** and will **not find it**; they will **desire to die**, and death will flee from them.”*

Ellen White makes the following statement about the fruits of atheism:

*“Atheism can shed **no ray of light** into the grave. It cannot restrain crime or quicken the moral energies. It has **no power to elevate** the character or purify the soul. On the contrary, it always tends to **degenerate** the human race; it leads **away from purity and peace**. An instance of this is given in the history of the **French Revolution**. That period, when the existence of God was denied, and his commandments were abolished, was the **most revolting** that is recorded on the pages of human history.”* YI December 24, 1896

The main characteristic of contemporary society is **meaninglessness**. This is why people are hungering and **thirsting for spirituality** and a reason to live. The rise of philosophies such as **deism**, **ethical relativism**, **nihilism**, **rationalism**, **existentialism**, **evolutionism** and **atheistic communism** has led people to be pessimistic about the meaning of life. After all, if there was no supernatural divine beginning, what hope is there for a supernatural divine end? If there is no creator God, there is **no future**, and if there is no future, then **life has no ultimate meaning**. This is the reason why the Psalmist says that a fool says in his heart that there is no God (Psalm 14:1; see also Job 3:20, 21; Jeremiah 8:3).

*“There are many ways in which human beings can crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame. The worship of **worldly business** so confuses the mind that Satan stealthily approaches, and insidiously gains entrance. He has many theories by which to lead astray those who will be led. The erroneous views of God that the world is entertaining are skepticism in disguise, **preparing the way for atheism**. By hasty words and selfish deeds, men often grieve the heart of Christ. Thus, Satan works untiringly to lead them to disloyalty. As he gains control of minds, he makes upon them lasting impressions, and the **realities of eternity fade away**.”* TDG p. 339

The book of **Ecclesiastes** is a good illustration of the spirit that inspired the French Revolution. **Solomon became a hedonist**, living only for present pleasure. He even came to entertain doubts about the **existence of God**. He even went so far as to say that he hated life:



## Ecclesiastes 2:17, 18, NIV

*“So I **hated life**, because the work that is done under the sun was grievous to me. All of it is **meaningless**, a **chasing after the wind**.<sup>18</sup> I **hated all the things** I had toiled for under the sun, because I must leave them to the one who comes after me.”*

*“His faith in the living God was supplanted by **atheistic doubts**. Unbelief **marred his happiness**, **weakened** his principles, and **degraded** his life.” PK, p. 58*

Ernest Hemingway, the Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1954, greatly admired the book of Ecclesiastes. He led a **disorderly and miserable life** and ended it by blowing out his brains. Such is the fruit of a life without God. It ends in **pessimism and meaninglessness**.

Ellen White described two individuals that the spirit of the rationalism captivated:

*“It is said that **Hume**, the skeptic, was in early life a conscientious believer in the Word of God. Being connected with a debating society, he was appointed to present the arguments **in favor of infidelity**. He studied with earnestness and perseverance, and his keen and active mind became imbued with the **sophistry of skepticism**. Ere long he came to believe its **delusive teachings**, and his whole **afterlife bore the dark impress of infidelity**.” CG p. 196*

*“When **Voltaire** was five years old, he committed to memory an **infidel poem**, and the pernicious influence was never effaced from his mind. He became one of Satan's most successful agents to lead men away from God. Thousands will rise up in the judgment and charge the ruin of their souls upon the **infidel Voltaire**.” CG p. 196*

Rationalism even came to the point of denying the creation story:

*“God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world, in both science and art; but when professedly scientific men treat upon these subjects from a **merely human point of view**, they will assuredly come to wrong conclusions. It may be innocent to speculate beyond what God's word has revealed, if our theories do not contradict facts found in the Scriptures; but those who leave the word of God, and seek to account for his created works upon scientific principles, are*

drifting, without chart or compass, upon an unknown ocean. The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become **bewildered** in their attempts to trace the relations of science and revelation. Because the Creator and his works are so far beyond their comprehension that they are **unable to explain** them by natural laws, they regard Bible history as **unreliable**. Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments will be led to go a step farther, and **doubt the existence of God**; and then, **having lost their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity**. These persons have lost the **simplicity of faith**. There should be a **settled belief** in the divine authority of God's holy word." CE p. 193

### **Comments on Revelation 9:7**

"The shape of the locusts was like **horses prepared for battle**. On their heads were **crowns** of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men."

We find the backdrop of this imagery in Joel 2:4-10 where God compares an invading army with a **plague of locusts**. It is of interest that the **Italian word** for locust is *cavalletta*, which means 'little horse'. The German peasants call the locust *hupferde*, which means, 'hay horses.' At this point Satan and his angels are already gathering their forces for the final battle against the God, the Bible and His people.

### **Comments on Revelation 9:8-10**

"Their hair was like women's hair, and their **teeth** were like **lions' teeth**. They had breastplates like breastplates of **iron**, and the sound of their **wings** was like the thundering of **many horses** and chariots rushing into **battle**. They had **tails** and stings like **scorpions**, and in their tails, they had **power** to torment people for five months."

The lion is a symbol of the destructive **power of Satan** who goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1Peter 5:8) and Ellen White compares Satan's **angels with lions as well**. When Jesus resurrected:

"[**Satan**] related to his angels that Jesus had given His disciples power to rebuke them and cast them out, and to heal those whom they should afflict. Then **Satan's angels** went forth **like roaring lions**, seeking to destroy the followers of Jesus. EW, p. 191

In Scripture the **tail represents lies** (Revelation 12:7-9; John 8:44; Isaiah 9:15). It is significant that during the 1260 years, Satan deceived people by the lie of **false religion** (false God) but during the age of reason Satan deceived and hurt people by the **lies of secularism** (no God).

According to Daniel 11:40-45, false religion and secularism are the **two enemies** that will face off during the time of the end. These two will eventually **join forces** for the final battle.

### **Comments on Revelation 9:11**

The **king** who rules over the locusts is the **angel of the Abyss**, and his name in Hebrew is *Abaddon*, and in Greek, *Apollyon*." The names *Abaddon* and *Apollyon* mean "destroyer." The New Testament describes **Satan as the ruler** or prince of demons (Matthew 12:24) and Jesus referred to him as the '**destroyer**' (John 10:10). This means that the locusts represent Satan's angels.





## **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

### **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 7: THE REVELATION 11 INTERLUDE: THE 1260-YEARS AND FRENCH REVOLUTION**

### **Revelation 11:2**

*“But leave out the **court** which is **outside** the temple, and **do not measure it**, for it **has been given** [*edothē: first aorist passive*] to the Gentiles. And **they will** [*future tense*] tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.”*

- ✓ What is the meaning of **the court** in this verse?
- ✓ Why does the angel command John **not to measure** the court of the temple?
- ✓ **Daniel 8:10-13** refers to trampling the sanctuary and Revelation 13:5 speaks of the blaspheming of the tabernacle in heaven. Do these actions have anything to do with **not measuring** the court?
- ✓ What does the **holy city** represent in this verse?
- ✓ Who are the **Gentiles** who trampled the holy city?
- ✓ When did the period of the **42 months begin and end**?
- ✓ Are the 42 months **past or future**?
- ✓ Did God give the court of the temple to the gentiles **before or after** the measurement of the temple began?

Daniel and Revelation refer to the 1260 days in different ways and with different emphases:

- ✓ In **Daniel 7**, the emphasis falls upon what the papacy did as a system on earth during the 1260 years. It blasphemed God, persecuted the saints of God and thought it could change the times and the Law of God.
- ✓ In **Revelation 12**, the central focus falls upon Satan who was the driving force behind the persecution of the saints by the papacy.
- ✓ In **Revelation 13**, the emphasis seems to fall upon the attack upon the name of God, those who dwell in heaven, the heavenly sanctuary and the saints of that sanctuary (which is also the emphasis in Daniel 8).
- ✓ However, in **Revelation 11** the central focus is upon the attack against the Bible, the Word of God.

Ellen White makes a definite connection between what the papacy did with the Bible during the 1260 years and the events of the French Revolution. The **proscription** of the Bible by the papacy during the 1260 years led to the spiritual ignorance that exploded in the French Revolution:

*“The **war against the Bible**, carried forward for so many centuries in France, culminated in the scenes of the Revolution. That terrible outbreaking was but the legitimate result of Rome’s **suppression of the Scriptures**.” GC p. 265*

*“It was popery that had **begun the work** which atheism was **completing**. The policy of Rome had wrought out those conditions, social, political, and religious, that were hurrying France on to ruin.” GC p. 276*

There is an **important sequence** in Daniel 8 that Revelation 11:2 echoes. Daniel 8 tells us that the little horn trampled the sanctuary and those who worshipped there and took away ‘the daily’, a word that describes the work of the priest in the court and in the holy place. Both Daniel and Revelation use the specific word ‘**trample**’ as it relates to the sanctuary (Daniel 8:10-13). The trampling of the sanctuary, the host and the daily transpires **for 42 months** and then, at the **end of the 2300 days**, the process of cleansing the sanctuary begins. Thus Daniel describes a clear transition from the daily service (in Daniel 8:10-13) to the yearly service (Daniel 8:14).

The same is true of Revelation 11:1, 2. For **1260 years**, God allowed the Gentiles to trample the city of Jerusalem as well as upon the truth revealed by

the two witnesses and then after this period God would **begin to measure** the most holy place and those who worship there.

Thus, there is a close link between Daniel 8 and Revelation 11:1, 2. In Daniel 8, after the trampling of the Prince, the host and the sanctuary for 1260 years, the process to **cleanse** the sanctuary begins. In Revelation 11, the Gentiles trample upon Jerusalem and then the temple is **measured**.

**Albert Barnes** captured the meaning of the Gentiles who trampled the holy city for 42 months:

*"This, as we have seen, would properly mean that a separation was to be made between what was the **true church** and **what was not**, though it **might seem to belong to it**. The one was to be **measured or estimated**; the other was to be **left out**, as not pertaining to that, or as belonging to the Gentiles, or to **paganism**. The idea would be that though it **professedly pertained** to the true church, and to the worship of God, however, that it deserved to be characterized as **paganism**. Now this will apply with great propriety, according to all Protestant notions, to the manner in which **the papacy** was regarded by the Reformers, and should be regarded at all times. **It claimed to be the true church**, and to the eye of an observer would **seem to belong to it**, as much as the outer court seemed to pertain to the temple. However, it had the **essential characteristics of paganism**, and was, therefore, properly to be **left out**, or, cast out, as not pertaining to the **true church**." Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved)*

Then Barnes makes this amazing statement:

*"Can anyone doubt the truth of this representation as **applicable to the papacy**? Almost everything that was unique in the ancient **pagan systems of religion** had been introduced into the Roman communion; and a stranger at Rome would see more that would lead him to feel that he was in a pagan land than he would that he was in a land where the **pure doctrines** of Christianity prevailed, and where the worship was celebrated which the Redeemer hath designed to set up on the earth. This was true not only in the pomp and splendor of worship, and in the processions and imposing ceremonials; but in the worship of images, in the homage rendered to the dead, in the number of festival days, in the fact that the statues reared in pagan Rome to the honor of the gods had been reconsecrated in*

*the service of Christian devotion to the apostles, saints, and martyrs; and in the robes of the Christian priesthood, derived from those in use in the ancient pagan worship. The direction was, that, in **estimating the true church, this was to be 'left out,' or 'cast out';** and, if this interpretation is correct, the meaning is, that **the Roman Catholic communion, as an organized body, is to be regarded as no part of the true church—a conclusion which is inevitable, if the passages of Scripture which are commonly supposed by Protestants to apply to it are correctly applied.** To determine this, and to **separate the true church from it,** was no small part of the work of the Reformation (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved)*

In Revelation 11:1, the Angel transported John in vision to 1844 and told him to measure the temple and those who worshiped there. However, the angel also told him not to measure the court where the Gentiles worshipped because it **was given** to the gentiles (**not** 'will' be given to them from 1844 forward but rather was given to them from 538 AD forward).

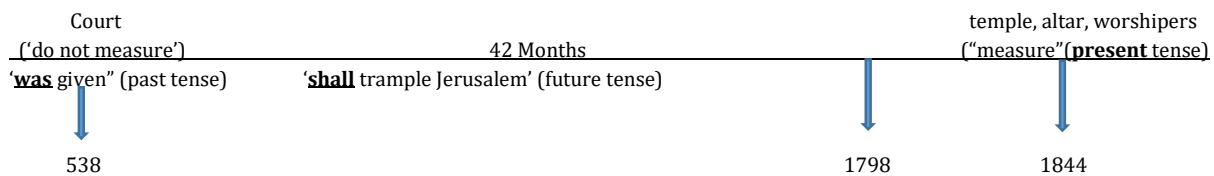
The best translation of the Greek word *edothē* (a first aorist passive indicative) is '**was** given.' It is worthy of note that in every other appearance of this word in the NIV the word *edothē* is translated '*was given.*' Only in this **one instance** does the NIV translate the aorist passive as a perfect tense "has been given").

The tense of the verb clearly indicates that God **gave the court** to the Gentiles **before the process of measuring** the temple began. Stated another way, God gave the court to the Gentiles, they would trample the holy city for 42 months and **then** (after the 42 months) the angel told John to measure the temple and its worshipers. *Young's Literal Translation* of Revelation 11:2, 3 captures the correct translation of the word *edothē*:

*"... and the court that is without the sanctuary leave out, and thou mayest not measure it, because it **was** [aorist tense] given to the nations [gentiles], and the holy city they **shall** [future tense] tread down forty-two months and I **will** [future tense] give to My two witnesses, and they **shall** [future tense] prophesy days, a thousand, two hundred, sixty, arrayed with sackcloth. . ."*

This chart illustrates the timing for the trampling of the court and the measuring of the temple:





In the New Testament, both Jerusalem and the temple represent God's faithful people on earth:

- ✓ Galatians 4:21-31
- ✓ John 4:20-24
- ✓ Hebrews 12:22-24
- ✓ Philippians 3:20, 21
- ✓ Ephesians 2:19-22
- ✓ 2Thessalonians 2:3, 4
- ✓ Daniel 8:10-12

The Presbyterian minister, Albert Barnes wrote:

*"The 'holy city,' Jerusalem, was regarded as sacred to God—as his dwelling-place on earth, and as the abode of his people, and nothing was more natural than to use the term as representing **the church**."* Albert Barnes, notes on Revelation 11:2

This statement has significant implications because if the holy city and the temple here represent the church, then in Revelation 14:20 the city that the wicked surround must represent the church as well. Then the scenario looks like this:

During the **1260 years** God allowed the **Gentiles to trample** upon the holy city/temple (Daniel 8:11-13; Revelation 11:2) but in **Revelation 14:20** and **19:14, 15** the Lord will trample upon the Gentiles or nations (according to Joel 3) who will **gather around the end time church** with the intention of destroying it. This provides evidence that the Lord will trample upon those who trampled upon His people during the 1260 years. This helps explain how end time Babylon will receive **double of what she gave** (Revelation 18:6). She trampled upon God's people, and God, in turn will **trample upon her**.

In Revelation 11:2, the Gentiles stand in **contrast to the holy city** in the same manner as in Daniel 7, the **saints are in contrast to the little horn** and in

Revelation 13, in **contrast to the beast**. When the Bible speaks about Jerusalem being overwhelmed by the Gentiles it is not talking about brick and mortar but rather the people in the city (2Kings 24:14, 15; Matthew 23:37; Luke 23:38).

Daniel 1:1, 2 tells us that Nebuchadnezzar **took Jerusalem captive**. He did not take the physical city to Babylon but rather the **citizens of the city**. The **trampling of the city** by the Gentiles for 42 months is the same as the **persecuting of the saints** in Daniel 7 and Revelation 12 and 13.

The Gentiles are those who are **not true Jews** or true believers but rather **counterfeit Jews** (see John 1:47; John 8; Romans 2:28, 29; Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 3:28, 29). These 'counterfeit believers' are **not judged in 1844** but only the righteous. In Daniel 7 and 8, the central focus of the judgment is not on the condemnation of the little horn but on **rewarding the saints** who receive the kingdom.

In the judgment before the second coming, God will pronounce a **sentence in favor** of the saints of the Most High. During and after the **millennium** God will announce a verdict against their **wicked oppressors**. It is no coincidence, that the **sixth church**, Philadelphia, as in Revelation 11:1 there are people who say that they are Jews but they are not. Thus, the **synagogue of Satan** in the church of Philadelphia and the **Gentiles under the sixth trumpet** are closely related.

Two paraphrase versions catch the correct nuance of Revelation 11:2:

### **New Century Version**

*"... it [**the court**] has been given to those who are **not God's people**."*

### **The Message:**

*"... it has [**the court**] been handed over to **non-Jewish outsiders**."*

The following insight by the Presbyterian minister, Albert Barnes, sounds much like the view of Adventist eschatology:

*"This would find a fulfillment if there should arise a state of things in the church in which it would be necessary **to draw a line** between those who properly constituted the church and those who did not; if there should be such a condition of things that any considerable portion of those who **professedly pertained to***

***the church** ought to be divided off as not belonging to it, or would have such characteristic marks that it could be seen that they were strangers and aliens. The interpretation would demand that they should sustain **some relation to the church**, or that they would **seem to belong** to it—as the court did to the temple; but still that this was in **appearance only**, and that in **estimating the true church** it was necessary to **leave them out altogether**.” (Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved)*

### **Comments on Revelation 11:3**

*“And I will give power to my **two witnesses**, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in **sackcloth**.”*

The questions we need to answer in verse 3 are these:

- **Who** are the two witnesses?
- **Why** are they clothed in sackcloth?
- **Who** is the person that gives them power to prophesy? That is to say, who is saying, ‘I will give power to **my** two **witnesses**’?
- **Why** do two olive trees and the two candlesticks symbolize the two witnesses?

### **The Two Witnesses**

The person who gives the two witnesses power to prophesy **is Jesus** because He sent the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to enable the apostles to be His witnesses:

### **Acts 1:8**

*“But you shall receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be **witnesses to Me** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

Clearly we must link the two witnesses with **Acts 1** where Jesus promised to impart **power** to His apostles and referred to them with the possessive pronoun “**my**” and called upon them to be His **witnesses** to the world. Although the word “power” is not in the original in verse 3, most versions say that Jesus gave the two witnesses power or authority.

Someone may wonder whether the two witnesses represent the **Old and New Testaments**. Yes, they do, but there is more to the story. Jesus made the **apostles the depositories** of the oracles of God. He called them to preach God's message as found in the Old and New Testaments. Thus, the two witnesses symbolize **God's messengers** who have been empowered by the **Holy Spirit** to give the message of salvation **to the world** as found in the **Old and New Testaments**.

Ellen White underlines that the two witnesses impart their messages to the world through the **medium of the church**. Thus, the two witnesses represent the Bible as **preached by the faithful church**:

*"Until Christ shall appear in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, men will become perverse in spirit and turn from the truth to fables. **The church** will yet see troublous times. **She will prophesy in sackcloth**. Although she must meet **heresies and persecutions**, although she **must battle** with the infidel and the apostate, yet by the help of God she is bruising the head of Satan. The Lord will have a people as true as steel, and with faith as firm as the granite rock. They are to be **His witnesses in the world**, His instrumentalities to do a special, a glorious work in the day of His preparation." 4T, pp. 594, 595*

## **Two Act as One**

Although there are two witnesses, they act as one, in **perfect unison**. They **testify** together, they pour out **plagues** together, they **suffer** persecution together, the beast from the **bottomless pit kills** them together and they **resurrect** and **ascend** to heaven together. Thus, although there are two witnesses they are in perfect harmony and **act as one**.

**Revelation 11:8** uses the **singular** word 'body' in a **collective sense** for both witnesses ('their dead **body**'). In **verse 9**, the word '**body**' appears once more in the **singular** before the Greek switches to the plural. The same thing happens in **verse 5** with reference to the word '**mouth**', which is singular. Thus, although the witnesses are two in number, they speak as one and the text refers to them **as one**. They are one because they have a common purpose: To reveal the one and only Jesus Christ.

## Two Prophets

The two witnesses receive power **to prophecy**, so they must have the prophetic gift:

### **1 Peter 1:10-12, NIV**

*“Concerning this salvation, **the [Old Testament] prophets**, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, 11 trying to find out the **time** and **circumstances** to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing **[in the Old Testament]** when he predicted **[NKJV: ‘testified beforehand’]** the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them **[the Old Testament Prophets]** that they were **not serving themselves** but you **[those who lived in the New Testament]**, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.”*

## Moses and Elijah Theme

These two witnesses are not **two ordinary** prophets. The context clearly reveals that the two prophets function in the power and spirit of **Moses** and **Elijah**. This is made clear by the fact that Moses brought a judgment of God against Egypt for rejecting God’s word by turning the **waters of the Nile into blood** (in Revelation 11 the waters are symbolic of peoples) and Elijah brought a **judgment of fire** down from heaven for the same reason (2 Kings 1:10-18).

Does this mean that Moses and Elijah would appear **literally and personally** during the 1260 years? Not any more than Jezebel and Balaam appeared literally during the period of the seven churches.

Moses and Elijah are symbolic in the passage. Moses was the prophet that **began the history of Israel** thus being the giant spokesperson of the old dispensation (see John 5:45-47). On the other hand, Elijah was the **prophet of the future** (John the Baptist and the end time Elijah movement). John was the last prophet of the old dispensation and announced the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in Jesus. The gospels identify **John the Baptist** as Elijah (Luke 1:16, 17; Matthew 11:10-13; Matthew 17:10-13) who bore **witness** to Jesus (John 5:35) who is the light (John 5:36).

The **last book** of the Old Testament brings to view both Moses and Elijah. Moses is presented as the prophet of the **past** and Elijah as the prophet of the **future**. Thus, they represent the **Old and New Testaments**.

### **Malachi 4:4-6**

*"Remember the **Law of Moses**, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. <sup>5</sup> Behold, **I will send** you **Elijah the prophet** before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. <sup>6</sup> And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

### **Word of God and Testimony of Jesus**

**Revelation 1:2** further corroborates that the two witnesses represent the Old and New Testaments. This verse tells us that John bore **witness** to the **Word of God** and the **Testimony of Jesus Christ**. In fact, John was on Patmos for bearing witness to the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 1:9). The **martyrs** (the word means 'witnesses') of the dark ages and the end time suffered, and will suffer death because of their faithfulness in proclaiming the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 20:4; 6:9). Hebrews 1:1 states that God spoke in **old times** by the **prophets** but in **these last days** has spoken by the **Son**. Jesus stated that there were two witnesses to His divine calling, the **Father** and **Himself** (John 8:13-18, 28, 38, 14:24).

Kenneth Strand correctly wrote:

*"These two witnesses are, namely, 'the word of God' and 'the testimony of Jesus Christ,' or what we today would call the OT prophetic message and the NT apostolic witness." (Kenneth Strand, "The Two Witnesses of Revelation 11:3-12" Andrews University Seminary Studies (Summer 1981. Volume 19, number 2), pp. 127-135*

The **Bible** describes God's scriptural message in terms of **twosomes**. The Bible is one book, a unity, composed of **two parts**. The Bible is a **two edged** sword, **two witnesses**, **two candlesticks**, **two olive trees**, **two keys**, **Moses and Elijah** and the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Ellen White explains:

*“The two witnesses represent the Scriptures of the **Old and the New Testament**. **Both** are important testimonies to the origin and perpetuity of the law of God. **Both** are witnesses also to the plan of salvation. The types, sacrifices, and prophecies of the Old Testament point forward to a Savior **to come**. The Gospels and Epistles of the New Testament tell of a Savior who **has come** in the exact manner foretold by type and prophecy.” GC p. 267*

The Old Testament and the New Testament are **two distinct Testaments** but they bear witness to **one Jesus**. Although they are two, they give witness to One. The Old Testament gives witness to Jesus (John 5:39, 40; Acts 10:43; 23:11; 26:16; I John 1:1, 2; I Peter 1:10-12) as does the New. In fact, the reason why **John** wrote his gospel was to give **witness to Jesus** (John 21:24, 25).

### **The Sackcloth: Obscurity and Persecution**

In Scripture God’s people use sackcloth when the **wicked persecute them**. Sackcloth also represents the darkness of **error** and **persecution** and **affliction**. When the King of Assyria came with the intention to destroy Jerusalem, King Hezekiah wore sackcloth:

#### **2 Kings 19:1-3**

*“And so it was, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he **tore his clothes**, covered himself with **sackcloth**, and went into the house of the Lord. <sup>2</sup> Then he sent Eliakim, who was over the household, Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, **covered with sackcloth**, to Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz. <sup>3</sup> And they said to him, “Thus says Hezekiah: ‘This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy; for the children have come to birth, but there is no strength to bring them forth.’”*

#### **Esther 4:1-4**

*“When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on **sackcloth and ashes**, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a **loud and bitter cry**. <sup>2</sup> He went as far as the front of the king’s gate, for no one might enter the king’s gate **clothed with sackcloth**. <sup>3</sup> And in every province where the king’s command and decree arrived, there was **great mourning** among the*

Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.”

### Isaiah 50:3

“I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make **sackcloth** their covering.”

### Revelation 6:12

“I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.”

Ellen White explained the meaning of sackcloth:

“Not only is Satan leading the world captive, but his deceptions are leavening the professed churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. The great apostasy will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. To God's people it will be a night of trial, a night of weeping, a night of persecution for the truth's sake. However, out of that night of darkness God's light will shine. COL pp. 414, 415

“The great apostasy is working to a point and will develop into darkness deep as midnight, impenetrable as sackcloth of hair. This is the time to employ any system that can be devised to discover and counteract the leaven of **error**. Let there be light. There should be one hundred light bearers in our world where there is one today. **Darkness** will become more dense in human minds after the truth has penetrated and been rejected. However, there are some minds where the darkness will be removed. They recognize the light. . . .” PM p. 324

Ellen White saw a deeper dimension to the two witnesses than the Old and New Testaments. She discerned that they represent the church that preaches from these two Testaments. As a result, the proclaimers suffer persecution. In other words, the two witnesses testify through the medium of the Holy Spirit who empowers the church and the result is persecution.

This is precisely what the introduction to the book of Revelation affirms. The Roman Empire exiled John to Patmos for the Word of God and the Testimony of Jesus Christ. God gave the book of Revelation to Jesus, Jesus to the Spirit, the Spirit to the angel, the angel to John and John to the churches and the churches



to the world. The seven candlesticks represent the **work of the church** in imparting the light.

*“Until Christ shall appear in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, men will become perverse in spirit and turn from the truth to fables. The **church** will yet see troublous times. **She will prophesy in sackcloth**. But although she must meet **heresies and persecutions**, although she must battle with the **infidel and the apostate**, yet by the help of God she is bruising the head of Satan.” PM p. 386*

*“The heavens were **clothed in sackcloth [darkness] to hide** the sight of the Divine Sufferer.” LHU p. 153*

*“God’s witnesses remained in a state of **obscurity**. The papal power sought to hide from the people the word of truth, and set before them false witnesses to contradict its testimony. When the **Bible was proscribed** by religious and secular authority; when its testimony was **perverted**, and every effort made that men and demons could invent to turn the minds of the people from it; when **those who dared proclaim its sacred truths** were **hunted, betrayed, tortured, buried** in dungeon cells, martyred for their faith, or compelled to flee to mountain fastnesses, and to dens and caves of the earth--then the faithful witnesses **prophesied in sackcloth**.” GC p. 267*

This prophecy links **sackcloth with blackness and darkness**. The two witnesses testified in the midst of darkness. This reminds us of the **fourth trumpet** where the heavenly lights were **partially eclipsed**. This was truly the period of the ‘dark ages’.

### **The 42 months and 1260 Days**

*“The periods here mentioned—42 ‘forty and two months,’ and ‘a thousand two hundred and threescore days’—are the same, alike representing the time in which the church of Christ was to suffer **oppression** from Rome. The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A.D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798. At that time, a French army entered Rome and made the pope a prisoner, and he died in exile. Though a new pope was soon afterward elected, the papal hierarchy has never since been able to wield the power which it before possessed.” GC p. 266*

## The Lamp Stands

The key passage that helps us comprehend the meaning of the two lampstands is **Zechariah 4:1-6**.

*"Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. <sup>2</sup> And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is **a lampstand of solid gold** with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand **seven lamps** with seven pipes to the **seven lamps**. <sup>3</sup> Two **olive trees** are by it, one at the **right** of the bowl and the other at its **left**." <sup>4</sup> So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" <sup>5</sup> Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." <sup>6</sup> So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but **by My Spirit**,' says the Lord of hosts."*

In **Zechariah 4:14** the two olive trees are called the **two anointed ones**, literally in Hebrew, 'the two sons of oil'. The text does not call them 'sons of oil' because their anointing but rather because they **furnished oil** to the candlestick (the church) and the oil is the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6).

In the Zechariah, there is only **one lampstand** and **two olive trees** while in the New Testament we have **two olive trees** and **two lamp stands**. There is a reason for this difference. During the Old Testament period, there was only **one Testament** while in the New Testament period **there are two**.

This is also the reason why God gave the religious leaders of Christ's day the **key** (singular) of knowledge (Luke 11:52) and not the **keys** of knowledge. Later Jesus gave Peter and all believers the **keys** of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:19). Peter had two keys because he had the Old Testament witness and the New Testament fulfillment.

The Bible describes the **Word of God as light** (Psalm 119:105). Jesus is the Word of God **in person** and He is identified as light (John 1:1-4) but **the Bible** is the lesser light that leads to Christ, the greater light (John 5:39-40). Sadly, when the light came, the darkness became deeper (John 1:5, 6). The word 'testify' and 'light' are together in John 5:35, 36. John was a burning lamp that gave light but verse 36 tells us that Jesus has **greater witness** or light.

**No book can contain** the fullness of the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Bible is only a **faint shadow** of the reality but in it we have enough information to find salvation and then throughout eternity we will continue to explore the beauty of Jesus.

*"In the parable, the wise virgins had **oil** in their vessels with their **lamps**. Their **light burned** with undimmed flame through the night of watching. It helped to swell the illumination for the bridegroom's honor. Shining out in the darkness, it helped to illuminate the way to the home of the bridegroom, to the marriage feast.*

***Likewise**, the **followers of Christ** are to shed light into the darkness of the world. Through the **Holy Spirit**, **God's word** is a light as it becomes a transforming power in the life of the receiver. By implanting in their hearts the principles of His word, the Holy Spirit develops in men the attributes of God. The light of His glory—His character—is to shine forth **in His followers**. Thus they are to glorify God, to **lighten the path** to the Bridegroom's home, to the city of God, to the marriage supper of the Lamb." COL, p. 414*

**Revelation 4:6** explains that the seven lamps of fire represent the **seven Spirits** that stand before the Lord. In **Revelation 5:6**, after Christ's inauguration as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, the Father **sent the seven Spirits** to the earth to help the church fulfill its mission of lighting the world with the Word of God.

The **two witnesses** accomplish their work through the ministration of the **Holy Spirit** who imparts the message **to the church** and then the church proclaims the message **to the world**. Zechariah 4 makes this clear when it states that the two witnesses accomplish their work, "*not by might nor by power but by my Spirit.*" The two holy ones who stand in the presence of the Lord receive the holy oil and impart it to those on earth who proclaim the gospel.

*"From the two olive trees the golden oil was emptied through the golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick, and thence into the golden lamps that gave light to the sanctuary. **So** from the holy ones that stand in God's presence **His Spirit is imparted to the human instrumentalities** who are consecrated to His service. The mission of the two anointed ones is to **communicate to God's people** that heavenly grace which alone can make His word a lamp to the feet*

and a light to the path. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' Zech. 4:6." COL p. 408

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.' Through the golden pipes, the olive-branches empty the golden oil out of themselves. These olive branches are the anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth. **Through them, the Holy Spirit is communicated to the churches.** Thus, heaven and earth are united. The power that is in heaven unites with human intelligences." RH, May 16, 1899

"The **word is the preacher's light**, and as the **golden oil flows** from the heavenly olive tree into the bowl, it makes the lamp of life flash with a clearness and power that all will discern. Those who have the privilege of sitting under such a ministry, if their hearts are susceptible to the Holy Spirit's influence, will feel an inner life. The **fire of God's love** will be kindled within them. **The Bible, the word of God**, is the bread of life. He who feeds the flock of God must himself first eat of the bread which came down from heaven." TM pp. 339, 340

### **Revelation 11:5**

"And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds **from their mouth** and **devours** their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner."

The fire that proceeds out of the mouth of the two witnesses reminds us of two texts that describe the experience of the prophet Jeremiah:

### **Jeremiah 20:9**

"Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name." But **His word** was in my heart like a **burning fire** shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not."

### **Jeremiah 5:14**

"Therefore thus says the Lord God of hosts: "Because you **speak this word**, behold, I will make **My words in your mouth fire**, and this people wood, and it shall **devour** them."

On this matter, Ellen White remarks:

*"And if any man will hurt them, **fire proceedeth** out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Revelation 11:5. Men cannot with impunity **trample upon the word of God**. The meaning of this fearful denunciation is set forth in the closing chapter of the Revelation: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall **add unto** him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall **take away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Revelation 22:18, 19. GC p. 268*

### **Revelation 11:6**

*"These have power to **shut heaven**, so that no **rain** falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to **blood**, and to strike the earth with all **plagues**, as often as they desire."*

The book of Revelation tells us that those who add or take away from the testimony of the book of Revelation will receive the plagues that are written in the book (Revelation 22:18). Thus, the book of Revelation **pours out plagues** upon those who seek to change its message.

The question at this point is this: In what sense do the two witnesses have power to open and shut heaven? The answer is that they have the **keys of the kingdom of heaven**.

**Matthew 16:19** describes **the keys** that **open** or **shut** the kingdom of heaven:

*"And I will give you the **keys** of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you **bind** on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you **loose** on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

The dual form 'keys' without a qualifying number refers to **two keys**. Thus, the keys have the same meaning as the **two witnesses**. How do the two witnesses—the keys—open and shut heaven? The answer is that when God's messengers preach the Word of God through the ministration of the Holy Spirit, people either **accept or reject the message**. If they reject it, the kingdom of **heaven closes**. If they accept message, the kingdom of heaven **opens before them** (see the problematic passage in John 20:21-23 and compare Matthew

18:15, 18). With one sermon from the Word of God, Peter opened the kingdom of heaven to **three thousand** souls on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:37, 38).

The problem with the theologians in Christ's day is that they did not preach the Word of God but rather their own traditions. Matthew 23:2, 13 tells us that the Scribes and Pharisees sat on Moses' Seat and shut the kingdom of heaven:

### **Matthew 23:2, 13**

*"The scribes and the Pharisees sit in **Moses' seat** . . . <sup>13</sup> "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you **shut up** the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."*

The Roman Catholic **Jerome Bible Commentary** explains the meaning of Moses' Seat:

*"The phrase [**Moses' Seat**] is most probably a metaphor for the authority of the scribes to teach. In **rabbinical tradition**, the interpretation of the Law was carried on in a scribal tradition that theoretically went back through an **unbroken chain** of scribes to Moses. This view is, of course, **entirely unhistorical**." *The Jerome Bible Commentary*, volume 2 (New York: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1968), p. 102)*

**Luke 11:52** tells us that the **Scribes took away** the key (singular) of knowledge and thus **closed** the kingdom to themselves and others:

*"Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the **key of knowledge**. You did not **enter** in yourselves, and those who were entering in you **hindered**."*

*"The keys of the kingdom of heaven"" are the **words of Christ**. All the words of Holy Scripture are His, and are here included. These **words** have power to **open and to shut** heaven. They **declare the conditions** upon which men are received or rejected. Thus, the work of those who **preach God's word** is a savor of **life** unto life or of **death** unto death. Theirs is a mission weighted with eternal results. *DA* pp. 413, 414*

In the days of Elijah, apostasy led to the closing of heaven for three and a half literal years (James 5:17, 18) as the two witnesses closed heaven for three and a half symbolic years. **1 Kings 17:1** tells us that the **word of Elijah** had the

power to **shut heaven or open it**. When Israel was in apostasy Elijah's word shut heaven. When Israel repented of her apostasy, rain came once again. God had already told Israel that apostasy would lead to a withdrawal of rain

### **2 Chronicles 6:26, 27**

*"When the heavens are **shut up** and there is **no rain** because they **have sinned** against You, when they **pray** toward this place and **confess** Your name and **turn** from their sin because You afflict them,<sup>27</sup> then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and **send rain** on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance."*

The **apostasy of the Christian church** was the reason for the shutting of heaven in the days of the prophecy of the two witnesses. The Word of God and the Holy Spirit were **scarce** in those days as they were in the days of Elijah (on the word 'apostasy' for this period see 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4 (see also, Revelation 2:20-23).

### **Revelation 11:7**

*"When they **finish** their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them."*

The translation 'when they finish' is misleading because it leaves the impression that the beast from the abyss ascended after the 1260 years concluded in 1798. However, the same word 'finished' appears in **2 Timothy 4:7** where Paul was in prison and stated that he **had finished** the race. However, Paul was still alive when he said this. The same word also appears in **John 17:4** where Jesus, on His way to Gethsemane, prayed to His Father and said that He **had finished** His work on earth. However, Jesus still had to go to Gethsemane and to the cross where He would say, "*It is finished.*" Thus, Ellen White is correct when she quoted verse 7 and added in brackets, '*are finishing*' their testimony.

Ellen White identified the beast from the abyss as **revolutionary France**:

*"The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror did wage such a war*

against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed. The National Assembly did abolish the worship of the Deity. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn.” GC p. 273

As I mentioned before, Revelation 11:2ff is a further expansion of the fifth trumpet (Revelation 9:1-12) where the shaft of the bottomless pit is opened and King Abaddon or Apollyon leads an army of demons to hurt and sting people. Those who are stung do not die, but rather embrace a painful and pessimistic outlook on life.

“When France **publicly rejected God** and set aside the Bible, wicked men and **spirits of darkness** exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired—a kingdom free from the restraints of the law of God.” GC p. 286

“The restraining **Spirit of God**, which imposes **a check** upon the cruel power of Satan, was in a **great measure removed** [the shaft of the bottomless pit was opened with the key and Satan and his angels were given free reign], and he whose only delight is the wretchedness of men **was permitted** to work his will. Those who had chosen the service of rebellion were left to reap its fruits until the land was filled with crimes too horrible for pen to trace.” GC p. 286

Ellen White made an explicit connection between the 1260 years and the beast from the bottomless pit:

“As they were approaching the termination of their work in obscurity, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as **“the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit.”**” GC p. 268

“When they shall have finished [are finishing] their testimony.” The period when the two witnesses were to prophesy clothed in sackcloth, ended in 1798. As they **were approaching the termination** of their work in obscurity, war was to be made upon them by the power represented as; the beast that ascendeth out of the **bottomless pit.** In many of the nations of Europe, the powers that ruled in church and state had for centuries been controlled by Satan through the medium of the papacy. But here is brought to view **a new manifestation of satanic power.**” GC p. 268

“It had been Rome's policy, under a profession of reverence for the Bible, to keep it locked up in an unknown tongue and hidden away from the people. Under her



rule, the witnesses prophesied, 'clothed in sackcloth.' But **another power beast**—the beast from the **bottomless pit**—was to arise to make open, avowed war upon the word of God." *GC* p. 269

The renowned church historian, **Philip Schaff**, once stated to the American Society of Church History:

*"France rejected the Reformation—and reaped the Revolution." (Schaff, Progress, p. 44)*

### **Revelation 11:8**

*"And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the **great city** which **spiritually** is called **Sodom** and **Egypt**, where also our **Lord was crucified**."*

The word 'spiritually' in the NKJV indicates that we are dealing with symbols and not with **literal geographical locations**:

- ✓ NIV has "figuratively"
- ✓ NASB has "mystically";
- ✓ ESV has "symbolically"
- ✓ RSV has "allegorically"
- ✓ NRSV has "prophetically"

With the exception of Revelation 21:10 (where the New Jerusalem is described) the 'great city' in Revelation is always identified with Babylon (Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21).

Historians have referred to France as the **eldest daughter** of the papacy because she was the papacy's **first and staunchest supporter**. France persecuted God's people to the death more than any other kingdom of Europe (for example the St. Bartholomew Massacre).

*"Unhappy France reaped in blood the harvest she had sown. Terrible were the results of her submission to the controlling **power of Rome**. Where France, under the influence of Romanism, had set up the **first stake** at the opening of the Reformation, there the Revolution set up its first **guillotine**. On the very spot where the **first martyrs** to the Protestant faith were burned in the sixteenth century, the first victims were **guillotined** in the eighteenth. In **repelling the***

**gospel**, which would have brought her healing, France had opened the door to infidelity and ruin. When the **restraints** of God's law were cast aside, it was found that the laws of man were inadequate to **hold in check** the powerful tides of human passion; and the nation swept on to revolt and anarchy. The **war against the Bible** inaugurated an era, which stands in the world's history as the Reign of Terror. Peace and happiness were banished from the homes and hearts of men. No one was secure. He who triumphed today was suspected, condemned, tomorrow. **Violence and lust** held undisputed sway." GC p. 282

It is significant that France was the **tenth part** of the city mentioned later in the prophecy. The ten horns were the ten kingdoms of Europe but **only one** of them fell at this time.

"According to the words of the prophet, then, a little before the year 1798 some **power of satanic origin and character** would rise to make war upon the Bible. And in the land where the testimony of God's **two witnesses should thus be silenced**, there would be manifest the **atheism of the Pharaoh** and the **licentiousness of Sodom**." This prophecy has received a **most exact** and **striking** fulfillment in the history of France." GC p. 269

The Bible describes the **atheistic hardihood** of Egypt in the days of Moses:

#### **Exodus 5:2**

"And Pharaoh said, '**Who is the Lord** that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? **I do not know the Lord**, nor will I let Israel go.'"

**Ezekiel 29:3** tells us that Pharaoh claimed to have **creative powers**:

"Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, who has said, 'My River is my own; I have made it for myself.'"

**Daniel 11:40** describes the **king of the south** (identified as Egypt in verses 8-11) who rose against the king of the north at the **time of the end**. The time of the end begins in **1798**. This is the identical chronological point when the beast from the abyss arose in Revelation 11.

The king of the south in **1798 was France** who manifested the same defiant spirit as ancient Egypt and the king of the north is the papacy:

*"No monarch ever ventured upon more **open and highhanded rebellion** against the authority of Heaven than did the **king of Egypt**. When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered: "Who is Jehovah that I should hearken unto His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go." Exodus 5:2, A.R.V. **This is atheism**, and the nation **represented by Egypt** would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance." GC p. 269*

*"The great city' is also compared, 'spiritually,' to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in **licentiousness**. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfill the specifications of this scripture." GC p. 269*

Even today, we use the words sodomy and sodomize to describe sexual perversion (Genesis 19:5-8; Jude 7).

*"Where also our Lord was crucified." France also fulfilled this specification of the prophecy. In no land had the spirit of **enmity against Christ** been more strikingly displayed. In no country had the truth encountered more bitter and cruel opposition. In the persecution which France had visited upon the confessors of the gospel, she had crucified **Christ in the person of His disciples**." GC p. 271*

The church is the **body of Christ**, and whoever touches His body touches him. When **Saul of Tarsus** went on the road to Damascus to persecute Christians, Jesus met him and said, 'why do you persecute me?' In the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31-46) Jesus stated that what we do unto others we do unto Him. Whoever who touches His people, touches the apple of His eye (Zechariah 2:8). We are his body, his sheep, his army, his bride.

*"The **same master spirit [the beast from the bottomless pit]** that urged on the St. Bartholomew Massacre led also in the scenes of the Revolution. Jesus Christ was declared to be an impostor, and the rallying cry of the French infidels was, 'Crush the Wretch,' meaning Christ." GC p. 273*

Jesus is the Word of God **in person** and the Bible is **His written biography**. France, the eldest daughter of the papacy **crucified Christ** by crucifying the Bible. By killing the two witnesses, they **killed Christ** because the two Testaments give witness to Christ. It is possible to crucify Jesus afresh

(Hebrews 6:4-6; 1Corinthians 11:27). The **Bible received the same vile treatment** in the French Revolution that Jesus did in his trial and execution. The revolutionaries **tried, judged, mistreated and executed** Bible. However, Christ in the two witnesses resurrected and ascended to heaven.

Concerning the St. Bartholomew Massacre, Ellen White remarks:

*“As Christ was the invisible leader of His people from Egyptian bondage, **so was Satan the unseen leader of his subjects** in this horrible work of multiplying martyrs. For seven days, the massacre was continued in Paris, the first three with inconceivable fury. And it was not confined to the city itself, but by special order of the king was extended to all the provinces and towns where Protestants were found. Neither age nor sex was respected. Neither the innocent babe nor the man of gray hairs was spared. Noble and peasant, old and young, mother and child, were cut down together. Throughout France the butchery continued for two months. Seventy thousand of the very flower of the nation perished.” GC p. 272*

### **Revelation 11:9**

*“Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their **[of the two witnesses]** dead bodies **three-and-a-half days**, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.”*

In ancient Rome, **denying a person burial** was the utmost insult reserved only for the **worst criminals**. This is the way that France treated the two witnesses during the Revolution.

On **November 23, 1793**, the national assembly gave a decree that all churches and religious services were to cease. On **June 17, 1797**, France gave a decree allowing religious services once again.

### **Revelation 11:10**

*“And those who dwell on the earth will **rejoice** over them, **make merry**, and send gifts to one another, **because** these two prophets **tormented** those who dwell on the earth.”*

The word of God **torments those who disobey** it but brings peace to those who obey it. The pangs of conscience are **painful to the transgressor**.

*“Infidel France had silenced the **reproving voice** of God's two witnesses. The **word of truth** lay **dead in her streets**, and those who hated the restrictions and requirements of God's law were **jubilant**.” GC p. 274*

*“**Deprived of the Bible**, and abandoned to the teachings of bigotry and selfishness, the people were shrouded in ignorance and superstition, and sunken in vice, so that they were wholly **unfitted for self-government**.” GC p. 281*

*“But the outworking of all this was widely different from what Rome had purposed. Instead of holding the masses in a **blind submission** to her dogmas, her work resulted in making them **infidels and revolutionists**. Romanism they despised as priest craft. They beheld the clergy as a party to their oppression. The only god they knew was the god of Rome; her teaching was their only religion. They regarded her greed and cruelty as the legitimate fruit of the Bible, and they would have none of it.” GC p. 281*

### **Revelation 11:11**

*“Now after the three-and-a-half days the **breath of life** from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.”*

On **November 23, 1793**, the National Assembly uttered a decree abolishing religion but on **June 17, 1797**, the French government removed the restrictions against the practice of religion.

*“God's faithful witnesses, slain by the blasphemous power that ‘ascendeth out of the bottomless pit,’ were not long to remain silent. ‘After three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.’ Revelation 11:11. It was in 1793 that the decrees that abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting **toleration to the Scriptures**, was adopted by the same body.” GC p. 287*

### **Revelation 11:12**

*“And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they **ascended** to heaven in a cloud, and their **enemies** saw them.”*

The key question here is this: **Who are the enemies** who saw the two witnesses ascend to heaven after they resurrected? The first part of chapter

11 provides the answer. In the first instance, their enemies are the ones who exiled them during the 1260 years. The second enemy is the beast that arose from the bottomless pit. Both groups would watch the marvelous resurrection of the two witnesses. According to Revelation 10, the witnesses resurrected when the little book of Daniel 8-12 was unsealed and knowledge of Bible prophecy increased. This happened exactly in 1798, as we shall see when we study Revelation 10.

*“Concerning the two witnesses the prophet declares further: ‘And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.’ Revelation 11:12. Since France made war upon God's two witnesses, they have been honored as never before. In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was organized. This was followed by similar organizations, with numerous branches, upon the continent of Europe. In 1816, the American Bible Society was founded. When the British Society was formed, the Bible had been printed and circulated in fifty tongues. It has since been translated into many hundreds of languages and dialects.”* GC p. 287

*“For the fifty years preceding 1792, little attention was given to the work of foreign missions. No new societies were formed, and there were but few churches that made any effort for the spread of Christianity in heathen lands. However, toward the close of the eighteenth century a great change took place. Men became dissatisfied with the results of rationalism [notice how she links the dissatisfaction with rationalism that began with Descartes] and realized the necessity of divine revelation and experimental religion. From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth.”*

*“The improvements in printing have given an impetus to the work of circulating the Bible. The increased facilities for communication between different countries, the breaking down of ancient barriers of prejudice and national exclusiveness, and the loss of secular power by the pontiff of Rome have opened the way for the entrance of the word of God. For some years the Bible has been sold without restraint in the streets of Rome, and it has now been carried to every part of the habitable globe.”* GC pp. 287, 288

*“While a student at school, Gausson had encountered that spirit of **rationalism which pervaded all Europe during the latter part of the eighteenth and the opening of the nineteenth century**; and when he entered the ministry he was not only ignorant of true faith, but **inclined to skepticism** . . . He could not rest satisfied with the **teachings of rationalism**, and in studying the Bible and searching for clearer light he was, after a time, led to a positive faith. GC p. 364*

### **Revelation 11:13**

*“In the same hour there was a great **earthquake**, and a **tenth** of the city **fell**. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the **rest** [**loipos: remnant, same word as Revelation 12:17**] were **afraid** [**feared**] and **gave glory** to the God of heaven.”*

*“**France** was **shaken** as if by an **earthquake**. Religion, law, social order, the family, the state, and the church—all were smitten down by the impious hand that had been lifted against the law of God.” GC p. 286*

**Only a fraction** of the great city fell during the French Revolution. **Revelation 16:17-21** describes the final global and **cataclysmic earthquake** that will destroy the totality of Babylon. The events of the French Revolution actually **foreshadow the events** that will transpire during the **last three plagues** of Revelation 16.

**Verse 12** addresses the **enemies** of God’s people who see the witnesses resurrect. However, Revelation 11:13 also brings to view **a remnant** who **feared God** and gave **Him glory**. This is a direct reference to the **first angel’s message**. That is to say, we have here the introduction to the first angel’s message, which falls within the period of the sixth trumpet.

The book of Revelation uses the expression, ‘*give glory to God*’ in a positive sense. The righteous fear God and give glory to Him (Revelation 14:7). The wicked never give glory to God in the book of Revelation; they rather **do not give Him glory** (Revelation 16:9).

### **A Future Event Similar to the French Revolution**

*“At the same time anarchy is seeking to sweep away all law, not only divine, but human. The centralizing of wealth and power; the vast combinations for the enriching of the few at the expense of the many; the combinations of the poorer*

*classes for the defense of their interests and claims; the spirit of unrest, of riot and bloodshed; the world-wide dissemination of the same teachings that led to the French Revolution--all are tending to involve the whole world in a struggle similar to that which convulsed France.” Ed p. 228*

## **The Passion of Jesus and the Bible**

We must read the story of the two witnesses in the light of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus:

- Jesus carried on a ministry of **three and a half years** in the midst of great **persecution and opposition**.
- When Jesus was **about to finish** His testimony, demons united with men were let loose and they made **merry** over him. This was the hour of the **powers of darkness** (Luke 22:3). Satan and his angels unleashed all their power against Jesus.
- The enemies of Jesus treated Him as the French revolutionaries treated the Scriptures, dragging him **down the streets** and making merry (Matthew 27:50-54).
- The **enemies** of Jesus gazed upon Him as He **hung on the cross**.
- There was a **great earthquake** when Jesus died and when he resurrected (Matthew 28:2).

*“An earthquake marked the hour when Christ laid down His life, and another earthquake witnessed the moment when He took it up in triumph. He who had vanquished death and the grave came forth from the tomb with the tread of a conqueror, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder.” DA p. 780*

- *“Nature sympathized with the suffering of its Author. The heaving earth, the rent rocks, proclaimed that it was the Son of God who died. There was a mighty earthquake. The veil of the Temple was rent in twain. Terror seized the executioners and spectators as they beheld the sun veiled in darkness, and felt the earth shake beneath them, and saw and heard the rending of the rocks. The mocking and jeering of the chief priests and elders were hushed as Christ commended His spirit into the hands of His Father.*



*The astonished throng began to withdraw and grope their way in the darkness to the city. They smote upon their breasts as they went and in terror, speaking scarcely above a whisper, said among themselves: 'It is an innocent person that has been murdered. What if, indeed, He is, as He asserted, the Son of God?'" LHU p. 42*

- When Jesus died, there was **fear** on the part of the **centurion** (Matthew 27:54) and there was fear when He resurrected (Matthew 28:4; Mark 16:5, 8).
- Jesus was **caught up to heaven** in a cloud after being slain (Acts 1:9-11).
- ✓ After Jesus resurrected the **gospel spread** like a California grassfire and no one was able to detain it (Acts 1:6-8).





## **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS” A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 8: MATTHEW, LUKE AND THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES**

A study of the two witnesses in Revelation 11 would not be complete without taking some time to study parallel passages in Matthew 24 and Luke 21 that bear directly on the subject at hand.

#### **Matthew 24 and Luke 21**

**Matthew 24** presents four sequential signs:

- The destruction of earthly Jerusalem (verses 15-20)
- A period of tribulation (verses 21-28)
- Signs in the sun and moon (verse 29)
- Powers in the heavens are shaken and the Son of Man appears (verses 30-31)

However, **Luke 21** is the parallel passage and appears to have only three sequential signs:

- The destruction of earthly Jerusalem (verses 20-24)
- Signs in the sun, moon and stars (verse 25)

- The powers of the **heaven will be shaken** and the coming of the Son of Man (verses 25, 26)

The sign that appears to be missing in Luke 21 is the **tribulation sign**. However, is the tribulation sign **really missing** in Luke? The answer is no. Luke simply describes the tribulation **sign differently** as the period during which the gentiles would trample upon Jerusalem.

## **Literal and Spiritual Jerusalem**

One thing is clear from the first part of Luke 21:24. This part of the verse found its fulfillment in the destruction of the **literal** city of **Jerusalem** and its **temple**:

*“And they will fall by the **edge of the sword** and be led away **captive** into all nations.”*

On the other hand, the second part of Luke 21:24 describes the trampling of **spiritual Jerusalem** by **spiritual Gentiles** for a symbolic period:

*“And **Jerusalem** will be **trampled** by **Gentiles until** the **times of the Gentiles** are fulfilled **[completed]**.”*

In other words, in Luke 21:24 there are **two cities of Jerusalem**, one literal and one symbolic, **two tramplings**, one literal and one symbolic and **two groups of gentiles**, one literal and one symbolic.

**Louis Were** expressed a very important principle of prophetic interpretation:

*“When passing over into the Christian Era there is an automatic transition from **literal to spiritual** Babylon; from **literal to spiritual** Jerusalem; from **literal** lands of Israel and Babylon to their **spiritual** antitypes.” Louis F. Were, *The King of the North at Jerusalem*, p. 75*

When the **second part** of Luke 21:24 describes the trampling of Jerusalem it is not referring to the **physical city** of brick and mortar; Jesus is **personifying** the city. Notice the following texts that use the word ‘Jerusalem’ to refer to the people in the city:

## **2 Kings 24:14-15**

*"Also he carried into captivity **all Jerusalem**: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land."*

Obviously, Nebuchadnezzar did not carry the literal city of Jerusalem—with buildings and all—into captivity.

**Luke 19:41-44**: As He descended the Mount of Olives, Jesus **personified** the city of Jerusalem:

*Now as He drew near, He saw the **city** and **wept over it**,<sup>42</sup> saying, "If **you** had known, even you, especially in this **your day**, the things that make for **your** peace! However, now they are hidden from **your** eyes.<sup>43</sup> For days will come upon **you** when **your** enemies will build an embankment around **you**, surround you and close **you** in on every side,<sup>44</sup> and level **you**, and **your children within you**, to the ground; and they will not leave in **you** one stone upon another, because **you** did not know the time of **your** visitation."*

**Matthew 23:37-39**: Clearly, the brick and mortar did not kill the prophets!

*"O **Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, the one who **kills the prophets** and stones those who are sent to **her**! How often I wanted to gather **your** children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but **you** were not willing!<sup>38</sup> See! **Your** house is left to you desolate;<sup>39</sup> for I say to **you**, **you** shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' "*

## **Four Key Elements in Luke 21:24B and Revelation 11:2**

There are four key elements in Luke 21:24B:

- 'Jerusalem'
- 'trampling'
- 'gentiles'
- 'times' (the word 'until' specifies a **definite ending point**)

## **Revelation 11:2, 3**

*"However, leave out **the court** which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given [was given] to the **Gentiles**. And they will **tread** the **holy city***

underfoot for **forty-two months**.<sup>3</sup> And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**, clothed in sackcloth."

When **John wrote** Revelation 11:2 at the end of the first century, the **Romans had destroyed** the literal city of Jerusalem and it had been in ruins for **25 years**. The gentiles had **already taken the Jews captive** so this cannot refer to the trampling of the **literal city** of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D.

*"Even the literal treading down of the outer sanctuary had taken place **more than forty-two months** before John's time, implying that the number was symbolic for the whole period from its **devastation** in some sense until its **restoration**."*

Revelation 11:2 contains the very same **four elements** that Jesus mentioned in Luke 21:24B:

- 'Holy City' ('Jerusalem')
- 'trampling'
- 'gentiles'
- '42 months' ('times of the gentiles')

Who are the gentiles? What does the word 'Jerusalem' mean? We have already pointed out that Jerusalem during the Christian dispensation refers to God's faithful church and gentiles refers to those who are enemies of Christ's true church. **Several texts** make this clear (Revelation 3:9; Matthew 18:15-18 tells us that it is possible for a believer to be considered a gentile rather than a spiritual citizen of spiritual Jerusalem; Romans 9:6-8; Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 3:26-29; John 1:47-49; John 4:23, 24; John 8:31-58).

In Revelation 11:1 the Angel told John to measure the **temple** and **those who worship** in it but not to measure the court because 'it was given' to the gentiles for 42 months (the **sanctuary** and the **host**). When John wrote the book of **Revelation**, Rome had already destroyed the **literal temple** and the **literal Jews** had been scattered among the nations. This means that the temple referred to here must be the one in **heaven** (Hebrews, Revelation) and the **worshippers** must be those who worship there **spiritually**. We are to

understand that the temple is the heavenly sanctuary literally and the church spiritually.

## **The Link between Revelation 11:2, 3 Daniel 7 and 8**

According to Revelation 11:2, the trampling of the city occurs for a period of **42 months**, also described, in the following verse as **1260 days**. This links the **42 months** of verse 2 with the **1260 days** of verse 3. Furthermore, it links **Revelation 11:2, 3** with the 1260 days of **Revelation 12:14**, the 42 months of **Revelation 13:5** and the 'time, times and the dividing of time' of **Revelation 12:6**.

- ✓ 42 months (Revelation 11:2)
- ✓ 1260 days (Revelation 11:3)
- ✓ 1260 days (Revelation 12:6)
- ✓ 42 months (Revelation 13:5)
- ✓ 3.5 times (Revelation 12:14)
- ✓ 3.5 times (Daniel 7:25)

In order to understand Revelation 11:2, 3 we must go back to the **Old Testament roots** of this prophecy and we find those roots in **Daniel 7:21, 25; 8:11-13; 11:31-35**. In these verses, we find a power that tramples underfoot the **temple of God** and its **true worshipers, not by the Roman Empire** (that had already passed away), but by a rebellious little horn that introduced an idolatrous 'Christian' worship that caused desolation.

According to **Daniel 7:21, 25** this little horn blasphemed God and persecuted His people for 3.5 prophetic times.

Let us consider the historical framework of the little horn's work in Daniel 7:

- Lion: Babylon
- Bear: Medes and Persians
- Leopard: Greece
- Dragon: Rome
- 10 horns: Division of the Roman Empire
- Little horn: Papacy (3.5 times)

*“He [the little horn] shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.”*

Immediately after the nefarious work of the little horn, the judgment in the heavenly temple begins (Daniel 7:8-10; Revelation 11:1). This order of events is very similar to Revelation 11:1-3 where the measuring of the heavenly naós (Daniel 7:8, 9, 13, 14, 21, 22, 25-27) follows the trampling of Jerusalem for 42 months. These verses prove that the measuring of the temple follows the trampling of the city and not vice-versa.

**Daniel 8** further amplifies the nefarious work of this little horn power by specifically saying that it trampled on the sanctuary and the host (**Daniel 8:13**), language very similar to Revelation 11:2, 3.

Daniel 8 describes two distinct stages of this little horn power. One stage is horizontal and the other vertical and both are Roman.

**Daniel 8:9: Horizontal** on earth:

*“And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.”*

**Daniel 8:10-13: Vertical** toward heaven:

*“And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them. 11 He even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down. 12 Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered. 13 Then I heard a holy one speaking; and another holy one said to that certain one who was speaking, “How long will the vision be, concerning the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation, the giving of both the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot?”*

**Revelation 13:1, 2, 5-7** also mentions the 42 months. There, the beast persecutes the saints and blasphemes the heavenly tabernacle and those who



dwell in heaven. The **sequence of powers** is identical to the one in Daniel 7 (lion, bear, leopard, dragon, 10 horns and beast). The inevitable conclusion is that this **Jerusalem** is in the **Christian era** after the demise of the Roman Empire.

## **Link between Daniel 7 and 8 and Revelation 11 and 13**

The sequence of powers in Revelation 13:1, 2, 5:

- Lion
- Bear
- Leopard
- Dragon
- 10 Horns
- Beast (42 months)

### **Revelation 13:5-7**

*“And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for **forty-two months**.<sup>6</sup> Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His **name**, His **tabernacle**, and those who **dwell in heaven**.<sup>7</sup> It was granted to him to make **war with the saints** and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.”*

As noted before, the **Revelation 13:5-7** and **Revelation 11:2** bear a close relationship because both mention the same period—**42 months**

## **Daniel 7 and Revelation 12**

Furthermore, **Revelation 11:3** bears a relationship with **Revelation 12:6** because both refer to the **1260 days**.

Even further, the terminology of **Revelation 12:6** shares common language with **Revelation 12:14** and **Revelation 12:14** in turn has a connection with **Daniel 7:25** by the common reference to the **‘time, times and the dividing of time’**.

## **Revelation 12:13, 14**

*"Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. <sup>14</sup> But the **woman** was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the **wilderness** to her **place**, where she is **nourished** for a **time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent."*

## **Revelation 12:6**

*"Then the **woman** fled into the **wilderness**, where she has a **place prepared** by God that they should **feed her** there **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**."*

## **Daniel 7:25**

*"He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a **time and times and half a time**."*

Therefore, we can safely reach the conclusion that the **3.5 times**, the **1260 days** and the **42 months** are all **parallel expressions**. A careful study of these time prophecies indicates clearly that their fulfillment took place during a 1260-year period **after** the **disintegration** of the **Roman Empire**. This means that the Jerusalem spoken of is **not literal Jerusalem** but rather, **spiritual Jerusalem** because literal Jerusalem had already been devastated by the year 70 A. D.

The Presbyterian minister, **Albert Barnes** was right on target when he wrote:

*"This [**the 42 months**] would embrace the whole period of the ascendancy and prevalence of **the papacy**, or the whole time of the continuance of that corrupt domination in which **Christendom was to be trodden down and corrupted by it**. . . Thus regarded, this would properly express the time of the ascendancy of the papal power, and the end of the 'forty-two months,' or 'twelve hundred and sixty years', would denote the time when the influence of that **power would cease**." (From **Barnes' Notes**, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by BibleSoft, Inc. All rights reserved).*

## Thoughts on Daniel 9:26, 27

We have reached the conclusion that the two halves of Luke 21:24 describe two distinct 'tramlings' of two different 'Jerusalems'. The first half describes **literal Jerusalem** trampled by the **literal Romans**. The second half of the verse describes the trampling of **spiritual Jerusalem** (the Church) by **spiritual Rome** (the papacy). Revelation 11:2 expands upon the second half of Luke 21:24.

Now let us take a few moments to focus on Daniel 9:26, 27

### **Daniel 9:26-27**

*"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come **shall destroy the city and the sanctuary**. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war **desolations** are determined. <sup>27</sup> Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of **abominations** shall be one who makes **desolate**, even **until the consummation**, which is determined, is poured out on the **desolate**."*

These verses describe the trampling of literal Jerusalem in the year **70 AD**. It is significant that the very words **abomination** and **desolation** that appear in Matthew 24:15 appear here.

It is probable that Daniel 9:26, 27 refers not only to a **future desolation** of **literal Jerusalem** in the year 70 AD but also to a **subsequent desolation** at the end of time. This seems to be the case because of the plural form '**desolations**'. The plural form implies **more than one** desolation.

If this is the case, then the first part of Daniel 9:26, 27 depicts the **first desolation** of literal Jerusalem in **AD 70** (as does the first part of Luke 21:24) while the second part of Daniel 9:27 describes the **desolation of spiritual Jerusalem** that Jesus described in the second part of Luke 21:24.

Matthew and Mark refer to this period as the **tribulation**, a word that Jesus referred to as the **trampling** of Jerusalem by the Gentiles.

This interpretation fits very well with the fact that Jesus **blended** the description of the literal Jerusalem and spiritual Jerusalem:

*“The prophecy which He uttered was **twofold** in its meaning; while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, it **prefigured** also the terrors of the last great day. GC p. 25*

*“The Savior's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have **another fulfillment**, of which that terrible desolation was but a **faint shadow**. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon his law.” GC p. 36*

According to Revelation 13:3 the deadly wound of the papacy will heal and then she will **continue the abominations** she practiced during the **first stage** of her existence. Revelation 17 describes this time by using the words “**abominations**” and “**desolate**”.

### **Revelation 17:4-6, 15, 16**

*“The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of **abominations** and the filthiness of her fornication. <sup>5</sup> And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE **ABOMINATIONS** OF THE EARTH. <sup>6</sup> I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement. . . .<sup>15</sup> Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. <sup>16</sup> And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her **desolate** and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire.”*

Even further, 2 Thessalonians 2 explains that there would be a **long period of apostasy** (the times of the gentiles or 42 months in Matthew and Revelation) before Jesus comes. This is the sign that Jesus mentioned in the second part of Luke 21:24 and Revelation 11:2.



# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS” A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 9: THE LITTLE SEALED BOOK**

### **Introduction**

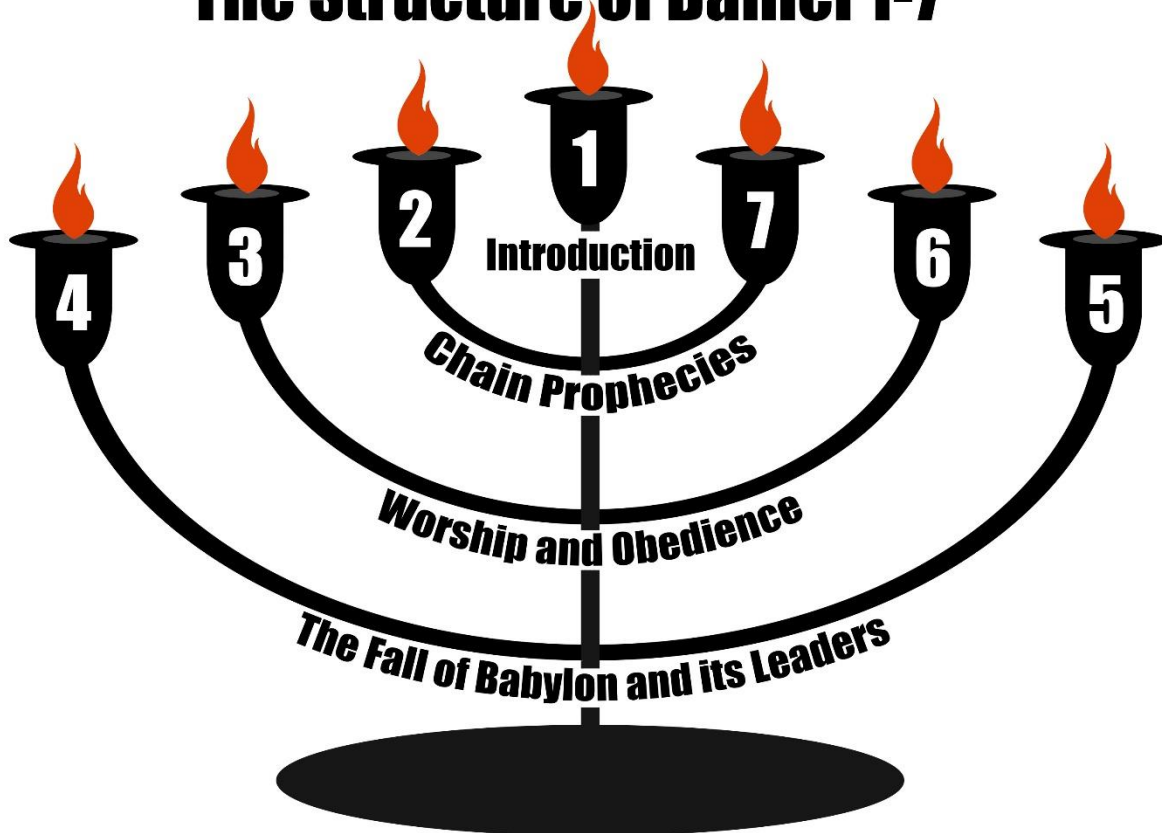
A review of the chiastic structure of Daniel 1-7 reveals that the book of Daniel is actually composed of two books in one. The first book embraces chapters one to seven and the second Daniel eight to twelve.

Here is the structure of the first book, Daniel 1-7:

- Chapter 1: Introduction to the book
- Chapters 2 and 7: Chain prophecies
- Chapters 3 and 6: Conflict over the law and worship
- Chapters 4 and 5: The arrogance of Babylon and the fall of its leaders

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# The Structure of Daniel 1-7



## The First Book

Daniel 7 describes a sequence of powers that lead up to the time of the judgment:

- **Lion** (Babylon) 605-539 BC (Daniel 7:4)
- **Bear** (Medes and Persians) 539-331 BC (Daniel 7:5)
- **Leopard** (Greece) 331-168 BC (Daniel 7:6)
- **Dragon** (Roman Empire) 168 BC-476 AD (Daniel 7:7)
- **Ten horns** (Roman Empire divided) 476 AD - 538 AD (Daniel 7:7, 23)
- **Little horn** (Papal Rome during the 1260 years) 538 AD - 1798 AD (Daniel 7:8, 24, 25)
- **The judgment** (the [1] investigation, the [2] verdict and the [3] execution or reward) No precise date given in Daniel 7, but the process will begin sometime after 1798 (Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 26, 27)

- **In consequence of** the judgment, Christ and His **saints will possess** the kingdoms of the world (Daniel 7:14, 22, 26, 27)

**Note:** The sequence of powers indicates that the judgment would begin sometime **after 1798** and would conclude with Christ receiving the kingdom from His Father. No one before October 23, 1844 understood that the judgment would occur in **three stages** (investigative **in heaven**, sentencing **in heaven** and rewarding **on earth**).

**Daniel 7:9-10, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22:** Daniel 7 runs in four repetitive cycles:

- ✓ Daniel 7:9, 10
- ✓ Daniel 7:17, 18
- ✓ Daniel 7:21, 22
- ✓ Daniel 7:25, 27

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days [in heaven]** was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; <sup>10</sup> A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him **[in heaven]**. The **court was seated [in heaven]**, and the **books were opened [the investigation]**. . . <sup>13</sup> "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He **came to the Ancient of Days [in heaven]**, and they brought Him near before Him **[before the Father in heaven]**. <sup>14</sup> Then **to Him [to Jesus] was given [by the Father in heaven] dominion and glory and a kingdom [clearly Jesus receives the kingdom in heaven before the second coming]**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and **His kingdom** the one which shall not be destroyed. . . <sup>17</sup> "Those great beasts, which are four, are four kings which arise out of the earth but the **saints** of the Most High **shall receive the kingdom**, and **possess the kingdom [the execution of the sentence]** forever, even forever and ever.' <sup>21</sup> "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, <sup>22</sup> **until the Ancient of Days came**, and a judgment was made **in favor of the saints [in heaven]** of the Most*

High **[in heaven]**, and **the time came [at the second coming]** for the **saints to possess** the kingdom **[when Jesus comes]**. . . <sup>25</sup> He **[the little horn]** shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. <sup>26</sup> 'But the **court shall be seated [for the investigation]**, and they shall take away his dominion **[in heaven]**, To consume and destroy it forever. <sup>27</sup> Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people **[on earth]**, the saints of the Most High. **His [Jesus']** kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey **Him [Jesus]**."

Summary of the **three stages** of the judgment in Daniel 7:

- The judgment sits, God opens the books in heaven, and the **records** of all those who have professed the name of Jesus **are examined**.
- When the **investigation ends**, God will pronounce a **sentence** in favor of the saints in heaven and the Father will give Christ the kingdom.
- Then the time will come when Jesus and His **subjects** will **empirically** possess the kingdom.

Ellen White, in full harmony with the Bible, understood that when the investigation is over, the **kingdom of Jesus** is complete:

*"**Every case** had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the **[investigative] judgment** had been going on for the **righteous** dead, and then for the **righteous** living. Christ had **received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were **made up**. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, **was given to Jesus** and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus **was to reign** as King of kings and Lord of lords." *EW*, p. 280*



## The Second Book

### Daniel 12:4

*"But you, Daniel, **shut up** the words and **seal** the book **until** the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and **knowledge** shall increase."*

The second book in Daniel was **closed and sealed** in the days of the prophet (around 538 BC), to be opened in the **time of the end** (1798). This verse has nothing to do with the **increase of science and technology**. When God removes the seal from the book at the time of the end, people will run to-and-fro **seeking an increased knowledge** of the **contents of the book**. This is the way that **Ellen White** invariably understood the expression, 'knowledge shall be increased'.

**Amos 8:11, 12:** The identical Hebrew idiom of 'moving to and fro' in Daniel 12:4 appears in Amos 8:11, 12:

*'Behold, the days are coming,' says the Lord GOD, "that I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD. They shall wander from sea to sea, and from north to east; they shall **run to and fro**, seeking **the word of the LORD**, but shall not find it."*

The book that Daniel sealed until the time of the end (Daniel 12:4, 9) is **not the ENTIRE** book of Daniel but rather the **PORTION OR PART** whose central theme is the **2300 days** and the beginning date for the heavenly investigative **judgment**. We know this for at least **five reasons**:

#### **Reason #1:**

The book of Daniel contains **two different languages**. Chapter one, which is the introduction to the entire book, is in Hebrew. **Chapters 2-7** are in **Aramaic** and **chapters 8-12** are in Hebrew. The **difference in language** between Daniel 2-7 and Daniel 8-12 strongly hints that the book is composed of **two distinct units**.

## Reason #2:

There is clear evidence that most of Daniel, chapters 1-7 (with the exception of the judgment scene in Daniel 7), was understood long before the 'time of the end'. The church father Hippolytus who wrote in the third century A. D. understood the sequence of powers in Daniel 7:

*"In speaking of a 'lioness from the sea', he [Daniel] meant the rising of the kingdom of Babylon and that this was the 'golden head of the image'... Then after the lioness he sees a second beast, 'like a bear', which signified the Persians. For after the Babylonians the Persians obtain the power. And in saying that 'it had three ribs in its mouth', he pointed to the three nations, Persians, Medes, and Babylonians, which were expressed in the image by the silver after the gold. Then comes the third beast, 'a leopard', which means the Greeks; for after the Persians, Alexander of Macedon had the power, when Darius was overthrown, which was also indicated by the brass in the image. And in saying that the beast 'had four wings of a fowl, and four heads', he showed most clearly how the kingdom of Alexander was parted into four divisions. For in speaking of four heads, he meant the four kings that arose out of it. For Alexander, when dying, divided his kingdom into four parts. Then he says, 'the fourth beast (was) dreadful and terrible: it had iron teeth, and claws of brass'. Who, then, are meant by this but the Romans, whose kingdom, the kingdom that still stands, is expressed by the iron? 'For', says he, 'its legs are of iron.'" L. E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, volume 1, p. 272*

Did Hippolytus also understand the meaning of the ten horns and the little horn?

*"Let us look at what is before us more carefully, and scan it, as it were, with open eye. The 'golden head of the image' is identical with the 'lioness', by which the Babylonians were represented. 'The golden shoulders and arms of silver' are the same with the 'bear', by which the Persians and Medes are meant. 'The belly and thighs of brass' are the 'leopard', by which the Greeks who ruled from Alexander onwards are intended. The 'legs of iron' are the 'dreadful and terrible beast', by which the Romans who hold the empire now are meant. The 'toes of clay and iron'*

*are the 'ten horns' which are to be. The 'one other little horn springing up in their midst is the 'antichrist'. The stone that 'smites the image and breaks it in pieces', and that filled the whole earth, is Christ, who comes from heaven [notice that he did not understand that there was going to be a heavenly pre-Advent investigative judgment] and brings judgment on the world."* L. E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers, volume 1, p. 272

The evidence from these quotations indicates that Hippolytus understood everything about Daniel 7 except one vitally important detail, the investigative pre-Advent judgment in heaven before the second coming. According to the understanding of Hippolytus, the judgment would take place when Jesus comes from heaven to earth to judge the world and establish His everlasting kingdom! However, as we have already noted, the investigative judgment and the verdict take place in heaven before Jesus returns to the earth.

We should note that people could understand some portions of Daniel that found their fulfillment before the time of the end. The historical sections of chapters 1-7 were easy to understand. Daniel 8 explained the meaning of the ram and the he-goat long before the time of the end. The prophecy of the seventy weeks was no mystery. People understood many of the early portions of Daniel 11 before the time of the end. The pagan philosopher, Porphyry, entertained a discussion with church father Tertullian arguing that the earlier portions of Daniel 11 described so precisely Greek and early Roman history that it could not have been written in the sixth century BC but rather by an anonymous writer in the second century.

However, the time element relating to the heavenly pre-advent judgment remained sealed until the time of the end. God commanded Daniel to seal the message concerning the 2300 days and the heavenly pre-advent judgment until the time of the end because only then would it be true that the hour of God's judgment had arrived.

### **Reason #3:**

Ellen White explicitly states repeatedly in her writings that the book that Daniel sealed until the time of the end was not the totality of the book of Daniel

but rather the **PORTION** or **PART** of the book that has to do with the date for the beginning of the **judgment** as depicted in the **2300-day prophecy**. Following are some of her comments.

*"In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end. Here is the complement of the book of Daniel. One is a prophecy; the other a revelation. The book that was sealed is not the Revelation, but **that portion** of the prophecy of Daniel relating to the **last days**. The angel commanded, "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end." Daniel 12:4." Acts of the Apostles, p. 585*

*"The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but **this message [Revelation 14:6, 7]** is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed **only in the last days**, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment had come. The prophecies present a **succession of events leading down** to the opening of the judgment [**the fulfillment of Daniel 7 and 8 begins in the days of the prophet and continue in succession until the judgment**]. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. However, **that part** of his prophecy that related to the **last days**, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal 'to the time of the end.' **Not till we reach** this time could a message concerning the **judgment** be proclaimed, **based on the fulfillment** of these prophecies. However, at the **time of the end**, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4." The Great Controversy, p. 355*

*"The words of the angel to Daniel relating to the **last days** were to be understood in the **time of the end**. At that time, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Daniel 12:4, 10" The Desire of Ages, p. 234*

*"The unsealing of the little book was the **message in relation to time [the 2300 days]**." Manuscript Releases, volume 1, p. 99*

*"Honored by men with the responsibilities of state and with the secrets of kingdoms bearing universal sway, Daniel was honored by God as His ambassador, and was given many revelations of the mysteries of ages to come. His wonderful*

prophecies, as recorded by him in **chapters 7 to 12** of the book bearing his name, **were not fully understood even by the prophet himself**; but before his life labors closed, he was given the blessed assurance that ‘**at the end of the days**’—in the **closing period of this world's history**—he would again be permitted to stand in his lot and place [**not in person but through the unsealing of his book**]. **It was not given him to understand all that God had revealed of the divine purpose**. ‘Shut up the words, and seal the book,’ he was directed concerning his prophetic writings; these were to be sealed ‘**even to the time of the end**.’ ‘Go thy way, Daniel,’ the angel once more directed the faithful messenger of Jehovah; ‘for the words are closed up and sealed till **the time of the end**. . . . Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot **at the end of the days**.’” Daniel 12:4, 9, 13 Prophets and Kings, p. 547

#### **Reason #4:**

The **internal evidence** of **Daniel 8-12** proves beyond any doubt that these chapters compose the little book sealed until the time of the end. These chapters have a **central theme** that bonds the together—the 2300 days and the beginning date for the heavenly investigative judgment. Let us consider the content of these chapters, **one by one** to see how they relate to the **2300 days** and the heavenly **judgment**.

#### **Daniel 8:**

The vision in this chapter describes the historical **chain of events** that precede **the beginning** of the investigative judgment:

- The **ram with two horns**: The vision begins with the **Medo-Persian** kingdom.
- The **he-goat**: The kingdom of **Greece**.
- The **notable horn** on the head of the he-goat: The first king of the Grecian dynasty, **Alexander the Great**.
- The **four horns** that came out on the head of the scapegoat after the great horn was broken: The **four divisions** of the Grecian Empire after Alexander’s death.

- The **little horn**: Secular Rome extended **horizontally** on the earth toward the south, the east and the glorious land.
- The little horn then **morphed** into a power that grew **vertically** to heaven, persecuted the saints on earth and interfered with the work of Jesus in the **heavenly sanctuary**.
- The **2300 days** at the end of which the sanctuary **would be cleansed**

The vision of Daniel 8 covers the period from the ram until the end of the 2300 days. When the ending point arrived, the process of **cleansing the sanctuary** began.

The problem is that Daniel 8 provides us with the length of the time- period but does not provide us with a starting point for the 2300-year prophecy so we have no way of knowing when the prophecy begins or ends!

### **Four Differences**

There are **four differences** between the prophecy of **Daniel 8** and the prophetic outlines of **Daniel 2** and **7**:

- First, while in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 the prophetic series begins with the kingdom of Babylon (the **gold** and the **lion**) Daniel 8 has **no symbol** for the kingdom of **Babylon**. The vision begins during the period of the **Persian kingdom**.

The **usual argument** given for the absence of Babylon in the vision of Daniel 8 is that the kingdom of Babylon was **about to pass from history**. However, the **date** that this chapter provides indicates that the kingdom of Babylon would not pass away for another **twelve years**.

- Second, in contrast to the voracious wild beasts in Daniel 7, the animals in Daniel 8 are domestic **sanctuary animals**. The priests offered a **ram** in the **daily** sanctuary service and they sacrificed a **he goat** in the **yearly service**. This strongly hints that the **central theme** of Daniel 8 is the **daily** (which the little horn took away) and the **yearly** (when the heavenly judgment rectifies the verdicts of earthly courts) services of the sanctuary.

- Third, there is only **one symbol** in Daniel 8 for both **pagan** and **papal** Rome, a little horn. The horn first spreads out **horizontally** to the **east**, the **south** and the **glorious land** and then **morphs** and extends **vertically** to heaven. In similar fashion to the fourth beast of Daniel 7, the dragon first extends **politically** and **geographically** and then, as with the little horn of Daniel 7, it morphs into a religious system.

The **introduction of another beast** into Daniel 8 to represent the difference between pagan and papal Rome would have **spoiled** the **symmetry of the chapter** that emphasizes the two domestic beasts of the sanctuary service.

- Fourth, while the chain of prophetic events in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7 ends with the setting up of Christ's everlasting kingdom, there is no reference in Daniel 8 to this final event. Gabriel interpreted the entire chapter except the 2300 days. Daniel **got sick** before Gabriel was able to finish his explanation of the entire vision (Daniel 8:26, 27). This is the reason why Gabriel **came back** in Daniel 9-12 to explain the things that had **remained unexplained** in chapter 8.

### **Daniel 9:**

As noted before, Daniel 8 mentions the 2300-day prophecy but does not provide a **starting point**. In **chapter 9**, however, the crucial **starting point** for the 2300 days is given. The seventy weeks constitute the **first 490 years** of the 2300-day prophecy and those years **begin** during the kingdom of **Persia** in the year 457 BC. This is the real reason why Daniel 8 does not mention the kingdom of **Babylon**. The 2300 days begin during the reign of Persia and not during the reign of Babylon.

### **Daniel 10:**

**In order** for the prophecy of the 2300 days to be fulfilled (especially the 70 weeks), it was necessary for the **kings of Persia** to give **certain decrees** for Israel to go back to their land to rebuild their **temple, city, walls** and to restore a **functioning Hebrew theocracy**.

**Satan** (the prince of Persia) **knew this** and therefore he worked on the **minds of the Persian kings** to discourage **them** from allowing Israel to return to their land to rebuild the temple, the city, and the walls and to reestablish a working theocracy. If Israel **did not return**, the fulfillment of the prophecy of the **2300 days could not begin** and God's plan would be frustrated. However, in the end, **Michael** came to help Gabriel and the prophecy of the 2300 days began right on schedule. Ellen White explains:

*"While **Satan was striving to influence the highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia** to show **disfavor** to God's people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel, we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. For three weeks Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences **at work on the mind of Cyrus**; and before the contest closed, **Christ Himself came to Gabriel's aid.**" PK, pp. 571, 572*

### **Daniel 11:1-12:3**

In chapter 11, Gabriel will complete the explanation that he suspended in **Daniel 8**. It is important to underline that there is no new vision in this chapter, **only an explanation**. This indicates that Daniel 11 is the **explanation of the vision of Daniel 8** because there is no other vision between chapter 8 and chapter 11. Gabriel will begin the explanation of the vision of Daniel 8 at the same starting point:

- As in Daniel 8, the explanation of Daniel 11 begins during the kingdom of **Persia** rather than Babylon (Daniel 11:2).
- The explanation continues with **Greece**.
- Alexander the Great, the **first king** of Greece.
- Then the **four divisions** of Alexander's empire.
- The chapter then describes **the dominion of pagan Rome**.
- **Papal Rome** during the 1260 years is next.



- The deadly wound is then referred to in Daniel 11:40A (the king of the south attacks the king of the north at the time of the end. The time of the end begins, as we shall see, in 1798 AD).
- The vision then takes us beyond the 1260 years of papal oppression to the final persecution against God's people when the king of the North's wound is healed (11:40-45).
- When the king of the north goes out to destroy and annihilate God's people and sets up in a strategic point to deliver a final death blow, **Michael stands up** (Daniel 12:1) to defend His people. As we shall see, the standing up of Michael refers to the close of human probation.
- The vision of **Daniel 8** only explained the prophetic chain from the kingdom of Persia (457 BC) to the beginning of the judgment at the end of the 2300 days (1844 AD). The explanation of Daniel 11 begins at the same starting point as Daniel 8 but takes us beyond the beginning of the judgment at the conclusion of the 2300 days, to the close of the investigative judgment when Michael stand up.
- **After Michael stands up**, God's people will go through the worst time of trouble in history (Daniel 12:1).
- At the end of the time of trouble, **God will deliver** His people from the wrath of the king of the north, that is, all whose names were retained in the book when their case came up in the investigative judgment (Daniel 12:1).
- Then the **special resurrection** takes place (Daniel 12:2).
- God's people **shine as stars** in the everlasting kingdom (Daniel 12:2, 3).
- Thus, **Daniel 11:1-12:3** takes us **full circle** from the kingdom of Persia in 457 BC to the time when Christ sets up His everlasting kingdom.

### **Daniel 12:4**

Immediately after Gabriel finishes his explanation of the vision of Daniel 8, he tells Daniel to close the book and seal it until the time of the end.

**Daniel 12:5-13**: We must understand this section of Daniel not as the beginning of a new vision, but rather as the **epilogue** of the book. These verses provide a summary and review of the two time prophecies of Daniel 7-11 (the 3.5 times and the 2300 days).

### **Reason #5:**

Daniel 12:4 tells us that the prophet sealed the little book about the 2300 days and the judgment until the time of the end. At the time of the end, therefore, we would **expect the opening** of the book. Is there any reference in Scripture to the opening of the book in the time of the end? There most certainly is!

**Revelation 10** is a **clear echo** of the unsealing and opening of the book that Daniel sealed until the time of the end. There is only one book in the entire Bible that was sealed at one point, to be opened at the time of the end, the book of Daniel 12:4.

It is important to remember that the angel from heaven opened the little book of Revelation 10 during the period of the **sixth trumpet** at the **very end** of history immediately **before Jesus takes over the kingdom** at the time of the seventh trumpet (Revelation 11:15-18).

We shall find in our next study that no chapter in the Bible explains more clearly the **origin**, **message**, **mission** and **destiny** of God's end-time remnant people than Revelation 10. It is not coincidental that the central message of the **Millerites** who preached after 1798 came from Daniel 8:14 and Revelation 14:6, 7 where we find a description of the hour of God's judgment.

As we shall see in our next study, the **eating of the little book** in Revelation 10 clearly describes the judgment hour preaching of the Millerite movement and its subsequent disappointment. After the disappointment, the Angel from heaven commanded John to **prophecy again** and to **measure the temple**. In other words, after the disappointment, God commanded His people to present another message from the book of Daniel and that message had to do with the measuring of the heavenly temple, another way of describing the investigative judgment.

Concerning the unsealing of the little book, Ellen White wrote:

*"It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who **unsealed the book** and **gave to John the revelation of what should be in these last days**. Daniel **stood in his lot** to **bear his testimony**, which was sealed until the time of the end, when the **first angel's message** should be proclaimed to our world. These matters are of infinite importance in these last days, but while "many shall be purified, and made white, and tried," "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." . . . The book of Daniel is unsealed in the revelation to John, and carries us forward to the last scenes of this earth's history." Manuscript Releases, volume 18, p. 15.*





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS” A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

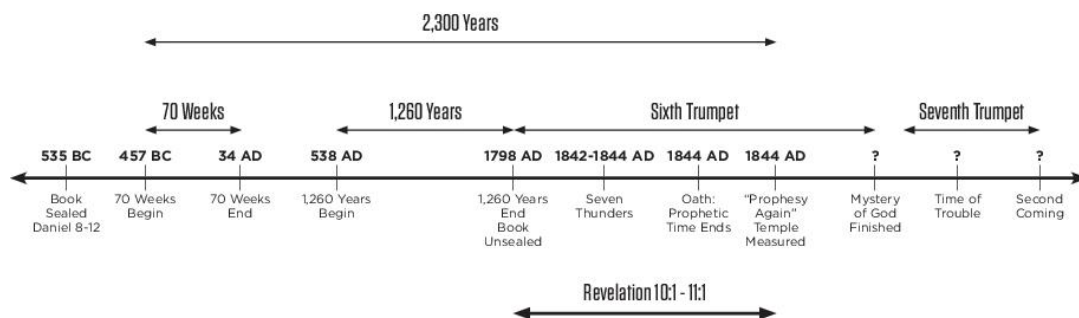
**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 10: THE MIGHTY ANGEL FROM HEAVEN**



### **CHRONOLOGY OF REVELATION 10**

by Pastor Stephen Bohr



## Introduction

There is no passage in Scripture that describes more accurately the **origin, identity, message, mission** and **destiny** of the Seventh-day Adventist Church than **Revelation 10**. The three main **philosophical questions** are relevant when we speak about the origin of our beloved Church:

- **Where** do we come from?
- **Why** are we here?
- What is our **destiny**?

If we **do not know our roots**, we will not realize the immense privilege of belonging to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and the awesome responsibility of proclaiming our message and fulfilling our mission. We will feel no particular pride in belonging to, not just any church, but to the remnant church!

These days some of the **intelligentsia** (the highly educated) of our church are **embarrassed** about the origin of our church. They have concluded that the pioneers were a group of **uneducated individuals** who had no higher education degrees and therefore were **highly deficient** in their theology. As the leaders of the Jewish Sanhedrin perceived Peter and John, they perceive that the pioneers were '*uneducated and untrained*' (see Acts 4:13). Some liberal publications such as *Spectrum* and *Adventist Today* would just as soon **erase** from our history the **sanctuary, 1844, and the Great Disappointment**. They would like the Seventh-day Adventist Church to be just **like all other churches**, perhaps with a **little sprinkling** of distinctive doctrines such as the Sabbath. This is a great tragedy, because if we do not know the prophecies that have made us the people that we are, we will simply conclude that **our Church is one among many**.

In this study of Revelation 10, we will allow the **Bible to explain itself** by comparing one text with another. The Holy Spirit **supervised the composition** of the Scriptures and placed in them everything that we need to explain their

meaning. We will find that the Holy Spirit placed in many different books of the Bible all the necessary elements to explain the prophecy of Revelation 10.

One point I would like to underline as we begin this study. We will see that Revelation 10 describes the origins of the great Advent Movement in the minutest detail, and as we move along I will use the Spirit of Prophecy to support many details in our interpretation.

## **Why Use Ellen White?**

On a certain occasion when I was lecturing on this chapter, someone came to me with the utmost sincerity asked:

*“If I wished to give this study on Revelation 10 to one who is not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, could I do it by simply using the Bible and not the Spirit of Prophecy?”*

The implication of the question was that a non-Adventist would never accept the authority of the Spirit of Prophecy and therefore we should use the Bible alone in explaining Revelation 10. In my answer, I made two very important points:

First, we should never give a non-Adventist a study on Revelation 10 until the very end of a series of Bible studies in preparation for baptism. After the candidate has fully studied all of the doctrines of the church, including the sanctuary, the 70 weeks, the 2300-day prophecy, and the role of the Spirit of Prophecy, then we can unlock the meaning of Revelation 10.

Second, it is not fair to insist that we must present this study from the Bible alone. Let me explain what I mean by giving a couple of examples.

How can we explain the little horn/beast prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13 to Roman Catholics by using the Bible alone? The simple answer is that we cannot. Daniel and John give us many characteristics of the little horn/beast. They wrote that the little horn/beast blasphemed God, His tabernacle and those who dwell in heaven, persecuted the saints, thought that it could change the law and ruled for 1260 years. How can we prove that

these characteristics apply to the papacy without going outside the Bible to history? The answer is that we cannot. The Bible gives us the characteristics and then we must find their fulfillment in history outside the canon.

We could say the same about the earth beast in Revelation 13:11-18. All the characteristics of this beast indicate that it represents the United States. However, nowhere in the Bible can we find the name 'United States'. Once again, the Bible provides the characteristics and then we must find in history the power to which the characteristics apply.

We can say the same about the prophecy of Revelation 10. In this chapter, we find the characteristics that point to the rise of the remnant church but we must find the fulfillment of these characteristics in history. Would it not be absurd to say that we must look for the fulfillment of Bible prophecies in history except for Revelation 10?

We must underline that the writings of Ellen White and the pioneers are of particular authority when it comes to the fulfillment of Revelation 10 because they personally participated in its fulfillment—they were eyewitnesses! Ellen White did not write simply as historian looking back at what happened. She was there and actually participated in the events that the chapter describes. One of the great deficiencies of SDA evangelism today is that we are not teaching our baptismal candidates our denominational history and therefore they are not aware of the rich historical heritage of the church that they are joining.

## **The Passage**

Traditionally, Seventh-day Adventist interpreters have correctly seen in the trumpets a chronological sequence of events in Christian history. The events of Revelation 10 clearly transpire at the time of the end because they occur during the period of the sixth trumpet. He is the passage with explanatory notes in brackets:

*"I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head; his face was like the sun, and his feet like*



pillars of fire. <sup>2</sup> He had a little book open [having been opened] in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, <sup>3</sup> and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. <sup>4</sup> Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them." <sup>5</sup> The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven <sup>6</sup> and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it [a clear reference to the fourth commandment], that there should be delay no longer [better: time no longer], <sup>7</sup> but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. <sup>8</sup> Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again [after telling him not to write what the seven thunders uttered] and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth." <sup>9</sup> So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me: "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." <sup>10</sup> Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me [the same angel], "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings." Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel [the same angel] stood, saying: "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there."

## Summary of the Little Book Episode

Everything in the chapter revolves around the mighty angel:

- The Angel descended from heaven to the earth (verse 1).
- The Angel's physical characteristics were then described (verse 1).
- As the Angel descends from heaven, he has in his right hand an open scroll. This means that he had already opened it before he descended to the earth (verse 2).

- The Angel then placed one **foot** on dry land and the other on the sea (verse 2).
- The Angel then spoke a message like the **roar of a lion** that echoed like seven **thunders** (verses 3-4).
- John understood the message of the thunders, but the Angel instructed him to **seal the message** that the thunders uttered and **not to write it down**.
- The Angel then raised his **right hand** to heaven (the book was in his left hand) and swore an oath in the name of the **eternal Creator God**, that **time would be no longer** (verses 5-7).
- The angel then **gave the book** to John **with instructions** to eat it and told him it would be bitter in his stomach and sweet as honey in his mouth (verses 8-9).
- John then ate the book and it was **sweet** in his mouth (verse 10).
- The aftermath of eating the book was **indigestion** (verse 10).
- The same Angel then instructed John to **prophecy again** from the little book to *“many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.”* (verse 11).
- The same Angel then commanded John to **measure the temple**, the **altar** and those who **worship** therein (11:1).
- The **‘mystery of God’** ends when the seventh angel was **about to** blow his trumpet (10:7).
- When the **seventh trumpet blows**, Jesus takes over the **kingdoms** of the world (Revelation 11:15-17).

## **The Messenger**

**Jesus Christ** Himself gave the message of Revelation 10 so it must be **extremely important**:

- John did not see an ordinary angel; He saw a **mighty** Angel.
- The **Angel’s face** shone like the noonday sun (Rev. 1:16; Matthew 17:3).
- A **cloud** surrounded the Angel that represents the angelic hosts.
- The Angel’s legs and feet were like **pillars of fire** (see Revelation 1:15).
- When the Angel spoke, he roared like a **lion** (see Revelation 5:5).

- The Angel had a **rainbow** over His head representing the union of Christ's mercy and justice:

*"As the bow in the cloud results from the union of sunshine and shower, so the bow above God's throne represents the **union of His mercy and His justice**. To the sinful but repentant soul God says: Live thou; "I have found a ransom." Job 33:24. Education, p. 115*

Ellen White explained that the mighty Angel was none other than **Jesus**:

- *"The mighty angel who instructed John was no less a personage than **Jesus Christ**." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971*
- *"The instruction to be communicated to John was so important that **Christ came from heaven** to give it to His servant, telling him to send it to the churches." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, pp. 953, 954*

## **The Identity of the Little Book**

There is only **one book** in the Bible that was **sealed** and **later** opened at the time of the end:

**Daniel 12:4**: Daniel **shut up** the book and **sealed it** around the year **538 BC** when he received the explanation of the vision of Daniel 8, the **first year of Darius** (Daniel 11:1):

*"But you, Daniel, **shut up** the words, and **seal** the book **until** the **time of the end**: many **[eyes]** shall **run to and fro**, and **knowledge [of the book]** shall increase."*

### **Revelation 10:1**

*"I saw still another **mighty angel** coming down from heaven, clothed with a **cloud** and a **rainbow** was on his head; his face was like the **sun**, and his feet like **pillars of fire**. He had a **little book open [having been opened]** in his hand."*

The tense of the verb 'open' indicates that the angel unsealed and opened the little closed book just before he descended from heaven. The verb 'open' literally reads, 'the book, the one **having been opened**.'

Literally, the Greek verb that describes the opening of the book is a **passive perfect tense participle**. The perfect tense describes an event that **began in the past** and **endures** or continues in the present. This means that the Angel opened the book **in heaven** at the time of the end (1798) and **then descended** from heaven with the open book. In other words, the little book (Daniel 12:4) remained **closed and sealed** until the time of the end at which time the seal **was removed** and the book was opened so that it could be understood and proclaimed.

As we studied previously, the little book consisted of **Daniel 8:1-12:4**, particularly the portion relating to the **2300 days** and the **beginning of the heavenly judgment**. The opening of the little book took place when the Millerites and others preached the **first angel's message** beginning in **1798**.

- 1) **Daniel 8:14** gives us the **timing** for the beginning of the judgment—at the end of the 2300 days/years.
- 2) **Daniel 7** provides us with a description of the **heavenly event** that took place at the conclusion of the 2300 days/years.
- 3) Revelation 10 and 14:6, 7 provide us with the **earthly announcement** of the heavenly event.

*"It was the Lion of the tribe of Judah who **unsealed the book** and **gave to John** the revelation of what should be in these **last days**. Daniel **stood in his lot to bear his testimony [not in person but through his book]**, which was sealed until the **time of the end**, when **the first angel's message should be proclaimed [the message of the first angel removes the seal from the book, particularly the portion that had to do with the timing of the judgment hour]** to our world. These matters are of infinite importance in these **last days**, but while "many shall be purified, and made white, and tried," "the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand." How true this is. Sin is the transgression of the law of God, and those in the denominational churches who will **not accept the light in regard to the law of God** will not understand the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages. The book of Daniel*

is unsealed in the revelation to John, and carries us forward to the last scenes of this earth's history." Manuscript Releases, volume 18, p. 15

"The message of salvation has been preached in all ages; but this message [the first angel's message concerning the judgment hour] is a part of the gospel which could be proclaimed only in the last days, for only then would it be true that the hour of judgment had come. The prophecies present a succession of events [for example, the prophetic chain of Daniel 7] leading down to the opening of the judgment. This is especially true of the book of Daniel. But that part of his prophecy which related to the last days, Daniel was bidden to close up and seal "to the time of the end." Not till we reach this time could a message concerning the judgment be proclaimed, based on the fulfillment of these prophecies. But at the time of the end, says the prophet, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Daniel 12:4. The Great Controversy, p. 356

"The words of the angel to Daniel relating to the last days were to be understood in the time of the end. At that time [see Amos 8:11, 12], "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." Daniel 12:4, 10.

"The unsealing of the little book was the message in relation to time [the 2300-day prophecy]." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971

## **When did the Angel Open the Book?**

When did the Angel remove the seal from the little book? According to Revelation 10, the Angel removed the seal from the book so that the people could study and proclaim it at the end time, just before the seventh angel blows his trumpet and the mystery of God is finished. Concerning the message of judgment that the first angel proclaimed, Ellen White wrote:

"No such message has ever been given in past ages. Paul, as we have seen, did not preach it; he pointed his brethren into the then far-distant future for the coming of the Lord. The Reformers did not proclaim it. Martin Luther placed the judgment about three hundred years in the future from his day. But since 1798 [the time of the end begins in 1798 and that is the date when the little book

*was unsealed] the book of Daniel has been unsealed, knowledge [same word as Daniel 12:4] of the prophecies [not scientific knowledge] has increased, and many have proclaimed the solemn message of the judgment near." The Great Controversy, p. 356*

It is a **historical fact** that **after 1798** there was an **awakened interest** in the study of the prophecies of **Daniel and Revelation**. **Preachers everywhere**, including children, preached that the hour of God's judgment had come. Among the notables were Lacunza, Wolff, Bengel, Gaussen, Miller, Litch, and Fitch.

## **Global Extension**

The Angel presents a message from the book that is **global in extension**—to every nation, kindred, tongue and people (Revelation 14:6). The global reach of the message is expressed **in symbolic language** at the **beginning** of the chapter ('feet on the sea and on the land') and **in literal language** at the **end** ('to every nation, tongue and kings')

*"The message of Revelation 14, proclaiming that the hour of God's judgment is come, is given in the time of the end; and the angel of Revelation 10 is represented as having one foot on the sea and one foot on the land, showing that the message will be carried to distant lands, the ocean will be crossed, and the islands of the sea will hear the proclamation of the last message of warning to our world." 2SM, pp. 107, 108*

In order for the message from the book to go to the entire world there must be a **worldwide church** to proclaim it. Besides being a **global**, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the only church in the world that believes that its mission is to proclaim the three angels' message.

*"The angel's position, with one foot on the sea, the other on the land, signifies the wide extent of the proclamation of the message. It will cross the broad waters and be proclaimed in other countries, even to all the world." The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971*

The expression 'sea and land' could also mean that the message will be proclaimed to the nations of the '**old world**' (the beast from the **sea**: Europe) and in the '**new world**' (the beast from the **earth**: North America).

The act of **planting the feet** indicates that the Angel is claiming **global ownership** of the world. When the **seventh trumpet sounds**, the claim will become an empirical reality when the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms **of God and the Lamb** (Revelation 11:15-17):

### **Deuteronomy 11:24**

*"Every place on which the sole of **your foot treads** shall be **yours**: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, **shall be your territory**."*

## **The Seven Thunders**

**John 12:28, 29**: The sound of the seven thunders imparted an **intelligible message** from God to John. That is to say, the thunders were not simply noise but rather contained a **message from God**. In fact, the thunders were the echo of God's voice.

There is **another text** from Scripture that helps us understand how thunder can carry an intelligible message. Just before His passion, Jesus pleaded with His Father to glorify His name:

*"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify Your name." Then **a voice came from heaven**, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." <sup>29</sup> Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had **thundered**. Others said, "**An angel** has spoken to Him."*

We must focus on several facts as we study the meaning of the seven thunders:

- The Angel, whose voice sounded like seven thunders, **gave the message** to John and he understood their message.

- The Angel commanded John **to seal the message** so that the **readers** could not understand it.
- The seven thunders bear a relationship with events that transpired **between 1798 and 1844** because they imparted their message **after** the book was opened and the Angel descended from heaven in 1798 and **before** the Angel swore His oath that time would be no longer in 1844.

Ellen White wrote about the timing for the fulfillment of the seven thunders:

*“The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the **first and second angels’ messages**. It was **not best for the people to know** these things, for their **faith must necessarily be tested**.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971*

Three facts are clear in this statement:

- The seven thunders described a **delineation of events** that would occur **between 1842 and 1844** just before the mighty Angel swore His oath.
- The people who lived during this period were **not supposed to know** these events beforehand.
- The reason they were not supposed to know is that their **faith needed to be tested**.

The message of the seven thunders told John that those who proclaimed the judgment hour message **would be disappointed** when Jesus failed to come in **1843 or the spring of 1844**. As is well known by informed Adventists, Miller originally believed that Jesus would come ‘*about the year 1843*.’ Unfortunately, Miller and his associates failed to reckon that there was **no year zero** between 1 BC and 1 AD and therefore they were disappointed when Jesus did not come. Ellen White wrote about this disappointment:

*“I saw the people of God **joyful in expectation [in 1843]**, looking for their Lord. But God designed to **prove them**. **His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods [this is the same as the sealing of the seven thunders]**.”*



*If John had written down what the thunders said, the people would not have been disappointed]. Those who were looking for their Lord did not discover this mistake [they had not reckoned that there was no year zero], and the most learned men who opposed the time also failed to see it. God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment. The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Savior were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts. They were the first to turn and ridicule the sorrowful, disappointed ones who really loved the appearing of their Savior. I saw the wisdom of God in proving His people and giving them a searching test to discover those who would shrink and turn back in the hour of trial.” EW, p. 235, 236*

*“Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. Again they were led to their Bibles to search the prophetic periods. The hand of the Lord was removed from the figures, and the mistake was explained. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that the same evidence which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844. Light from the Word of God shone upon their position, and they discovered a tarrying time--“Though it [the vision] tarry, wait for it.” In their love for Christ's immediate coming, they had overlooked the tarrying of the vision, which was calculated to manifest the true waiting ones. Again they had a point of time. Yet I saw that many of them could not rise above their severe disappointment to possess that degree of zeal and energy which had marked their faith in 1843.” EW, p. 236*

Some zealous but misguided Adventists who are predicting that the seven thunders are still in the future, have misinterpreted a statement that Ellen White wrote in 1900 where she seems to leave the impression that the seven thunders were still in the future in that year. Here is the quotation:

*"After these seven thunders uttered their voices, the injunction comes to John as to Daniel in regard to the little book: "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered." These [the thunders] relate **to future events [from the time of John]** which will be **disclosed [notice the word 'disclosed'] in their order.** Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. John sees the **little book unsealed.** Then Daniel's prophecies **have their proper place** in the first, second, and third angels' messages to be given to the world. The **unsealing** of the little book was the message in **relation to time [that is to say, when the Millerites proclaimed that the hour of God's judgment had come, the seal was removed from Daniel 8:14 because now the time factor could be understood].**" The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971*

The critical question is this: Was the message of the seven thunders future **from the time that Ellen White** in 1900 or were they future **from the time of John.** A careful reading of the quotation clearly reveals that the seven thunders uttered a message that was future from the time of Daniel and John.

## **The Angel's Oath**

After the Angel [1] **descended** from heaven with the open book (1798), and [2] the **seven thunders** had uttered their message (1842-spring of 1844), [3] he raised **His right hand** to heaven and swore an oath in the name of the **eternal God, the Creator** that time would be **no longer** (Autumn of 1844).

What did the Angel mean by 'time will be no longer'? Was he referring to the end of **probationary time** or the **end of the world**? Not at all! Ellen White explained:

*"This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this **world's history**, neither of **probationary time**, but of **prophetic time**, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will **not have another message upon definite time.** After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be **no definite tracing** of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844." The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971*

In another place, Ellen White wrote:

*“And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer” (Revelation 10:5, 6). This message announces the **end of the prophetic periods**. The disappointment of those who expected to see our Lord in 1844 was **indeed bitter** to those who had so ardently looked for His appearing. It was in the Lord’s order that this disappointment should come, and that hearts should be revealed.” Selected Messages, volume 2, p. 108*

The ‘time’ referred to by the Angel cannot mean the **close of probation** or the **end of human history** for at least **two reasons**:

- ✓ The announcement that time would be no longer was made by the Angel during the period of the **sixth trumpet**, and probation does not close until the mystery of God is finished when the seventh trumpet **is about to** blow. Further, Jesus does not come to take over his **kingdom** until the **seventh trumpet** actually does blow (Revelation 11:15-19).
- ✓ After the Angel announced that “*time will be no longer*,” He instructed to **prophecy again** and **measure** the temple (Revelation 10:11). What good would it do to prophecy again and measure the temple if probation had closed or the world had ended?

Unfortunately, all modern versions of the Bible translate the expression ‘*time will be no longer*’ as ‘*there should no longer be any delay*’. Even our very own *Andrews University Study Bible* translates it in this fashion. However, this translation is **wrong**. It totally severs the time referred to in Revelation 10:6 from the time prophecy of the 2300 days in little book of Daniel 12:4.

The word **chronos** appears in **three** other places in the book of **Revelation** and none of the modern versions translates the word with ‘delay’. (2:21; 6:11; 20:3). Even more telling is the fact that the word is translated “**time**” in over **30 other places** in the New Testament and it is not translated ‘delay’ even once. The New

Testament had a way of expressing a delay and that is the word **chronizo**. This word appears in **Matthew 24:48** where the Lord's servant says: "**my master is delayed.**"

It is obvious the Angel's declaration that 'time will be no longer' cannot have been made by the angel **before** the **42 months** (Revelation 11:2; 13:5), **1260 days** (Revelation 11:3; 12:6), **3.5 times** (Revelation 12:14; Daniel 7:25), **3.5 days** (Revelation 11:9, 11) and **2300 days** (Daniel 8:14) had reached their conclusion.

## **Adventists not Time Setters**

Contrary to the accusations of the enemies of Adventism within and without, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has **never set a date** for any prophetic event. In 1844, the Adventist church **did not even exist!** It is true that later, the Seventh-day Adventist Church **did embrace October 22, 1844** as the date when Jesus entered the most holy place to begin the work of investigative judgment. However, leading up to 1844, scholars of many **different denominations** came up with the date. Ellen White, on multiple occasions warned Adventists not to set dates for any prophetic event after 1844:

*"The Lord has shown me that the message of the third angel must go, and be proclaimed to the scattered children of the Lord, and that it **should not be hung on time**; for time **never will be a test again**. I saw that some were getting a **false excitement** arising from preaching time; that the third angel's message was **stronger** than time can be. I saw that this message can stand on **its own foundation**, and that it **needs not time** to strengthen it, and that it will go in mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness." The Review and Herald, July 21, 1851*

*"There will always be false and fanatical movements made by persons **in the church** who **claim to be led** of God --those who will run before they are sent, and will give **day and date** for the occurrence of **unfulfilled prophecy**. The enemy is pleased to have them do this, for their successive failures and leading into false*

lines cause **confusion and unbelief.**" Letter 28, 1897. *Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 84

## **The Oath in Daniel and Revelation**

Both **Daniel and Revelation** refer to the Angel's oath (Daniel 12:7; Revelation 10:6) and both books begin the oath by invoking the name of the **everlasting God**. In Daniel 12:7 the Angel lifts up **both hands** to heaven but in Revelation the Angel **raises only his right hand**. The reason for the difference is simple: In Daniel 12 the Angel did not yet have in his hand the book that was sealed.

Significantly, the Angel in the book of Daniel invokes the name of the eternal God when He swears the oath. However, the book of Revelation adds that the eternal God was the one '**who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it**', language clearly reminiscent of the **fourth commandment** of God's holy law.

The description of God as the eternal Creator links the little book of **Revelation 10** with the **first angel's message** of Revelation 14. There are three similarities between Revelation 10 and the first angel's message:

- Both underline that the message must be **global**—to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.
- Both announce that the **time for the judgment** has arrived.
- Both focus attention on **the Creator**.

The Angel's command for John to prophesy again from the little book bears a direct relationship with the first angel's message where God commands the world to worship the Creator because the hour of God's judgment has come. Thus, the final remnant people of God will admonish the world to worship the Creator God in the context of the judgment. In addition, there is something more: In his oath, the Angel strongly paraphrases the language of the **fourth commandment** where God commands His people to **keep the Sabbath** as the sign of creation (Exodus 20:8-11; Genesis 2:2, 3).

## The Mystery of God

### Revelation 10:7

*“... **but [however]** in the days of the sounding of the **seventh angel**, when he is **about to sound**, the **mystery of God** would be **finished**, as He declared to His **servants the prophets**.”*

Verse 7 begins with a strong **adversative** ‘but’. That is to say, the word ‘but’ marks a **strong break** in time between the moment when the Angel announces that time will be no longer during the sixth trumpet and the moment when the seventh trumpet is **about to begin** to sound.

What the text indicates is that the declaration that ‘time will be no longer’ is made during the period of the **sixth trumpet but** the mystery of God will not be finished until the seventh trumpet is **about** to sound. This clearly shows that the **end of the prophetic periods** occurs during the sixth, and before seventh trumpets.

### What is the Mystery of God?

The mystery of God is the **gospel of salvation** that He **kept secret** in His eternal councils in the past, but has now revealed by the **preaching** of the gospel:

### Romans 16:25-27

*“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my **gospel** and the **preaching of Jesus** Christ, according to the revelation of the **mystery** kept secret since the world began <sup>26</sup> but **now made manifest**, and by the **prophetic Scriptures** made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—<sup>27</sup> to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.”*

Ellen White makes this magnificent statement about the meaning of the expression ‘mystery of God’:

*"The incarnation of Christ is a **mystery**. The union of divinity with humanity is a **mystery** indeed, hidden with God, "even the **mystery** which hath been **hid** from ages." It was **kept in eternal silence** by Jehovah, and was **first revealed in Eden**, by the prophecy that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and that he should bruise his heel. To present to the world this **mystery** that God **kept in silence** for eternal ages before the world was created, before man was created, was the part that Christ was to act in the work he entered upon when he came to this earth. And **this wonderful mystery**, the incarnation of Christ and the atonement that he made, **must be declared to every son and daughter of Adam, whether Jew or Gentile.**" *Signs of the Times*, March 25, 1897*

The mystery of God (the preaching of the gospel to the world) will end **shortly before the seventh trumpet** begins to sound. At that time, **Jesus will remove** his priestly robes and clothe Himself with his **kingly robe**. **Daniel 12:1** describes this moment as Michael 'standing up'. At this time, Jesus will begin to reign because the judgment has ended and the number of the subjects of His kingdom is complete (see, Daniel 11:2, 3 where 'stand up' means 'to begin to reign'). **Revelation 15:5-8** describes this moment as well where Christ's work of intercession ends in the heavenly *naós*—the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

In summary, when the seventh trumpet is **about to sound** the following events will transpire:

- ✓ **Probation** will close.
- ✓ The **mystery of God** will be finished.
- ✓ The time of trouble will ensue.
- ✓ Then the **seventh trumpet will sound** and Jesus will possess the kingdom with his saints (Revelation 11:15-17).

**Revelation 15:5-8**: Describes the moment when **probation closes**, the plague **angels come out** of the most holy place and **no one will be able to enter** there until the seven plagues are finished:

*"After these things I looked, and behold, the **temple** [*naós*; Revelation 11:19] of the tabernacle of the testimony **in heaven** was opened. <sup>6</sup> And **out of the temple***

*[naós] came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. <sup>7</sup> Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls **full of the wrath of God [probation has closed and now God's wrath will fall]** who lives forever and ever. <sup>8</sup> The temple *[naós]* was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and **no one was able to enter** the temple *[naós]* till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed."*

**Rev 22:10-12** mentions **three consecutive** points of time:

- ✓ A message **can still come forth** from the book of Revelation:

*"And he said to me, "**Do not seal** the words of the prophecy of this book, for **the time is at hand.**"*

- ✓ The time when all cases **have been decided** for life or death:

*"He who is unjust, let him be unjust **still**; he who is filthy, let him be filthy **still**; he who is righteous, let him be righteous **still**; he who is holy, let him be holy **still.**"*

- ✓ Jesus comes **to reward** His people at the **second coming**:

*"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My **reward is with Me**, to give to everyone according to his work."*

**Daniel 7** presents the same **three-step scenario**:

- ✓ The **ancient of days comes** to the heavenly *naós* for the judgment. At this time, the door of probation is still open.
- ✓ At the **conclusion of the judgment** when all cases are decided, Jesus receives the kingdom **from His Father.**
- ✓ The time comes for Jesus and the saints to **possess the kingdom.**

**Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22, 26, 27**

*"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the **Ancient of Days [in heaven]***



was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire; <sup>10</sup> A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times **ten thousand stood before Him [in heaven]**, the court was seated **[in heaven]**, and the **books were opened [the investigative judgment in heaven]**. . . <sup>13</sup> "I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He **came to the Ancient of Days [in heaven]**, and they **[the clouds]** brought Him near before Him **[before God the Father in heaven]**. <sup>14</sup> Then **to Him was given [who gave it to Him?]** dominion and glory and **a kingdom**, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and **His kingdom** the one which shall not be destroyed. . . <sup>18</sup> But the **saints** of the Most High **shall receive the kingdom [when Jesus comes]**, and **possess the kingdom** forever, even forever and ever.' <sup>21</sup> "I was watching; and the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them, <sup>22</sup> **until the Ancient of Days came [in heaven]**, and a **judgment [this is the purpose of the judgment]** was made **in favor of the saints** of the Most High **[in heaven before the second coming]**, and **the time came [when Jesus returns]** for the saints **to possess** the kingdom. . . <sup>25</sup> He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. . . <sup>26</sup> 'But the **court shall be seated [in heaven]**, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it forever. <sup>27</sup> Then the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be **given to the people**, the saints of the Most High. **His** kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey **Him**.'"

**Summary** of the **three steps** of the judgment in Daniel 7:

1. The **books are opened** in heaven to review the cases of all those **who have claimed** the name of Jesus.

2. When the examination of every case is finished, **probation closes** and the **Father gives** Jesus His kingdom—the **totality** of the saints.
3. Finally, when Jesus comes, He and his subjects will **possess** the kingdom.

## **The Bittersweet Experience**

It is clear that the little book experience of verses 8-11 **precedes Revelation 10:7** in time. In other words, Revelation 10:7 is a parenthetical statement that breaks the flow of thought. Someone may wonder why this is so. The reason is obvious. After John eats the little book and it is sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach, the Angel tells him **to prophecy again** and to **measure the temple**.

If the **mystery of God** (the preaching of the gospel) had already finished and **probation had closed**, there would be no reason to prophesy again about the contents of the book and to talk about the investigative judgment. Clearly, **verses 8-11** take us back to events that occurred **between verses 6 and 7**.

The assimilation of the little book by John causes a **bittersweet reaction**. In the mouth, the judgment book was **sweet** but when it reached the belly, it gave him **indigestion**. We have already identified the **contents of the book** as the prophecy of the 2300 days, especially the **time element** that marks the beginning of the judgment. This means that the **judgment hour message** was sweet to John, but in the aftermath, it became bitter. Have you ever **had the experience** of eating something that is delicious to your palate but then becomes bitter?

The Bible compares the words of God with the **sweetness of honey**:

### **Jeremiah 15:16**

***"Your words** were found, and I **ate them**, and Your word was to me the **joy and rejoicing** of my heart; for I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts."*

### **Psalms 119:103**

***"How sweet are Your words** to my taste, **sweeter than honey** to my **mouth**!"*

**Exodus 16:31:** The Manna in the wilderness symbolized the Word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3, 4):

*“And the house of Israel called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.”*

Ellen White explained in what sense the book concerning the judgment message was sweet:

*“The comprehension of truth, the glad reception of the message, is represented in the eating of the little book. The truth in regard to the time of the advent of our Lord was a precious message to our souls.” The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 971 (Manuscript 59, 1900)*

**Ellen White** described the year that led up to October 22, 1844 as ‘*the happiest year of my life.*’

The act of eating the scroll not only represents the assimilation and understanding of the message of the little book but also its impartation. We find the closest parallel to Revelation 10:8-11 in Ezekiel 3:1-4 where God instructs the prophet to eat the scroll and then to share the contents of the scroll with Israel:

*“Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”<sup>2</sup> So I opened my mouth, and He caused me to eat that scroll.<sup>3</sup> And He said to me, “Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll that I give you.” So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness.<sup>4</sup> Then He said to me: “Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them.”*

## **The Great Disappointment of 1844**

The message of the judgment imparted by the Millerites leading up to October 22, 1844 was indeed sweet. They believed that the judgment meant the cleansing of the earth by fire and the setting up of Christ’s everlasting kingdom. They were wrong about the event and were severely disappointed. Let us look at the reaction of some of the pioneers:

## **Hiram Edson:**

*"... we confidently expected to see Jesus Christ and all the holy angels with him; and that his voice would call up Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient worthies, and dear friends which had been torn from us by death, and that our trials and sufferings, with our earthly pilgrimage would close, and we should be caught up to meet our coming Lord to be forever with him, to inhabit bright golden mansions in the golden home city prepared for the redeemed. Our expectations were raised high, and thus we looked for our coming Lord until the clock tolled 12, at midnight.*

*The day had then passed and our disappointment became a certainty. Our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted, and such a spirit of weeping came over us as I never experienced before. It seemed that the loss of all earthly friends could have been no comparison. We wept, and wept, till the day dawn. I mused in my own heart, saying, My advent experience has been the richest and brightest of all my Christian experience. If this had proved a failure, what was the rest of my Christian experience worth? Has the Bible proved a failure? Is there no God, no heaven, no golden home city, no paradise? Is all this but a cunningly devised fable? Is there no reality to our fondest hope and expectation of these things? And thus we had something to grieve and weep over, if all our fond hopes were lost. And as I said, we wept till the day dawn." Hiram Edson, manuscript fragment on his "Life and Experience," no date, pp. 4-5, Ellen G. White Research Center, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Mich.*

## **Washington Morse**

*"The passing of the time was a bitter disappointment. True believers had given up all for Christ, and had shared His presence as never before. The love of Jesus filled every soul; and with inexpressible desire, they prayed, 'Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly;' but He did not come. And now, to turn again to the cares, perplexities, and dangers of life, in full view of jeering and reviling unbelievers who scoffed as never before, was a terrible trial of faith and patience. When elder Himes visited Waterbury, Vermont, a short time after the passing of the time, and stated that the brethren should prepare for another cold winter, my feelings were almost*

*incontrollable. I left the place of meeting and wept like a child.” Washington Morse, “Remembrance of Former Days,” The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, May 7, 1901*

### **William Miller**

*“It passed, and the next day it seemed as though all the demons from the bottomless pit were let loose upon us. The same ones and many more who were crying for mercy two days before, were not mixed with the rabble and mocking, scoffing, and threatening in a most blasphemous manner.” Words of William Miller in a letter to I. O. Orr, M. D. dated December 13, 1844*

### **The Triumphal Entry**

The experience of the Millerites was **very similar** to what happened to the disciples toward the end of Christ’s ministry on earth. Every time that Jesus moves into a **new phase of His work**, his people are **one-step behind** and go through a disappointment.

- The followers of Jesus had never had a **sweeter** experience than when **Jesus entered Jerusalem** on a donkey and the multitudes proclaimed Him king!
- Jesus was fulfilling the specific time prophecy of the **Seventy Weeks**, the first part of the **2300-day prophecy**.
- The disciples were sure that Jesus was going to establish **His kingdom on earth** but they were **mistaken** about the **event**.
- The **timing** of the event was correct but their understanding of the **event** was wrong.
- The followers of Jesus were **bitterly disappointed** in their expectations when Jesus suffered crucifixion.
- However, after the disappointment, Jesus caught up to **two followers** (we know the name of one of them Cleophas) who were walking on a country road to Emmaus and **clarified the prophecies** that they had misunderstood.
- Jesus then entered the **holy place** in heaven to begin His ministry there.

- The majority of those who professed to **follow Jesus** did not follow Him into the holy place and His work there could not benefit them.
- Jesus then gave the apostles the command and power to **preach again** but with the **added understanding** of what Jesus was doing (Matthew 28:18-20).
- The small remnant of believers, who **remained faithful** in spite of the disappointment, became the nucleus of the **Christian Church**. Thus, the Christian Church began with a great disappointment.

## **The Triumphal Entry and the Millerites**

- The Millerites also had a **sweet experience** when they were expecting Jesus to come to the earth on October 22, 1844.
- Jesus was fulfilling a specific **time prophecy** on October 22, 1844—the prophecy of the **2300 days** that was the larger portion of the 70-week prophecy.
- The Millerites were sure that Jesus was going to **establish His kingdom** on earth on that date. They were **right about the time** but **wrong about the event**.
- When Jesus failed to meet their expectations, the sweet experience changed into **bitterness**.
- The day after the disappointment, **two Millerites** were walking across a field. One of them, **Hiram Edson** (we do not know the name of the other) had a **momentary flash** where he saw that instead of Jesus coming to the earth on October 22, 1844, he entered for the first time into **the most holy place** to **measure** the temple, the altar and those who worshiped there.
- The **majority** of those who had believed that Jesus would come on October 22 **forsook the movement** and said that they had been deceived.
- The faithful remnant then **restudied the prophecies** that they had misinterpreted and realized that Jesus had begun a new work in the most holy place.

- The faithful remnant received the command to **prophesy again** but with the **added understanding** of what Jesus was doing. That message is in **Revelation 14:6-12**.
- The small remnant of believers, who **remained faithful** in spite of the disappointment, became the nucleus of the **Seventh-day Adventist Church**. Thus, the remnant church began with a great disappointment just like the Christian Church.

## Propheying Again

There is **something strange** about the Angel's order for John to eat the book. He first told John that the book would be **bitter** in the stomach and **sweet** in the mouth. Why does the Angel **reverse the natural order** in verse 9? In order to understand we must look at the chiastic structure of verses 9-11:

- A. The **Angel tells** John to take the scroll and eat it (9a)
- B. 'it will be **bitter** in your stomach' (9b)
- C. 'in your mouth it will be **sweet** as honey' (9c)
- C. 'it tasted as **sweet** as honey in my mouth' (10a)
- B. 'it was **bitter** in my stomach' (10b)
- A. The Angel tells John 'you must prophesy again' (11)

This chiastic structure is important because it shows that the Angel's order for John **to eat the scroll in verse 9a** is equivalent to the order **to prophesy again in verse 11**. When John ate the scroll, he assimilated the judgment message and proclaimed it. However, because of the disappointment, it was necessary to preach the **message** from the **same scroll again** but with added understanding. Obviously, a person cannot do something again unless he has done it at least **once before**!

According to the *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, the word 'must' 'designates an **unconditional necessity**; sentences with this verb have fundamentally an **absolute, unquestioned**, and often anonymous and **deterministic** character.' In other words, prophesying again is not optional but rather obligatory!

We find the 'prophesying again in the **first angel's message**. The Millerites preached this message leading up to 1844 but the remnant needed to preach it **once more** but with **greater understanding**. The Millerites also preached the **second angel's message** but the remnant must preach it again (Revelation 18:1-5). There are three **common denominators** between Revelation 10 and Revelation 14:6, 7:

- ✓ Both contain a **global message** to every nation, kindred, tongue and people
- ✓ Both draw attention to **the Creator** and His Sabbath
- ✓ The little book contains the **judgment hour** message as does the first angel's message

However, there were several points that the **Millerites did not understand** because they had not yet understood that the judgment would transpire in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. Not having moved from the holy to the most holy place, they did not yet understand the **judgment**, the **law**, the **Sabbath**, the **state of the dead** and **health reform**.

## **A Representative Person**

The question we must ask at this point is this: Does this symbolic portrayal apply to John in the first century or does the act of John symbolize the experience of an end time remnant. William Shea provides the answer:

*"John lived at the **beginning** of the Christian Era when he received this vision. However, the prophetic scene itself looks down **toward the end of time, long after John's death**. He should, therefore, be taken as **representative** of those who will bear this final message, the part he was acting out under those circumstances. It would have been **physically impossible** for John to bear his message to **all of the groups** he was told to address (vs. 11). We may look, therefore, for a **group or movement** to fulfill this commission in the end-time." William Shea, "The Mighty Angel and His Message," Symposium on Revelation, volume 1, p. 321*

This prophecy, then, does not apply to John in the first century for two reasons:



- ✓ First, John lived during the first century but these events take place during the period of the **sixth trumpet** at the time of the end.
- ✓ Second, it would have been impossible for John to prophesy again to 'many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.' After all, he was a **prisoner on Patmos** and there is no evidence that he ever fulfilled this commission. A **global message** requires a **global people** to proclaim it.

The noted commentary on Revelation by Joseph Seiss concurs with Shea:

*"As remarked long since by Irenaeus, the ancient prophets fulfilled their office of predicting, not merely in the **verbal delivery** of predictions, but by themselves seeing, hearing, or acting out the things **in type**, which were afterward to be seen, heard, or acted out by others **in reality**-and this whether in real life, or perchance in vision. In all which cases they were to be considered, as they are called in Isaiah and in Zechariah, "mophthim;" that is, **figurative or representative** persons."* J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse: Exposition of the Book of Revelation, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1998, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc.





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 11: MEASURE THE TEMPLE OF GOD**

#### **Revelation 11:1**

*“Then I was given a reed like a **measuring rod** and the angel, stood saying: “Rise and **measure** the **temple** of God, the **altar**, and **those who worship** there.”*

The word ‘rise’ in this verse is in the **imperative mood**. That is to say, the angel **commands** John to rise. Why does the angel command John with the word ‘rise’ in this verse? The New Testament uses this word to describe sick people that someone raises up by taking them by the hand (Mark 1:31; 9:27; Acts 3:7). In the context of Revelation 10, we remember that John’s **stomach got sick** after he ate the little book so presumably the angel commanded him to **get up from his sickbed** to measure the temple.

The book of Revelation has several instances where the **chapter division** is in the wrong place. We should see Revelation 11:1 as the **concluding verse** of Revelation 10 rather than the introductory verse to chapter 11. Joseph **A. Seiss** grasped the link between Revelation 10:11 and 11:1:

*“The connection between what concludes the one [**Revelation 10**], and what begins the other [**Revelation 11**], appears to be as close as it well could be: seeing that the Angel who before addressed John **still continues here to address him**;*

and the new injunction, Rise and measure, is but a sequel to His previous injunction, "Thou must prophesy again." Joseph A. Seiss, The Apocalypse: Exposition of the Book of Revelation, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1998, 2003, 2006 by Biblsoft, Inc. All rights reserved.

## Questions about Revelation 11:1

- To which temple does Revelation 11:1 refer? Is this the heavenly temple or a rebuilt earthly Jerusalem temple?
- What does it mean to measure the temple, the altar and those who worship there?
- What does the measuring rod represent?
- Which altar? Is it the altar of sacrifice in the court or the altar of incense in the holy place?
- Why was it necessary to measure the altar of incense?

## Which Temple?

The fundamental mistake that the Millerites made was that they believed and taught that the earth was the sanctuary that needed cleansing, this in spite of the fact that there is not a single text in the Bible that refers to the earth as the sanctuary.

Clearly, the temple referred to here is the heavenly sanctuary. The Romans destroyed the earthly temple in the year 70 AD it no longer exists. When the sixth trumpet sounded between 1798 and 1844, the earthly temple did not exist.

Furthermore, the book of Hebrews makes it abundantly clear that the earthly sanctuary and its services were shadows of the heavenly. When Jesus died and the temple veil ripped from top to bottom, God was announcing that the ceremonial system had reached its goal and end. No need for a literal earthly temple anymore! Jesus now ministers in the heavenly sanctuary where He entered with His own blood. Moreover, the book of Hebrews states that the

heavenly things must be cleansed with the blood of better sacrifices than the earthly.

### **Hebrews 8:1-2**

*“Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,  
<sup>2</sup> a Minister of the sanctuary and of **the true tabernacle** which the Lord erected, and not man.”*

### **Hebrews 9:23**

*“Therefore it was necessary that the **copies** of the things in the heavens **should be purified** with these, but the **heavenly things** themselves with **better sacrifices** than these.”*

There are two words for ‘temple’ in the New Testament. The first is *hiéron* and the second is *naós*. The book of Revelation never uses the word *hiéron* that generally refers to the **entire temple complex**. However, the word *naós* appears **16 times** and in every instance, it seems to refer exclusively to the **most holy place** of the heavenly sanctuary.

In **Revelation 11:19**, the word *naós* clearly refers to the most holy place where the Ark of the Covenant is located. This means that the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary had to be measured after the great disappointment:

### **Revelation 11:19**

*“Then the temple [*naós*] of God **was opened** in heaven, and the **ark of His covenant** [*the law that was given at Sinai*] was seen in His temple [*naós*]. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.”*

The phenomena that accompanied the opening of the temple are reminiscent of when God revealed his **Law on Mt. Sinai**. In 1844, on the Day of Atonement, the ark His covenant was opened and **the law was seen** in the ark and at the center of the law **is the Sabbath**. Shortly after the opening of the most holy place, the **pioneers discovered** that the law was still binding as well as the Sabbath and the state of the dead:

## **Exodus 19:16-20**

*“Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were **thunderings and lightnings**, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. <sup>17</sup> And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. <sup>18</sup> Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it **in fire**. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a **furnace**, and the whole **mountain quaked** greatly. <sup>19</sup> And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and **God answered him by voice**.”*

**Revelation 15:5-8** refers to *naós* as the **temple of the tabernacle** of the testimony. The tabernacle is the **total building** while the temple of the tabernacle is the **most holy apartment** of that tabernacle.

## **Revelation 15:5-8**

*“After these things I looked, and behold, the **temple** of the **tabernacle** of the testimony in **heaven** was opened. <sup>6</sup> And **out of the temple** [*naós of the tabernacle*] came the seven angels having the seven plagues, clothed in pure bright linen, and having their chests girded with golden bands. <sup>7</sup> Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls **full of the wrath of God** [*probation has closed*] who lives forever and ever. <sup>8</sup> The **temple** [*naós of the tabernacle*] was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power, and **no one was able to enter** the **temple** [*naós of the tabernacle*] till the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed.”*

## **How can Earthlings Worship in Heaven?**

However, the question that immediately comes to mind is this: How can **God's people be worshipping** in the heavenly temple in 1844 during the sixth trumpet while they are still **living on the earth**? The answer is actually quite simple. On the Old Testament **Day of Atonement** while the high priest was cleansing the sanctuary from the sins of Israel, the people were required to

**gather outside** and **follow the work** of the high priest **by faith**. The people gathered, fasted, abstained from work and afflicted their souls.

In the Old Testament sanctuary service, the **court was open to the view** of the congregation but the inside of the tent itself was not. The people had to follow the work of the priest **by faith** based on the **description** of the sanctuary that they could read in the **book of Exodus**. The **court represents the earthly work** of Jesus because on earth He presented Himself as the **perfect lamb** who died for the sins of the world. Everything Jesus did on earth was **open to the view** of the inhabitants of the earth. However, Jesus is now in heaven **beyond the view of our physical eyes**. We must follow Him **by faith** in His work there.

There is a work of measuring the temple **in heaven** (examining the books of record there) and a parallel work of measuring the **spiritual temple** on earth (the actual worshipers in the church on earth). Actually, in a certain sense, those who have claimed Jesus as Savior and Lord **are written in heaven** because God keeps a precise transcript of their lives. The book of Hebrews depicts those who enter into the heavenly temple by faith as **worshiping in the heavenly temple** though they actually live on earth.

Notice, for example, **Hebrews 4:14-16**:

*“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have **a High Priest** who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore **come boldly to the throne of grace** that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”*

Thus the apostle Paul could speak of the temple of God as representing the **church on earth** (2Thessalonians 2:3, 4; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; 2Corinthians 6:16) while the book of Revelation describes it as the place where Jesus **ministers in heaven**.

## **In the Temple of God as God**

The apostle Paul describes the coming **antichrist** as one who would sit in the temple of God claiming to be God:

## **2 Thessalonians 2:4**

*“ . . . who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in **the temple of God**, showing himself that he is God.”*

Is the expression ‘temple of God’ in 2 Thessalonians 2 a reference to a **literal rebuilt** Jerusalem temple? Obviously not! The temple of God is in heaven so it is impossible for the antichrist sit in that temple. The antichrist does not sit in the heavenly temple but rather in the earthly one—the church—which is the earthly reflection of the heavenly temple.

**Matthew 21:12, 13**: When Jesus entered the Jewish temple at the conclusion of the **triumphal entry** He described the temple as ‘the temple of God’ and ‘My house’:

*“Then Jesus went into the **temple of God** and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. <sup>13</sup> And He said to them, "It is written, '**My house** shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'”*

However, when Jesus **forsook** the temple a short while later, He said to the Jewish leadership:

## **Matthew 23:38**

*“See! **Your house** is left to you desolate.”*

Clearly, the Jewish temple was **no longer God’s temple** after Jesus left it. When the **apostle Paul** used the word ‘temple’ (*naós*), he always applied it spiritually **to the Christian church** and **never to the literal** Jewish temple (1Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20; 2Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21).

The New Testament contains **two Greek words** that are translated ‘temple’. One is **hiéron** and the other is **naós**. The apostle Paul **never** used the word *naós* to refer to the Jewish temple. Without exception, he used the word *naós* as a reference to the spiritual temple, the Christian church. The **book of Acts**, refers



to the Jewish 'temple' **25 times** and it is never called it *naós*. Furthermore, none of the **epistles** uses the word *naós* to refer to the literal Jewish temple.

Paul explained to the **Ephesians** what he meant by the word 'temple':

### **Ephesians 2:19-22**

*"Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the **chief cornerstone**, <sup>21</sup> in whom the **whole building**, being fitted together, grows into a **holy temple** in the Lord, <sup>22</sup> in whom you also **are being built** together for a **dwelling place of God** in the Spirit."*

In this passage, the apostle Paul clearly explains that the temple is a spiritual house composed of spiritual materials:

- **Foundations** of the temple: Apostles and Prophets
- **Chief Cornerstone**: Jesus
- **Stones**: Believers
- **Shekinah**: The Holy Spirit (invisible)

In conclusion, the man of sin who sits in the temple of God must **sit within the Christian Church**. We can clearly see the link between the **little horn** and the **man of sin** by the fact that the little horn/beast speaks **blasphemies** against the Most High and **demand worship**.

It is hardly a coincidence that Pope **Benedict XVI**, at the conclusion of the week for Christian unity in **St. Paul's Outside the Wall**, sat on a great **white throne** and on each side of the throne was a **cherub**. Later, Pope Francis has also occupied this throne. Thus, Francis usurps the position of the **great YHWH** God, who sits between the cherubim in the heavenly sanctuary (Psalm 80:1).

### **What does it mean to measure?**

The act of measuring is a **symbolic way** of expressing the act of **judging**. The word 'measure' in Greek is *metreo* from where we get the word 'meter'.

## **2 Kings 21:13**

*"And I will stretch over Jerusalem the **measuring line** of Samaria and the **plummet** of the house of Ahab; **I will wipe Jerusalem** as one wipes a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down."*

## **Matthew 7:2**

*"Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup> For with what judgment **you judge**, you will be judged; and with the **measure you use**, it will be measured back to you."*

Ellen White concurs:

*"The grand **judgment** is taking place, and has been going on for some time. Now the Lord says, **Measure the temple and the worshipers thereof**. Remember when you are walking the streets about your business, God is **measuring** you; when you are attending your household duties, when you engage in conversation, God is **measuring** you. Remember that your words and actions are being daguerreotyped [photographed] in the **books of heaven**, as the face is reproduced by the artist on the polished plate. . ." Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, volume 7, p. 972*

In a personal testimony to a **judgmental woman** in the church, Ellen White linked the concepts of measuring tape, balance, judgment and sanctuary:

*"You can be a blessing. You can help such as need help; but you must lay down your **measuring tape**, for that is not for you to use. One who is unerring in **judgment**, who understands the weakness of our fallen, corrupt natures, holds the standard Himself. He weighs in the **balances of the sanctuary**, and His just **measure** we shall all accept. Testimonies for the Church, volume 2, p. 438*

In another place, Ellen White explained what the **tape measure** is:

*"When the **Judgment is set** and the books opened, your life and mine will be **measured by the law** of the Most High." Signs of the Times, December 29, 1887*

*"Every case is coming in review before God; He is **measuring the temple** and the worshipers therein." 7T, p. 219*

*“The Lord has provided His church with capabilities and blessings, that they may present to the world an image of His own sufficiency, and that His church may be complete in Him, a continual representation of another, even the eternal world, of laws that are higher than earthly laws. His **church is to be a temple built after the divine similitude**, and the angelic architect has brought his **golden measuring rod** from heaven, that every stone may be hewed and squared by the divine measurement and polished to shine as an emblem of heaven, radiating in all directions the bright, clear beams of the Sun of Righteousness.” 1T, p. 17*

**Ellen White** agreed with James when she wrote that God would judge us by the **perfect law of liberty**.

We must understand the idea of measuring the heavenly temple in Revelation 11:1 in the context of the **preceding chapter** where we find a description of the little book episode. As we have seen, a message of judgment **came out of the little book** beginning at the time of the end (post 1798) which John (representing God’s people) **devoured and proclaimed**. As John devoured it, the message was sweet in the mouth but the aftermath was bitter. Thus, somehow the message of judgment that came out of the little book would be at first sweet and then bitter. After the bittersweet experience, the Angel told John to **prophecy again from the little book** and the message had to do with the **measuring of the temple**.

## **The Altar**

The altar here must be the one in the **holy place** and not the one in the court because the angel instructed John **not to measure the court** (11:2). Jesus died, so to speak, at the **altar in the court** in the **first century**, but the measurement of this altar began during the **sixth trumpet** near the close of time.

**Kenneth Strand** has shown in an incisive article that the background to Revelation 11:1 is in the **Day of Atonement** of Leviticus 16. On Yom Kippur, there was an atonement for the priests, the sanctuary, the altar and the congregation. Revelation mentions three of these four, leaving out the atoning for the priest. Jesus needs no atonement or measuring on the Day of Atonement.

In both Leviticus 16 and Revelation 11:1, we see the same movement from the temple to the altar to the worshipers.

We must underline once again that John sees those who worship in the temple **as worshipping in heaven** although they are physically on the earth. This is a common way of expressing that God's people enter boldly into the heavenly sanctuary by faith while they are still live physically on earth (Hebrews 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22; 12:22-24). Until 1844, the faith of God's people **entered the holy place** but after 1844, their faith enters the most holy place. Peter made this very clear on the day of Pentecost when he spoke about the installation of Jesus as our intercessor in the holy place (cf. Acts 2; Revelation 4:5; 5:6).

**How do people draw near** to the throne of grace? It is through **their prayers**:

### **Psalm 141:2**

*"Let my **prayer** be set before You as **incense**, the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."*

Luke 1 explains that when the congregation prays, the priest in the holy place **mingles the incense** with their prayers:

### **Luke 1:8-10**

*"So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to **burn incense** when he went **into the temple** of the Lord. <sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the **people was praying** outside at the **hour of incense**."*

However, the incense does not represent prayer. Rather, the priest mingled the incense with the prayers of God's people:

### **Revelation 8:3, 4**

*"Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood **at the altar**. He was given **much incense**, that he should offer it **with** the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar that was before the throne. <sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, **with the prayers** of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand."*

Ellen White described beautifully the relationship between the incense and prayer:

*“Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured up as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense.” In Heavenly Places, p. 69*

However, not all prayers are sincere and genuine. For this reason, the altar must be measured to reveal who came to the throne of grace with a sincere and repentant heart.

### **Proverbs 28:9, NKJV, NIV**

*“One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.”*

*“If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.”*

### **Jeremiah 7:16**

*“Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them, nor make intercession to Me; for I will not hear you.”*

### **Psalms 66:18-19**

*“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.”<sup>19</sup> But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer.”*

### **Why a Judgment of God's People?**

However, we wonder what possible purpose there could be for God to judge His own people. After all, does not God know who truly belongs to Him?

The noted commentator, Albert Barnes, considered it highly unusual that God should judge His own people:

*“There is some **apparent incongruity** in directing him to ‘measure’ those who were engaged in worship; but the obvious meaning is, that he was to take a **correct estimate of their character**; of **what they professed**; of the **reality of their piety**; of **their lives**, and of the general state of the church considered as **professedly worshipping** God.” Barnes’ Notes; Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Incorporated.*

**1 Peter 4:17** explains that judgment must begin in the **house of God**. The house of God is composed of everyone who has ever **claimed the name of Jesus**:

*“For the time has come for judgment to **begin at the house of God**; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”*

**1 Timothy 3:14, 15**: The house of God is **the church**:

*“These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; <sup>15</sup> but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the **house of God**, which is **the church** of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”*

*“As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of **all who have believed on Jesus** come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. **Every name** is mentioned, **every case** closely investigated. Names are **accepted**, names **rejected**. When any have sins **remaining upon the books** of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God’s remembrance.” GC, p. 483*

Clearly, the judgment that Revelation 11:1 describes applies only to those who professed to follow Jesus and **worshipped** by faith at the **altar of incense** in the temple.

## **Review of Revelation 10**

Here is a summary of the chronological sequence of events in Revelation 10:

- The Angel **descended** from heaven to the earth (verse 1).
- The Angel's **physical characteristics** were described (verse 1).
- The Angel brought in his right hand an **open scroll**. This means that the Angel had already opened it before he descended to the earth (verse 2).
- The Angel placed one **foot** on dry land and the other on the sea (verse 2).
- The Angel then spoke with the **roar of the lion** that echoed like seven **thunders** (verses 3-4).
- The Angel then instructed John to **seal the message** that the thunders uttered and **not to write down** their message.
- The Angel then swore the **oath** in the name of the **Creator** that **time would be no longer** (verses 5-7).
- The angel then **gave the book** to John **instructing** him to eat it and told him it would be bitter in his stomach and sweet as honey in his mouth (verses 8-9).
- John then eats the book and it is **sweet** in his mouth (verse 10).
- The aftermath of eating the book was **indigestion** (verse 10).
- The same Angel then instructed John to **prophesy again** from the little book (verse 11).
- The same Angel commanded John to **measure the temple** and those who worship therein (11:1).
- The '**mystery of God**' ended when the seventh angel was **about to** blow his trumpet (10:7).
- When the **seventh trumpet** blows, Jesus takes over the kingdoms of the world (Revelation 11:15-17).

## **Why does our Church Exist?**

God raised up the Seventh-day Adventist Church **shortly after 1844** to obey the order to prophesy again, announcing to the world that God is **measuring the heavenly sanctuary** and those **who worship** there. God established **the organization** of this church to make it possible to take the **three angels' message** to the world. This is the reason for our existence and **woe be to us** if we fail to live up to our calling:

*“In a **special sense** Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as **watchmen [defensive task]** and **light bearers [offensive task]**. To them has been entrusted the **last warning** for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is **no other work** of so great importance. They are to **allow nothing else** to absorb their attention.” 9T, p. 19*

*“In the **balances of the sanctuary** the Seventh-day Adventist church **is to be weighed**. She will be judged by the **privileges and advantages** that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, **on her will be pronounced the sentence:** “Found wanting.” By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged. . .” LDE, pp. 59, 60*





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 12: DANIEL 10 AND THE LITTLE BOOK**

### **Historical Time Frame**

Daniel was **88 years old** when the events of Daniel 10 transpired. We know this because we are told in **4T 570**, that Daniel was **18 years** of age when Nebuchadnezzar took him captive to Babylon (Daniel 1:1-2). The events of chapter 10 begin while Daniel **was still in Babylon** although Cyrus had already given the decree authorizing the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. We know this because Daniel was by the great river Hiddekel, that is to say, the Tigris (10:4).

### **Chronological Matters**

It is of the utmost importance to remember **the dates** that we find in Daniel, chapters eight through eleven:

- The events of **Daniel 8** took place in the year **550 BC**, roughly eleven years before the fall of Babylon (in 539 BC) and fourteen years before Cyrus’ decree of release (in 536 BC).
- **Daniel 9** bears the date **538 BC**. At this point Babylon had fallen but Cyrus had not yet given his decree of release.
- The events of **chapter 10** transpire in the year **535 B. C.** Cyrus had already given his decree and the **first wave** of Jews had returned to

rebuild the temple.

- **Chapter 11** bears the **same date** as chapter 10 because it is the continuation of it.

Daniel 11:1 seems to indicate that the entire chapter bears the same date as Daniel 9 (538 BC). This would mean that the events of Daniel 11 transpired before those of chapter 10. However, a careful analysis of Daniel 11:1 reveals that this verse contains a **parenthetical statement** inserted by Daniel between Daniel **10:21** and Daniel **11:2**. In other words, Daniel 11:1 is out of chronological order with the events that come before and after it. In 11:1 Daniel is simply explaining that **he also confirmed** and strengthened Darius the Mede in the first year of his rule (Daniel 9:1-2). In short, the text of Daniel 10:20-11:2 (skipping Daniel 11:1) should look like this:

*"Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of **Persia**; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of **Greece** will come.<sup>21</sup> But **I will tell you** what is noted in the **Scripture of Truth**. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. "Also in the first year of Darius the Mede, I, even I, stood up to confirm and strengthen him.)<sup>2</sup> And now **I will tell you the truth**: Behold, three more kings will arise in **Persia**, and the fourth shall be far richer than them all; by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of **Greece**."*

It is obvious that the words in bold both before and after Daniel's parenthetical statement bear a close relationship to each another. In both there is a reference to **Persia and Greece** and in both Gabriel says to Daniel 'I will tell you the truth.' It is safe to conclude, then, that the **introductory vision** of Daniel 10 continues in **chapter 11**. Both chapters bear the **same date**. Thus, **Daniel 10 is the introduction** to the explanation provided by Gabriel in Daniel 11:2-12:3. Daniel 12:4-13 should then be understood as the epilogue to the book of Daniel in general and of Daniel 8-12 in particular.

## Comments on Daniel 10:1

The ‘thing’ (*dabar*) that Gabriel revealed to Daniel in the third year of Cyrus (535 B. C.) was actually the explanation we find in Daniel 11:2-12:3. Significantly, Daniel did not receive a new vision in this year. He merely received a word (‘thing’) which explained the vision (*mareh*) which had previously been given in chapter 8. For the purpose of clarity, I will quote verse 1 and provide explanatory notes in brackets:

*‘In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message [the explanation of Daniel 11:2-12:4] was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message [the explanation of Daniel 11:2-12:3] was true, but the appointed time was long [because the explanation covered the periods of Persia, Greece, imperial Rome, papal Rome in its two stages, the close of probation, the time of trouble, and the final deliverance of God’s people]; and he understood the message [Daniel 11:2-12:3], and had understanding of the vision [the vision of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 because there was no new vision in Daniel 11].’*

## Comments on Daniel 10:2-4

In verses 2-4 Daniel is fasting and praying. Until this point in the book, we have seen Daniel as a man of intense prayer (Daniel 2:17-18; 6:10-11; 9:3-19). However, Daniel 10 tells us that Daniel not only prayed. He also was mourning and fasting. What grave historical circumstances led Daniel not only to pray but also to mourn and fast?

We know that Daniel’s agony had nothing to do with the decree for God’s people to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. At this point, Cyrus had already given the decree and the first wave of exiles had returned (Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-8; 1:1). Neither did Daniel’s agony have to do with whether Artaxerxes would utter the decree to restore and build Jerusalem because this decree was still eighty years in the future. Furthermore, Daniel was not mourning because he did not understand the ‘vision’ (*mareh*) of Daniel 8 because verse 1

tells us that he **did** understand it at this point. Why, then, was Daniel praying, mourning and fasting? There appear to be **two reasons**.

In the first place, **three years before** the events of Daniel 10, Gabriel had already explained in **broad strokes** the basic elements of the prophecy of the 2300 days. However, **many details** were still unclear in the mind of Daniel. This **motivated** Daniel's prayer. The prophet was seeking wisdom to understand the **unexplained elements** of the vision of Daniel 8. In response to Daniel's plea, God provided the material we find in **Daniel 11:2-12:**

Ellen G. White explained:

*"Upon the occasion just described [Daniel 9], the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction which he was then able to receive. A **few years afterward** [535 BC], however, the prophet desired to learn more of the subjects **not yet fully explained**, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God. 'In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all. . .'" (Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, p. 49).*

Perhaps this would be a good time to examine the relationship between the prophecies of Daniel 8, 9, 10 and 11. We can discern the **close relationship** between these prophecies in the continued use of the words '**vision**' and '**understand**'.

- ✓ In **Daniel 8:16** Gabriel was given the command to make Daniel **understand** the **vision** (*mareh*) but at the end of the chapter (8:26-27) we are told that Daniel did **not understand** the **vision** (*mareh*).
- ✓ In **Daniel 9:23** Gabriel came back to Daniel and told him to '**understand** the matter, and consider the **vision**' (*mareh*).
- ✓ After Gabriel's explanation, **Daniel 10:1** tells us that Daniel 'understood the thing, and had **understanding** in the **vision**' (*mareh*).
- ✓ Yet in **Daniel 10:2-3, 12** Daniel pleaded for God to give him **further understanding**.

- ✓ As a result, Gabriel **came back** to explain further details which were still unclear in Daniel's mind. Gabriel explained:

*"Now I have come to make you **understand** what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the **vision [chazon]** refers to **many days** yet to come."* (Daniel 10:14).

- ✓ God gave this further understanding to Daniel in **chapter 11** where Gabriel provided the **fullest explanation** of the unexplained portions of Daniel 8. Significantly, as we shall see in our study Daniel 12, the prophet did not even then understand everything (Daniel 12:8-10). When the book of Daniel ended, Daniel still did not understand all. This is why **God gave the book of Revelation**, to expand upon the book of Daniel. Daniel 8-12 is a close-knit prophecy and the Apocalypse is a Revelation or explanation of that prophecy. Regarding this Ellen White states:

*"The things revealed to Daniel were afterward complemented by the revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. We should carefully study these books. . . The book of Daniel is **unsealed in the revelation** to John, and carries us **forward** to the **last scenes** of this earth's history."* (*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 114-115).

The phrase 'the time of the end' also connects the prophecies of Daniel 8-11. In **Daniel 8:17, 19** Gabriel told the prophet that the *mareh* is for the 'time of the end'. In our previous study of Daniel 8, we noticed that the word *mareh* particularly denotes the events connected with the **conclusion of the 2300 days**. What this means is that the *mareh* would not be present truth neither would it be fully comprehended until the 'time of the end'.

Significantly, there is no reference to the time of the end in **Daniel 9** because the focus of this chapter is not on the time of the end but rather on the time of probation for **Daniel's literal people**, that is, the Jewish nation. However, in **chapter 10:14** Gabriel once more informs Daniel that the **vision (chazon)** is for what will **befall his people** (spiritual Israel) in the **latter days** 'for yet the vision (*chazon*) is for many days.' Why does Daniel 10:14 use the word *chazon* for 'vision' instead of the word *mareh*?

In order to answer this question, we must keep in mind that the word *chazon* in Daniel 8 refers to the **totality of the vision** from the time of Persia until the cleansing of the sanctuary at the conclusion of the 2300 days. On the other hand, the word *mareh* appears in a **more restricted sense** to describe the **apparition** of the two heavenly messengers who explained **the time element** of the 2300 days (Daniel 8:13-14).

We can now understand why Gabriel used *mareh* in Daniel 8:17 while he used *chazon* in Daniel 10:14. The reason is actually quite simple. You see, when Gabriel returned in Daniel 11, he **not only explained the time element** of the 2300 days but he also explained **the totality of the vision** of Daniel 8 once again beginning with Persia and ending with the final persecution and deliverance of God's people. In other words, he explained once again not only the *mareh* but also the total *chazon*.

Moving on to **Daniel 11:40** we find a clear description of the events that would befall Daniel's people during the 'time of the end'. After the papacy ruled the world for 1260 years (Daniel 11:30-39), the king of the south—France—would give it a deadly wound in 1798. (Daniel 11:40A). However, the king of the north would then recover its power and overwhelm the world even to the point of attempting to annihilate Daniel's end-time people (11:40-45). Nevertheless, in the hour of utmost extremity, God would intervene to deliver His people (12:1). The events that began in Daniel 11:40 are the ones that Gabriel had not explained in Daniel 8 and 9. Notice the excellent summary provided Louis Were:

*"In **Daniel 9** the prophecy of the 2300 days was explained **down to the overthrow** of the Jewish nation as God's chosen people and the destruction of Jerusalem. However, the prophet had **not yet been told all the rest** of the time belonging to the 2300 days and the final events of earth's history. He therefore prayed for light on these things, and Gabriel came explaining to Daniel **the reason for his delay [more on this later]**: 'But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days [**the 21 days Daniel was praying**]: but lo, Michael the first Prince came to help me. . . Now I am come to **make thee***

**understand** *what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for **many days**. . . and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia.” (Daniel 10:2-20). Louis F. Were, The Battle for the Kingship of the World, pp. 12-13.*

When Gabriel concluded his explanation in Daniel 11:2-12:3, the prophet Gabriel told him to ‘*shut up the words and seal up the book until the time of the end*’. In other words, **the time element** of the 2300 days of Daniel chapters 8-12 would be in great measure unintelligible until 1798. However, Gabriel assured Daniel that at the time of the end the **book would be opened** and knowledge of its contents would be increased (Daniel 12:4). Revelation 10 fulfilled this promise with the removal of the seal from the last half of Daniel. After 1798 and in the Great Advent Awakening of the 1830’s and 1840’s there was great interest in the study of the book of Daniel.

Just a few remarks about the epilog of Daniel’s ‘little book’. In the epilog (Daniel 12:5-13) Gabriel gave additional chronological explanations but these proved to be **too much** for **Daniel to understand** (12:8-9) so Gabriel told the prophet:

*‘But go thou thy way until the end be: for thou shalt rest and stand up in thy lot at the end of the days.’ (Daniel 12:13).*

At this point Gabriel decided to burden Daniel no more. He simply told the prophet that these things were **not for his time** but rather for the time of the end. The enigmatic statement, ‘*thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot*’ could be taken to mean that Daniel was to **resurrect** at the end of time or that he would **stand up figuratively** to speak through his writings at the time of the end (Prophets and Kings, p. 547). The second option is the most persuasive.

We can find one final thing that links the prophecies of Daniel 8-11 and that is the role performed by the **angel Gabriel**. In Chapter 8, God commanded **Gabriel** to explain the vision to Daniel. When Daniel failed to understand Gabriel’s explanation, he came back in Daniel 9 to explain it. Then, in chapters 10 and 11, **Gabriel** who contended with the Prince and the kings of Persia and **Gabriel** gave the explanation we find in Daniel 11:2-12:3.

However, there was a **second reason** why Daniel was agonizing in prayer. As we have previously noted, the events of Daniel 10 took place in the year **535 BC**. Just one year earlier, Cyrus had given a decree authorizing the rebuilding of the temple and had even provided materials to carry forward the task (Ezra 1:1-4). The first wave of Jews had enthusiastically returned to Jerusalem and quickly laid the foundations of the temple and the altar (Ezra 3:8-10). At first, **the Samaritans** feigned to have great interest in the rebuilding of the temple and offered to help (Ezra 4:1-2). However, when they were **rebuffed by Zerubbabel** (Ezra 4:3), the opposition began. Notice the words of Ezra:

*“Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building. And hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of **Cyrus king of Persia**, even until the reign of **Darius king of Persia**.” (Ezra 4:4-5)*

During the reign of **Cambyeses**, the opposition became so great that for a time the rebuilders of the temple suspended their work. In the reign of **Darius Hystaspes** (also known as Darius the Persian) the governors of the land even came to the builders and demanded to know **who had given them permission** to rebuild the temple (Ezra 5:2-4).

The governors of the land sent a letter to king Darius to find out if the Jews had royal permission to rebuild the temple. (Ezra 5:7-17). Ezra 6:1-3 tells us that Darius searched the archives in order to ascertain if any previous decree had been given that authorized the Jews to rebuild the temple. When Darius found Cyrus’ original decree in the archives, he sent a letter **renewing the decree of Cyrus** (Ezra 6:7-13). Because of this confirmatory decree and due to the help of Zechariah and Haggai, the **temple was finally finished** in the year 515 BC.

It is in the context of this opposition that we must understand the **mourning and fasting of Daniel** in chapter 10. Daniel knew at this point that the rebuilding of the temple was imperative to make possible the fulfillment of the prophecy of the seventy weeks and the 2300 days. Yet the historical circumstances seemed to indicate that the temple would not take place



according to schedule. Therefore, Daniel poured out his heart to God in prayer pleading for the Lord to fulfill His promise.

### **Comments on Verses 4-6**

These verses describe a magnificent Christophany. Daniel saw a vision of Christ and the description is virtually identical with that of the glorified Christ in Revelation 1:13-16 and the Mighty Angel of Revelation 10:1, 2. This indicates that Daniel did not see Jesus, as He was clothed at that very moment, but rather prophetically, as He would be clothed upon his inauguration as High Priest after His ascension.

### **Comments on Verses 7-9**

These verses describe the impact the vision had on those who were present with Daniel. Although they did not see the glorified Christ, they felt the intense solemnity of the occasion. The text tells us that they fled to hide and therefore Daniel remained alone. The text also tells us that Daniel heard Christ speak to him but Christ's words were not recorded.

### **Comments on Verses 10-14**

As Daniel lay on the ground, a hand touched him and set him upon his knees and the palms of his hands. The text identifies Gabriel as the person who touched the prophet.

Some have erroneously concluded that the person whom Daniel saw in his vision (verses 5-6) is the same as the one who touched him. However, there is no reason to reach this conclusion. Verse 10 marks a clear break between the personage Daniel saw in vision and the person who lifted him up. The words are clear:

*“Suddenly, a hand touched me [not necessarily the hand of the person he saw in vision], which made me tremble on my knees and on the palms of my hands.” (Daniel 10:10).*

As we have previously noted from the book of Ezra (see page 5 above), **the Samaritans** assiduously opposed the rebuilding of the temple, even to the point of **complaining to the Persian kings**. As we have seen, during the reigns of **Cambyases and Darius I** the work on the temple ceased **for a time**.

Now, if the book of Ezra were our only source of information about this experience, we might conclude that the opposition was due to **mere human factors**. However, Daniel 10 gives us a glimpse **behind the veil** of human history. Here we discern invisible **cosmic powers** doing their utmost to influence earthly human events. Verse 13 describes **this battle** between the prince of Persia and Gabriel, a battle so intense that it was finally necessary for **Michael to come** to Gabriel's aid:

*"But **the prince** of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the **chief princes**, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia."*

Three questions emerge when we read this verse.

- ✓ Who is the **prince** of the kingdom of Persia?
- ✓ Who is **Michael**?
- ✓ What was **the reason** for the conflict between these two persons?

From the start, we must recognize that the **prince** of the kingdom of Persia is **not the same** as the **king of Persia**. The word 'prince' appear some **420 times** in the Old Testament and **not once** does the word describe a king. The word most frequently describes **military commanders**. Daniel 10:13 indicates that Gabriel and Michael were working on **two fronts**. First, they were contending with the **prince** of the kingdom of Persia and secondly they were working upon the minds of the **kings** of Persia. Thus, there is a clear distinction between the prince of Persia and the kings of Persia.

Who is this prince of the kingdom of Persia, and who is Michael who stands watch over Daniel's people?

Before we can answer these questions, it is imperative to realize that **ancient cultures** believed that every kingdom had its own particular '**guardian angel**'

who looked out for the interests and welfare of the nation. That being the case, the prince of the kingdom of Persia would be Persia's 'guardian angel' and Michael would be Israel's guardian Angel.

Michael is a fascinating personage. In Scripture, the specific name appears **five times**, always in **apocalyptic passages** where Michael is **in conflict** with Satan. Michael's **very name** is a challenge to Satan. It means, '*Who is like God?*'

**Revelation 12:7-9** tells us that Michael cast Satan and his angels out of heaven. It is of more than passing interest that at the beginning of the great controversy, Michael had **his** angels and Satan had **his**. At the conclusion of the great controversy, Jesus will come with **his** holy angels (Matthew 24:31) and Satan and **his** angels will be cast in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41).

In **Jude 9** Michael contended with Satan for the body of Moses. The testimony of Scripture indicates that Michael had come on this occasion to resurrect Moses from the dead (see Deuteronomy 34:5-6; Matthew 17:3). Clearly, Michael is the **Angel who has resurrecting power**. It is no coincidence that when Jesus comes to resurrect the dead at His second coming, he will '*descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of **the Archangel**, and with the trump of God*' (1Thessalonians 4:16; see also John 5:26-29 where we are told that the voice of Jesus will resurrect the dead).

The book of **Daniel** contains **three references** to Michael. Two of them are in the chapter we are presently studying (verses 13, 21) and the other is in Daniel 12:1. This last verse is of particular importance for **two reasons**:

- ✓ First, the text describes Michael as the great prince who **stands watch** over Israel. That is to say, Michael is Israel's guardian angel.
- ✓ Second, Michael is **the deliverer** of Israel and the one who **resurrects** those who sleep in the dust of the earth (Daniel 12:2).

The Old Testament also refers to Michael as '*the Angel of the Lord*'. Our present study will not allow us to examine every reference to the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament, but we must consider a few key passages.

The first passage is **Zechariah 3:1-5**. These verses leave no doubt that the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is the same person as **Michael**. In this passage, the Angel of the Lord is in **conflict with Satan** and the issue of the conflict is **Israel** in the person of the high priest (verse 2). Of particular significance are the words: '*The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan*' (verse 2). These are the very words that Michael uttered to Satan when He came to **resurrect Moses** (Jude 9). Thus, a comparison of Zechariah 3:1-5 with Jude 9 reveals, without a doubt, that the **Angel of the Lord is Michael**.

In **Genesis 32:11, 24, 26, 30** we find Jacob praying for God to **deliver** him from the wrath of his brother, Esau. Other places in Scripture describe Jacob's anguish as the '*time of Jacob's trouble*.' In fact, Genesis 32 is in the background of the time of trouble spoken of in **Daniel 12:1**. As Jacob was praying, the Angel of the Lord (see Hosea 12:3-5) laid hold of him and they began to struggle. The result of the story is well known. Not only did the Angel **deliver** Jacob from the wrath of his brother but he also **blessed him** and gave him a **new name**. At the conclusion of this episode, Jacob called the place Peniel '*for **I have seen God face to face**, and my life has been preserved*' (this word is frequently translated 'delivered' in the Old Testament). Can anyone doubt that the Angel of the Lord in this story is God?

**Exodus 14:19-20** explains that the Angel of God led Israel in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night to **protect** them from their enemies. **Verse 24** identifies this Angel as God.

The **burning bush** story is well known. The **Angel of the Lord** appeared to Moses and announced that **he** was going to **deliver** Israel (Exodus 3:8) from their bondage to the Egyptians. One cannot help but remember that Michael is also the **end-time deliverer** of spiritual Israel in Daniel 12:1. A close inspection of Exodus 3:2-14 reveals that this Angel is **also God** (see John 8:58-59).

In **Joshua 5:13-15** this same Angel is identified as the **Prince of the host** who had come to **defend Israel** in the conquest of Jericho. As we saw in our study on Daniel 8, we find the name '*Prince of the host*' in only one other place in Scripture, **Daniel 8:11** that refers to Jesus as 'the Prince of the host.' In fact, as

we have seen before, Daniel refers to Jesus as ‘the Prince of the host,’ ‘the Prince of princes,’ the ‘Prince of the covenant,’ and ‘the great Prince.’

There can be no doubt, then, that Michael is Israel’s **Guardian Angel**. He is Israel’s **protector and deliverer** from the power of Satan. He is God! Michael is none other than **Jesus Christ**! What an appropriate name for one who is in contention with Lucifer, who had declared, ‘I will be like the Most High.’ (Isaiah 14:14) In response to Lucifer’s ambitions, Jesus’ name throws out the challenge: ‘*Who is Like God*’?

We are now ready to identify the **prince of the kingdom of Persia**. If Michael the Prince is Christ, then the prince of the kingdom of Persia must be Satan. Jesus called Satan the ‘*prince of the world*’ on at least three occasions (John 14:30; 12:30-33; 16:11).

Now that we have identified the contending parties, we can discuss the reason for the battle. As we saw in our study of Daniel 9, God had promised that Israel would spend **70 years** in Babylonian captivity and then would **return to their land** to rebuild the temple, the city and the walls. However, the restoration and building of the city and walls could not take place until the **temple was rebuilt**. The decree of Cyrus in 536 BC was a great victory for God. Everything appeared to be going according to schedule. However, then the **opposition of the Samaritans** ensued. Daniel 10 leaves no doubt that this opposition **did not originate with the Samaritans**. The prince of the kingdom of Persia (Satan) was working to influence the minds of the kings of Persia so that they would **halt the work of rebuilding the temple**. At the same time, Gabriel was doing his utmost to influence the minds of the kings of Persia so that they would authorize the continuation of the work.

For **three weeks**, while Daniel was **mourning and praying**, Gabriel struggled with the prince of Persia and with the **minds of the kings of Persia**. Furthermore, at the very end of this period, Michael Himself came to aid Gabriel in the struggle. Doubtless, we must understand the 21 days as **literal days**. However, it is tempting to understand them in a broader sense as well by applying the **year/day principle**.

Cyrus uttered his decree to rebuild the temple in the year **536 BC** and the temple was finally finished in the year **515 BC**, exactly 21 years after Cyrus gave the decree! During this entire period, Gabriel was struggling with Satan and with the kings of Persia (notice **the plural** 'kings' in Daniel 10:13). The **book of Ezra** itself explains that the work of rebuilding went on according to schedule because *'the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they [the Samaritans] could not cause them to cease.'* (Ezra 5:5)

In short, it is as if Gabriel was telling Daniel:

*'I know you have been mourning, fasting and praying for three full weeks because you wanted a clearer understanding of the end-time elements of the vision of Daniel 8. The very moment you started to pray, I had every intention of coming immediately to answer your plea as I had done the previous time you prayed (Daniel 9:20-23) but this time I was delayed. You see, I was involved in this conflict with the prince of the kingdom of Persia. He was influencing the minds of the Persian kings so that they would halt the rebuilding of the temple. However, at the end of the 21 days, Michael came to help me and we prevailed. The opposition you have seen by the Samaritans is really the visible manifestation of this invisible conflict. Nevertheless, now I have finally been able to break away and help you understand 'what shall befall thy people in the **latter days**: for **yet** the vision is for many days.'* (Daniel 10:14)'.

Do not miss the significance of the word **yet**. This word seems to imply that Gabriel had already explained part of the vision (*chazon*) in Daniel 9 (the 70 weeks) but that there were **yet** many days in the vision that Gabriel still needed to explain.

Ellen White confirmed this scenario:

*“Untiring in their opposition, **the Samaritans** ‘weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them, to **frustrate their purpose**, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, **even until the reign of Darius.**’ (Ezra 4:4, 5). By false reports, they aroused suspicion in minds easily led to suspect. However, for many years **the powers of evil were held in check [because of Gabriel and Michael]**, and the people of Judea had liberty to continue their work.*

*“While Satan was striving to influence the **highest powers in the kingdom of Medo-Persia** to show disfavor to God’s people, angels worked in behalf of the exiles. The controversy was one in which all heaven was interested. Through the prophet Daniel we are given a glimpse of this mighty struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. **For three weeks** Gabriel wrestled with the powers of darkness, seeking to counteract the influences at work on the mind of Cyrus; and before the contest closed, **Christ Himself came to Gabriel’s aid** [Daniel 10:13 is quoted]. All that heaven could do in behalf of the people of God was done. The victory was finally gained; the forces of the enemy were held in check all the days of **Cyrus**, and all the days of his son **Cambyses**, who reigned about seven and a half years.” *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 571-572.*

*“The king of Persia was controlled by the highest of all evil angels. He refused, as did Pharaoh, to obey the word of the Lord. Gabriel declared, He withstood me twenty-one days by his **representations against the Jews**. But Michael came to his help, and then he remained with the kings of Persia, **holding the powers in check**, giving right counsel against evil counsel.” *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 4, p. 1173.*

## **Comments on Verses 15-19**

In response to Gabriel’s words, Daniel bowed to the ground and found himself **speechless**. The vision (*mareh*) filled him with sorrow and his physical strength was gone. Furthermore, his breath left him. Gabriel remedied the situation by restoring Daniel’s speech and by strengthening him.

## Comments on Verses 20-21

Before further explaining the vision to Daniel in chapter 11, Gabriel informed the prophet that the battle with Satan was not over:

*"Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must **return to fight** with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. <sup>21</sup> But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince."*

This is what Gabriel was telling Daniel:

*"I must now return to **continue my struggle** with the prince of Persia (Satan). There is still **work to do**. I must still make sure that Artaxerxes gives his decree on schedule to mark the beginning of the 70 weeks and the 2300 days. Furthermore, when the kingdom of Persia has fallen, I must continue to do battle with the **prince of Greece** (Satan in control of the Greek kingdom). However, before I continue this battle, **I will take the time to show you** the events that will transpire from this point on. These events have already been written in the scripture of truth, that is, in God's calendar and therefore their **fulfillment is absolutely certain**."*

## Putting it all Together

In closing, let us see how the prophecies of Daniel 8, 9, 10 and 11 **fit together**. We will begin with chapter 8 and show how each succeeding chapter builds upon the previous ones.

### Daniel 8

The sweep of the *chazon* (vision) contains the following sequence of events:

- ✓ **Persia** (8:3-4, 20)
- ✓ **Greece** (8:3-7, 19-21)
- ✓ Four **divisions** of Greece (8:22)
- ✓ **Pagan Rome** (8:9-10)



✓ **Papal Rome** (8:11-12)

✓ The beginning of the **cleansing of the sanctuary** in **1844** (8:13-14)

Daniel 8 **takes us only** to the **beginning** of the investigative judgment in 1844 but tells us **nothing** about the **ending of the judgment**. In Daniel 8, Gabriel just made a few remarks about **events that would transpire after 1844** (8:19, 25). A voice told **Gabriel** to make Daniel **understand** the vision (*mareh*; 8:16) who told Daniel that the vision (*mareh*) was for the **time of the end** (8:16). At the conclusion of Daniel 8, the story tells us that Daniel was astonished at the *mareh* and **did not understand it**. (8:27).

## Daniel 9

When chapter 8 ended, Daniel was confused over the *mareh* so he studied Jeremiah's prophecy of the seventy years and **prayed for understanding** (9:1-19). In response to Daniel's prayer, actually, from the **beginning** of his supplications (9:23) God sent **Gabriel** to give Daniel **understanding** of the **vision** (*mareh*) of Daniel 8 (9:22-23). Gabriel explained that he was giving the answer because Daniel was a man **greatly beloved** (9:23)

Gabriel then explained **the first part** of the prophecy of the 2300 days, that is to say, the **seventy weeks**. In his explanation, Gabriel emphasized that this portion of the 2300 days was for Daniel's **literal city and people** (9:24). It is significant that there is no reference to **the time of the end** in Daniel 9 because this prophecy does not deal with end-time events but rather with the probationary period for the **Jewish theocracy**. Notably, the seventy weeks begin with the kingdom of **Persia** and end with **Pagan Rome**. Thus, the seventy weeks begin with the same kingdom as Daniel 8 but only take us to the reign of Pagan Rome when Jesus was anointed, crucified and Stephen stoned. However, what about the period **beyond Pagan Rome**? We certainly would expect Gabriel to **come back** at some point to explain the events beyond the period of Pagan Rome, and he did!

## Daniel 10

Daniel 10 begins with the statement that Daniel **understood** the *mareh* (10:1). However, he wanted further light so he **prayed** to God (10:2-3, 12). In response to Daniel's prayer, nay, at the **beginning** of Daniel's supplication (10:12) God sent **Gabriel** to give the prophet **understanding** (10:14) because Daniel was **greatly beloved** (10:11). The understanding that Gabriel came to give Daniel includes the totality of the *chazon* but deals particularly with the **latter days** (10:14).

## Daniel 11

Gabriel began his explanation of the vision of Daniel 11 in the same place as he began the explanation in Daniel 8. However, Daniel 11 greatly expands the details of Daniel 8:

- ✓ **Persia**
- ✓ **Greece**
- ✓ The **first king** of Greece
- ✓ The **four divisions** of Greece
- ✓ **Pagan Rome**
- ✓ **Papal Rome** during its 1260 years of dominion (11:31-39).

Gabriel had already revealed this much in Daniel 8. However, as Gabriel very briefly hinted in Daniel 8, there was more to Papal Rome than its 1260-year career. Therefore, in Daniel 11 Gabriel took Daniel **far beyond 1798 and 1844**. He explained that the Papacy would receive a **mortal wound** from France in 1798 (11:40), that the deadly wound **would be healed** (11:40-41), and that the Papacy would yet exercise **world dominion**.

Additionally, he explained the **shaking**, the **loud cry**, the **death decree**, the **close of probation**, the **time of trouble**, the **deliverance** of God's people, the **special resurrection** and the **everlasting kingdom** (Daniel 11:2-12:3).

Finally, Gabriel commanded Daniel to **close and seal** the book until the time of the end (Daniel 12:4). Then, the book of **Revelation further expands** and

explains the contents of the little book upon its unsealing. Ellen White explained:

*“The things revealed to Daniel were afterward **complemented** by the revelation made to John on the Isle of Patmos. These books should be carefully studied . . . The book of Daniel is **unsealed** in the revelation to John, and carries us forward to the **last scenes** of this earth’s history.”* (*Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 114-115)

## **Literal and Spiritual**

As we look at the relationship between Daniel 10 and chapters 11 and 12, we see that in chapter 10, Michael stood watch over Daniel’s **literal people** to save them from their **literal enemies** as they returned from their **literal captivity** in **literal Babylon** to rebuild the **literal temple**.

However, in the time of the end, Michael stands watch over Daniel’s **spiritual people** who have returned from their **spiritual captivity** in **spiritual Babylon** to rebuild the **spiritual temple** as **spiritual enemies** oppose them.

The **end of the seventy weeks** marks the transition point from the literal to the spiritual. That is to say, at the center of Daniel 9 is Messiah’s work for literal Israel while at the center of Daniel 10-11 is Messiah’s work for spiritual Israel.

**Daniel 8:14** and **Daniel 12:1** mark the **beginning** and ending points of the investigative judgment. In Daniel 8:14 (also Daniel 7:13, 14) Jesus went in to His Father **to receive the kingdom** and in Daniel 12:1 Jesus will **stand up** to **receive the kingdom**. Thus, the literary structure of Daniel 8-12 reveals that these chapters constitute a **unified whole**. They are, so to speak, a **book within a book**.

Once final statement from the pen of Ellen White:

*“The light that Daniel received direct from God was given **especially for these last days**. The visions he saw by the banks of the **Ulai [Daniel 8]** and the Hiddekel **[Daniel 10-11]**, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in the **process of fulfillment**, and **all** the events foretold will soon have come to pass.”* *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 4, p. 1166. Bold is mine.

Should we not be dedicating our time to the comprehension of these extremely important chapters? Referring to God's people in the very last remnant of time, Gabriel promises:

*"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Daniel 12:10).*

***Before moving on, study  
"The Flow of Revelation 8:12-15:4"  
chart on page 378 of this syllabus***



# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 13: THE SIXTH TRUMPET**

#### **Overview of the Sixth Trumpet**

The sixth trumpet (Revelation 9:13-21) is a vivid description of the **gathering** of the wicked by Satan’s **three symbolic angels** for the final battle **against God’s remnant** (Revelation 16:13-16). This final gathering, which began in 1844, will intensify until the close of probation.

**Immediately before** the close of probation (when the seventh angel is about to blow his trumpet) Satan will bring about a great **counterfeit Pentecostal revival** (Revelation 13:13). The purpose of this revival will be to **preempt and counterfeit** the **genuine revival** that will take place at the outpouring of the latter rain. It will gather the wicked into **one body**.

Inspiration tells us that the **False Prophet** (apostate Protestantism) will even make **fire come down** from heaven in the sight of men, a miracle that parodies the falling of fire from heaven in the days of **Elijah** and the manifestation of tongues of fire on the **Day of Pentecost** (see Revelation 13:13; GC p. 464). This **gathering of the wicked** during the sixth trumpet (in Revelation 9:13-21) is further amplified in Revelation 12:17, 13:11-18, 14:18-20 and 16:13-16.

Immediately after the conclusion of the gathering of the wicked during the sixth trumpet (in Revelation 9:21), **chapter 10 presents the flip side** by going back

in time to describe the global **gathering of the righteous** by the message that comes forth from the little book. We know that this judgment hour message, which began with events surrounding the year 1844, is **global** because the angel places one foot on the land and the other on the sea. This **gathering of the righteous** by the message that comes from the little book is further amplified in **Revelation 14:6-12** (which is the ‘prophesying again’ of Revelation 10:11).

In the midst of Satan’s counterfeit revival, God will bring about a genuine revival of **primitive godliness** among His people. This message is known as the message of the **fourth angel** who brings the final latter rain **loud cry** (Revelation 18:1-4) revival of the Holy Spirit to God’s remnant (GC p. 464) The gathering of both the righteous and the wicked is then further described in the harvest scene of Revelation 14:14-20.

## **Structure of Revelation 9:13-14:20**

Revelation 9:13-21	The gathering of the wicked from 1844 till the close of probation
Revelation 10:1-11:1	The gathering of the righteous from 1844 until the close of probation
Revelation 12:17; 13:11-18	The gathering of the wicked before the close of probation
Revelation 14:6-12	The gathering of the righteous before the close of probation
Revelation 14:14-20	The wicked and righteous have been gathered inside and outside of the symbolic city, spiritual Jerusalem

## **Ellen White and the Two Gatherings**

Ellen White described the final gathering of both the righteous and the wicked under the genuine and the counterfeit Pentecostal revivals:

*“Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a **revival of primitive godliness** as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time, many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has*

supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths, which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and **before the time for such a movement shall come**, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches, which he can bring under his deceptive power, he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be **great religious interest**. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world." *GC* p. 464

"Servants of God, with their faces lighted up and shining with holy consecration, will hasten from place to place to proclaim the message from heaven. Thousands of voices, all over the earth, will give the warning. Miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and signs and wonders will follow the believers. **Satan also works, with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men**. Revelation 13:13. Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand." *GC* p. 612

## **The Relevance of Revelation 16:12-16**

We are to understand Revelation 16:12-16 as an **enlargement and expansion** of the sixth trumpet in 9:13-21. There are two facts that link these two passages together. The first is the reference to the **River Euphrates**. The second is the reference evil spirits that are released to go the whole world to gather the wicked against the remnant. These are the **only passages** in the book of Revelation that mention the River Euphrates by name. However, we will notice that **Revelation 12:13-15** strongly alludes to it.

In order to understand the relationship between these two passages (Revelation 9:13-21 and 16:12-16) we must go **back to Revelation 12** to get a little **historical context**. Revelation 12:13-15 tells us that the dragon **spewed water** out of his mouth like a river with the intention of **drowning God's faithful** remnant during the 1260 years of papal persecution.

*“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. However, the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed **water** out of his mouth like a **flood** after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away by **the flood**.”* (Revelation 12:13-15)

**Joshua 24:2, 3, 14, 15** refers to the Euphrates River as ‘the flood’ and **Genesis 15:18** calls the Euphrates ‘the great River’ (compare **Isaiah 8:7, 8**; 17:12, 13; 59:19). Thus in Revelation 12 we are to understand **the** River (with the definite article in the Greek) or flood that the dragon spews out his mouth as the river Euphrates.

Although the Greek word translated ‘flood’ and ‘river’ in the New Testament are the same, many contemporary Bible versions have seen the relationship between ‘the flood’ and ‘the river’ and thus use them interchangeably. Notice only one example of many, the English Standard Version (ESV):

### **Revelation 12:15**

*“The serpent poured water like a **river** out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a **flood**.”*

The text tells us that ‘the earth’ (the territory of the United States) dried up the flow of the persecuting waters of the River Euphrates by **providing a refuge** for the persecuted woman:

*“But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and **swallowed up the flood** which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.”* (Revelation 12:16)

However, **Revelation 12:17** explains that after persecution **ceased for a while**, the dragon will once **again persecute** the remnant of the Seed of the woman, in other words, the remnant of Jesus. This is another way of saying that the dragon will once **again spew the waters** of the symbolic River Euphrates out of his mouth.



Revelation 9:13-21 and 16:13-16 describe the time when the waters of the Euphrates which were dried up by the democratic principles of the United States and the French Revolution, will **begin flowing once again** after the deadly wound is healed. This will lead to oppressive enactments against God's people.

**Revelation 17 further describes** how the waters of the Euphrates will flow once again under the dominion of the harlot who sits on many waters. As long as the waters of the **river flow**, all goes well for the harlot who is full of the blood of the saints (Revelation 17:6). However, immediately after describing the meaning of the waters upon which the woman sits (Revelation 17:15), the text tells us that the kings **will turn on her** (Revelation 17:16). In other words, they will **dry up on her** (Revelation 16:12). This will be the final drying up of the Euphrates River.

Ellen White graphically describes the events that will lead up to this climactic moment:

*"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. **The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested.** Their mocking cries die away. They forget the objects of their murderous rage. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness." GC pp. 635, 636*

A little later, Ellen White explains in *The Great Controversy*, what she meant by the expression, "the angry multitudes are suddenly arrested":

*"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The **multitudes are filled with fury.** "We are lost!" they cry,*

*"and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they **turn upon the false shepherds.** The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords that were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed." GC, pp. 655, 656*

Thus, **Revelation 9:13-21** describes how wicked angels united with evil men will be released at the symbolic Great River Euphrates to **wreak global havoc** on humanity. Revelation 16:12 describes the moment when they will eventually **lose the support** of the waters.

### **In summary**

- Revelation 8:12; 12:13-15; 13:1-9: The persecuting waters of the symbolic River Euphrates **flowed against God's people for 1260 years.**
- Revelation 9:1-11; 12:16; 13:3, 10: The persecuting **waters dried up** by the earth and by the French Revolution, which acquired many of its principles from the 'American Experiment'.
- Revelation 9: 13-21; 12:17; 16:13-15; 17:1, 2, 15: The persecuting waters **flow once again** when the lamb-horned beast from the earth gives the sword back to the beast and heals its wound.
- Revelation 11:15-17; 16:12; 17:16: The persecuting **waters dry up** against Babylon for the final time when Jesus overcomes them and takes over the kingdoms of the world.

### **Comments on Revelation 16:12**

*"Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the **great river Euphrates**, and its **water was dried up**, so that the way of the **kings from the east** might be prepared."*

**Note:** We know for certain that the drying up of the Euphrates at the time of the sixth plague occurs after the close of probationary time because the seven

bowls of God's unmingled wrath will be poured out after probation closes (see Revelation 15:5-8 and 16:1).

### **Comments on Revelation 16:13**

*"And I saw three **unclean spirits** like frogs coming out of the **mouth** of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet."*

**Note:** It is vitally important to underline that the events of **verses 13-16 occur chronologically before** those of verse 12. In other words, verse 12 describes the sixth plague after the close of probationary time while **verses 13-16** describe the events that **led up** to that climax during probationary time.

The ancient Egyptians considered the frog the **God of immortality**. The three unclean spirits symbolize **three symbolic fallen angels** (see Luke 4:33 where the evil spirits or angels that Jesus cast out are called demons). The three unclean spirits come out of the **mouth** of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet.

It has been common among Adventists to interpret the dragon in this verse as spiritualism. However, **spiritualism controls all three** of these powers because the evil spirits come out of the mouths of all three. These **three fallen angels** (actually, these three angels represent Satan's people who spread his lies) will **speak** on behalf of the **counterfeit trinity**. The dragon (or civil powers of the world according to Testimonies to Ministers, p. 39) is a parody of God the Father. The beast counterfeits the ministry of the Jesus Christ the Son and the false prophet counterfeits the work of the Holy Spirit.

Notice how Ellen White connects the false prophet of Revelation 13:13 with the message of Revelation 16:13, 14:

*"John, upon the Isle of Patmos, saw the things which should come upon the earth in the last days. **Revelation 13:13; 16:14**: "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Confrontation p. 89*

## Comments on Revelation 16:14

*"For they are **spirits of demons**, performing signs which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to **gather them** to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."*

**Note:** The purpose of the message of these **three symbolic angels** and the signs they perform is to **gather the kings** of the earth and the whole world against God and His people. One cannot help but see that under the sixth trumpet the angels at the **four corners** at the **River Euphrates are released**, and here the text tells us that the **spirits of demons go** to the kings of the earth and the whole world.

Notice how Ellen White understood Revelation 16:13, 14:

*"The Spirit of God **is** gradually withdrawing from the world. Satan **is** also mustering his forces of evil, going forth "unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world," to gather them under his banner, to be trained for "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" [Revelation 16:14] LDE p. 249*

*"The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to **unite them in one body** and thus strengthen his cause by **sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism**. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this **wonder-working power**; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. **Papists**, **Protestants**, and **worldlings** will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium." GC p. 588, 589*

*"**Already** the inhabitants of the earth **are** marshalling under the leading of the prince of darkness." 8T p. 49*

*"Let us earnestly prepare for the conflict that is before us, for Satan's armies **are** marshalling for the **last great struggle**." 19MR p. 376*

*“In these perilous times, when the forces of evil **are** marshalling their **hosts** to thwart, if possible, the efforts of God's servants in the earth, it is vitally necessary for every laborer to walk humbly with God. Daily he is to maintain a close connection with heavenly agencies.” North Pacific Union Gleaner, January 27, 1910*

*“Satan **is** marshalling his **forces** for the **last great struggle [the Battle of Armageddon]**, ‘to make war with the **remnant of her seed**, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’ If we would be true to God, we cannot escape the conflict. But we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Beyond the **smoke and heat [smoke, fire and brimstone]** of the **battle**, we behold ‘them that had gotten the victory’ **standing on Mount Zion** with the Lamb.” RH July 18, 1882*

*“I was shown that a terrible condition of things **is** seen to exist in our world. The angel of mercy **is folding** her wings, **ready to depart**. **Already** the Lord's restraining power **is being withdrawn** from the earth, and the power of Satan **is working** in the world to **stir up the religious elements**, under the training of the great deceiver, to work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in the children of disobedience. **Already** the inhabitants of the earth **are** marshalling under the leadings of the prince of darkness, and this is **only the beginning of the end**. The law of God **is** made void. We **see** and hear of confusion, perplexities, want and famine, earthquakes and floods; terrible outrages will be committed by men; passion not reason bears sway. The wrath of God is upon the inhabitants of a world that is fast becoming as corrupt as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. **Already** fires and floods are destroying thousands of human beings and the property that has been selfishly boarded by the oppression of the poor.” 8T, p. 49*

*“So it will be in the great final conflict of the controversy between righteousness and sin. While new life and light and power are descending from on high upon the disciples of Christ, a new life is springing up from beneath, and energizing the agencies of Satan. Intensity is taking possession of every earthly element. With a subtlety gained through centuries of conflict, the prince of evil works under a*

disguise. He appears clothed as an angel of light, and multitudes are "giving heed to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.**" 1 Timothy 4:1." *DA* p. 257

"The light given me has been very forcible that **many would go out from us,** giving heed to seducing **spirits and doctrines of devils.** The Lord desires that every soul who claims to believe the truth shall have an intelligent knowledge of what is truth. False prophets will arise and will deceive many. Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken. Then does it not become everyone to understand the reasons for our faith? In place of having so many sermons, there should be a more close searching of the Word of God, opening the Scriptures text by text, and searching for the strong evidences that sustain the fundamental doctrines that have brought us where we now are, upon the platform of eternal truth." *Evangelism* pp. 363, 364

"He has power to bring before men the appearance of their departed friends. The counterfeit is perfect; the familiar look, the words, the tone, are reproduced with marvelous distinctness. Many are comforted with the assurance that their loved ones are enjoying the bliss of heaven, and without suspicion of danger, they give ear "to **seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.**" *GC* p. 552

"Many will be confronted by the **spirits of devils** personating beloved relatives or friends and declaring the most dangerous heresies. These visitants will appeal to our tenderest sympathies and will work miracles to sustain their pretensions. We must be prepared to withstand them with the Bible truth that the dead know not anything and that, they who thus appear are the **spirits of devils.**" *GC* p. 560

"Satan has long been preparing for his **final effort** to deceive **the world.** The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden: "Ye shall not surely die." "In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:4, 5. Little by little he has prepared the way for his **masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism.** He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the **last remnant of time.** Says the prophet: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the **spirits of devils,** working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them

to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Revelation 16:13, 14. Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, **the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion**. The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God." *GC*, p. 561, 562

In *Early Writings*, p. 87 Ellen White describes the importance of understanding the state of the dead:

*"I saw that the saints must get a thorough understanding of present truth, which they will be obliged to maintain from the Scriptures. They must understand the state of the dead; for the **spirits of devils** will yet appear to them, professing to be beloved friends and relatives, who will declare to them that the Sabbath has been changed, also other unscriptural doctrines."* *EW*, p. 87

Under the description of a train, she then goes on to explain the global nature of the work of these spirits of devils in the last days before the close of probation:

*"I saw the rapidity with which this delusion was spreading. A train of cars was shown me, going with the speed of lightning. The angel bade me look carefully. I fixed my eyes upon the train. It seemed that **the whole world** was on board, that there could not be one left. Said the angel: 'They are binding in bundles ready to burn.' Then he showed me the conductor, who appeared like a stately, fair person, whom all the passengers looked up to and revered. I was perplexed and asked my attending angel who it was. He said, 'It is Satan. He is the conductor in the form of an angel of light. He has taken **the world** captive. They are given over to **strong delusions**, to believe a lie, that they may be damned. This agent, the next highest in order to him, is the engineer, and other of his agents are employed in different offices as he may need them, and they are all going with lightning speed to perdition."* *EW*, pp. 88, 89

Ellen White then described another group that **resisted and opposed** this overwhelming delusion:

*"I asked the angel if there were none left. He bade me look in an opposite direction, and I saw a **little company** traveling a narrow pathway. All seemed to be firmly **united**, bound **together by the truth**, in bundles, or companies. Said the angel: 'The third angel is binding, or sealing, them in bundles for the heavenly garner.' This **little company** looked careworn, as if they had passed through severe trials and conflicts. And it appeared as if the sun had just risen from behind a cloud and shone upon their countenances, causing them to look triumphant, as if their victories were nearly won."*

J. A. Seiss in his Exposition of the Book of Revelation makes the following incisive remark about Revelation 16:13 that agrees fully with the concept of Ellen G. White:

*"Modern Spiritism, or so-called spiritualism, is only a revival of the same thing—a branch of the same iniquity. There doubtless is some reality in it; and it is confessedly a system of contact with the dead, whose spirits are invoked in various forms and methods, to teach wisdom; to dictate faith, religion, and life; to comfort and help in trouble and necessity; and to serve as saviors and as gods. **It is demon-worship brought to life again.** It claims to have vast multitudes of adherents, **even among the baptized** and nominally Christian. It is influencing whole communities of men and women, who are prepared to commit themselves body and soul, for time and eternity, into the care of these **lying demon guides**. It has made inroads upon people of all classes, and is received by many as a distinct and the only true religion. Its oracles are loud and hopeful in the prediction, that it will soon enlist to itself the **governments and reigning classes of the whole world.**" J. A. Seiss, The Apocalypse: Exposition of the Book of Revelation, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1998, 2003, 2006 by Biblesoft, Incorporated*

### **Comments on Revelation 16:15**

*"Behold, I am coming as a **thief**. Blessed is he who **watches**, and keeps his **garments**, lest he **walk naked** and they **see his shame**."*

**Note:** Revelation 3:18 uses the same language that appears in the context of the Laodicean Message. However, we find the original sources for this verse in



the parables of Jesus in Matthew 24 and 25 and ultimately in Genesis 3:7, 15, 21.

It bears noting that it would **do no good** to give this warning to God's people during the period of the **sixth plague after probation** has closed because at that time, probation will have closed and no one can change sides. In fact, verse 15 contains God's warning to His people during probationary time to be faithful in **resisting the spirits of devils** by not gathering with the kings of the earth and the whole world.

### **Comments on Revelation 16:16**

*"And they **gathered** them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon."*

Here is a summary of the **literary structure** of Revelation 16:12-16:

**Revelation 16:12**: Up to the moment of the **fifth plague** (the plague of darkness), Babylon's waters (the multitudes that support her) are **ever increasing** with the intention of drowning God's people but at the time of the sixth plague, the waters **suddenly dry up** (withdraw their support) and **Babylon falls**. The drying up of the waters then **prepares the way** for the coming of the kings from the east (Jesus and His angels—the seventh plague and trumpet).

**Revelation 16:13-14**: These verses **take us back to probationary time** when the wicked swirling waters are ever increasing and gathering against God's people. Three **evil angels** with a counterfeit message go *'to the kings of the earth and the whole world'* to gather them for the **final battle** against God in the person of His people.

**Revelation 16:15**: In this **parenthetical statement**, Jesus warns God's people to be on the right side when probation closes. When the **gathering is over** and probation closes, there will only be **two groups**: Those who **walk clothed** and have the Seal of God and those who **walk naked** and have the Mark of the Beast.

**Revelation 16:16:** We must understand this verse as a **continuation** of verses 13 and 14. Let us read these two verses together **skipping** the parenthetical verse 15:

*“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. <sup>14</sup> For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, **to gather them** to the battle of that great day of God Almighty . . . <sup>16</sup> And **they gathered them [the three evil angels]** together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.”*

Where is Armageddon located? The word Armageddon comes from **two Hebrew words**: *Har* (mountain) and *moed* (congregation). The wicked are actually gathered at the **Mount of the Congregation**. The **consonants** in Har-mageddon are identical to the ones in Har-moed.

However, what about the ending -on? This is simply a way of ‘Greekisizing’ a Hebrew word. The ending is a Greek ending adapted to a Hebrew word. The same happens with the Hebrew word *abad* in Hebrew (Obadiah 12). This is ‘Greekisized’ in Revelation 9:11 as *Abaddon*. The ending -on is a Greek ending to a Hebrew word.

For example, in English we have the word **park**. In Spanish, we speak about parking our car we use the word ‘parkear’. The ending -ar provides a Spanish ending to an English word.

In Daniel and Revelation God gathers His people to **Mt. Zion** where the spiritual temple on earth is—the remnant church. In Revelation, there is a **two-fold gathering**. God and His angels gather the remnant to symbolic Mt. Zion and Satan and his angels gather the wicked around it to attempt to destroy it. In the Old Testament, the word *moed* refers exclusively either to the **congregation of the tabernacle** or the appointed times to celebrate religious observances. It is a **sanctuary term** that refers to the congregation that meets at the temple on Mt. Zion to worship the Lord. Notice the following texts:

- Revelation 14:1

- Revelation 14:19, 20
- Joel 2:32; 3:9-12
- Daniel 11:45
- Psalm 48:1, 2

**Isaiah 14:12-14**: At the beginning of the controversy in heaven, Satan wanted to take over the heavenly Mount of the Congregation but **Michael and His angels defeated him**. Therefore, at the end, Satan will attempt to conquer the **earthly mount**—the Church—where God’s people have gathered to worship the Lord.

### **Comments on Revelation 9:13-21**

#### **Verse 13:**

*“Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the **four horns** of the **golden altar** which is **before God**. . .”*

**Note:** The fact that the voice comes from the **four horns of the golden altar** of incense is significant. The noted commentator, **Albert Barnes**, in agreement with virtually all others, stated:

*“When it is said that this was ‘before God,’ the meaning is, that it was directly before or in front of the symbol of the divine presence in the most holy place.”*  
Albert Barnes, **Electronic Database** on Revelation 9:13.

It is obvious that God the Father is **not the one who is speaking** here from the four horns because the altar is ‘before God’. The one who stands ministering at the altar of incense before God, presenting the prayers of the saints is none other than **Jesus Christ Himself**, the Mediator (1Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:25).

The **horns of the golden altar** of sacrifice in the court represented God’s **mercy and protective power** in times of crisis when life was in danger (see 1Kings 1:50, 51; 2:28) However, if Israel had not repented from her sin, the **horns were broken off** (Amos 3:14, 15) and **no mercy** was extended. In the daily service blood was rubbed on the horns of the altar of sacrifice (Leviticus

4:24, 25; Jeremiah 17:1) to indicate that the confessed sins of Israel had been forgiven.

The altar in view in Revelation 9:13 is not the altar of sacrifice but rather the altar of incense. As we have noted, the sixth trumpet relates to events that transpire between **1844 and the close of probation**. Significantly, blood was rubbed on the horns of the altar of incense once a year for an atonement to **cleanse the sanctuary** from the sins of Israel that had entered there throughout the course of the year (Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:16-18).

### **Verse 14:**

*“... saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet: “**Release the four angels** who are **bound** at the **great river Euphrates**.”*

**Note:** Some have confused the four angels who hold the winds in Revelation 7:1-4 with the four angels that wreak havoc on mankind in the trumpets. However, these four angels are **not the good angels** that hold back the winds of strife in Revelation 7:1-4. These evil angels are waiting for **God to release them** so that they can wreak havoc on humankind as we can see from the succeeding context.

We are not to understand that **only four angels** cause the devastation. The number four represents **universality or global extent** (see Ezekiel 7:2; Matthew 24:31; Revelation 7:1, 2). In other words, Satan and his angels go to the whole world to wreak havoc beginning in 1844 but especially intensifying as the close of probation approaches.

### **The releasing of the winds in Revelation 7**

Notably, God has three angels that gather the remnant on **God’s side** and Satan has three angels who gather the **wicked on his side**. Furthermore, both God and Satan have a ‘fourth angel’ that brings a final great ‘revival’ before the end.

As we have mentioned before, the only other time that the name ‘the great river Euphrates’ appears in the book of Revelation is in chapter 16 and verse 12 so there must be a relationship between the sixth trumpet and the sixth plague.

Some have sought to find an application of the sixth trumpet to the phenomenal growth of **radical Islam** because of the mention of the **river Euphrates**. The question that we must ask is this: What hermeneutical principle allows these expositors to say that the Euphrates in Revelation 9 is referring to a **literal geographical location** in the Middle East while the Euphrates of Revelation 16 refers to the multitudes of the **whole world** under the control of spiritual Babylon.

In short, why are we to understand the Euphrates in Revelation 16:12 as **symbolic** while we understand the one in Revelation 9 as **literal**, when both of them apply to the same period of the end time (sixth trumpet and sixth plague)? An important prophetic principle is that after the cross, prophecy uses the same terminology as the Old Testament but removes the geographical limitations.

Going on to another point. If these evil angels are **released**, then in the past they must have been **under restraint**. What is it that restrained these angels from manifesting their destructive power? Revelation 12:16 explains what restrained them—**the earth**. The papacy received a deadly wound in 1798 and the civil governments of the world have kept that wound in place. However, when the beast from the earth gives civil power back to the papacy (the deadly wound heals), then the **restraint will be removed** and Satan will manifest his final display of power.

In this context, we need to understand the meaning of **2 Thessalonians 2**. While the civil power of the Roman Empire ruled, the papacy was under restraint. However, when the civil power of Rome was removed by the barbarian invasions, the papacy was allowed to wreak havoc during the Middle Ages under the leadership of Satan, the dragon (Revelation 12:13-15).

Notice the interesting terminology Cardinal **Henry Edward Manning** uses to describe the removal of the restraints on the papacy by the civil power:

***“[When the barbarians invaded the Roman Empire], the pontiffs found themselves alone, the sole fountains of order, peace, law, and safety. And from the hour of this providential liberation, when, by a divine intervention, the chains fell off from the hands of the successor of St. Peter, as once before from his***

own, no sovereign has ever reigned in Rome except the Vicar of Jesus Christ.” (Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of The Vicar of Jesus Christ, Preface, pp. xxviii, xxix. London: Burns and Lambert, 1862). Bold is mine.

Manning added:

“It [**the papacy**] waited until such a time as God should break its **bonds** asunder, and **should liberate it from subjection to civil powers**, and **enthroned it** in the possession of a **temporal sovereignty** of its own.” Henry Edward Manning, The Temporal Power of the Vicar of Jesus Christ (London: Burns & Lambert, second edition, 1862), pp. 11-13. Bold is mine

However, the **French and American Revolutions** placed the restraints on the papacy once more. Democratic governments, led by the founding principles of the United States, flourished in the western world. The papacy has been under **restraint for over 200 years** because the civil powers of the world have not allowed the papacy to recover its lost power. Notice the following telling words from Malachi Martin, the Roman Catholic Jesuit priest:

“[For] **fifteen hundred years** and more, Rome had kept as strong a hand as possible in each local community around the wide world. . . . By and large, and admitting some exceptions, that had been the Roman view until **two hundred years of inactivity** had been **imposed** upon the papacy by the **major secular powers of the world**.” Quoted in Christianity Today (November 21, 1986), p. 26.

However, when the lamb-horned beast restores the sword to this beast by making an image to and of it, and commanding everyone to worship it and receive its mark, the restraint placed on the papacy will be removed and she will wreak havoc once again as she did in the past. Ellen White described what remove the restraint from the papacy in the future:

“Let the **restraints** now imposed by **secular governments** be removed and Rome be **reinstated** in her former power, and there would speedily be a **revival** of her tyranny and persecution.” GC p. 564

The sixth trumpet is primarily pointing to this period when the **papacy**, **apostate Protestantism** and the **civil rulers** of the world will unite to oppress God's people. However, the process of gathering these powers against God's people began in the events leading to 1844. It cannot be overstressed that modern spiritualism had its origins with the **Fox sisters** around the same time.

### Verse 15:

*"So the **four** angels, who had been prepared for the **hour and day and month and year**, were released to kill **a third** of mankind."*

**Note:** The number four in the Bible denotes **universality** or global extension. As we have noted, Revelation 16:14 tells us that the spirits of devils will gather the entire world in rebellion against God.

What is the meaning of the expression '*the hour, the day, the month and the year*'? A careful study of Revelation indicates that the hour is 'the hour of God's judgment' (14:6, 7). Other parts of Scripture indicate that the day refers to the 10<sup>th</sup> day, the month is Tishri (the seventh month), and the year is 1844 (see Leviticus 23:27; Daniel 8:14).

The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary explains:

*"The article **[teen]**, once only before all the periods implies that the hour in the day, and the day in the month, and the month in the year, and the year itself, had been definitely fixed by God." Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Incorporated*

This verse is not describing the final and total destruction of the wicked after the close of probation at the end of the time of trouble because this army of demons is only able to destroy a **third** of humanity.

### Verse 16:

*"Now the number of the **army** of the horsemen was **two hundred million** [literally: 'twice ten thousand times ten thousand']; **I heard the number of them** . . ."*

**Note:** The number of the enemy is huge in comparison to the 144,000 of Revelation 7:4. These are the **only two verses** in Revelation where John uses the expression “*I heard the number*” so they must be related in some way. Revelation 7:4 is transpiring during the sixth seal and Revelation 9:16 is occurring during the period of the sixth trumpet. Notice how Ellen White contrasts the number of God’s followers with those of Satan:

*“The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan **numbers the world as his subjects**; he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a **little company** that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his **triumph would be complete**.” 9T p. 231*

Revelation 18:1-4: the whole point of these verses is to call the 144,000 out of Babylon so that they can join the remnant.

### **Verse 17:**

*“And thus I **saw** the horses in the vision: those who **sat on them** had breastplates of **fiery red**, hyacinth **blue**, and sulfur **yellow** and the heads of the horses were like the heads of **lions**; and out of their **mouths** came fire, smoke, and brimstone.”*

**Note:** This army clearly rises figuratively from hell. These are the same spirits of demons in **Revelation 16:14** that God releases to gather the kings of the earth and the whole world against God’s people. They are the same demons that the ‘fourth angel’s message’ refers to in **Revelation 18:2, 3**.

Clearly, we have here a portrait of Satan and the wicked that are always described in the context of the **lake of fire** (Psalm 11:6; Ezekiel 38:22; Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:10; 21:8). The fire and smoke coming out of the mouths of the horses reminds us of the story of **Leviathan** in the book of Job where he has smoke and fire come **from His mouth** (Job 41:19-21, 31-34). Elsewhere, the Bible identifies Leviathan as the dragon, the ancient serpent, the devil and Satan (Isaiah 27:1; Revelation 12:7-9).



### Verse 18:

*“By these **three plagues** a **third** of mankind was killed — by the **fire and the smoke and the brimstone** which came out of their **mouths**.”*

**Note:** Notice that what comes out of the **mouth** is what kills the wicked. In the book of Revelation, fire, brimstone and smoke relate to those who worship the beast and his image and receive the mark. Notably Revelation 16:13 explains that the evil spirits come out of the mouth of the threefold union.

### Verse 19:

*“For their power is in their **mouth** and in their **tails** for their tails are like **serpents**, having heads; and with them they **do harm**.”*

**Note:** The horses have **mouths** like **lions**. Elsewhere in the Bible Babylon is portrayed as a devouring lion (Daniel 7:2) as is its king, Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 4:7) and Satan is described as a ravenous lion seeking whom he may devour (James 5:8).

Revelation 16:13, 14 clarifies that the false doctrines of the three counterfeit angels come out of the mouth and they gather the wicked for the final battle against God. The **tail** is a symbol of lies (Revelation 12:3-4; John 8:44; Isaiah 9:14). Notice that the mouth is in the tail.

### Verse 20:

*“But the **rest** of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, **did not repent** of the works of their hands, that they should not worship **demons** [Revelation 18:2, 3], and **idols** of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk.”*

**Note:** The expression ‘*idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk*’ comes almost verbatim from Daniel 5:23. Daniel 5 describes the fall of Babylon when the **Euphrates dried up**. Thus, this verse links three passages: The fall of Babylon in Daniel 5, the drying up of the Euphrates in Revelation 16:12 and the sixth trumpet of Revelation 9:20.

## Verse 21:

*“And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”*

## Note:

- ✓ Revelation 17:6; 18:20, 24 describes Babylon as a murderer of God’s people.
- ✓ Revelation 18:23 refers to the sorceries of Babylon as one of the reasons for her fall.
- ✓ Revelation 17:2 portrays the adultery or fornication of the harlot with the kings of the earth.
- ✓ Revelation 18:10-13 describes this system as greedy and enslaving, stealing from the poor and favoring the rich. James 5:1-8 describes the greediness that steals from the poor.

## Summary of the Sixth Trumpet

Since 1844, both armies have been in the process of being gathered. God’s three angels have gathered the righteous while Satan’s three angels have gathered the wicked. The sixth trumpet in Revelation 9:13-21 describes the gathering of the wicked for battle while Revelation 10 describes the gathering of the righteous on God’s side.

The only three places in Revelation where the word ‘demons’ appears is in Revelation 16:14; 9:20 and 18:1-5. Furthermore, the only places where the great river Euphrates appears is Revelation 9 and Revelation 16. Therefore, we know that there is a link between these two passages.

Some choice Ellen G. White comments:

*“Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world. The foundation of his work was laid by the assurance given to Eve in Eden: “Ye shall not surely die.” “In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:4, 5. Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of*

spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs; . . . they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." Revelation 16:13, 14. Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His word, **the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion.**" *DD*, p. 24

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The **spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world**, to fasten them in deception, and **urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven.** By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures." *DD*, p. 41

"This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of Revelation 14 (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, **since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844.** A **terrible condition of the religious world** is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an **infidel hardihood**. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, **the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed** [the evil angels are released], and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in **spiritual manifestations** opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus **the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.**" *GC* pp. 603, 604

*“Spiritualism is about to take the **world captive**. There are many who think that Spiritualism is upheld through trickery and imposture; but this is far from the truth. Superhuman power is working in a variety of ways, and few have any idea as to what will be the manifestations of Spiritualism in the future. The foundation for the success of Spiritualism has been laid in the assertions that have been made from the pulpits of our land. **The ministers have proclaimed, as Bible doctrines, falsehoods that have originated from the arch-deceiver**. The doctrine of consciousness after death, of the spirits of the dead being in communion with the living, has no foundation in the Scriptures, and yet this theory is affirmed as truth. Through this false doctrine the way has been opened for **the spirits of devils to deceive the people** in representing themselves as the dead. **Satanic agencies** personate the dead, and thus bring souls into captivity. **Satan has a religion**; he has a synagogue and devout worshipers. To swell the ranks of his devotees he uses all manner of deception.” ST May 28, 1894*

*“**Four mighty angels hold back** the powers of this earth till the servants of God are sealed in their conflict, but they are **held in check** by the angels. When this **restraining power is removed** there will come a time of trouble and anguish. Deadly instruments of warfare will be invented. Vessels with their living cargo will be entombed in the great deep. All who have not the spirit of truth will unite under the leadership of satanic agencies, but they are to be **kept under control** till the time shall come for the great battle of Armageddon.” LDE p. 238*

*“We need to study the pouring out of the **seventh vial** [**Revelation 16:17-21: Post-probationary**]. The **powers of evil** will not yield up the conflict without a struggle. However, Providence has a part to act in the battle of Armageddon. When the earth is **lighted with the glory of the angel of Revelation eighteen** [**probationary**], the **religious elements, good and evil, will awake from slumber**, and the armies of the living God will take the field.” LDE p. 251*

*“The battle of Armageddon is soon to be fought. He on whose vesture is written the name, King of kings and Lord of lords, **leads forth the armies of heaven on white horses**, clothed in fine linen, clean and white [**Revelation 19:11-16**].” LDE p. 251*



# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 14: THE SEVENTH TRUMPET**

#### **Revelation 11:15-17**

*“Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying: “The kingdoms of this world **have become** the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”<sup>16</sup> And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,<sup>17</sup> saying: “We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You **have taken** Your great power and reigned.”*

**Probation closes** when the seventh trumpet is **about to sound**. At that moment, Jesus will **receive the kingdom** from his Father when the judgment concludes. Then the time of trouble will ensue followed by the blowing of the seventh trumpet when Jesus comes to **take His people home**.

*“About **His coming** cluster the glories of that “restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” Acts 3:21. Then the long-continued rule of evil shall be broken; “the kingdoms of this world” will become “the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15.” GC, p. 301*

The **Jamieson, Fausset and Brown** Commentary is on target:

*“The seventh trumpet, like the seventh seal and seventh vial, being the consummation, is accompanied differently from the preceding six: not the consequences on earth, but those IN HEAVEN, are described, the great voices and thanksgiving of the 24 elders in heaven, as the half-hour's silence in heaven at the seventh seal, and the voice out of the temple in heaven, ‘It is done,’ at the seventh vial.*

*“Thus, the seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials, are **not consecutive**, but **parallel**, ending in the **same consummation**. They, from **distinct stand-points**, unfold God's plans for bringing about the grand end, under **three aspects**, mutually **complementing** each other.”* Comment from **Jamieson, Fausset and Brown** on Revelation 11:19

We can be certain that the **releasing of the four angels** under the sixth trumpet takes place **during probationary time**. We know this because probation will only close when the mystery of God is finished **just before the sounding of the seventh trumpet**. This means that the releasing of the four angels in the sixth trumpet is **not the same thing** as releasing the four winds of Revelation 7. When the angels of Revelation 7 release the winds probation has closed and **mayhem ensues**. Notice the following quotations from Ellen White:

*“Winds are a symbol of strife. The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power.”* **GC**, p. 439

*“I saw that the four angels would hold the four winds **until Jesus' work was done in the sanctuary**, and then will come the seven last plagues.”* **EW**, p. 36

*“As yet the four winds are held until the servants of God shall be sealed in their foreheads. Then the powers of earth will **marshal their forces** for the last great battle.”* **6T**, p. 14.

*“The restraining Spirit of God is even **now being withdrawn** from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow*

each other in quick succession. Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there shall be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.” 6T, p. 408.

“We feel depressed, greatly depressed, as we see the world and its wickedness. The professed Christian world is enveloped in the darkness that covers the earth. We sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the land. Why is it that all this wickedness does not break forth in decided violence against righteousness and truth? It is because the four angels are holding the four winds that they shall not blow upon the earth. But human passions are reaching a high pass, and the Spirit of the Lord is being withdrawn from the earth. Were it not that God has commanded angelic agencies to control the satanic agencies that are seeking to break loose and to destroy, there would be no hope. But the winds are to be held until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. . . .” HP p. 96

“Four mighty angels are still holding the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is forbidden to come in full. The ... winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, **while the angels hold** the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads.” Maranatha, p. 175

“Just before we entered it [the time of trouble], we all received the seal of the living God. Then I saw the four angels cease to hold the four winds. And I saw famine, pestilence and sword, nation rose against nation, and the whole world was in confusion.” Mar 243

“Angels are holding the four winds, which are represented as an angry horse seeking to break loose and rush over the face of the whole earth, bearing destruction and death in its path. ML p. 308

When the angels are released in the sixth trumpet, probation has not closed because probation does not close until the seventh angel is about to sound at

the very end of the sixth trumpet. This is a vital point. The whole scene of the sixth trumpet takes place during probationary time, as does Revelation 16:14.

## **Final Remarks**

We must link **Revelation 17:14** with **Revelation 19:11ff** where Jesus bears the title 'KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. This means that Revelation 11:15 is repeated again in Revelation 17:14 and Revelation 19:16. This proves that we cannot read Revelation as a continuous flow but rather full of recapitulations and repetitions.

Revelation 11:17 actually concludes the seventh trumpet. Revelation 11:18 then introduces and summarizes the main events of the rest of the book. This verse contains five key points of time that form the structure of the rest of the book:

Revelation 12-14	Nations were angry
Revelation 15-19	Your wrath has come
Revelation 20:4, 11, 12	The time to judge the dead
Revelation 19:11-21; 22:12	The time to reward your servants
Revelation 20:14, 15	Destroy those who destroy the earth





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 15: THE MARRIAGE, THE MARRIAGE SUPPER AND POSSESSING THE KINGDOM**

#### **Wedding Customs in Biblical Times**

- The betrothal or engagement between the bride and the groom took place at the home of the bride’s father where the groom paid the dowry.
- The groom then returned to his father’s house to prepare the home where he would live with his wife after the marriage.
- During the period of preparation, the bride would remain in her father’s house preparing for the wedding.
- When the place and the bride were ready, the bridegroom would return to the bride’s home to take her to his father’s house where the wedding ceremony took place.
- The groom sent a special garment to the guests that gave them the right to attend the wedding.

## **Scripture and the Wedding Customs**

### **Matthew 25:1-13**

Jesus instructed His **individual** followers to be ready to go with Him into the wedding chamber **as invited guests**.

### **Matthew 22:1-14**

The Groom's Father sent out an invitation to the wedding with a **special garment** for each guest. Once in the wedding chamber, **the Father examined** the garment of **the guests** to determine if **each** was wearing the wedding garment.

Those who did not have the garment **were cast out** of the wedding chamber into **outer darkness** where they would **wail and gnash** their teeth for not having been able to remain in the wedding hall (Matthew 8:12; 13:41, 42; 13:47-50; 22:13, 14; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:25-30).

Once the Father of the groom had examined the garments of the guests and the unworthy guests were cast out of the wedding chamber into outer darkness, the wedding took place.

### **Revelation 19:9**

An angel pronounced a blessing upon the **invited guests** to the marriage **supper** of the Lamb. The bride (the church as a whole) was ready, clothed in fine linen, bright and pure which are the **righteous deeds** of the saints, an indication that they were **judged by their works** that were written in the books.

### **Luke 12:35-37**

The Bible makes it clear that the wedding takes place **in heaven before Jesus returns** for the second time. However, many modern versions (for example, the NIV and the ESV), leave the impression that Jesus will come to earth to gather his people to Himself after the marriage **feast has ended**. These translations are confusing because other texts clearly affirm that Jesus will literally sit **with**

**his people** at the supper table in His kingdom after He has come for them (see Matthew 8:11, 12).

So the question is this, when is the marriage supper? Does it take place before Jesus comes for his own or after?

We must look at all of Scripture in order to get clear picture of the chronology:

**Daniel 7:13, 14**: In 1844 Jesus moved from the holy to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary to **receive the kingdom** from His Father.

**Luke 19:11, 12**: Jesus informed his followers that he was going to a **far country** to receive the kingdom **after which He would return** to this earth:

*“Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a **far country** to receive for himself **a kingdom** and to **return**.”*

Because the Lamb’s bride is the **New Jerusalem**, the **capital and symbol** of His kingdom, we can know for sure that receiving the kingdom from His Father and marrying his bride are two complementary ways of saying the same thing. Jesus marries His bride and receives the kingdom **before His second coming**. Ellen White makes this perceptive statement:

***[When probation closes]** “Every case had been decided for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, **the judgment** had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had **received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were made up. The **marriage of the Lamb** was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.” *EW*, p. 280*

In **2 Corinthians 11:2** Paul stated that he had **engaged** the church to Christ as a pure bride and in **Ephesians 5:25-27** he wrote that Christ died to make it possible for the church/bride to be without spot or blemish.

## The Composite Picture

In 1844 Jesus came to the Father to begin the process that would eventually make it possible for Him to **receive the kingdom** or to **marry** His bride—the **church as a whole** (Matthew 25:1-13).

Since 1844, the King has been **examining the garments** of each person individually who has claimed Jesus as Savior. These persons, **as individuals**, are the **invited guests** to the wedding. However, the people **as a whole**—the faithful church in its entirety—are Christ’s betrothed bride or kingdom.

*“The parable of the wedding garment opens before us a lesson of the highest consequence. By the marriage is represented the **union of humanity with divinity**; the wedding garment represents the character which all must possess who shall be accounted fit guests for the wedding.” COL, p. 307.*

**Not everyone** who has claimed Jesus, as Savior has been true and faithful. Those who are found without a wedding garment in the judgment will be **removed from the book** of life (Matthew 22:1-14) and when the last case has been examined, the bride/kingdom is purged, pure and faithful (Revelation 19:7-9; Ephesians 5:25-27).

The bride (the church in its entirety) has now **made herself ready** for Him and Jesus will **marry her** (He takes over the kingdom; Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 19:11, 12). The moment that Jesus receives the kingdom, the **door** to the wedding (probation) chamber **is shut** and any guests who arrive late are found unprepared and unworthy and those who are in the wedding chamber without the garment will be **cast out** (Matthew 25:1-14; Revelation 22:11).

After the wedding in heaven is finished, a terrible **time of trouble** ensues for the bride (the church) and Jesus **returns to the earth** to rescue her from certain annihilation (Daniel 11:44-12:3).

Jesus **gathers his kingdom/bride** and takes them to the Father’s house in heaven. When the faithful arrive in heaven, they sit down with Jesus to eat the **marriage supper**—this is the wedding reception (Revelation 19:9; Matthew

8:11, 12).

*"To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall **bring home His bride to the Father's house**, and the redeemed with the Redeemer shall sit down to the **marriage supper of the Lamb**." The Adventist Home, p. 503*

### **Luke 12:35-37**

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when **he will return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, **when he comes**, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them **sit down to eat**, and will come and serve them."*

*"Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, "Come, My people, you have come out of **great tribulation**, and done My will; suffered for Me; **come in to supper**, for I will gird Myself, and serve you." We shouted, "Alleluia! glory!" and entered into the city. And I saw a **table of pure silver**; it was **many miles in length**, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit." Counsels to the Church, p. 36*

### **Solving a Problem**

However, we need to clarify one more thing. Let us compare **Luke 12:35-37** in the **NKJV** with the **NIV**:

#### **NKJV**:

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will **return from the wedding**, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them."*

**NIV:**

*"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to **return from a wedding banquet**, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them."*

It will be noticed that in the **NIV** (and many other contemporary versions), Jesus returns to the earth **from** the heavenly **wedding banquet** to gather his waiting people. In other words, the wedding banquet takes place before Jesus comes to take His people to heaven. However, in the NKJV Jesus returns from **the wedding** (not the banquet) to gather His people. Which translation makes more sense and fits best with all the Biblical evidence?

In Greek the words used for **marriage** (*gamos* and *gamoi*) **include both** the wedding and the wedding feast. In our times, we make a marked distinction between the wedding and the reception. However, in biblical times the **covenant vow** took very little time while the **feast was a major community event** that would last hours and even days or weeks. Thus, the wedding was simply a brief ceremony with a celebration that was a big feast!

The **Greek language** did not have a word that **distinguishes** between the **wedding** and the **feast** as we do today (such as wedding and reception) because people perceived both to be **phases of the same event**. Although the Greeks did not have a common word for the vow as distinguished from the feast, they did have a word for the feast alone when that is what they wished to emphasize. That word appears in **Revelation 19:9** where the saints are invited to the wedding **feast**.

Therefore, the process is as follows:

- Jesus will **marry** his kingdom/church **in heaven**. This is **vow** portion of the marriage ceremony.
- Jesus will then **return** from the wedding in heaven to take his waiting

people on earth to the heavenly **feast/reception**.

**Note:** The bride is the **church or kingdom as a whole** while the church members **as individuals** are the guests (clearly shown in Matthew 22). The bride/kingdom is the **New Jerusalem**, the symbol of Christ's entire human kingdom (Revelation 21:9, 10). Individual members of the city are not the city itself but **the residents** who have homes there (John 14:1-3)

Ellen White understood this very clearly:

*"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the Ten Commandments, **throw down the censer**. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, '**It is done**.' Then all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.'*

**Every case had been decided** for life or death. While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ **had received His kingdom**, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The **subjects of the kingdom** were made up. The **marriage of the Lamb** was consummated. And **the kingdom**, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was **given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation**, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords." *EW*, pp. 279, 280

*"The marriage represents the **reception by Christ of His kingdom**. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, which is the **capital and representative of the kingdom**, is called 'the bride, the Lamb's wife.' Said the angel to John: 'Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.' 'He carried me away in the spirit,' says the prophet, 'and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God' Revelation 21:9, 10. Clearly, then, the bride represents the Holy City, and the **virgins** that go out to meet the bridegroom are a symbol of the **church**. In the Revelation, the people of God are said to be the **guests** at the*

marriage supper Revelation 19:9. **If guests, they cannot be represented also as the bride.** Christ, as stated by the prophet Daniel, will receive from the Ancient of Days in heaven, 'dominion, and glory, and a kingdom;' He will receive the New Jerusalem, **the capital of His kingdom**, 'prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.' Daniel 7:14; Revelation 21:2. Having **received the kingdom**, He will come in His glory, as King of kings and Lord of lords, for the redemption of His people, who are to **'sit down** with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,' **at His table** in His kingdom (Matthew 8:11; Luke 22:30), to partake of the **marriage supper of the Lamb**.

'The proclamation, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,' in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time the **Bridegroom came**, not to the earth, as the people expected, but **to the Ancient of Days** in heaven, to the **marriage**, the **reception of His kingdom**. 'They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage: and the door was shut.' They were **not to be present in person** at the marriage; for it **takes place in heaven, while they are upon the earth**. The followers of Christ are to 'wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding' **Luke 12:36**. However, they are to understand His work, and to **follow Him by faith** as He goes in before God. It is in this sense that they are said to go in to the marriage." *GC*, pp. 426, 427

Notice all the Biblical texts that Ellen White uses to explain the wedding and the reception:

"In both the Old and the New Testament, the marriage relation is employed to represent the tender and sacred union that exists between Christ and His people. To the mind of Jesus the gladness of the wedding festivities pointed forward to the rejoicing of that day when He shall **bring home His bride [the kingdom in its entirety] to the Father's house**, and the redeemed with the Redeemer **shall sit down to the marriage supper** of the Lamb. He says, 'As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.' 'Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; . . . but thou shalt be called My Delight; . . . for the Lord delighteth in thee.' 'He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing' Isaiah 62:5, 4, margin; Zephaniah 3:17. When the vision of heavenly things was granted to John the apostle, he wrote: 'I heard as it were the



*voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19:6, 7, 9." DA, p. 151*





## **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

### **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 16: EXAMINING THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM**

In our present study, we will consider the biblical doctrine of the pre-Advent investigative judgment. The books of **Daniel and Revelation** have much to say about this subject. However, in the present study I would like to dwell on a parable that Jesus told that we find in **Matthew 22:1-14**. Our study will reveal that this parable contains many important details that help us understand the **when**, **where** and **how** of the judgment. Let us begin our study by reading the passage:

*“And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: <sup>2</sup> “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain **king** who arranged a marriage for his **son**, <sup>3</sup> and **sent** out his **servants** to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. <sup>4</sup> Again, he sent out **other servants**, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle **are killed**, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.”’ <sup>5</sup> But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. <sup>6</sup> And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. <sup>7</sup> But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he **sent out his armies**, destroyed those murderers, and **burned up their city**. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. <sup>9</sup> Therefore go into the **highways**, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’ <sup>10</sup> So those servants went out into the **highways** and*

gathered together all whom they found, both **bad and good**. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. <sup>11</sup> "But when the king came in to **see** the **guests**, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. <sup>12</sup> So he said to him, '**Friend**, how did you **come in here** without a wedding garment?' And he was **speechless**. <sup>13</sup> Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.'" <sup>14</sup> **"For many are called, but few are chosen."**

## **Verse 1**

*"And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by **parables** and said. . ."*

## **Verse 2**

*"The kingdom of heaven is like a certain **king** [God the Father] who **arranged** a marriage for his **son** [Jesus]. . ."*

## **Verse 3**

*". . . and **sent out** his **servants** to call those who **were invited** to the wedding and they were **not willing** to come."*

## **Who are the servants that the King Sent Out?**

**John 1:6-7: John the Baptist** was the first servant or messenger sent:

*"There was a man **sent** from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> This man came for a witness, to bear **witness** of the Light that all through him might believe."*

**Matthew 10:5-7:** Jesus sent the **twelve** disciples to invite guests to the wedding:

*"These twelve Jesus **sent out** and commanded them, saying: "Do not **go** into the **way** [this is a key word that is translated 'highways' in verses 9, 10] of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. <sup>6</sup> But **go** rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> And as you **go**, preach, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*

**Luke 10:1:** Jesus sent out the **seventy** to invite the guests to the wedding:

*“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and **sent them** two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself **was about to go.**”*

**Note:** God sent John, the twelve, and the seventy to invite the citizens of the Jewish nation to the wedding. The invited guests to the future wedding rejected this first invitation.

## **Verse 4**

*“**Again**, he sent out **other servants** saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my **oxen** and **fatted cattle are killed**, and all things are **ready**. Come to the **wedding**. [**Jesus had already been sacrificed at this point**].”*

**Note:** The Father sent the second group of servants **after sacrifice of Jesus**. We know this because the text tells us that the Father sent this second group of servants to announce that the oxen and fatted cattle **had been** sacrificed.

The **slaughter of animals** in the sacrificial system represented the death of Christ. At this point of time in the parable, we have moved from the time of [1] **John** to the [2] call of the **twelve** to the [3] call of the **seventy**, to the [4] **death of Christ**.

## **Isaiah 53:7**

*“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the **slaughter** and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.”*

## **Verses 5, 6**

*“But they made **light of it** and went their ways, one to his own farm another to his business. <sup>6</sup> And the rest seized his servants, treated them **spitefully**, and **killed them**. . .”*

## **Matthew 23:34-35**

*“Therefore, indeed, I [will] send you **prophets** [Stephen], **wise men** [seven deacons], and **scribes** [Paul]: some of them you **will kill and crucify** [James, Peter], and some of them you **will scourge** in your synagogues [John, Peter, Paul, Silas] and persecute from **city to city** [Paul].”*

**Note:** Jesus spoke these words in Matthew 23:34-35 just **a few days before** His death. Who were the additional prophets, wise men and scribes?

**Peter prophesied** to the Jews on the day of Pentecost and **Stephen** saw a vision of Jesus in heaven as he preached his sermon before the Sanhedrin. Acts 7 describes the **seven deacons** as individuals full of wisdom and the **apostle Paul** was a theologian or scribe. Herod had **James** killed with the sword and **Peter** was crucified on an upside down cross. The Jewish leadership scourged **Peter and John** in the synagogue and **Saul of Tarsus** persecuted Christians from city to city. The Father sent many messengers to the Jews after Jesus died inviting them to receive Jesus and accept the invitation to the future wedding but they refused the invitation.

**Acts 6:2, 3:** The **seven deacons** were the wise men:

*“Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said: “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the **Holy Spirit and wisdom**, whom we may appoint over this business.”*

**Acts 7:57-58:** **Stephen** was the final prophet to the Jewish nation:

*[Last **prophet to Israel**, he had a **vision of Jesus in heaven**] “Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.”*

**Acts 5:40-41:** The Sanhedrin beat **Peter and John** in the synagogue:

*“And they agreed with him and when they had called for the apostles and **beaten them** they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus and let them*

go. <sup>41</sup> So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

**Acts 12:1-4:** Herod killed **James** with the sword:

**[James the brother of Jesus killed]** “Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. <sup>2</sup> Then he **killed James** the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup> And because he saw that it **pleased the Jews**, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread.”

**John 21:18-19:** By instigation of the Jews, the Romans crucified **Peter** on an upside down cross:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will **stretch out your hands**, and another will gird you and **carry you where you do not wish**.” <sup>19</sup> This He spoke, signifying by **what death** he would glorify God.”

**Acts 26:11:** **Saul of Tarsus** persecuted God’s people from city to city:

**[Paul persecuted in foreign cities like Damascus]** “And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to **foreign cities**.”

## **Verse 7**

“But when the **king [God the Father]** heard about it, he was **furiously**. And he sent out **his armies [Titus and the Roman legions]**, **destroyed** those murderers, and **burned up their city**. . . **[the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70].**”

**Note:** The armies are the Roman Legions and the city is Jerusalem. The parable now moves forward to the destruction of **Jerusalem** by the Romans in AD 70. Thus the parable began with **John the Baptist** in the spring of **27 AD** and has moved to the destruction of Jerusalem in the **year 70 AD**

**Luke 19:41-44:** The Romans destroyed Jerusalem because the city **rejected the invitation** to the wedding:

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, <sup>42</sup> saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. <sup>43</sup> For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, **surround you** and close you in on every side, <sup>44</sup> and **level you**, and your children within you, **to the ground**; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the **time of your visitation**."*

## **Verse 8**

*"Then he said to his servants: 'The wedding is **ready**, but those **who were invited** [the first two times] were not **worthy**...'"*

**Note:** God gave **two invitations** to the Jewish nation to be guests at the future wedding of Jesus. God gave one invitation **before** Jesus died on the cross and the other **after**. The Jews slighted both invitations. The word '**worthy**' is very important at this point. **Matthew 10:5, 6, 11-15** tells us that the lost sheep of the house of Israel were the ones who were unworthy.

## **Matthew 10:5, 6, 11-15**

*"These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "**Do not go** into the **way** [same word as in verses 9, 10 translated 'highways'] of the **Gentiles**, and do not enter a city of the **Samaritans**. <sup>6</sup> But go rather to the **lost sheep of the house of Israel**. <sup>11</sup> "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire **who** in it is **worthy**, and stay there till you go out. <sup>12</sup> And when you go into a household, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the household is **worthy**, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not **worthy**, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> And **whoever** will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. <sup>15</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city."*



## Verse 9

*“Therefore go into the highways [the way of the Gentiles], and as many as you find, invite to the wedding” [the wedding has not taken place when the gospel goes to the Gentiles].*

**Note:** The word ‘highways’ is significant at this point. If we remember, in Matthew 10:5, 6 Jesus instructed His disciples not to go in the way of the Samaritans or the Gentiles. The gospel was to go first to Jerusalem and Judea and only later to Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. The word ‘way’ or ‘highway’ thus refers to taking the gospel beyond Jerusalem to the Gentiles.

**Matthew 8:11-12:** The sons of the kingdom are the Jews and those who come from east and west are the Gentiles:

*“And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>12</sup> But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

## Luke 13:22-30

This passage expands upon Matthew 8:11, 12. Those who rejected the message admit that they ate and drank in the presence of Jesus and that He taught in their streets. According to Jesus, the message went first to the Jews yet they would be last. On the other hand, the Gentiles who received the last call would be first.

*“And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. <sup>23</sup> Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, <sup>24</sup> “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. <sup>25</sup> When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying: ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you: ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ <sup>26</sup> then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ <sup>27</sup> But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me all you workers of iniquity.’ <sup>28</sup> There will be weeping*

and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and **yourselves thrust out**.<sup>29</sup> They will come from the **east and the west**, from the **north and the south**, and sit down in the kingdom of God.<sup>30</sup> And indeed there are **last [Gentiles preached to last]** who will be **first [be present for the wedding]**, and there are first who will be last."

Shortly before His death, Jesus predicted that God would take the kingdom **from** the Jewish nation and give it to the Gentiles:

#### **Matthew 21:43-44**

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be **taken from you** and given to a nation **[ethnos]** bearing the fruits of it."

When the Jews rejected the message of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, they were turning to the Gentiles:

#### **Acts 13:47, 48**

"Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said: "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken **to you first**; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, **we turn to the Gentiles [ethnos]**.<sup>47</sup> For so the Lord has commanded us: 'I have set you as a light **to the Gentiles** that you should be for salvation to the **ends of the earth** [same expression in Acts 1:8; also, Matthew 24:14: 'All the world as a witness to all the nations']'."

#### **Verse 10**

"So those **servants** went out into the **highways** [same word translated 'way' in Matthew 10:5 where Jesus says: 'don't go the 'way' of the Gentiles] and **gathered** together all whom they found, both **bad and good** and the **wedding hall** [at this point the wedding has not yet taken place but the **guests that accepted the invitation are there with the garments that the bridegroom has provided beforehand**] **was filled** with guests. . ."

Jesus referred to his followers as **fishermen**. The casting of the net is the **preaching of the gospel** and the **boat** is the church. The preaching of the gospel

gathers, not only true followers of Jesus but **also hypocrites**. The purpose of the investigative judgment is to **distinguish** between those who have the power of godliness and those who have only the **appearance**.

### **Matthew 13:47-50**

*"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of **every kind**,<sup>48</sup> which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the **good** into vessels, but threw the **bad** away.<sup>49</sup> So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, **separate the wicked from among the just**,<sup>50</sup> and **cast** them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

**Note:** When I was a child, my parents used to take us on vacation to a **pristine island state** in Venezuela. One of our favorite activities was to get up **early in the morning** to watch the fishermen bring in their nets. In the nets were all sorts of fish, good and bad. When they arrived at the shore, they would **separate** the good fish from the bad. The good they would put in baskets to take to the market place and the bad they threw in baskets to be **discarded**.

When the fishermen had finished their task, and the net had gathered all the fish, good and bad, into the boat, it was **time to separate** the good fish from the bad. The fishing analogy is another way of illustrating the **investigative pre-Advent** judgment that transpires in heaven before the second coming. After the preaching of the gospel is finished and **all the souls have joined** the church, the heavenly judgment will **separate** the genuine believers from the counterfeit. In fact, we will see that the wedding takes place in heaven and God's people are **present there only by faith**.

### **Verse 11**

*"But when the **king** came in to **see** [*theaomai: 'examine'*] **the guests** [*here is the examination of the garments of the invitees to the wedding*], **he saw** a man there who did not have on a wedding garment [*this examination of the wedding garments cannot take place after the second coming because no one will*]*

***sneak into heaven. Actually, God examines the records in the books to determine if the person has on the wedding garment].***

The translation 'see' is weak. The Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament explains that in the New Testament this word 'see'.

*' . . . regularly connotes intensive, thorough, lingering, astonished, reflective, comprehending observation.'*

Ellen White describes the sanctuary context of the heavenly examination:

*"As the sins of the people were anciently transferred, in figure, to the earthly sanctuary by the blood of the sin-offering, so our sins are, in fact, transferred to the heavenly sanctuary by the blood of Christ. Furthermore, as the typical cleansing of the earthly was accomplished by the removal of the sins by which it had been polluted, so the actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins that are there recorded. This necessitates an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of his atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigative Judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem his people; for when he comes, his reward is with him to give to every man according to his works." [REV. 22:12.] 4SP, p. 266*

## **All Believers Examined**

*"The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, "to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12." COL, p. 310:*

**Note:** The Bible is clear that all who have professed the name of Jesus must appear before the judgment seat of Christ. However, they will not appear there in person but rather by their records in the books.

## **2 Corinthians 5:10**

We must **all appear** before the judgment seat of Christ to **render an account** for what we have done **in the body**.

## **Matthew 12:34-37**

Our words will justify or condemn us.

## **Ecclesiastes 12:14**

God will bring **every work** into judgment along with every **secret thing**.

## **Revelation 22:12**

When Jesus comes, He will **bring His reward** to give to everyone according to **his work**.

## **The Hypocrites**

### **Matthew 7:21-23**

Many will **claim the name** of Jesus and He will say that He does not know them.

### **Matthew 13:47-50**

The gospel net gathers both **good and bad** fish.

## **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**

In the church, there are ministers of unrighteousness who are **garbed** as ministers of righteousness.

### **Matthew 13:30**

In the church, there are **wheat and the tares** and both look very much alike.

### **Matthew 25:1-10**

All ten virgins had **lamps and oil**; all **claimed to be waiting** for the groom but five were foolish.

The purpose of the judgment is to reveal to the universe **if repentance, confession, faith** and **baptism** were **genuine** or not. The proof of true conversion is a **sanctified life** that produces **works that flow** from repentance. God saves us by grace through faith but He will judge us by our works because works reveal whether faith is genuine or not.

### **COL, p. 310**

*"It is while men are still dwelling upon the **earth** that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of **heaven**. The lives of **all** [**'guests'** (plural) **were examined**] His **professed followers** pass in review before God. **All** are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed."*

### **COL, p. 312**

*"Righteousness is **right doing**, and it is by their deeds that all will be judged. Our characters are **revealed** by what we do. The works show **whether the faith is genuine**."*

Is Ellen White correct in this assessment? Absolutely, because as we have seen, in the Bible the judgment is always concerned with an examination of our works, words, deeds, thoughts, motives and intentions of the heart!

### **2 SM, p. 380**

*"That which God required of Adam before his fall was perfect obedience to His law. God requires now what He required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires. We cannot do this without **that faith** that brings Christ's righteousness **into daily practice**."*

### **Luke 12:35-37**

The wedding transpires in heaven, and Jesus will return from the wedding to take his people home:

*"Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; <sup>36</sup> and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will **return from the wedding**, that when he*

comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. <sup>37</sup> Blessed are those servants whom the master, **when he comes**, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.”

## **Verse 12**

“So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come **in here** without a wedding garment?' ***[This conversation between God and the believer does not actually take place in heaven].*** And he was **speechless** ***[the point is that no excuses will be given or allowed]***.

## **Romans 3:19**

“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that **every mouth may be stopped**, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

## **COL, pp. 315, 316**

“Many who call themselves Christians are mere human moralists. They have refused the gift that alone could enable them to honor Christ by representing Him to the world. The work of the Holy Spirit is to them a strange work. They are **not doers** of the word. The heavenly principles that distinguish those who are one with Christ from those who are one with the world have become almost **indistinguishable**. The professed followers of Christ are no longer a **separate and peculiar people**. The **line of demarcation** is **indistinct**. The people are subordinating themselves to the **world**, to its **practices**, its **customs**, its **selfishness**. The church has gone over to the world in transgression of the law, when the world should have come over to the church in obedience to the law. Daily the church is **being converted to the world**. All these expect to be saved by Christ's death, while they refuse to live His self-sacrificing life. They extol the **riches of free grace**, and attempt to cover themselves with an **appearance of righteousness**, hoping to screen their defects of character; but their efforts will be of no avail in the day of God.”

## **COL, p. 317**

*"Men may now excuse their defects of character, but in that day they will **offer no excuse.**"*

### **Verse 13**

*"Then the king said to the **servants [the angels]**, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

### **Matthew 13:30**

*"Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the **reapers**, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"*

### **Verse 14**

*"For many are called, but few are chosen"*

### **Revelation 17:14**

*"These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, **chosen**, and faithful."*

## **Final Story**

### **Matthew 18:23-35**

*"Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain **king [God]** who wanted to **settle accounts [judgment]** with his **servants [those who claim Jesus]**.<sup>24</sup> And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was **brought to him** who owed him ten thousand talents [**a huge debt that was impossible to pay**].<sup>25</sup> But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made [**what he deserved**].<sup>26</sup> The servant therefore **fell down** before him [**repentance for sin or for the consequences?**], saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.'<sup>27</sup> Then the master of that servant was*



moved with compassion [grace and mercy], released him, and forgave [God's free forgiveness or justification] him the debt. <sup>28</sup> "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat [his works showed that his repentance was not genuine], saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' <sup>29</sup> So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' <sup>30</sup> And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. <sup>31</sup> So when his fellow servants [the recording angels] saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. <sup>32</sup> Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. <sup>33</sup> Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' <sup>34</sup> And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay [his forgiveness was revoked] all that was due to him. <sup>35</sup> "So, My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."

Is the judgment investigation a threat to a person's salvation? Only if their repentance, confession and faith are counterfeit. If a person on a train has purchased a ticket, he has nothing to fear when the attendant asks to see it. However, if a person on the train never purchased the ticket he has every reason to fear.





# **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

## **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

### **CHAPTER 17: MATTERS RELATING TO LITERARY STRUCTURE**

#### **Textual Location of the Three Woes**

##### **Revelation 8:12**

Describes the end of the fourth trumpet (the period of papal dominion).

##### **Revelation 8:13**

After the fourth trumpet has passed, the angel announces **three woes**.

##### **Revelation 9:1-11**

The events of the **fifth trumpet** are the **first woe** (the French Revolution)

##### **Revelation 9:12**

When the events of the fifth trumpet conclude the text tells us that the **first woe has passed**.

##### **Revelation 9:13-21**

These verses contain a description of the **sixth trumpet**. When this trumpet concludes in verse 21, there is **no reference** to the second woe passing (this

indicates that **chapters 10 and 11** will have more to say about the period of the sixth trumpet).

### **Revelation 10:1-11:13**

This passage will further **amplify certain aspects** of the periods of the **fourth**, **fifth** and **sixth** trumpets:

- **Revelation 11:2-6** takes us back to period of the 1260 years (538-1798 AD: the fourth trumpet)
- **Revelation 11:7-10** describes the **French Revolution** that killed the two witnesses (1793-1797 AD: the fifth trumpet and the first woe).
- **Revelation 11:11-12** describes the **resurrection** of the two witnesses after the French Revolution. They **no longer testify in sackcloth** but rather enjoy **great power and prestige**. This miraculous resurrection of the Bible not only describes the establishment of multiple **Bible societies** in the aftermath of the French Revolution. It also portrays the **great Advent Awakening** in the renewed study of **Bible prophecy** because of the opening of the little book of Daniel at the time of the end and knowledge of prophecy increased.
- **Revelation 11:13** introduces the **two groups** that will exist in the end time:

(1) The two **enemies** of the two witnesses (the previous context identifies the enemies as the **gentiles** and the **beast from the bottomless pit**). Revelation uses the word ‘enemies’ **only twice** and both references are in chapter **11:5, 12**. In the first instance, the enemies persecuted the two witnesses during the 1260 years while in the second they killed the two witnesses at the end of the same period).

(2) The **remnant** who fear God and give glory to Him, a clear literary link to the three angels’ messages (Revelation 14:7; Luke 7:16; Acts 2:43; Acts 13:16; 19:17, 18; 2Corinthians 7:1; Revelation 11:18; 15:4).

- **Revelation 11:14**: After the resurrection of the Bible and the mention of the enemies and the remnant, the text tells us that the **second woe** is past.
- We must understand the sixth trumpet as the **negative side** (the perspective of the enemies) of end time events while we should see Revelation 10 as the **positive side** (the perspective of the remnant) during the same period.

Expressed another way, the sixth trumpet describes the **gathering of the enemies** of the two witnesses in the end time while Revelation 10 describes the **gathering** of the faithful remnant during the same period.

- The **sixth** trumpet carries us from **1844** all the way to the **close of probation** when the mystery of God is finished (Revelation 10:7). We know this because the seventh trumpet describes the close of probation and Jesus taking over the kingdoms of the world.

**Revelation 12** provides a **recapitulation** and further **amplification** of the periods of the fourth, fifth and sixth trumpets

- This chapter begins with the **1260-year** period (the fourth trumpet)
- The chapter continues with the period when the **earth helped** the woman (the period during which the deadly wound is kept in place by the civil powers of the world).
- The chapter ends with a description of the **same two groups** that Revelation 11:13 briefly introduced: the enemies and the remnant.
- The **remnant** of the woman's seed (the remnant of Jesus) keeps the commandments of God while the other group (the enemies) manifests the wrath of the dragon (Revelation 12:17).
- Revelation 12:17 is a **further description** of the period of the sixth trumpet.

**Revelation 13** provides a further **amplification** of the **fourth**, **fifth** and **sixth** trumpets:

- **Revelation 13:1-8** provides a description of the **1260 years** (the **fourth trumpet**) when the beast persecuted the saints of the Most High (notably described as 42 months thus linking it with Revelation 11:2).
- **Revelation 13:9** portrays the **deadly wound** that was given to the papacy with the sword beginning in 1793 and culminating in 1798 (the **fifth trumpet** and the first woe).
- **Revelation 13:11-18** then describes the end time conflict between those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark (the enemies) and those who receive the seal of God (those who fear God and give Him glory, the 144,000 of Revelation 14:1-5 who are in contrast to the apostate worshipers in the previous chapter). This is the period of the **sixth trumpet** that ends with the **second woe**.

In **Revelation 14:6-13**, the fourth and fifth trumpets have **faded from view**. The emphasis now will fall upon **the message** that the remnant will proclaim during the time when the **sixth trumpet** is blowing. This is the 'prophesying again' of Revelation 10:11.

- That is to say, Revelation 14:6-13 **takes us back** to the time when faithful remnant began to proclaim the **first angel's message** to the world (in the 1830's and early 1840's) after the fifth trumpet and fifth woe ended in 1798.
- This is the period when the **two witnesses resurrected** and no longer gave their testimony in sackcloth.
- The **sixth trumpet polarizes** the world into **two groups**: those who have the seal of God and those who receive the mark of the beast (Revelation 14:9-11) ending with the two groups (the enemies and the remnant) once again in Revelation 14:9-11.

**Revelation 14:14-20**: When the **two groups are complete**, the **seventh trumpet is about** to sound. The harvest of the earth and the grapes of the earth

are ripe. The remnant is **in spiritual Jerusalem** while **outside the city** are the enemies who are intent on destroying the remnant (Revelation 14:18-20; see the background of Joel 3).

Notably, **Revelation 16:14** shows the **negative side** of this where three counterfeit angels go to the kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them in apostasy against God for a final battle against God's people! Thus the **sixth trumpet** (Revelation 9:13-21) describes the gathering of the wicked forces against God's people and Revelation 10 and 14:6-13 describes the gathering of God's people by the three angels' messages.

## **Understanding the Location of Revelation 11:19**

### **Revelation 11:19 (first part):**

The temple opens in 1844 and the sixth trumpet begins the gathering of the righteous and the wicked. When the temple closes there will be voices, thunder, lightning, a great earthquake and great hail.

### **Revelation 11:19 (second part); 15:5-8:**

The temple closes and the seven plagues fall culminating with the seventh plague where the same phenomena of Revelation 11:19 are described.

Revelation 11:19 is not the conclusion of chapter 11 but rather the introduction to chapters 12-14. In other words, Revelation 11:19 brings us to the same climax as Revelation 11:1 does in chapter ten. Thus, Revelation 11:1 speaks about the beginning of the judgment in heaven after the great disappointment and Revelation 11:19 reaches the same climax again. Notice the following sequence of events in Revelation 11:

- The beginning of the investigative judgment in 1844 (Revelation 11:1)
- The persecution of the two witnesses for 42 months or 1260 days (Revelation 11:2-6) Verse 1 presents the climax of the judgment and then verses 2-6 go back in time to the 1260 years. This proves that my

translation of Revelation 11:1 was correct. The measuring of the temple comes after the 1260 years.

- The conclusion of the 42 months with the French Revolution and the deadly wound (Revelation 11:7-13).
- In the aftermath of the French Revolution there is a remnant that fears God and gives glory to Him (Revelation 11:13). This is actually the prolepsis of the climax that will be reached again in Revelation 14:6, 7.
- The close of the investigative judgment and Christ takes over the kingdom (11:15-18).
- Revelation 11:19: Takes us back to the point of time of Revelation 11:1 and then Revelation 12, 13 backtracks to the 1260 years to provide a framework for the beginning of the judgment in Revelation 14:6, 7.

### **Structural Matters Relating to Revelation 11:19-15:8**

- The beginning of the investigative judgment in 1844 introduces a new cycle. Revelation 11:19 begins in the very same place as Revelation 11:1.  
*"As foretold in the Scriptures, the ministration of Christ in the most holy place began at the termination of the prophetic days in 1844. **To this time,** apply the words of the Revelator, "The temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." [REV. 11:19] The ark of God's testament is in the second apartment of the sanctuary. As Christ entered there, to minister in the sinner's behalf, the inner temple was opened, and the ark of God was brought to view. To those who by faith beheld the Savior in his work of intercession, God's majesty and power were revealed. As the train of his glory filled the temple, light from the holy of holies was shed upon his waiting people on the earth." 4SP p. 273*  
*"In the ministration of the earthly tabernacle, which served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," the holy of holies was opened only upon the great day of atonement, the typical day of judgment, set apart for the cleansing of the sanctuary. Therefore the announcement, "The temple*



*of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament," **points to the opening of the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, at the end of the twenty-three hundred days—in 1844**—as Christ entered there to perform the closing work of the atonement. Those who by faith followed their great High Priest, as he entered upon his ministry in the most holy place, beheld the ark of the testament." RH, November 9, 1905*

- It is important to realize that the introductory scene of Revelation 11:19 presents **two moments of time**: When the temple opens and when there is thunder and lightning.
- Revelation 11:19 depicts the **beginning of the judgment** and Revelation 15:5-8 describes **its close**.
- Between Revelation 11:19 and 15:5-8 the central focus falls upon the events that transpired **between the beginning and the ending** of the judgment.
- Of course, Revelation 12 and 13 also refer to events that occurred before 1844.
- Revelation 12:1-5, 7-12 describes the dragon's persecution of Jesus and the victory of Jesus during this period.
- After briefly mentioning the beasts of Daniel 7, Revelation 13 begins with the moment that pagan Rome (the dragon) handed off the baton to Papal Rome (the beast). Clearly, both Revelation 12 and Revelation 13 begin with pagan Rome.
- Revelation 12:6, 13-15 describes the papal persecution during the 1260 years, a period of respite when the earth helps the woman (12:16) and climaxes with the final persecution against God's people (Revelation 12:17).
- After describing pagan Rome handing off the baton to papal Rome, Revelation 13:3-8 describes the 42 months of persecution against the

saints. It then mentions a period of respite while the beast recovers from a deadly wound (Revelation 13:9, 10). The chapter climaxes with a portrayal of the final persecution of God's remnant (13:11-18).

- Revelation 14:1-5 describes those who are victorious in the final conflict.
- Revelation 14:6-12 contains the messages that warn about the beginning of the judgment and warn against the powers that will play an important role in the end time crisis.
- At the conclusion of the three messages the whole world will have been divided into two groups (Revelation 14:14-18).
- As the wicked gather around the city to destroy God's people, Jesus and his angels come to trample the winepress (Revelation 14:19, 20).
- In Revelation 15:2-4: God's people stand victorious again at the end of the vision.

Revelation 15:5-8 portrays the moment when the door of probation will close and the outpouring of the seven last plagues by God.



## **“REVELATION’S SEVEN TRUMPETS”**

### **A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

**BY PASTOR STEPHEN BOHR**

## **CHAPTER 18: VIEWS AND ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF THE TRUMPETS**

### **Uriah Smith’s view of the First Five Trumpets**

#### **FIRST TRUMPET**

*“The blast of the first trumpet has its location about the close of the fourth century and onward, and refers to these desolating invasions of the Roman Empire under the Goths.”*

#### **SECOND TRUMPET**

*“The sounding of the second trumpet evidently relates to the invasion and conquest of Africa, and afterward of Italy, by Gaiseric (Genseric), king of the Vandals. His conquests were for the most part naval, and his triumphs were “as it were a great mountain burning with fire, cast into the sea.”*

#### **THIRD TRUMPET**

*“It is here premised that this trumpet has allusion to the desolating wars and furious invasions of Attila, king of the Huns, against the Roman power.”*

## **FOURTH TRUMPET**

*“We understand that this trumpet symbolizes the career of Odoacer, the first barbarian ruler of Italy, who was so intimately connected with the downfall of Western Rome. The symbols sun, moon, and stars — for they are undoubtedly here used as symbols—evidently denote the great luminaries of the Roman government, its emperors, senators, and consuls.”*

## **FIFTH TRUMPET**

*“The meaning of this term may be learned from the Greek abyssos, which is defined ‘deep, bottomless, profound,’ and may refer to any waste, desolate, and uncultivated place. It is applied to the earth in its original state of chaos (Genesis 1:2). In this instance it may appropriately refer to the unknown wastes of the Arabian desert, from the borders of which issued the hordes of Saracens, like swarms of locusts.”*

## **FIFTH TRUMPET (continued)**

*“Like the noxious and even deadly vapors which the winds, particularly from the southwest, diffuse in Arabia, Mahometanism spread from hence its pestilential influence — arose as suddenly and spread as widely as smoke arising out of the pit, the smoke of a great furnace. Such is a suitable symbol of the religion of Mahomet, of itself, or as compared with the pure light of the gospel of Jesus. It was not, like the latter, a light from heaven, but a smoke out of the bottomless pit.”*

Please take time to read the following article ***“Issues In The Interpretation of the Seven Trumpets of Revelation”*** by Ángel Manuel Rodríguez, ThD. Here is the link:

<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2012/01/the-seven-trumpets-of-revelation>

## **The Prophecy of Josiah Litch**

### **The Time Period between the Fifth and Sixth Trumpets**

*"In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the Second Advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown "in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;" and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case."--Josiah Litch, in Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy, Aug. 1, 1840.*

*"At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction. (See Appendix.) When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended." GC p. 334, 335*

Josiah Litch's prophecy is a debated issue within Adventism. Although it is difficult to grasp, the following is an attempt to present it as briefly and clearly as possible.

Litch's prophecy was based on the following text:

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.” (Revelation 9:15)

The ‘hour, and a day, and a month, and a year’ is understood by many Greek scholars to designate a date—a specific point of time—as in the following example: 3 p. m., 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2003. They see the ‘hour, and a day, and a month, and a year’ as a date rather than a time period.

On the other hand, by applying the principle that a symbolic day represents a literal year, Litch taught that the ‘hour, and a day, and a month, and a year’ was a prophetic time period of 391 years and fifteen days. (In prophetic time, a year consists of 360 days, with each prophetic day symbolizing a literal year.)

To find a starting point for his proposed prophetic-time period, he first made the assumption that Revelation, chapter 9, portrays the Muslim world in prophecy. This assumption was based upon the works of commentators and historians rather than upon the testimony of the Bible as its own interpreter.

Then he took the five months of Revelation 9:10 as a prophetic time period of 150 years reaching from July 27, 1299 A. D., to July 27, 1449 A. D. The starting point for this period was fixed by the date when Othman (also called Osman), leader of the Muslim Ottoman Turks, made his first assault on the Greek Empire (also called the Byzantine Empire, or the East Roman Empire). In Litch's interpretation, the 150 years ended on July 27, 1449 A. D. During this time, said Litch, the Muslims were permitted to torment the Greek Empire ‘by constant depredations, but not politically to kill them’ (Josiah Litch, *Prophetic Expositions*, Volume 2, p. 180).

Then Litch made the assumption that *his* time period started at the assumed ending point of the ‘five months’ of Revelation 9:10.

Based on the above assumptions, time periods, and dates, Litch started his prophetic time period of three hundred and ninety-one years and fifteen days on July 27, 1449 A. D., and predicted its end on August 11, 1840.

Of the beginning of this period, Litch writes:

“And when the sixth angel sounded, it was commanded to take off the restraints which had been imposed on the nation [the Muslim Ottoman Turk Empire], by which they were restricted to the work of tormenting men, and their commission extended to slay the third part of men.” (Quoted in Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, p. 505.

In this interpretation, the ‘third part of men’ was considered the Greek Empire. Uriah Smith quoted Edward B. Elliot as follows:

“It was to ‘the fire and the smoke and the sulphur,’ to the artillery and firearms of Mahomet, that the killing of the third part of men, *i. e.*, the capture of Constantinople, and by consequence the destruction of the Greek Empire, was owing” (Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, p. 510)

Thus, he equates the Greek Empire (also called the Byzantine Empire, or the East Roman Empire) with ‘the third part of men’.

At this point, Litch’s interpretation becomes more difficult to understand. The text upon which his interpretation was based focused on the slaying of ‘the third part of men,’ which he took to symbolize the Greek Empire. The following is the entire text of the verse upon which he based his interpretation:

“And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.” (Revelation 9:15)

The Greek Empire fell when the Muslim Ottoman Turks seized Constantinople, its capital city, in 1453, *four years* after the beginning of Litch’s prophecy. The

Ottoman Turks did not need 391 years and fifteen days to conquer the Greek Empire. Therefore, what did Litch do? Ignoring what was actually written, he proceeded on the assumption that the prophecy was foretelling the length of time before the powerful phase of the Ottoman Empire would cease; but that idea is not even hinted at in the above quoted text.

The event that Litch took to represent the end of the time period on August 11, 1840 was the delivery of an ultimatum from the four powers, England, Austria, and Prussia to the pasha of Egypt to negotiate a settlement of hostilities between Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. “The sultan [of the Ottoman Empire] accepted this intervention of the great powers, and thus made a voluntary surrender of the question into their hands.”

Uriah Smith wrote:

“On August 11, 1840, the period of three hundred ninety-one years and fifteen days, allotted to the continuance of the Ottoman power, ended; and *where was the sultan’s independence?*—GONE. Who had the supremacy of the Ottoman Empire in their hands?—the *four great powers*; and that empire has existed ever since only by the *sufferance* of these Christian powers. Thus was the prophecy fulfilled to the very letter.” (Uriah Smith, Daniel and Revelation, p. 517)

## **The Issues**

1. Is ‘an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year’ a date or a time period? Greek scholars consider this question, and many come up with the conclusion that it is a date.
2. Litch’s time prophecy differs from the established prophetic-time prophecies in several important respects.

The prophecies in which a prophetic day equals a literal year—Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:4-6; Daniel 8:14 and 9:24; Revelation 12:6 (and other prophecies of



the same time period)—all produce literal years, but not literal days. All the literal years consist of even numbers ending in zero—40 years, 390 years, 40 years, 2300 years, 490 years, and 1260 years. Not one of the established prophetic-time prophecies uses the hour as a unit of prophetic time. In addition, each of the established prophetic-time prophecies is based upon only one unit of prophetic time—either days, weeks, months, or years.

By contrast, Litch's interpretation produces a time period of 391 years and 15 days, it uses the hour as a unit of prophetic time, and it is based upon four different units of time—'an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year.'

These differences generate the following questions: Is 'an hour, and a day, and a month and a year' really a statement of prophetic time, in which a day represents a literal year? Did God give one atypical prophetic-time period that was precise as to the exact days of elapsed time?

God well knew the difficulties that man has had in devising a calendar that stays in agreement with the astronomical 'calendar' that He instituted. *When one assumes precision to the exact number of elapsed days*, how does he account for the change that Pope Gregory XIII made in the calendar in 1582, by which Thursday, October 4, was followed by Friday, October 15? Litch did not take this calendar change, and all its ramifications in terms of elapsed days, into account in his computations.

(Note: The month and day for the beginning of the investigative judgment is not based upon mathematical computations, but upon the date of Yom Kippur in the Jewish religious calendar.)

3. What Biblical support can be found for Josiah Litch and Uriah Smith's interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets, an interpretation upon which Litch's time computations rest? The support for their interpretation, as given by Uriah Smith, consists solely of quotations from Bible commentators and historians. Where does the principle, 'One scripture is the key to unlock other

scriptures,' come into play here? There is no Biblical support for this interpretation.

4. Is there any evidence that Litch's proposed time period, based on Revelation 9:15, started at the assumed ending point of the 'five months mentioned in Revelation 9:10?

5. Were the events of August 11, 1840 a fulfillment of the prophecy of Revelation 9:15? The answer is no. The length of time that the Muslim Ottoman Empire would continue as a powerful nation is not even mentioned in Revelation 9:15

6. However, the Lord's messenger addresses this subject in these words:

"In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. . . At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction." GC, pp. 334, 335.

When inspiration speaks, the statement is true; but how is it to be understood? Mrs. White calls the event of August 11, 1840, 'another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy'. Perhaps the key to this conundrum is found in the definition of the word 'remarkable.' It can mean 'notable,' or 'noteworthy,' but it can also mean 'extraordinary,' or 'singular.'

In view of all the evidence, the only possible conclusion is that the Lord's messenger is speaking of the prophecy of Josiah Litch, not the prophecy of the apostle John recorded in Revelation 9:15. It is an 'extraordinary' case, a 'singular' case, indeed, in which God permitted an event to take place that was regarded, at the time, as the fulfillment of prophecy.

Why? After considering all the facts, one can only conclude that Josiah Litch's interpretation was not worked out under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Who, then, did inspire it? Evidently, Satan did **[I here disagree with the author. I believe that Litch reached his conclusions based on human error]**. It would appear that his plan was to work up a great excitement over a false prophecy, only to create a backlash when it fell flat. Such an event would cause a great revulsion against the principle of 'prophetic time,' in which a prophetic day symbolizes a literal year. If God had not honored the prophecy of Josiah Litch, it would have created such a prejudice against the preaching of the 2300-day prophecy, which was also based on the day-for-a-year principle, as to thwart God's plan for its worldwide proclamation. Therefore, God saw fit to honor Litch's prophecy with an extraordinary, singular 'fulfillment of prophecy' to make a profound impression upon contemporary society.

It was left to after generations to unravel the mystery as they sought the blessings promised to the earnest student of the book of Revelation.

After considering the facts, one must conclude that this fulfillment of prophecy was a fulfillment of Josiah Litch's prophecy—not a fulfillment of the Bible prophecy given in Revelation 9:15. Therefore, the reasonable conclusion is that the fulfillment of Josiah Litch's prophecy has no bearing in determining the organization of the book of Revelation.



# THE SEVEN TRUMPETS IN ADVENTISM

By Gerhard Pfandl

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Perspective Digest, Volume 24, Issue 3

A recent *Sabbath School Quarterly*—*The Book of Revelation*—caused quite a bit of discussion in the church, because among other things it presented an interpretation of the seven trumpets in Revelation 8 and 9 that was completely different from the traditional understanding of these chapters. The traditional Adventist interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets with the Muslims and Turks was the standard interpretation of Bible scholars in the 18th and 19th centuries— Among them, John Wesley, Edward Irving, and Henry Drummond. In America as well as in Europe, expositors usually saw in the first four trumpets the barbarian invasions of the Roman Empire (Goths, Vandals, Huns, and the fall of Rome in A.D. 476) and in the fifth and sixth the Saracens (another name for Muslims) and Turks. Thus, it is not surprising that the Millerites, especially Josiah Litch, did the same. They had behind them centuries of exposition representing many faiths and nationalities.

For Josiah Litch, the “fallen Star” in Revelation 9:1 was Mohammed, and the symbolic “locusts” (vs. 3) the Muslim horsemen. The “five months” (vs. 5)<sup>1</sup> of torment were for him 150 years, which referred to the period of the Turkish torment of the Greeks from 1299 to 1449. All of this had, of course, been previously presented again and again by others.

The symbolic “hour and day and month and year” under the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:15, NKJV) was widely acknowledged as representing 391 years and 15 days. Adding this time period to 1449 brought Litch to August 1840,<sup>2</sup> when the Sultan in Constantinople, he believed, would voluntarily surrender his independence into the hands of the Christian powers. When at the predicted time, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian

nations, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates.

Not surprisingly, Uriah Smith in 1867 in his book *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Revelation* introduced this interpretation of the trumpets into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It became the standard interpretation of the trumpets in Revelation in the church until recent times. Many members around the world still hold this view and believe that any deviation from it constitutes an apostasy from the faith.

Beginning with Louis Were in Australia in the 1940s<sup>3</sup> and continued by Hans K. LaRondelle,<sup>4</sup> Jon Paulien,<sup>5</sup> and Ranko Stefanovic,<sup>6</sup> the focus in the interpretation of the trumpets shifted from political and military events to spiritual aspects of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Stefanovic, the author of the recent Sabbath school quarterly, presented this scenario in the lessons and in more detail in his book on Revelation. Instead of military invasions and battles, he emphasizes the spiritual battles in the context of the Great Controversy. The first trumpet is seen as God's judgment on the Jews in A.D. 70, who were the first nation to persecute the Christians. The second trumpet heralds God's judgment on Rome in the fifth century A.D.; Rome was the second nation to persecute the Christians. The third trumpet portrays the apostasy of the Christian Church in the medieval period. The fourth trumpet describes "the temporal darkening of the spiritual sources of the true light, namely, the Bible gospel, under the prevailing influence of secularism,"<sup>7</sup> following the Dark Ages. The fifth trumpet, according to Stefanovic, "refers to the spiritual condition in the secular world and the consequences of such conditions from the eighteenth century to our time."<sup>8</sup> And the sixth trumpet "portrays the preparation for the battle of Armageddon, which is described later in the book (Rev. 16:12-16)."<sup>9</sup>

The lesson quarterly was heavily criticized by some because it seems to contradict Ellen G. White's statement in *The Great Controversy*, where she wrote: "In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited

widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. . . . At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction.”<sup>10</sup> This is the only place in her writings where Ellen G. White refers to the trumpets in Revelation 9. Robert W. Olson, the former director of the Ellen G. White Estate, in his booklet “101 Questions on the Sanctuary and on Ellen White” questioned whether she really supported Litch or whether what she wrote is simply part of her description of the Millerite movement. He wrote: “If Ellen White, in *The Great Controversy*, pp. 334–335, means that John the Revelator’s prophecy was fulfilled on August 11, 1840, she would be giving support to Litch’s interpretation of Revelation 9:15. If she simply means that Josiah Litch’s prediction was fulfilled, then she is not necessarily supporting Litch’s interpretation of the text.”<sup>11</sup> In other words, if she was simply recording what happened, she was not supporting Litch. Ángel Rodríguez correctly observed, “the fact that she never again mentions 1840 as a year when a biblical prophecy was fulfilled should make us cautious on how we use this single statement.”<sup>12</sup>

Heidi Heiks in his book *Satan’s Counterfeit Prophecy* has assembled a large amount of historical material showing that the traditional interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets in Revelation 9 is exegetically and historically not defensible. The assumed dates for the beginning and ending of the 150 and 391 years are not confirmed by historical events. For example, the Battle of Bapheus, which for Litch was the beginning date of the 150 years, did not take place on July 27, 1299, as Litch assumed, but three years later on July 27, 1302.<sup>13</sup> At the 1919 Bible Conference, a committee concluded that it could not begin the 150 years on July 27, 1299, because “the date itself could not be established.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Litch did not take note of the 10 days that were deleted when the Julian calendar was changed to the Gregorian calendar in 1582. Thus, the date August 11, 1840, does not fit the prophecy.

The trumpets in Revelation 8 and 9 have produced two competing interpretations in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It behooves us to diligently study these chapters to see which interpretation is exegetically sound and has the support of history. Ellen G. White advised: “The fact that certain doctrines have been held as truth for many years by our people, is not a proof that our ideas are infallible. Age will not make error into truth, and truth can afford to be fair.”<sup>15</sup>

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13. Heidi Heiks, *Satan’s Counterfeit Prophecy* (Ringgold, Ga.: Teach Services Inc. 2013), 90.

14. Transcript of the 1919 Bible Conference of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, July 17, 1919 (General Conference Archives, Silver Spring, Md.), 50.

15. *Counsels to Writers and Editors*, 35.

## **THE FLOW OF REVELATION 8:12 – 15:4**

for further information please refer to pages 355-362

Revelation 8:12	4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Papacy
Revelation 8:13	4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet Ends – Three Woes
Revelation 9:11 - Rev. 11	5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet - French Revolution
Revelation 9:12	1 <sup>st</sup> Woe Passes
Revelation 9:13-21	6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Gathering of the Wicked
Revelation 10:1 – 11:1	6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet - Focus on Gathering the <b><u>Remnant</u></b>
Revelation 11:2-3	Expansion of Fourth Trumpet - Papacy
Revelation 11:7-10	Expansion of 5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – French Revolution
Revelation 11:11-13	6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Witnesses Resurrect – Little Book Opened - <b><u>Remnant</u></b> Fears God and Gives Him Glory
Revelation 11:14	Second Woe Passes
Revelation 12:1-5	Satan and Rome Attempt to Slay the Male Child
Revelation 12:6, 13-16	4th Trumpet – Papacy - Earth Helps the Woman
Revelation 12:17	6th Trumpet – War of Dragon with the <b><u>Remnant</u></b>
Revelation 13:1-2	4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Pagan Rome Gives the Papacy its Throne
Revelation 13:3-9	4 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Papal Rome
Revelation 13:9-10	5 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – French Revolution
Revelation 13:11-18	6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Gathering of the Wicked
Revelation 14:1-5	7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – the <b><u>Remnant</u></b> in the Kingdom
Revelation 14:6-12	6 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet – Three Angels Gather the <b><u>Remnant</u></b>
Revelation 14:14-19	Close of Probation – Two Groups Complete
Revelation 14:20	7 <sup>th</sup> Trumpet (See Rev. 19:11-15) Jesus Comes to Rescue the Remnant
Revelation 15:2-4	<b><u>Remnant</u></b> Victorious on Mount Zion



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