



Victory over the Beast

Over his Image, Over his Mark,
and Over the Number of his Name

Revelation 15:2

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Preface

The movie *The Late Great Planet Earth* (1979) was based on a book by Hal Lindsey, which featured a body of teaching known as dispensationalism. The movie's gross earnings were almost \$20,000,000, and although some of the events were in accordance with Bible teachings, some were not.

Dispensationalism was formed in the 19th century by John Nelson Darby, a leader in the Plymouth Brethren movement. His ideas became the basis for this theology.

In 1909, Cyrus Scofield, a follower of Darby, produced the Scofield Reference Bible, which has scripture references in its margins to display dispensational beliefs. In 1924, Lewis Sperry Chafer, a follower of Scofield, founded Dallas Theological Seminary and put together a seminary faculty that became famous for the promotion of dispensationalism: Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord (Chafer's successor), Dwight Pentecost, and others. Dr. David Jeremiah, a well-known T.V. pastor who produces prophetic books on this subject, was a student of Dr. Pentecost.

While the history of dispensationalism looks impressive, many of its teachings contradict scripture. For example, dispensationalism teaches that animal sacrifices will be offered in a new Jewish temple in commemoration to God. This contradicts Hebrews chapter 10 and 1 Corinthians 3:16.

According to Bible expositor Dr. John MacArthur, if you find one prophecy in the Bible that is not true, you might as well as throw the Bible away (*"The Miraculous Jesus" from the sermon, series "Is the Bible Reliable"*). [Note: Dr. MacArthur is also a believer in dispensationalism.]

However, if this is true about Bible prophecy, that it separates the true God from false prophets (*because only the true God knows the future*), how much more important is it to use biblical methods to determine the meaning of prophetic Scripture? By the term "biblical methods," I am referring primarily to the comparison of Scripture with Scripture (1 Corinthians 2:13; Acts 17:10-11).

Although this is not as sensational as people randomly disappearing on public streets, the picture here is a lot more challenging and the foe a lot more formidable. Instead of waiting for the appearance of a George Soros-like figure in Jerusalem, we find ourselves face to face with Satan in our homes, with our families, holding hands with our children, in all our entertainment, employment, and on all our electronic devices where he is much harder to avoid and reject.

The need to reexamine the popular teachings on end times speaks for itself. The potential for error is great, and the consequences are fatal.

Michael Burris, 2024

Why Read This Book?

Most people do not know that there is a beast, and most in the Church, due to popular teachings, do not see what the beast is doing today.

Although there may be more appealing subjects, the prophecies of the beast are the revelation of Jesus Christ (*Revelation 1:1*), and these prophecies provide the wisdom and direction needed for the victory of the Church. These prophecies reveal the enemy of God, what he really looks like and how he operates. They reveal the challenges and the sophisticated attacks God's people will face, as well as the components to be used in the ultimate prevailing of God's people.

“And upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (*Matthew 16:18*)

The instructions in these prophecies are vital. The Apostle John says:

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” (*Revelation 1:3*)

These prophecies are a warning of what God has planned, and a knowledge of what God has provided for the victory of His people.

Bible prophecies prove that God controls the world, which is why prophecies are so often disputed or twisted. Proper interpretations are needed to prevent misleading because when properly understood, Bible prophecies reveal the glory of God and result in the instruction He desires for His people. The importance of accurately interpreting the Bible cannot be underestimated.

Although God works in mysterious ways, He often shows His wisdom, power, mercy, and compassion in the decisions He reveals to us. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in the great love He expressed when He sent His only Son into the world, Jesus Christ (*John 3:16-21*).

The knowledge of God, therefore, is the most valuable treasure in life (*in fact, it is life*), and the knowledge of what God has decreed is a knowledge of the future.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”

(Romans 11:33-36)

Introduction

Most Bible passages are literal and have no meanings other than what is plainly written. However, some Bible passages require a deeper investigation. This is especially true in the case of Bible parables and prophecies.

In the parable of the sower, for example (Mark chapter 4), the sower's seed represents the Word of God, the fowls of the air represent Satan, the stony ground represents a lack of understanding, the thorns represent those choked by the cares of this world, and the good ground represents those who hear the Word of God with a good heart.

When Jesus' disciples initially asked to know the meaning of this parable, Jesus said to them: "Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?"(Mark 4:13) In other words, said Jesus, "you need to think more deeply about what I say."

Jesus also corrected His disciples at length when He told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16: 11-12). They thought it was because they forgot to bring bread, but Jesus said that He was talking about the teaching of the Pharisees.

Jesus is our example and teacher on how we should regard, approach, and interpret God's Word, and we often see bad results from those who do not follow Him in these areas.

The Bible must also be approached with a prayerful mind. Sometimes we can just let God speak to us in our present state, however, there are times when we need to search for a proper understanding and application of its truth.

The investigation of a Bible passage might include:

- an examination of the original language words and grammar
- the context and culture in which they were written
- a comparison of other related Bible passages
- a consideration of metaphorical meaning
- a consideration of what the Spirit of God has revealed to others gifted to teach in the Church

Fortunately, there are many study Bibles today that employ these methods and enable individual efforts. The Spirit of God is always at work to bless those who are seeking God through the study of His Word.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15)

1. Who Is the Beast?

The Beast in Daniel

The Bible's description of the beast begins in the writings of Daniel. After witnessing as a teenager the destruction of his people in 600 BC, Daniel was taken into slavery in Babylon. It is unusual that such vivid pictures of future events should rise from such a lowly person. However, Daniel's prophecies have shown a stunning display of accuracy over the years.

An example of this came in 332 BC when Alexander the great came against Jerusalem. According to the historian Josephus, Jaddus the high priest showed Alexander the book of Daniel and the prophecies that were made about him. Alexander, due also to a dream he had the previous night, left Jerusalem without taxing them or changing their laws (*"Jewish Antiquities,"* Flavius Josephus).

Another example of this came in the fourth century when a philosopher named Phorphry claimed that Daniel's book was false because the prophecies about Antiochus Epiphanes were too accurate. He reasoned that it was probably written by someone who was present at the time. (*Jerome's Commentary on Daniel*, translated by Gleason L. Archer, p.15).

Daniel had a relationship with God, and God gave him special talents that made him indispensable to the people he served. Daniel, as a result, was able to survive the captivity and become a powerful witness of God.

There are many prophecies in Daniel that require a knowledge of world history to understand their application and fulfillment. Daniel's prophecies about the beast, however, connect with the visions in the book of Revelation.

The majority of Daniel's visions of the beast are in Daniel chapter 7. In verse 1, Daniel explains how these visions came to him.

“In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.” (*Daniel 7:1*)

In verses 3-4, Daniel describes the beasts that he saw.

“And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. 4 The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.” (*Daniel 7:3-4*)

In verses 5-6, the second beast was like a bear with three ribs in its teeth, and it was told to devour much flesh (*verse 5*). The third beast was like a leopard which had four wings, four heads, and dominion was given to it (*verse 6*). The fourth beast, however, was different. It was dreadful, and very strong. It had teeth like iron, ten horns, and was very destructive (*verse 7*). Within its ten horns, a little horn grew that had eyes and a profane mouth (*verse 8*).

After his vision of the Son of Man (*verses 13-18*), Daniel says that the little horn made war with the saints and prevailed until the return of Christ (*verses 20-22*). It will devour the whole earth, treading it down and breaking it in pieces (*verse 23*).

The ten horns are kingdoms (*verse 24*), and the little horn's "wearing out the saints" and "changing times and laws" (to benefit himself) are powers given to him (*verses 25-26*).

The Beast in Revelation

Daniel's prophecies of the fourth beast connect with John's prophecies in the book of Revelation. In Revelation chapter 12, the beast is referred to as the "dragon" having seven heads and ten horns, and the seven heads have crowns (symbols of their successes, *verse 3*). The dragon's tail gathers and throws a third of the stars down to earth (this is probably other angels), and then he tries to eat the child of a woman giving birth (*verse 4*).

The woman in child birth is described in Revelation 12:1 as a "great wonder in heaven." She is clothed with the sun, has the moon under her feet, and wearing a crown of twelve stars. She represents Mary, the mother of Christ, the Church, and God's redemptive work in the nation of Israel (*Genesis 3:15*, the promise of the woman's seed to crush the serpent's head is in view). The woman then escapes the dragon and gives birth to Christ [*This account reflects the adversities in Matthew chapter 2 and Luke chapters 1-2.*]

Victory follows as the dragon who deceived the world, is cast out of heaven and is no longer able to accuse the saints (*Job chapters 1-2*).

“I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” (*Luke 10:18*)

The dragon is unsuccessful against the woman (*verses 13-16*), goes in vengeance to make war with her seed - those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (*verse 17; 1 Peter 5:8*) The saints overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by their testimony of Christ (*Revelation 12:11*).

In chapter 13 of Revelation, we see another prophecy similar to Daniel's. A beast rises out of the sea with the name of blasphemy on its seven heads [” blasphemy” is speech against God.] Images of the leopard and bear appear; however, this beast has bear's feet and a lion's mouth. It also has the same horns and heads as the red dragon (*Revelation 12:3*) and the same power and authority.

Worse, however, is that one of its heads, which had been fatally wounded, is now healed (a reference to Genesis 3:15), which signals the close of the Church's existence on earth. The dragon is now worshiped, a blasphemous mouth is given to him (*verse 5*), and he is to continue until the return of Christ (the 42 months refers to the duration of the Church on earth, Revelation 11:2-3). His blasphemy makes war against the saints (*verse 7*), and his dominion is global. All whose

names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life will worship him.

The False Prophet

Another beast rises out of the earth who has horns like a lamb and speaks like a dragon (*verse 11*). He exercises the powers of the dragon and causes people to worship the beast whose wound was healed (*verse 12*). He also does miracles to deceive people (*verse 13-14*).

This beast also has power to give life. He tells people to make an image of the dragon and then gives life to the image, making it speak. He then uses the image to command the murder of anyone who will not worship his image (*verse 15*).

This beast then mandates that everyone (regardless of status) receive a mark. This mark has to be in the right hand or on the forehead. No business can be transacted without it. The individual must also have the name of the beast or number of his name (*verse 17*).

On the following page, the original Greek language and English translations are provided for further study. Note the phrase "number for man" or "number of man" with the article at "number" ("*Greek Grammer Beyond the Basics*," Wallace, p233).

Revelation 13:16:

ὧδε ἡ σοφία ἐστὶν ὁ ἔχων
here wisdom is let him who has

νοῦν ψηφισάτω τὸν ἀριθμὸν
understanding count the number

τοῦ θηρίου ἀριθμὸς γὰρ ἀνθρώπου
of the beast number for of man

ἐστὶν καὶ ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτοῦ χξς
it is and number his 666

The Apostles Peter and Paul were martyred under the Ceasar Nero, *and* the number “666” (or χξς in Greek) spells the name of Kaiser Nero when written in Hebrew:

קסר נרון, “Kaiser Nero” 306 + 360 = 666 (“ן” is ”נ”)
[60 = ס , 100 = ק , 50 = נ , 6 = ו , 200 = ר]

Note the warning of the third angel in Revelation 14:9-10:
“If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”

The Scarlet-Colored Whore

The scarlet-colored whore in Revelation chapter 17 sits on many waters, which represents multitudes of people. She is carried by the beast with ten horns (*verse 7*), who at some point will turn and destroy her (*verse 16*), because God has pronounced judgment on her (*verse 17*).

Sitting on the beast with ten horns and seven heads and having the names of blasphemy, she is decked with gold, pearls, and precious stones, and has a golden cup full of “abominations and filthiness” (*verse 4*). On her forehead is written, “Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth” (*verse 5*).

The woman has great powers of allurement, and is also drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. The fate of the whore is detailed in Revelation chapter 18.

The Bottomless Pit

In verse 8 of Revelation 17, we see the release of the beast from the bottomless pit. The phrase, “*the beast that was, and is not, and yet is*” emphasizes his appearance of victory over God’s judgment. He is so compelling that only those whose names are written in the Book of Life will not worship him (see 2Thessalonians 2:11, “strong delusion.”)

Like the riddle about the number of the beast (*page 6*), we now have another riddle about the whore.

9 And here is the mind which hath wisdom.

The seven heads are seven mountains,
on which the woman sitteth.

10 And there are seven kings:
five are fallen, and one is,
and the other is not yet come;
and when he cometh,
he must continue a short space.

11 And the beast that was, and is not,
even he is the eighth, and is of the seven,
and goeth into perdition.

12 And the ten horns which thou sawest
are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet;
but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13 These have one mind, and shall give
their power and strength unto the beast.

(Revelation 17:9-13)

The city of Rome sits on seven hills, and another historical similarity is seen in the succession of Roman emperors during this period. However, this passage also refers to all the empires of the beast, including those to come (“which have received no kingdom as yet,” verse 12).

The one-hour periods with the beast are symbolic of the power, wealth, and authority they will receive from him to be manifested in the times of their actual reigns. Certain characteristics, as a result, may be observed as they repeat in world history.

Satan told Jesus that all the kingdoms of the world had been given to him (Luke 4:6). Outside of Christ, all the kingdoms of the world unite in satan (*Revelation 17:13*).

2. Other Names of Satan

John’s Antichrist

The name “Antichrist” is the Apostle John’s description of Satan (the beast). John uses this term five times in four verses.

In 1 John 2:18, the Antichrist is foretold, and the increase of his following is an indication of the end.

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”

In 1 John 2:22, it is the Antichrist who denies the deity of Jesus Christ.

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ: He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”

In 1 John 4:3, it is the spirit of Antichrist to come.

“And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

In 2 John 1:7, antichrists are described as deceivers.

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”

Paul's Man of Sin

The “man of sin” is the Apostle Paul's description of Satan. “Son of perdition” is also a term Paul uses. The teachings of Paul on the actions of the beast near the end of time are detailed in several passages.

In 2Thessalonians 2:3-4 Paul writes:

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“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (*2 Thessalonians 2:3-4*)

This passage describes a massive falling away from Christ and a “man of sin” who will sit in God’s temple. The identity of this “man of sin” may be explained by a comparison of other “man” statements by Paul:

- 2 Timothy 3:17 - Paul’s “man of God” is a “type” of man.
- Ephesians 4:13 - The Church is to become a “perfect man.”
- Colossians 3:9-10 - We are to put off the “old man”
(see also Ephesians 4:22; Romans 6:6)
- Ephesians 4:24 - We are to and put on the “new man.”
- Ephesians 2:15 - Jew and Gentile become “one new man.”

(Note: Paul’s “revealing of the man of sin” is similar to Paul’s “manifestation of the Sons of God” in Romans 8:19).

The “man of sin” described by Paul is a “type of man.” The marks of the beast, in light of Exodus 13:16, Deuteronomy 6:8, and 11:8, refer to those who display Satan’s character. There will be a “coming out” of such people, and in probably the most unexpected and influential places.

The temple where the “man of sin” will sit is also defined by Paul. In 1 Corinthians 3:16, Paul says that the Church is the temple of God.

“And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

In Ephesians 2, Paul also says:

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;
20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;
21 in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

(Ephesians 2:19-22)

The temple of God is distinguished by His presence among His people. This temple is not to be built in the future and use animal sacrifices (*Hebrews 10:5*). It is here now standing on the blood of Jesus Christ, its cornerstone (*Ephesians 2:20*).

When unleashed, Satan will control the Church. This will mostly likely begin in the seminaries. God is the only restraint. In 2 Thessalonians 2:7, Paul says:

”For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.“

3. Satan's Bind and Release

The Binding of Satan

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound...”

(Isaiah 61:1)

Jesus quoted this as He was preaching in a local synagogue (*Luke 4:17-19*). The phrases “*liberty to the captives*” and “*the opening of the prison to them that are bound*” reveal the strength of Satan's hold on mankind.

In Matthew 12:28-29, Jesus addressed this in another way: “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. 29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.”

The “captivity” of Satan is seen in every activity that keeps people from God. Often he is like an innocuous, orderless gas whose fumes subtly addict. His work of suppressing and quenching faith Christ, however, is global and fatal.

In another beautiful description of our Lord's ministry, Paul says:

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.” (*Ephesians 4:7-8*)

Here Paul quotes Psalm 68:18 to show that Christ frees us from the “captivity” of Satan to be “captive” to Himself. Jesus takes His people “captive” and also gives us gifts, which are abilities and opportunities for service in His Church.

“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” (*John 15:16*)

Our freedom from the captivity of Satan is proven by our struggle against him. In Ephesians 6:10-12, Paul writes:

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

In another important passage Paul says:

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty
through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5 Casting
down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself
against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every
thought to the obedience of Christ.” (*2 Corinthians 10:3-5*)

Paul is speaking here about our inward fight against Satan
which begins when we receive the Holy Spirit.

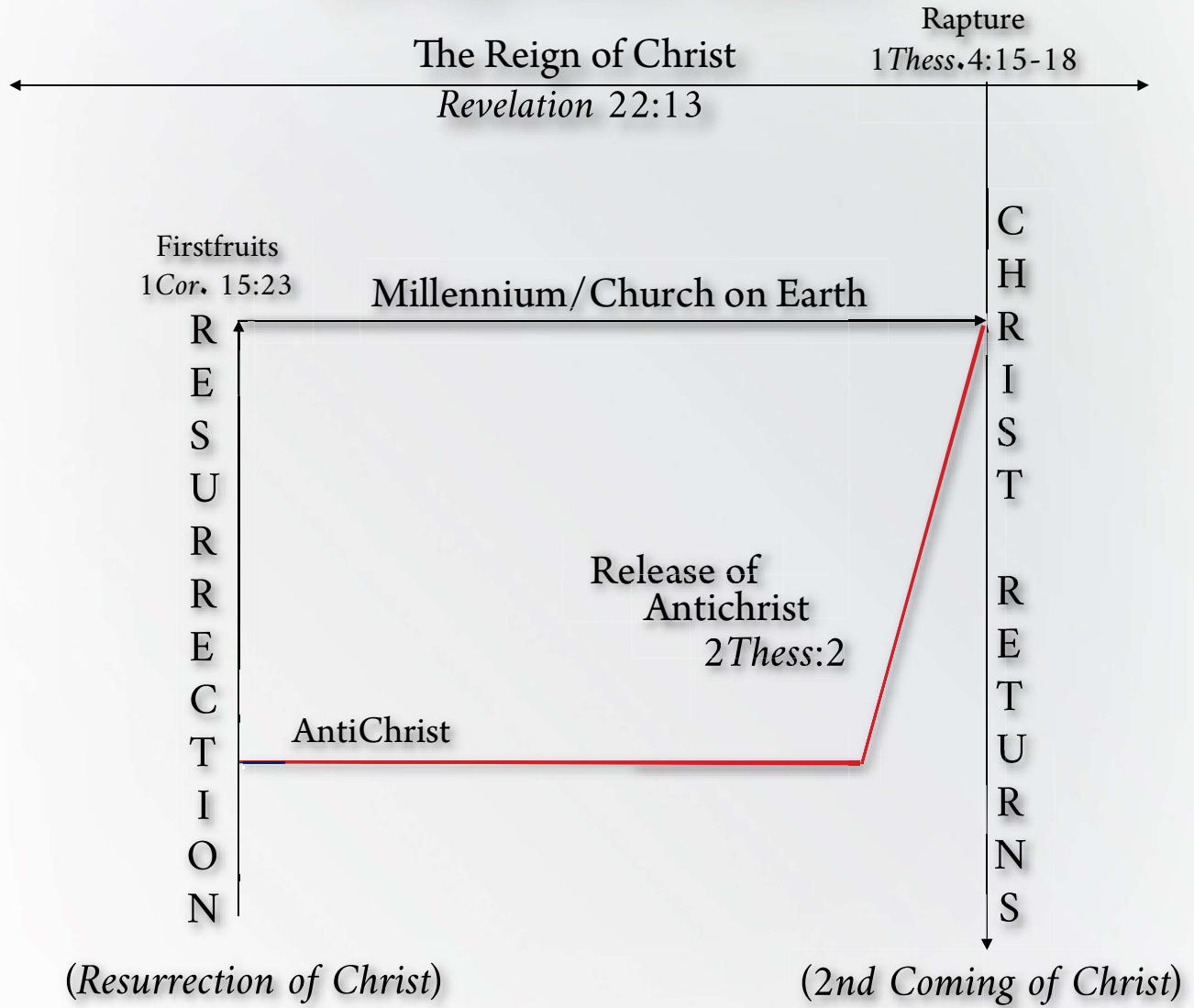
Jesus binds Satan for the saving of souls and the building
of His Church. The time in which He exercises this power
is called the “age” or “duration” of the Church. This is also
called the “millennium” in reference to the thousand year
period mentioned in Revelation 20.

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key
of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he
laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil,
and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him
into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon
him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the
thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be
loosed a little season.”

(Revelation 20:1-3)

The millennium refers to the Church on earth, and in some
verses the Church in heaven as a whole. The period of the
Church on earth is also mentioned in other Bible prophecies.

The Age of the Church



Other Bible Prophecies of the Church Age

“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.” (1260 days = 42 months)

(Revelation 11:3)

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” (1260 days = 42 months)

(Revelation 12:6)

“And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” *(Revelation 20:2-6)*

Here in this grand passage we have all the saints (past and present) who have been victoriously resurrected in Christ.

The one thousand year reign in this passage refers to the whole Church, including it's union with all the saints (*Hebrews 12:22-24*), and it's duration on earth. ("The Book of Revelation" NIGTC, Beale, p.1753, "*Is One Thousand Years Literal or Figurative?*") [*See also Revelation 14:20; 9:16 on the figurative and indefinite use of "xilas," and see page v of this book.*]

· "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (*Daniel 9:24 - 27*)

Christ confirmed the covenant for one week, and in the middle of the week caused sacrifice to cease. This perhaps represents the Old and New Testaments leaving three and a half days as a reference to the New Testament period (*verse 27*).

In these verses, note the phrase “*time and times and half a time*” (or the “*dividing of time*”). These also may refer to the duration of the Church on earth.

”And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” (*Revelation 12:14*)

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” (*Daniel 7:24-25*)

“And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.” (*Daniel 12:7*)

The Release of Satan

- Revelation 20:7-8 vividly describes the release of Satan at the expiration of the Church age.

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and
• Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.”

The name “Gog” is believed to mean “mountain.” It is symbolic of Satan’s kingdom. Ezekiel chapters 37-38 expresses the judgment of God upon Gog as he comes against Israel. However, in Revelation 20:8-9, Gog and Magog gather in battle against the saints or the Church.

This war against the saints is also described in Revelation 16:16 in a place called “Armageddon.”

“And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

Armageddon is “Megiddo” in Hebrew, a place where Israel often fought against its enemies.

Other prophecies on the release of Satan include:

- Daniel 7:7-8; 19-25 - the fourth beast
- Revelation 13:3-8 - the beast with the wound that healed

- 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 - the revealing of the “man of sin.”
- 1 John 2:18 - the coming of the antichrist.
- 1 Timothy 4:1-3 - a departure from the faith.
- 2 Timothy 3:1-3 - perilous times shall come.
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4 - no desire for sound teaching.
- Matthew 24:4-13; 23-24 - persecution and false prophets.

4. The Great Prophecy of Jesus

Matthew 24

The prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24 resulted from three questions asked by His disciples in response to His comments about the destruction of the Jewish temple.

[Note: Dispensationalism overlooks question 3 to create a separation between the rapture and the end of the world.]

1. Regarding the temple they asked, “Tell us, when shall these things be?”
2. Regarding His second coming they asked, “and what shall be the sign of thy coming,”
3. They also asked, “And of the end of the world?”

As He prepares to answer, Jesus gives an overview of the Church’s future (verses 4-14). In verses 15-22, He answers the first question and refers to “the abomination of desolation” mentioned in Daniel 9:27.

The Abomination of Desolation

“For the overspreading of abominations
he shall make it desolate.”

(Daniel 9:27)

The word “abomination” means filthy, and it refers to offering pagan sacrifices in the Jewish temple to desecrate it or make it desolate. This was done by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the 2nd century. However, Jesus applied this to the Jews in regard to their sins, and the actions that God would take against them (*Luke 21:22*) to desolate the city and the temple.

In a horrific fulfillment, the Jewish temple was destroyed in less than forty years after they crucified Jesus. Jewish zealots attempted to assassinate the caesar Vespasian. He responded by sending the Roman army to destroy them.

The attack began around the celebration of Passover. Many Jews were already enroute to Jerusalem, but most fled there believing that the city was strong enough to withstand the army. The Romans, instead of entering the city upon their arrival, camped around it and cut off the food and water supply. After four months, they entered the city, killed the remaining people and burned down the temple (*Book of the Wars IV, Josephus*).

The Church’s headquarters was in Jerusalem, and they met at the temple daily (*Acts 5:42; 6:7; 21:20*). The “shortening of days” (*verse 22*) may refer to the Church’s length of stay in Jerusalem since it had to leave there to survive the attack.

Just prior to the invasion, the Church relocated to a city called Pella in Perea and escaped ("*The Last Siege of The Jews After Christ*" Eusebius, chapter 5).

The Rapture and Return of Christ

In verses 23-28, Jesus continues to elaborate on the duration of the Church, and in verses 29-31 He gives a description of His return:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

(Matthew 24:29-31)

As stated, the rapture of the Church will occur at the return of Christ. It will be visible to all people. 1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17 also says,

“16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

5. Does the Beast Speak Today?

Violence and Death

The little horn speaking great things (Dan.7:8) sounds like the music blasted by my neighbor. Today's music is filled with enough profanity to saturate all the labels on the seven heads of the beast. People today are immersed in profanity. Along with the music industry, the movie industry jam-packs the most extreme scenarios to scream these words which help escalate crime and abuse in society.

The beast also tries to bring us under the judgment of God. One shocking example of this was the AIDS crisis in the early 80's. It sprang from the bathhouses in San Francisco. 88 million have been infected and perhaps more have died. The disease killed almost all who came in contact with it, and laws were even implemented to allow those infected not to reveal it to their care givers.

With the exception of the bubonic plague, the AIDS crisis was the worst since the flood of Noah (the covid virus has killed 7 million). In light of Sodom and Gomorrah (*Genesis 13-19*), how can anyone not consider the judgment of God? And yet, the U.S. government is currently seeking to promote the "transgendering" of as many young children as possible in public schools all over the world.

"...he shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces" (*Daniel 7:23*).

Government

Governments today reflect the beast in a number of ways. Their departments are becoming increasingly weaponized against its citizens in the extraction of taxes and silencing of adverse public opinion.

The legislation of lawlessness rises as those who publicly stand for morality become targets of prosecutors and news networks. Thankfully, there are well meaning people in government. However, the government as a whole appears to increasingly resemble the heads and horns of the beast with sharp teeth and claws.

Our friendly, local news people who are so easy to like and identify with, tell us the truth about the weather and local events. However, matters proposed by the government are subtly introduced and promoted in the most persuasive ways. The agenda of the beast is made to look reasonable and positive. It is presented with the most glowing reports that generate feelings of happiness, and such reports often appear as an oasis after the inner city crime blog.

Such messaging, however, has been crafted by university trained journalists and strategists, whose sole purpose is to persuade by twisting narratives. This is also how politicians get elected and stay in office. The deceptions of news networks often prevent majority voting on issues or people that support the Bible.

False Teachers

The beast with horns like a lamb in Rev.13:11 is also the false prophet in Rev. 20:10. As a result of his deceptions, many do not know they are at war with the beast, and that his goal is to destroy them. Hype, half truths, false miracles, peer pressure, and financial gain lead to what is probably best described as an “imaginary christianity” (“having the form but not the power,” *2Tim.3:5*). However, under the deceptions of the beast, even the true Church supports him in various ways.

The need for daily Spirit filled exhortation has never been greater. However, as I write, a number of well known pastors are in the process of being removed from their pulpits for past indiscretions. Also, more pastors are now exposing their congregations to teachers that undermine the integrity of the Bible, and many Christian colleges employ teachers who deny the Bible. In the New Testament, the exhortations and warnings about false teachers are drastic (*Jude 1; Mt.24:5;24; 2Pet.2:1*). Many pastors persist, however, because they themselves have also become victims of the beast.

Persecution

There is more martyrdom today than in the days of the apostles. In the last ten years, 50,000 has been estimated in Africa (due to groups like the Boko Haram and the Fulani militants), and others also in the middle east and North Korea.

More recently, the U.S. under president Biden has required other nations to accept LGBT values as a condition to engage in trade. This was recently negotiated in a \$55 billion pledge to Africa, and the nations of Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia ("VP Kamala Harris' visit to Africa," Brookings.Edu). Little has been done to stop the murder of Christians.

Materialism

In the U.S., Europe, and other parts of the world, the war against christianity is not so much physical as it is in materialism. Although persecution still exists, the war is now with a materialistic culture (*Ezekiel 16:49*).

The scarlet beast represents a global market under intense pressure to hold the minds of its customers. This "market" demands a media that addicts, and commercials designed to incite the most innate passions. One can hardly look at any media today without seeing something within a short period that captivates or entices. Most Christians don't believe they worship the beast, however, the media of the beast increases one's love for the world and quenches the Spirit(*1 Jn.2:15*).

There are over 2 billion Christians in the world, and yet laws against Christianity have been enacted and more are on the way. In places without physical persecution, the Church has become weak. The Church is a lot more willing to compromise and rationalize than fight. The beast will prevail against the Church (*Revelation 11:7; 13:7*).

6. Victory over the Beast

The First Resurrection

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

(Revelation 20:4-6)

The participants of the first resurrection overcome the beast, the second death, and reign with Christ for eternity. What is the first resurrection? According to the New Testament, the first resurrection is experienced with our new birth in Christ, and it is the only resurrection that can be experienced on earth prior the second death.

“Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

(Romans 6:4)

Romans 6:4 compares a believer's newness of life with the resurrection of Christ. In Romans 6:5 Paul adds:

“For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

The likeness of Christ's death in these passages refers to the believer's renunciation of the world, which also refers to a renunciation of the beast. The ways of the world outlined in 1 John 2:16 may be likened to the marks of the beast.

“For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

The marks of the beast are also seen in Galatians 5:19-21:

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

The need of a believer's resurrection in this life is also expressed in Colossians 2:12:

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

The believer's victory over the beast is the believer's resurrection to a new life in Christ, where the "old man" is put away and the "new man" is put on and renewed daily in the knowledge of Christ (*Colossians 3:9-10*). Paul also adds:

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness".

(Ephesians 4:22-24)

A Kingdom outside of Time

John's vision in Revelation 20:4 includes those already departed from earth:

"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

A timeless nature is presented in this vision as it is being viewed. The souls of these believers have already conquered the beast. The resurrection of the believer has this same element. It is a result of the believer's entrance into the kingdom of God. God's kingdom exists inside and outside of time as we know it. Hebrews 12:22-24 says:

“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

In this passage, the kingdom of God is presented in its fullness. As it says, we come to this kingdom when we fully commit ourselves to Jesus Christ as our Lord. In Colossians 3:1-3 Paul says the following in regard to our heavenly placement in Christ:

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

In this passage, Paul says that,

1. Our rapture will happen when Christ appears.
2. That in someway we are already in heaven.
3. We are exhorted to set our affections on Christ.
4. We share in the reign of Christ by choosing what is right.

The person who chooses the ways of the beast shares in the vials of wrath (Rev.15;16; 17; 21).

The Millennial Reign of Believers

· The millennial reign of believers is expressed in the following passage:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.” (*Ephesians 1:3-5*)

As citizens of God’s kingdom, we have been blessed beyond just the necessities for life on earth. We have been given “all” spiritual blessings and “riches” of grace, glory, wisdom, knowledge, joy, liberality, and full assurance (Ro.2:4, 9:23; 11:33; Eph.1:7; 18; 2;7 - exceeding; Col.2:2, including all that we need on earth Phil.4:19).

In addition, we have been given access to God through prayer. Our sins have been forgiven, we have been given a new heart and the Holy Spirit, our eyes have been opened to the heavenly mysteries of God, and we have been sufficiently empowered to fight the beast in the name of Jesus.

Also, we have been given victory over the beast, gifted for service, designated for godly purposes, and we have an inheritance in Christ that will raise us one day to a life filled with unspeakable joy in the presence of our creator.

The Believer’s Inheritance in Christ

Note the following verses on the inheritance of believers:

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”

(Ephesians 1:11)

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.”

(Ephesians 1:18)

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

(Colossians 1:12)

“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”

(Colossians 3:24)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.”

(1 Peter 1:3-4)

The thousand year reign of Christ represents the door of God’s kingdom and the time in which the saints will enter. When this period expires, Satan will be released to “close” the door as described in prophecy.

To enter the kingdom of God and experience the victory of Christ over the beast:

1. Seek and obey all teachings of Jesus Christ.
2. Repent of anything contrary to the teachings of Christ.
3. Implement in your life all that promotes Christ.
4. Receive the forgiveness of Christ for all sins.
5. Ask God for the Holy Spirit.
6. Strive to grow in the knowledge of Christ.
7. Strive to grow in the practice of godliness (god-likeness).
8. Look for ways to serve Christ.
9. Seek joy and delight in Christ.

Begin each day with prayer and thanksgiving. Ask God for the spiritual strength to glorify Him, and to grow from the adversities and challenges you may face. Ask Him for help to identify and resist the works of Satan. Victory can only come through prayer and the practice of God's word.

Satan often puts thoughts in our minds that at times are difficult to dismiss. In such cases we need to recall the example of Jesus (*Matthew 4*) and memorize the appropriate verses. The intensity of this practice (as well as prayer) may be driven by how deeply the issues may trouble us.

Finally, find a Church that is faithful to the Bible. Read their statements of faith. Carefully observe their practices. Your choice of Church will affect you and your family.

The battle against the beast is a spiritual war that all believers in Christ must fight to the end of their lives on earth. We can never give up - even if it seems like we so often fail. The battle is ultimately the Lord's.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

(Ephesians 6:10-18)

The evidence of our names being written in heaven is seen in our endeavor to hear and act upon the words of God. The struggle for victory is in itself, evidence of spiritual life.

“when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”

(Luke 18:8)

List of Scripture References

i: Heb.10; 1Cor.3:16

ii: 1Cor.2:13; Acts 17:10-11

iii: Rev. 1:1; Mt. 16:18; Rev. 1:3

iv: Jn. 3:16-21; Ro. 11:33-36

v: Mk 4; 4:13; Mt. 16:11-12

vi: 2 Tim. 2:15

2: Dan. 7, 7:3-4; 5-6; 7-8.

3: Dan 7, 7:13-18; 20-22; 23; 24; 25-26; Rev.12, 12:3;4;
Gen. 3:15

4: Mt.2, Lk.1-2; 10:18, 1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 13; 12:3; Gen.3:15

5: Rev.11:2; 13

6: Rev. 13:16, 14:9-10,

7: Rev.17

8: Rev.13:16; 17:9-13

9: Lk.4:6; Rev.17:13; 1Jn.2:18

10: 1 Jn.2:22; 4:3; 2 Jn. 1:7

11: 2 Thess.2:3-4; 2Tim.3:17; Eph.4:13, 22; 24; 2:15;

Col.3:9-10; Ro.6:6; Ex.13:16; Dt.6:8; 11:8; Rev.13:8

12: 1Cor. 3:16-17; Eph. 2:19-22; 2Cor.6:16; 2Thess. 2:7

13: Isaiah 61:1; Lk 4:17-19

14: Eph 4:7-8; 6:10-12;Ps.68:18; Jn 15:16;

15: 2Cor 10:3-5; Rev. 20:1-3

16: Rev.22:13; 1Thess. 4:15-18; 1Cor.15:23; 2Thess.2

17: Rev.11:3; 12:6; 20:2-5

18: Rev.20:6; Dan.9:24-27

19: Rev.12:14; Dan. 7:27-25; 12:7

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- 20: Rev.20:7-8; Ez.37-38; Dan.7:7-8; 19-25; Rev.13:3-8
21: 2 Thess.2:3-12; 1 Jn.2:18; 1 Tim.4:1-3; 2 Tim.3:1-3;
4:3-4; Mt.24:4-13; 23-24; Matthew 24; Dan. 9:27;
12:11
22: Dan. 9:27; Lk.21:22; Mt.24:22; Acts 5:42; 6:7; 21:20
23: Mt.24:23-31; 1 Thess 4:16-17
24: Dan.7:8;23; Gen.13-19;
26: Rev.13:11; 20:10; 2Tim.3:5; Jude 1; Mt.24:5; 24;
2 Pet.2:1
27: Ez.16:49; 1 Jn. 2:15; Rev. 11:7; 13:7
28: Rev. 20:4-6; Ro. 6:4
29: Ro.6:4-5; 1 Jn.2:16; Gal.5:19-21; Col.2:12.
30: Col. 3:9-10; Eph. 4:22-24; Rev. 20:4; Heb.12:22-24
31: Col. 3:1-3; Rev. 15; 16; 17; 21
32: Eph. 1:3-5; 7; 18; 2; 7; Col. 2:2; Phil.4:19
33: Eph. 1:11; 18; Col. 1:12; 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:3-4
34: Mt. 34
35: Eph. 6:10-18; Lk. 18:8

Recommended Reading

“Wrongly Dividing The Word of Truth” by John H. Gerstner, Ph.D.

“The Book of Revelation” G.K. Beale

**“And I saw...them that had gotten the
victory over the beast,
and over his image,
and over his mark,
and over the number of his name...”**

Revelation 15:2

Victory Over The Beast

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