



“Since **you have kept my command to endure patiently**, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth”
(Revelation 3:10).

Jesus addressed each church of Revelation with an introduction accentuating one of his many triumphs and the reward that he would share with that church if they overcome and are victorious as he was. Of the Philadelphia church, he said, “These are **the words of him who is holy and true**, who holds the key of David. What he opens, no one can shut; and what he shuts, no one can open” (Revelation 3:7). Jesus Christ has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. The doors—the opportunities, the positions, the offices, the roles he awards to victorious Christians, nobody can prevent or take away. The victorious Christians of the Philadelphia church will be awarded opportunities beyond human imagination and nobody can stop or prevent this prophecy if these faithful Believers remain holy [set apart in service to God] and true [loyal, honest, truthful].

The central characteristic of this group of people is that they have little strength, and yet, they keep Jesus’ word and do not deny his name. The opening of the fifth seal triggered two thousand years of persecution. It continues in waves with a tsunami building on our near horizon. The force of hatred and opposition will tear the next wave away from the horizon during a time like no other on earth, nor ever will be again.

The first warning Jesus gave the disciples when responding to their question, “When will these things happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” was to take care that nobody mislead you and he added, “For many will come in My name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many” (Matthew 24:4-5).

There are many churches within Christianity all teaching different doctrines. Their primary unifying belief is that Jesus is the Messiah, their Savior, yet, they disagree on many interpretations of scripture. Jesus foresaw the Christian ministry claiming to be following Christ’s instructions, but their teachings mislead their congregation. Jesus warned the congregation against being misled. Five churches in Revelation were urged to repent and return to teaching the pure word of God. If they do not repent, their church will not be saved because the church that Christ marries is one without spot, wrinkle or blemish.

To the Philadelphia church, their strength is little. Their vulnerability is not that they are spiritually weak, but that they are a scattered people across the world who have accepted the sacrifice of Christ, received God's Holy Spirit and like the Bereans eagerly welcome the word of God and test the teachings. The love these people have for Jesus is demonstrated in that they will keep his word and will not deny his name during a time when everyone who claims to follow Christ will be hated. "And everyone will hate you because you are my followers" (Luke 21:17). Not only outside the family, but also within, they will be hated and betrayed. "You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and some of you will be put to death" (Luke 21:16). These scattered people will not receive any support, not from local churches, nor from their government, not even from within their own family. They will be an open target for Wickedness, and yet, with virtually no support, they will remain faithful to Jesus' command to endure patiently.

In response, Jesus has said, "**Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you.** No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not understand what his master is doing. But **I have called you friends, because everything I have learned from My Father I have made known to you**" (John 15:13-15).

These people are not following Jesus blindly; they are fully aware of the need for the command to endure patiently and suffer longer, possibly even die while waiting for Christ's return during extreme times, when people are awakening to their mistakes and need extra time to separate themselves from Wickedness.

Jesus said, "I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take your crown" (Revelation 3:11). What these people have is a deep love for Almighty God, the source of all life. They understand the great battle that began in the heavens and has filtered down to earth. They know they battle against rogue heavenly rulers, powers and authorities (Ephesians 6:12) and they are dressed in the armour of God. They test information and hold onto truth; they humbly strive to live God's way of righteousness and with all their enemies whether on earth or in heaven, they are swift to keep peace through God's word of truth, speaking respectfully, and living to give honor to God remembering that our Great Creator is watching and His grace is a precious gift to be protected and treasured.

In particular, the Apostle John identified the people who give and continue to give these faithful their greatest grief—the "Jews who claim to be Jews"—they claim to be God's law-abiding people and yet they treat their fellow God-fearing and God-serving brothers and sisters with disdain. They will lead attacks against them, thinking that they are doing the right thing.

Jesus said, "Blessed are you, **when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and CAST OUT YOUR NAME AS EVIL**, for the Son of man's sake" (Luke 6:22). These "Jews" of the synagogue of Satan will discredit and character assassinate faithful people.

“For you will be expelled from the synagogues, and the time is coming when **those who kill you will think they are doing a holy service for God**” (John 16:2).

While these religious people think they are justified by hating, discrediting, shaming and character assassinating other people, when Christ returns, they will learn otherwise.

“You who tremble at His word, hear the word of the LORD: **‘Your brothers** who hate and exclude you **because of My name** have said, ‘Let the LORD be glorified that we may see your joy!’ **But they will be put to shame**” (Isaiah 66:5). In addition, to the vulnerable and faithful people of the Philadelphia group, Jesus said, “I will make those who are of the synagogue of Satan, who claim to be Jews though they are not, but are liars—**I will make them come and fall down at your feet and acknowledge that I HAVE LOVED YOU**” (Revelation 3:9).

What possesses these “Jews” to attack fellow Believers and justify their cruel actions as a service to God, except that these “Jews” will accept for a time a different Savior.

With an alien arrival and the open display of miracles (Revelation 13:13), this prophecy can be easily understood. The glory of these supernatural beings, their promises and display of great power will deceive many. Their leader will have a brightness that is evident in the creation in heaven. “This is that the Sovereign LORD says: Because **you think you are wise, as wise as a god**, I am going to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of nations; they will draw their swords against your beauty and wisdom and **pierce your shining splendor**” (Ezekiel 28:7).

This rogue leader has a “shining splendor” and thinks he is “wise like a god”. His bold character resembles the boastful little horn of Daniel. “This horn had eyes like the eyes of a man and **a mouth that spoke boastfully...**” (Daniel 7:8b).

War will break out in heaven, if it hasn’t already begun. The covering over earth of stars and planets keep mankind from seeing into these heavens. Though we are not able to witness the great battles, God has given Daniel the story for us to understand and prepare.

After God gives ten kings their promised rulership (Revelation 17:12), another king rises, “different from the earlier ones; he will subdue three kings... Out of one of them came another horn, which started small but grew in power... It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them” (Daniel 7 24, 8:9-10).

From within this beastly coalition, three of the ten kings will be overthrown by a little ruler who will grow in power so strong that he will overthrow “some of the starry host” [other heavenly beings] and throw them down to earth and “trample on them”. This will be one of many alarming events that mankind will witness. The raw power of these spiritual giants—the rogue heavenly rulers, powers and principalities of Ephesians 6:12 will be terrifying as they battle among themselves.

This rebel will “set itself up **to be as great as the Prince of the host [Christ]**; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low” (Daniel 8:11). This heavenly ruler sets himself up to be as important as Jesus Christ—co-creator of everything in heaven and earth, while **Satan works to overthrow Almighty God** and boasts, “I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High**” (Isaiah 14:14).

This rebel was not created as a member of the family of God like the other sons of God in heaven; he is of a lesser stature, but he is given power from Satan. “In the latter part of their reign, when rebels have become completely wicked, a stern-faced king, **a master of intrigue**, will arise. He will become very strong, **but not by his own power**” (Daniel 8:23).

Jesus Christ is under attack in heaven by the same ruler given authority by Satan in the book of Revelation. “Men worshiped **the dragon** because **he had given authority to the beast**, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, ‘Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?’” (Revelation 13:4)

Daniel recorded battles raging against the kings of the North and the South. These are likely battles in heaven that have been raging for a long time that are mirrored down onto earth where these kings have authority.

The final ruler of the North will be a “**contemptible person who has not been given the honor of royalty**. He will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and **he will seize it through intrigue**” (Daniel 11:21). He is the same ruler described in Daniel 8:23—a master of intrigue.

When Satan and his coalition are thrown down to earth, their raw power will be felt with intensity and mankind with their combined military might will find themselves helpless. “He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does. **He will destroy the mighty men and the holy people**. He will cause deceit to prosper, and he will consider himself superior. When they feel secure, **he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes**” (Daniel 8:23-25). The only being capable of preparing an army and standing one-on-one against Jesus Christ with a hope of success is a spiritual heavenly ruler. This Antichrist is not mortal.

“He will oppose and **will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God**” (II Thessalonians 2:4). Jesus Christ is God and the Son of God. This rebel is attempting to overthrow Jesus Christ and take his position.

The battle of the Son of God and this rogue heavenly ruler will be witnessed by all of mankind on earth. The rebel will be destroyed “not by human power” (Daniel 8:25b). It will be God’s all mighty power given to Jesus Christ that will take him down. Then, the shining splendor of this ruler will be tarnished and made dull, pocketed with dints and holes, cracks and ugly scratches. God Almighty will then respond, “Will you then say, ‘I am a god,’ in the presence of those who kill you?” (Ezekiel 28:9a) God will mortalize this rebel and sentence him. “You will be but a man,

not a god, in the hands of those who slay you [he will be easy to kill—no longer eternal]. You will die the death of the uncircumcised [the wicked] at the hands of foreigners [those you do not know]" (Ezekiel 28:9b-10).

If this rebel were merely a mortal, Daniel would not have written, "Yet he will be destroyed, **but not by human power**" (Daniel 8:25b). Mortal man does not understand the disdain the rogue heavenly rulers, powers and authorities have towards mankind on earth: human weaknesses, decaying bodies, sicknesses, temporary life and all of the many limitations associated with mortality. That is why God mortalizes these rogue arrogant rulers, powers and authorities. He will reduce them into the form they despise the most. He will bring them down to the lowest of all creation. Before they die, they will realize that they were never invincible and God the Father reigns supreme.

During the time this rebel rules on earth, there will be those who will join in with the Jewish fervor to worship someone who comes **in his OWN name** (John 5:44), someone outside of the only God—their God of Israel. All of these will team up with everyone worshiping Satan and together, they will persecute all those who hold to the testimony of Jesus and the commandments of God. This will be an extremely stressful time for the faithful because deception will cover the earth and root itself in every thought of man. The command to patiently endure will become fully understood and the reward for obeying this command will be well deserved.

This rebel, this Antichrist, this Assyrian—the little horn "will cause deceit to prosper" (Daniel 8:25a) and false saviors and false prophets "will appear and **perform great signs and wonders to deceive**, if possible, even the elect" (Matthew 24:24).

This rebel is the "son of perdition" (II Thessalonians 2:3) challenging the Son of God. He will be a chip off the old block and will work in the same manner as his father. "The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders **that serve the lie**, and with **every wicked deception directed against those who are perishing**, because **they refused the love of the truth that would have saved them**" (II Thessalonians 2:9-10).

It is especially during this time that Jesus' command to endure patiently becomes critical. Punishment from God Almighty will go out. "If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed" (Revelation 13:10). God will punish and purge the unrepentant people of 21st century Israel. The faithful will not choose physical life over their spiritual salvation. Those who remain alive, Jesus has promised, "Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth" (Revelation 3:10).

Those who live through the horrors of persecution and witness the terrible suffering of the faithful, again Jesus reminds them, "**This calls for patient endurance on the part of the saints**

who obey God's commandments and remain faithful to Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). More people will die, but not these people who have suffered terribly, but now a **repenting group** of people. "Then I heard a voice from heaven say, 'Write: **Blessed are the dead who die in the LORD from now on.**' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them'" (Revelation 14:13).

So much death, so much trouble and horror will grip the earth during the Great Tribulation. Above all, obedience to God and holding tightly onto the testimony of Jesus during Satan's cruel and merciless attacks will earn the faithful a great reward. The honor the people of the Philadelphia church will receive will be glorious. To "him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name" (Revelation 3:12). The significance of a name is acknowledging the authority to name and having the three most prestigious names placarded on these people is the greatest honor of all creation in both heaven and on earth. It is a medal of honor; it showcases the work of God's hands, His grace and glory through them.

The faithful people commanded to endure patiently during the darkest days to come will receive a rich welcome in heaven (II Peter 1:11) by the remaining righteous creation in heaven, Jesus Christ their Savior and their enduring Father—God Almighty, the source of all life, righteousness and love.

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