

CHAPTER 13

Prophetic Masterpiece (The Book of Revelation)

We have already considered 26 of the New Testament books and we are now ready to study the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation. In the Old Testament there are many prophetic books such as Daniel, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, etc. The great prophetic masterpiece of the New Testament is the book of Revelation.

On the night before He died on the cross, Jesus spoke to His disciples and told them that He had many things that He wanted to say to them, but they were not yet ready for this important information (John 16:12). Then in John 16:13 Jesus gave a promise: "when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you T _____ T _____ C _____."

The book of Revelation is about **things to come** (future things). Sometimes you will hear people say, "What is this world coming to?" or "What is going to take place in the future?" The last book in the Bible helps to answer these questions!

The Author

Who is the human author of this book (Revelation 1:4,9; 22:8)? _____. What other New Testament books did he write? [These books all bear his name.]

In the previous chapter we learned that during the last years of his life John served the Lord in the city of Ephesus. Was John still in Ephesus when he wrote the book of Revelation (see Revelation 1:9)? _____ John was on the small island of P _____ which is located in the Aegean Sea, not too far from Ephesus. Because of persecution John had been exiled to this island. The reason he was sent there was not because he was some wicked criminal, but because he preached God's Word and was an excellent witness for Christ ("for the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ"--Revelation 1:9). Those who love the Bible and who love the Christ of the Bible are sometimes called upon to suffer for their faith.

The book of Revelation was written at the end of the first century, probably around 95 A.D., during the reign of Emperor Domitian who fiercely persecuted believers. This is the last book of the Bible to have been written. As John wrote down the final verses of this book (see Revelation 22:18-21), it was as if God were putting His final "period" at the end. A period means that a sentence has come to an end. A final period means that there are no more sentences! When John put down the final "AMEN" (Revelation 22:21) the Bible was completed! All 66 books had now been finished!

Today we have something that Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul never had! **We have a completed Bible!** We must never add to or subtract from God's Word (Revelation 22:18-19)! Our job is to read it, understand it, believe it, obey it and live it!

God's Revelation

In the King James Version, the title of this book is "**The Revelation of St. John the Divine.**" This is not really the correct title. John was merely the one whom God used to write this revelation down. The correct title is found in Revelation 1:1: "The R_____ of Jesus Christ." We call this book "Revelation" because it is the REVELATION of Jesus Christ.

What does the word "revelation" mean? The word "revelation" means an unveiling or an uncovering of something. For example, if someone were wearing a veil over the face, the veil must be uncovered or removed so that the face might be revealed! Otherwise you would never know what the person looks like!

Very often when a great work of art is first put on display (a famous painting or sculpture) it is first covered up. Then, there is the **unveiling** ceremony when the work of art is revealed and seen for the first time.

God has a masterpiece which He wants to reveal! God has a great purpose and plan for mankind which He wants to make known! In the book of Revelation God uncovers the future and shows us things to come. He reveals His purpose and program. He reveals the awful judgments that will come down upon unbelievers. He reveals the eternal joys of the new heaven and new earth which will be shared by believers. Most of all, He reveals His blessed Son whose name is _____ (Revelation 19:16). It is the revelation of Jesus Christ!

A Book For Slaves!

The first verse of this book (1:1) tells us that God wants to show this revelation unto His **servants**. This word "servants" actually means "slaves." This book is for slaves, and only they can really understand the book of Revelation. Are you a slave of Jesus Christ (see Jude 1:1)? Does He own you (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)? What a wonderful slavery it is to belong to such a Master and Lord!

A slave is not free to do his own thing. A slave must listen to his master and must carry out his master's will. The book of Revelation is for those who are love-slaves of Jesus Christ. It is for those who can say, "S_____, LORD; for Thy S_____
H_____" (1 Samuel 3:9). Not only the book of Revelation, but all the Bible is really only for those who want to hear and to do what the Lord says! And when this book is read, a very special blessing is promised (see Revelation 1:3) to those who H_____ and K_____ (obey) the things that are written in this book!

The Grand Consummation

A race is not consummated until the runner crosses the finish line. Only then can the runner say, "I've completed the race!" Without the book of Revelation, the Bible would be very incomplete,

like a story without an ending. It is the great concluding and finishing book of the Bible. That which is begun in Genesis is finished in Revelation. Genesis tells us how everything began; Revelation tells us how everything will end. The following chart brings this out:

Genesis	Revelation
First Book	Last Book
Answers the question, Where did I come from? (man's origin)	Answers the question: Where am I going? (man's destiny)
Paradise lost (Genesis 3)	Paradise regained (Revelation 21-22)
The original heaven and earth (universe) (Genesis 1:1)	The new heaven and earth (universe) (Revelation 21:1)
Curse pronounced (Genesis 3:14,17)	No more curse (Revelation 22:3)
Death entered (Genesis 2:17; 3:19)	No more death (Revelation 21:4)
Sorrow (Genesis 3:17)	No more sorrow (Revelation 21:4)
"In the beginning" (Genesis 1:1)	"Finished" (Revelation 10:7)

Satan's Career

Satan, who appears as a serpent in the first book of the Bible (Genesis 3), is a central character in the affairs of men. In the last book of the Bible his final destiny is unfolded. The **downward falls** of Satan are described in the book of Revelation:

<p>WARNING:</p> <p>Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall!</p> <p>Proverbs 16:18 1Timothy 3:6</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A FALL TO THE EARTH (Revelation 12:9,12) This will take place in the middle of the tribulation. No longer will Satan have access to heaven as he did in Job chapters 1 and 2. 2. A FALL TO THE ABYSS OR BOTTOMLESS PIT (Revelation 20:1-3) This takes place at the second coming of Christ. 3. A FALL TO THE LAKE OF FIRE (Revelation 20:10). This takes place after the 1000 year kingdom.
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Why Prophecy?

Why has God taken the time to tell us about things to come? Why has He revealed to us things about the future? Is the book of Revelation given merely to satisfy man's curiosity about what lies ahead?

God gives us information about the future so that we might know how to live in the present! A right and correct understanding of prophecy should help us to live today!

The book of Revelation was originally sent to believers who lived in Asia Minor (notice the seven churches that John sent the book of Revelation to--Revelation 1:4). These believers were going through very difficult times. The Roman emperor Domitian was demanding that everyone bow down and worship him. The Christians who refused to do this were fiercely persecuted and many were put to death. Does the book of Revelation give any hope or encouragement to these people?

The book of Revelation describes a time of persecution far greater than any of the Roman persecutions. If God can help believers who are living during the great time of tribulation, then He is the same God who could help the early Christians! The book of Revelation shows that even though things will get very difficult on this earth, in the end there is **victory** for those who belong to Christ! No matter how things look, God is in control, and those who are on God's side cannot lose! God is never a loser, and neither are those who put their trust in Him!

Sign Language

The book of Revelation is filled with symbols, and for this reason many find it very hard to understand. Many of these symbols are explained right in the book. For example, what are the seven stars and the seven candlesticks or lampstands (Revelation 1:12,16)? The answer is found in Revelation 1:20:

What are the "waters" mentioned in Revelation 17:1? The answer is given in Revelation 17:15! We do not need to guess about these things because God has told us what the symbols mean!

Many of the symbols used are found in the Old Testament. To correctly understand the book of Revelation, we need to have a good understanding of the Old Testament, especially the book of Daniel. A person cannot understand the last book of the Bible apart from the other 65 books! God wants us to compare Scripture with Scripture. Here are just a few examples of how the Old Testament helps us to understand the book of Revelation:

1) _____	Revelation 11:14--two olive trees	A. Genesis 3:1,4,13-15 B. Genesis 37:9-10 C. Isaiah 65:17 D. Zechariah 4:3
2) _____	Revelation 12:1--twelve stars	
3) _____	Revelation 12:9--the serpent	
4) _____	Revelation 21:1--new heavens and new earth	

The Bible often explains itself!

The Worldwide Plagues

Our world has rejected God, rejected Christ, rejected the Bible and rejected truth. Because of this, our world is headed for judgment. The Lord Jesus spoke of a future day of trouble which would be the most difficult period in all of human history: "For then shall be great _____ (trouble), such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." One of the reasons this will be such a difficult time on earth is because men will face plagues and judgments sent from God.

The book of Revelation describes three series of judgments: 1) The Seven Seal Judgments (Revelation chapter 6), 2) The Seven Trumpet Judgments (Revelation chapters 8-9), 3) The Seven Vial or Bowl Judgments (Revelation chapters 15-16).

In the book of Exodus we learn about ten plagues or judgments that fell upon the land of Egypt. In the first plague, all the waters (including the waters of the Nile River) were turned to _____ (Exodus 7:20). The second plague involved an invasion of frogs as described in Exodus chapter 8:

1: And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2: And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs:

3: And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneadingtroughs:

4: And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

5: And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

[See Illustration on the next page]



[Illustration from *Bible Visuals*, Exodus Part 2]

This plague of frogs happened exactly as the Bible describes it. The Egyptians were plagued by frogs in enormous numbers, to the point where these amphibians were found in their bedrooms, in their ovens, etc. Why do we believe this? Because the text of the Bible says so! The text of Scripture is very clear about this plague and we take these statements literally. This plague really happened, just as described in the book of Exodus.

There were eight other plagues that happened in Egypt as described in Exodus 8-10. The last Egyptian plague was the killing of every firstborn son, including Pharaoh's son (Exodus 12:29-30). This final plague convinced Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go away from his land.

Let us compare the plagues of Egypt with the plagues described in Revelation:

The Plagues of Egypt	The Plagues During the Tribulation
Ten Plagues	Twenty-one Plagues (Seven Seals, Seven Trumpets, Seven Vials or Bowls)
Described in Exodus	Described in Revelation
Area Covered: the land of Egypt	Area Covered: the entire world
They happened just as described (history).	They will happen just as described (prophecy).
Judgment upon a stubborn ruler who refused to obey God.	Judgment upon an entire world who refused to believe and honor the living God.

The spectacular nature of the plagues described in Revelation can be seen by considering four of the plagues:

1. **The Fourth Seal Plague** (Revelation 6:8): "And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." *This passage indicates that one-fourth of the world's population will die.*

2. **The Sixth Trumpet Plague** (Revelation: 9:18): "By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." See also verse 15. *This passage indicates that one-third of the world's population will die.*

The implications from the Fourth Seal Plague and the Sixth Trumpet Plague are astounding when compared together. If one fourth of the world's population will die, and later one third will die, this means that the original population of the world will be reduced by one half, just by these two plagues alone!

This can be illustrated as follows:

Suppose you have an original population of eight blocks:



Reduce this population by one-fourth and six blocks will remain:



Reduce this population by one-third and four blocks will remain:



Therefore, your final population (four blocks) is only half of what you started with. The study of just these two terrible plagues helps us to understand why the Lord Jesus described the great tribulation as the most difficult time the earth will ever experience (Matthew 24:21).

3. The Second Trumpet Plague (Revelation 8):

8: And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;
 9: And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

Based on God's Word, we believe that one-third of the sea will become blood, one-third of the sea-creatures will die and one-third of the ships will be destroyed. We believe this because the text says so. A normal reading of this text leads to no other conclusion. We accept the text of the Bible at face value.

4. The Fourth Bowl Plague (Revelation 16):

8: And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.
 9: And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.

Here we have a horrifying description of global warming. This worldwide warming will not be caused by man, and will not be caused by carbon emissions. This plague will come from the hand of God. This plague will take place exactly as described, because we take the text of Scripture at face value. We take God at His Word.

There are many people, even those who claim to believe the Bible, who do not believe that the plagues described in the book of Revelation will be literally fulfilled. For example, preterists [those who believe that most prophecies have already been fulfilled] believe and teach that these plagues have already been fulfilled in or around 70 A.D. They believe that the great tribulation has already taken place! Of course, we know that these plagues have not been literally fulfilled in 70 A.D. or at any other time in past history. We know that there has never been a time when one-third of the sea became blood, one-third of the sea creatures died and one-third of the ships were destroyed. Since this has never happened, and since God cannot lie, then there must be a future fulfillment. Dispensationalists [those who seek to consistently interpret the Bible literally, to understand Scripture in its normal sense] believe that these judgments will take place in the coming tribulation period, a time which Jesus said will be the greatest time of trouble the world has ever known (Matt. 24:21).

Why is it that non-dispensationalists understand the plagues of Egypt literally, as having happened exactly as described, and yet they deny that the plagues described in Revelation will ever be fulfilled literally? Their position is very inconsistent.

An Open Scroll

The book of Daniel is the "Revelation of the Old Testament," the great prophetic book of the Old Testament. Many of its prophecies deal with the tribulation period and the second coming of Christ. Revelation speaks of these same subjects.

According to Daniel 12:9, the scroll which contained the book of Daniel was C _____ up and S _____! The people in Daniel's day could not fully understand Daniel's prophecies because they would not be fulfilled until the distant future. The scroll was closed up and sealed until **the time of the** _____ (Daniel 12:9)!

Is the same thing true about the book of Revelation? Is the book of Revelation a closed scroll? Are the things described in the book of Revelation going to happen in the distant future or are they going to begin happening shortly (compare Revelation 1:1)?

Read Revelation 22:10. Was John to seal the book or keep it open?

_____ Why? "For the time is _____"
 _____" (Revelation 22:10). Today the books of Daniel and Revelation are open books and books that should be understood by believers. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, "whosoever R _____ (the book of Daniel), let him U _____" (Matthew 24:15).

God's Outline of the Book



God has given us His own outline for the book of Revelation. It is found in Revelation 1:19 and it is made up of three parts:

JOHN WAS TO WRITE DOWN THREE THINGS:

1. "The things *WHICH THOU HAS SEEN*"
John's vision is described in Revelation 1.
2. "The things *WHICH ARE*"
This refers to the seven churches of Asia which were existing in John's day. These churches are described in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation.
3. "The things *WHICH SHALL BE HEREAFTER*"
This refers to the future events which are described in the book of Revelation, chapters 4-22 including the following:
 1. The time of tribulation--Revelation 4-19
 2. The second coming of Christ-Revelation 19
 3. The 1000 year kingdom-Revelation 20
 4. The new heaven and earth-Revelation 21-22

The following chart will help you to see at a glance the contents of the book of Revelation:

The Book of Revelation--A Prophetic Masterpiece

Jesus Christ revealed as the LORD of the churches (1:13)		Jesus Christ revealed as the LION over the nations (5:5)									Jesus Christ revealed as the LAMB of eternity (22:1)		
JOHN'S VISION OF CHRIST	THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA	GOD'S THRONE ROOM	Tribulation Judgments 1) SEALS (Chapter 6) 2) TRUMPETS (Chapters 8-9) 3) VIALS or BOWLS (Chapters 15-16)									ONE THOUSAND YEAR KINGDOM	THE NEW HEAVEN AND THE NEW EARTH (THE ETERNAL STATE)
			The Two Companies	The Little Book	The Two Witnesses	The Two Wonders or Signs	The Two Beasts	Angelic Announcements	Judgment on Babylon				
Chapter 1	2-3	4-5	7	10	11	12	13	14	17-18	19	20	21-22	
"The things which thou hast seen"	"The things which are"	"The things which shall be hereafter (in the future)"											



REVELATION 1:19

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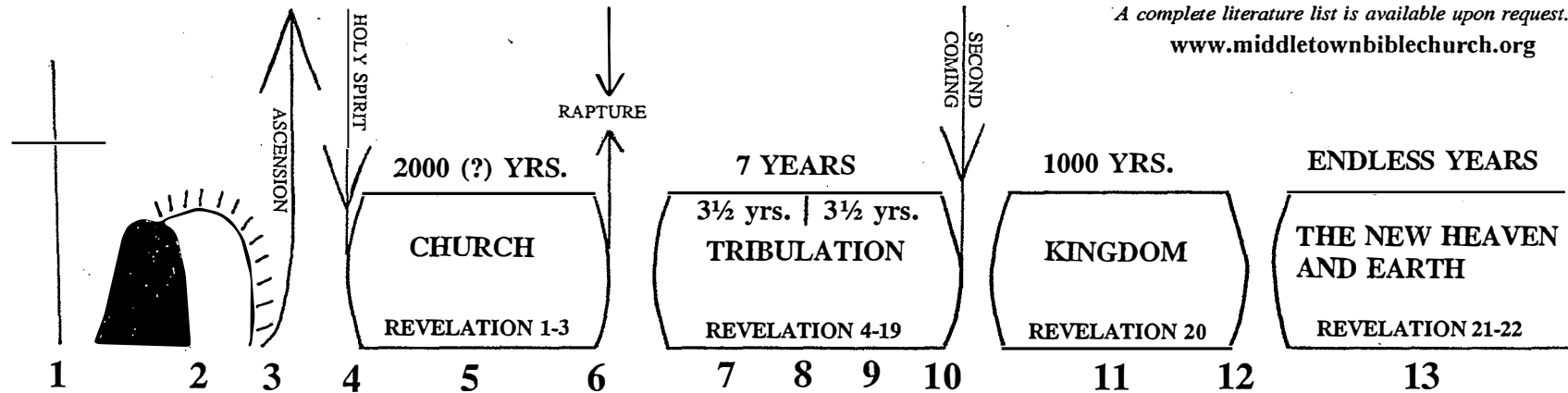
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A General Survey of Prophetic Events
 ("THINGS TO COME"--John 16:13)

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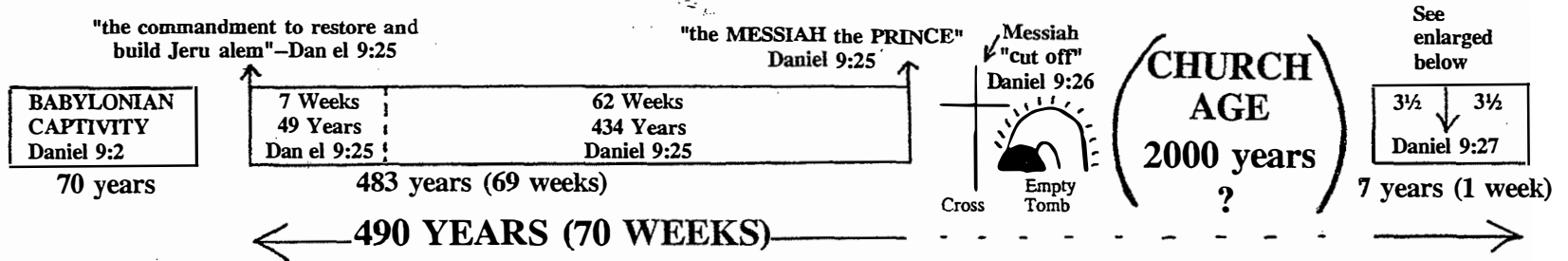


- 1** The death (crucifixion) of Christ: Dan. 9:26; Isa. ch.53; Ps.ch.22; Mt.ch.27; Mk.ch.15; Lk.ch.23; Jn. ch.19; Acts 2:23; Rom. 5:6-8; 1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; 5:21; Heb.ch.9-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2:24; 3:18; Rev. 1:5.
- 2** The resurrection of Christ: Ps. 16:10; Mt.ch.28; Mk.ch.16; Lk.ch.24; Jn.ch.20-21; Acts 2:24-32; 17:31; Rom. 4:25; 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:4-20; 2 Cor. 5:15.
- 3** The ascension of Christ (His return to heaven): Acts 1:9-11; Jn. 14:12,28; 16:5-7,16,28; 17:13; Lk. 24:51; Acts 1:2; Eph. 1:20-21; Heb. 9:24; 1 Tim. 3:16.
- 4** The coming of the Holy Spirit (the birthday of the church): Acts ch.2 (the day of Pentecost); Jn. 14:16-17,26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15; Lk. 24:49. How do we know that the church really began on the day of Pentecost? Compare Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:13 with Mt. 3:11; 16:18; Acts 1:5; 11:15-17.
- 5** The church age: Mt. 16:18; Acts 15:14; Rom. 12:3-8; 16:25-26; 1 Cor. 10:32; 12:12-18; Gal. 3:27-28; Eph. 2:14-22; 3:1-21; 4:11-16; Col. 1:25-27; 3:11; 1 Tim. 3:1-16; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rev. ch.2-3.

- 6** The rapture or catching up of the church (the first phase of the second coming of Christ): Jn.14:1-3; 1 Th. 4:13-18; 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:7-8; 15:51-53; Tit. 2:13; Phil. 1:6; 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1 Jn. 3:2; 2 Th. 2:7; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 22:20. The judgment seat of Christ also takes place at this time: 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 4:4-5; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 10:30-31; Jas. 5:7-9; 1 Pet. 5:4; 1 Th. 2:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:7; 1 Jn. 2:28.
- 7** The first half of the tribulation (3½ years): Mt. 24:4-12; Rev. 6:1-8; Rev. 11:3 (the ministry of the two witnesses); Dan. 9:27 (Israel in covenant relationship with the Antichrist).
- 8** Events that take place in the middle of the tribulation: a. Satan cast out of heaven (Rev. 12:7-12); b. the two witnesses killed (Rev. 11:3-13); c. the abomination of desolation (Dan. 9:27; Mt. 24:15-20; Rev. 13:1-18).
- 9** The second half of the tribulation (3½ years): Mt. 24:21-24; Dan. 12:1; Jer. 30:7; Rev. 11:2; 12:6,12-17. The Antichrist (the "man of sin"; the "beast") is described in these passages: Dan. 7:24-25; 8:23-25; 9:27; 11:36-37; 2 Th. 2:8-12; 1 Jn. 4:3; Rev. 6:2; 13:1-10; 19:20.

- 10** The revelation of Jesus Christ as King of Kings as Christ returns to the earth to establish His kingdom (the second phase of the second coming of Christ): Rev. 19:11-21; 2 Th. 1:7-10; Zech. 14:4-11; Mt. 24:26-31, 36-51. In Mt. 24:37-41 the unsaved are taken away in judgment and the saved remain on earth to enter the kingdom (compare Mt. 25:31-46 and Lk.17:34-37).
- 11** The millennial kingdom: Rev. 20:1-6; Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14,27; Isa. 2:1-5; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; Lk. 1:32-33; Jer. 23:5-8; 2 Sam. 7:4-17. The KINGDOM is one of the major themes of OT prophecy. "THY KINGDOM COME!"
- 12** The final rebellion: Rev. 20:7-10; cf. Rev. 20:1-3. The Great White Throne Judgment (for the unsaved): Rev. 20:11-15. The purging of the heavens and the earth by fire (2 Pet. 3:10-14; Rev. 20:11).
- 13** The new heaven and earth (the eternal state): Rev. ch. 21-22; 2 Pet. 3:13; 1 Cor. 15:24-28. "AND HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER!! HALLELUJAH!!!"

GOD'S HISTORY (PAST AND FUTURE) OF THE NATION ISRAEL (DANIEL 9:24-27)



The Hebrew word for "week" in Daniel 9:24-27 literally means "seven." "Seventy sevens are determined on thy people" (Daniel 9:24, etc.). The context demands that these "weeks" be understood as weeks of years and not weeks of days. Hence, each week contains seven years. Thus, the 70 weeks equals 490 years (70 weeks with each week consisting of 7 years).

- 1) 42 months = a time, times, ½ time (3½ years). See Revelation 11:2; 13:5 with Daniel 7:25; 12:7.
- 2) 1260 days = a time, times, ½ time (3½ years). See Revelation 12:6 with Revelation 12:14.
- 3) Therefore, 42 months must equal 1260 days (30 days per month; 360 days per prophetic year).

The terminal point for the 69 weeks was "unto the Messiah, the Prince" (Dan. 9:25). Many Bible teachers pinpoint the fulfillment of this as taking place at the triumphal entry when Israel's Messiah/Prince was officially presented to the nation (see Luke 19:42,44). The MESSIAH was "cut off" (violent death) and crucified AFTER the 69 weeks (Daniel 9:26). The covenant or treaty (between Antichrist and Israel) marks the beginning of the 70th week (Daniel 9:27).

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THE KING OF KINGS RETURNS

THE CHURCH "caught up"

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The catching up of the church (the RAPTURE)
John 14:1-3
1 Thess. 4:13-18
Titus 2:13
etc.

COVENANT CONFIRMED—Daniel 9:27

3½ YEARS

1,260 DAYS—the ministry of the 2 witnesses (Rev. 11:3)

"the beginning of sorrows" (beginning birthpangs)
Matt. 24:8; 1 Thess. 5:2-4

3½ YEARS

1,260 DAYS—woman in wilderness (Rev. 12:6, 14)
42 MONTHS—Gentile domination (Rev. 11:2)
42 MONTHS—the Beast's reign of terror (Rev. 13:5; Dan. 7:25)
"a time, times, and half a time" (3½ years) (Rev. 12:14; Dan. 7:25; 12:7)
"a short time" (3½ years, see Rev. 12:12)

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

"THE MIDST OF THE WEEK"
Daniel 9:27 (Matthew 24:15)

Matthew 24:21-22; Rev. 3:10;
Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1

Daniel 2:44
Daniel 7:22,27
Daniel 9:24
Zechariah 14:4-11
Matthew 24:26-31
2 Thessalonians 1:7-10
Revelation 19:11-21

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Daniel's 70th Week (7 years)
DANIEL 9:27

Enlarged from above