

# Two Prophecy Booklets

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## **Before getting started, let's review a few notes that will help make sense of these booklets...**

*\*This work mostly uses British spelling, except for the quoted material, which often employs U.S. spelling.*

*\*The Old Testament quotes are from the NASB and the New Testament quotes are from the ALT3.*

*\*"LORD" or "GOD" signifies the personal name of God, often rendered Jehovah.*

*\*The ALT3 distinguishes plural second person pronouns from singular ones by means of an asterisk (\*).*

*\*Divine pronouns are normally not capitalized, unless they appear that way in Bible versions or other quotes.*

*\*Words that appear in brackets within quotes are not found in the original texts, and were added by the translators or are my personal comments, etc.*

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# **Pim Fortuyn**

## ***and Bible Prophecy***

by Anthony Dessay

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## I. Introduction: Pim Who?

The following is from an article published by *The Independent* back in July 20, 2002...

In life, Pim Fortuyn, the flamboyant right-wing Dutch politician who was murdered in May, was a mass of contradictions.

He championed Dutch liberal traditions such as the legalisation of drugs and prostitution and wanted to be its first openly gay prime minister. Yet he objected to Islam, and his only policy was to end immigration.

In death his contradictions continued. The man who won his party a share of power on the strength of keeping foreigners out of Holland was laid to rest yesterday on foreign soil—near his holiday home in north-east Italy—in accordance with his wishes.

Fortuyn, 54, was shot six times in the chest and head on 6 May, days before the Dutch general election, by an animal rights extremist. He was buried temporarily near his home town, Driehuis, near Amsterdam, while legal obstacles to his interment in Italy were overcome.<sup>1</sup>

It's been over fifteen years since a controversial political figure was purportedly gunned down outside a radio station in Hilversum, a city in the Netherlands. He was known as Pim Fortuyn. His legal name was Wilhelmus Simon Petrus Fortuyn. He proved to be a frontiersman for a new right-wing that has emerged in the West. He bucked the trend when it came to typical Judeo-Christian morality, yet embraced paltry "conservative" values such as nationalism and the inaccurate castigation of Muslim

immigrants. The Dutch figure who seemed to be an odd fluke on the world stage a decade and a half ago turned out rather to be a stunning prototype.

As I'll reveal in this booklet, I have Biblical reasons to believe that Pim may be the world ruler known as the book of Revelation's "beast out of the sea" (popularly called "the Antichrist"). I understand that sounds completely insane. All the same, please humour me anyway. Even if Pim Fortuyn is not the "Antichrist," I think he casts many important shadows that could help us understand this coming prince better—most important of which concerns the famous number from the book of Revelation....

...It is the number of a person. And its number is six hundred sixty-six.

## **II. The Theology of 666 (Old Testament)**

God, the ever-existing, all-powerful, sole deity (although Triune in nature), created the universe and everything in it. On the last day of his creating and forming he brought forth man and woman. He gave them everything for life and happiness, and also issued one prohibition. Because of this, the woman and man eventually ceased to believe that God had given them everything for life and happiness. They thought the stature of their lot would be improved if they transgressed and partook of the prohibited tree. It wasn't. Instead of being brought to the heights of heaven, their sin plunged them and their descendants into a misery-laden cycle of sweat, thorns, subjugation, pain, and death.

After their separation from God, some humans clung to his promise of redemption through faith, and others went about seeking to improve their present state by both hook and crook. Eventually society became more like the rebels, and faithfulness became scarce in the earth. At this time God summoned Noah and his family to go aboard the ark, and the deluge of annihilation was sent to wipe the slate of sinfulness. Noah and his clan trod upon the dry land as a new first-family, yet they still bore the image of their original fallen forebears.

The human race began to repopulate the planet and the same corruption ensued. However, instead of destroying the inhabitants of earth again, he rather called one out of the newly-founded Babylonia. That man was Abram/Abraham, and his descendants and prototypical deeds are what make up the majority of the Bible.

He was called forth from a place of prosperity and idolatry and was led to be a stranger in the land of Canaan. Being a foreigner, he was completely dependent upon God for his sustenance. By faith he trusted the Almighty to preserve his life, and believed that the strange land of his sojourn would ultimately become a familiar home to an innumerable offspring.

Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob and Esau. Because of the deceitfulness he practiced against his brother, Jacob felt forced to flee back to distant relatives. These relatives were much more in keeping with the lifestyle that Abraham left behind years before. In fact, one of Jacob's newly acquired wives—Rachel—stole household gods from her father when the family decided to return to Canaan.

As the family grew, idolatry became a bigger problem. Before approaching God in gratitude for his sustaining graces, Jacob tried to set his household in order. He commanded them to deal with this issue...

Then God said to Jacob, “Arise, go up to Bethel and live there, and make an altar there to God, who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.” So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, “Put away the foreign gods which are among you, and purify yourselves...” -- Genesis 35:1-2

Although the family was obedient at that moment, we'll soon see that this virtuousness wouldn't last. After all, idols and various gods were seen as indispensable means of wealth and security. They were beneficent good-luck charms in the eyes of their possessors, but pernicious trinkets of blasphemy in the eyes of the all-knowing God.

Digressing, Jacob's descendants would prosper after resettling in Egypt, and would become known as the nation of Israel. They would eventually be called out of Egypt by God, led through the wilderness, and brought back to the land of Canaan. Henceforth that land would no longer be called by that name, but it would rather bear the name of the people, *Israel*. God was proving faithful to the covenant made to Abraham, as a multitude of his offspring now resided on the Promised Land.

Although the people had been blessed via the faithfulness of God, they were still cursed via the primal carnality of Adam. From the outset and onwards, many from their midst looked to these idols for their welfare and livelihood...

I [*God*] said to them, “Cast away, each of you, the detestable things of his eyes, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.” But they rebelled against Me and were not willing to listen to Me; they did not cast away the detestable things of their eyes, nor did they forsake the idols of Egypt... -- Ezekiel 20:7-8

This was true in Egypt. This was true during their journey to Canaan (Amos 5:25-27). This was also true once they arrived in Canaan...

...They mingled with the nations and learned their practices, and served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with the blood. -- Psalm 106:35-38

The nation was preserved from God’s overflowing wrath because of his promises to Abraham, yet life in Israel would be marked by a constant ebb and flow of idolatrous imports.

Moses, the leader of the exodus from Egypt, died after bringing the people to the cusp of Canaan. Joshua was given the role of leader and led the army of Israel to subdue the land. After Joshua’s death, God would raise up a number of leaders, popularly known as the “judges.” There would be a cycle of idolatrous entropy during this era. God would allow their enemies to prevail, and then the people would call out to their forgotten Lord. In response to their pleas and misery he would send a judge to deliver the people and usher in days of greater peace

and piety. With each cycle however authentic godliness became hazier.

In the midst of this period a certain town named Shechem rebelled against the memory of a divinely appointed judge. Previously, God had strengthened a young man named Gideon to be victorious over oppressors from the land of Midian. After his successful campaigns, he begat a large number of children. There were about 71 sons in all. After his death the people of Shechem didn't wish to be influenced by the legacy of Gideon anymore. They rather rallied around someone who was more closely related to them. They gave him the green light to accomplish a felonious coup...

...They [*the people of Shechem*] were inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our relative." They gave him seventy [pieces] of silver from the house of Baal-berith with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless fellows, and they followed him. Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal [*Gideon*], seventy men, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, for he hid himself. -- Judges 9:3-5

Let's linger here and consider some of the individual words from this text.

First of all, note that the name of Gideon is given as "Jerubbaal." This was due to the circumstances that surrounded his initial calling to fight with the Midianites. The Lord told Gideon to deface an idolatrous monument to Baal, a pagan god. Because of this he received the nickname Jerubbaal, which signified that the false deity was unable to strive with him (see Judges 6:31-32).



Now, note that when the people of Shechem hired Abimelech (whose name means something like, “my father is king,”) they gave him money that had been stored in a temple consecrated to “Baal-berith.” In Hebrew, *berith* means “covenant.” The name “Baal” means “lord” or “master,” etc. So putting this all together, the verses from Numbers 9 above are pregnant with spiritual meaning. The sons of the man of Baal’s striving were killed by a kinsman of Shechem, being paid with the wages of the covenant made with a replacement of the true Lord.

History marched on. Eventually the people became sick and tired of the train of judges and decided they wanted a king instead. They thought this would give them more consistent security. The king would watch over their affairs and fight their wars. The first king of Israel was Saul. We’ll get back to him later (*Solomon is our apex, and then we’re going to work our way back down the list of personages*). His reign didn’t please God, and David, a shepherd-boy, was chosen as his replacement.

Regarding importance in Israelite history, King David would stand alongside Abraham. As Abraham had been given the promises of the land and numerous progeny, David had been given the regal covenant. His family would be the kingly house before God perpetually...

My covenant I will not violate [Lit *profane*], nor will I alter the utterance [Lit *that which goes forth*] of My lips. Once [Or *One thing*] I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. His descendants [Lit *seed*] shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before Me... -- Psalm 89:34-36

David's first successor was Solomon. He is famous for being endowed with tremendous wisdom from God. He was also given splendour and honour, the likes of which are dreamlike in quality. His kingdom was nearly utopian. However, instead of relishing in the unique blessing of God, his heart turned towards the wealth and splendour. Through faithless lust the new Paradise of God turned into just another Babylon. Solomon hoarded wealth and wives contrary to the dictates of Moses (cf. Deuteronomy 17:17). These women turned Solomon to honour some of the vilest pagan deities imaginable. He even went so far as to personally erect idols.

In one of those touches of God's noteworthy artistry, throughout this downward spiral of Solomon two contrary things were happening. While reading the history of this era of bounty it appears to be a tremendous success story, yet God was keeping track in a different way. Solomon was receiving gold at this time—a little here, a little there. The total from this period is eventually tabulated: 666 talents of gold (1 Kings 10:14). To any student of Bible prophecy, that number should ring familiar. It is of course the number of the Antichrist, as related in Revelation 13:18.

Right, so we've hit the apex. Let's start sliding back down now. First, let's revisit Saul, the first king. Just as the demise of Solomon led us to a mention of "666," so did the coronation of Saul. After all, this king was a punishment from God due to the people's apostasy.

God was not pleased with the populace for wanting a king. It was clear that a major part of their motivation was their lack of desire to live by faith. When the government isn't perfect, your God better be. However, if you can achieve a perfect government, then who needs God? This has been

the poison apple that Satan has peddled through many philosophers over the centuries. There is no perfect government. We are fallen and sin exists—as does entropy. The people sought a king because they weren't seeking God...

Thereafter Samuel [*the last of the judge-type*] called the people together to the LORD at Mizpah; and he said to the sons of Israel, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'I brought Israel up from Egypt, and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the power of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you.' But you have today rejected your God, who delivers you from all your calamities and your distresses; yet you have said [to him], 'No, but set a king over us!' Now therefore, present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes and by your clans." -- 1 Samuel 10:17-19

God made it clear to Samuel that Saul was to be the king, only they couldn't find him. They asked the Lord of his whereabouts...

Therefore they inquired further of the LORD, "Has the man come here yet?" So the LORD said, "Behold, he is hiding himself by the baggage." -- 1 Samuel 10:22

Now there's nothing wrong with the NASB's rendering of "baggage." The Hebrew term *keli* can indeed be interpreted as such, and there are specific times when that would appear to be the meaning. However, the original Hebrew word is much broader in scope. The most common way the NASB renders *keli* is "utensils" (66 times).

Holladay says it means...

1. vessel, receptacle, gear...2. equipment, gear...3. implement...4. other objects: a) ornaments...b) clothes...5. weapons...6. vessel = ship... (pgs. 158-159)<sup>2</sup>

The Brown-Driver-Briggs lexicon gives as the primary definition, “article, utensil, vessel.” Then as a sub-definition it gives, “*implement* of labour, *tool*” (pgs. 479-480)<sup>3</sup>.

The word thus also means “tool.” It is used this way in 1 Kings 6:7, when Solomon is constructing the Temple of God in Jerusalem...

The house, while it was being built, was built of stone prepared at the quarry, and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any iron **tool** heard in the house while it was being built.

The Hebrew word *keli* isn't rendered “tool” too often by the NASB translators simply because a description of such items doesn't appear in the Bible very frequently. There are a couple of times the NASB translators render engraving/carving instruments as a “tool,” and once the Hebrew word for “sword” is rendered by the NASB translators as “tool.” That's it. The subject rarely comes up.

Also, in modern Hebrew *keli* means, “instrument, tool, vessel.”<sup>4</sup>

Now why am I going on about this? Well, if you were reading 1 Samuel 10 in Hebrew you would have come across the word *keli*, as we have pointed out. Then a couple of chapters later, we have Saul being completely rejected as king by God. He made a sacrifice of abomination to the Lord himself, contrary to every law and

ordinance, as this was the prerogative of the Levitical priests...

But Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "Because I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the appointed days, and that the Philistines were assembling at Michmash, therefore I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not asked the favor of the LORD.' So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering." Samuel said to Saul, "You have acted foolishly; you have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God, which He commanded you, for now the LORD would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not endure. The LORD has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has appointed him as ruler over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you." -- 1 Samuel 13:11-14

Recall that in the midst of Solomon's demise, the number 666 was given. A few verses after Saul's demise, there is a seemingly random list of tools...

Now no blacksmith could be found in all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said, "Otherwise the Hebrews will make swords or spears." So all Israel went down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his mattock, his axe, and his hoe. The charge was two-thirds of a shekel [Heb *pim*] for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, and the axes, and to fix the hoes. -- 1 Samuel 13:19-21

Remember, God told Samuel that Saul was hidden in the midst of tools. As I'm sure you noticed, the NASB includes a footnote in this passage. The Hebrew term behind the phrase, "two-thirds of a shekel," is *pim*. This is how a lot of modern translations read. They often render the word as "two-thirds of a shekel," and then include the Hebrew original "pim" as a footnote. This is the practice of the *English Standard Version*, the *Lexham English Bible*, and the *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, etc. The *New King James Version* just uses "pim" in the text itself.

So modern scholarship believes that a "pim" was a stone/weight/coin worth two-thirds of a shekel. God told the people that the king of their apostasy was hidden among the "tools/implements." Then shortly thereafter we're given this list with "pim" in the middle. Just as Solomon's demise was highlighted with 666, so was Saul's highlighted with the idea of two-thirds, which can be seen as another way of expressing 666, being an endless string of sixes percentage-wise.

In general, 666 means *a failed Messianic Kingdom*; for this number in Revelation 13 is properly contrasted with the 1,000 year reign of Christ in Revelation 20. Remember what was going on with Solomon. He was no longer looking to the Lord but trusting in his wealth and idolatrous wives for love and blessedness. The by-product of this resulted in the ominous number. Saul likewise ceased to trust in the Lord. The army was deserting him, and he relied on his own wit and present need. He did something grotesque and blasphemous in order to remedy the situation. Again, this portentous number pops up.

Both Solomon and Saul had things to glory in. Saul could revel in being the first king chosen of God, and Solomon

could point to his wealth and glory. Yet they both were dying inwardly, ceasing to rely on the Lord through faith.

### **III. The Theology of 666 (New Testament)**

As we slide back down our list of accounts I'd like to include concurrent information from the book of Revelation, for the Bible itself is its own best commentary. As time went on and more of the Biblical books were written, what later writers penned was rarely in isolation. The authors of the latter books were constantly making references to things that had been written before. So does the last book in the Bible—the book of Revelation—shed any light on apostate kings and on Jotham, Jacob, the exodus, and Eden?

We've previously mentioned the fact that Solomon and Saul's 666 is the same number given in Revelation for the Antichrist...

...No one is able to buy or to sell, except the one having the mark: the name of the beast or the number of its name...And its number is six hundred sixty-six. --  
13:17-18

Revelation chapters 13 and 17 give us the most detailed descriptions of his person and works.

Chapter 13 recounts that he will suffer a head injury and revive. He will be heralded as great and unstoppable. He will conquer the world, blaspheme the heavens, and force everyone to worship him. At the height of his wickedness an idol will be made in his honour that everyone will be

forced to reverence. Moreover, people will have to get a mark of his name/number in order to take part in commerce.

Let's look at a few specific passages from this chapter...

And one of its heads [was] as [if] having been slain to death [fig., mortally wounded], and its wound of death [fig., fatal wound] was healed. And the whole earth marveled after the beast. -- verse 3

Having witnessed a seven-headed beast arise from the sea, John (the author of Revelation) states that one of the heads was slain and then resurrected. Although there has always been a debate among conservative commentators as to the significance of the heads, the most natural sense is to understand them as referring to individuals. Paige Patterson, who has penned one of the best works on Revelation in my opinion (writing for the highly respected *New American Commentary* series), agrees. He believes the healing is a Messianic forgery...

One of the heads of the beast received a fatal wound, but this had been somehow healed...and so the beast miraculously lived, suggesting a deliberate imitation of the Christ... (pg. 177)<sup>5</sup>

The most respected Greek lexicon these days (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*; aka, BDAG) translates the line *one of its heads [was] as [if] having been slain to death* in Revelation 13:3 as “a head that seemed to be mortally wounded.” The lexicon notes specifically that the term rendered “slain” above normally means to “slaughter” the Lamb [i.e., Jesus] or to “butcher or murder someone” (pg. 979).<sup>6</sup> Thus he is a person who seemingly died like Jesus.



Revelation 13:14 elaborates on the nature of the wound...

And it [*the false prophet(s) of the eschaton*] leads astray [fig., deceives] my own [people], the ones dwelling on the earth because of the signs which were given it to do before the beast, telling the ones dwelling on the earth to make an image to the beast, the one having the wound of the sword and lived.

In the end times a powerful false prophet will command people to make an idol in honour of this resurrected hero. He will have been slain by a—as BDAG translates—“sword-wound” (*on a footnote, a bullet is obviously a miniature version of a sword*). The lexicon defines the Greek term behind “wound” in three different ways. In the category that mentions Revelation 13 it is defined as a “wound caused by a blow, *wound, bruise*” (pg. 825).<sup>6</sup> The only other New Testament passage that BDAG lists along with Revelation 13 is Acts 16:33, where Paul and Silas had been beaten with rods. It’s also worth noting that the use of this term in Acts is in the plural, whereas in Revelation it is in the singular.

Thus cumulatively there appears to be one great wound to the head brought on by a weapon that would normally be impossible to recover from. On an aside, anyone can search online for a picture of Pim Fortuyn’s death and see him lay lifeless with a bullet-wound to his forehead.

The beast is healed from this wound and the world “marveled after the beast.” BDAG translates the phrase from Revelation 13:3 as “the whole world followed the beast, full of wonder.” It then notes, “here wonder becomes worship” (pg. 445).<sup>6</sup>

Chapter 17 elucidates that false religion will help catapult the beast to such worshipful success. Before looking at this chapter a bit, let's revisit the account from Judges 9.

You'll recall that Abimelech had all the sons of Gideon/Jerubbaal killed while seeking the ascendancy for himself. The men of Shechem gave him money from the temple of Baal-berith in order to accomplish his task. There was one son of Gideon who escaped, and he had something to say about the evil bond between Shechem and Abimelech. During the coronation of Abimelech the last remaining son of Gideon shouted at the crowd from a mountain. He told a parable about the evil bond, and then concluded with these words...

Now therefore, if you have dealt in truth and integrity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have dealt with him as he deserved—for my father fought for you and risked his life and delivered you from the hand of Midian; but you have risen against my father's house today and have killed his sons, seventy men, on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your relative—if then you have dealt in truth and integrity with Jerubbaal and his house this day, rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. But if not, **let fire come out from Abimelech and consume the men of Shechem** and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem and from Beth-millo, and consume Abimelech. -- Judges 9:16-20

Keep that passage in mind, as a semblance is forthcoming.

Those of us who consider Bible prophecy often focus our attention exclusively on the pact that will be made between Israel and the Antichrist; yet there is another lamentable agreement. It's clear from Revelation 17 that false religion, stemming from Rome, will be one of the chief agents of his meteoric rise...

And he [*an angel*] carried me [*John*] away in spirit [or, by [the] Spirit] into a wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast being full of names of blasphemy [or, covered with blasphemous names], having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman had been clothed with purple and scarlet, having been adorned with gold and a precious stone and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand being full of abominations and the uncleanness of her sexual sin. And on her forehead a name had been written: SECRET [OR, MYSTERY], BABYLON THE GREAT THE MOTHER OF THE PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH[.] And I saw the woman being drunk from the blood of the holy ones, from the blood of the witnesses [or, martyrs] of Jesus. And having seen her, I was amazed with great amazement....And the woman which you saw is the great city, the one having kingship over the kings of the earth. -- verses 3-6, 18

The last verse above is our most important, specific clue. Obviously Rome was the great city reigning over the world of the Bible at the time the book of Revelation was written. The idea that a Christian organization is in view here aligns with many other statements from the New Testament as well which warn of an onslaught by false teachers in the end times. Pointing out a specific church

isn't necessary, for it doubtlessly will seek to accommodate a broad scope of religions and philosophies. However, it will certainly have a distinct Judeo-Christian emphasis; and if this is to be the case, the Vatican would certainly be heavily involved. *(Moreover, Pim apparently courted Catholic support, being often seen with a priest towards the end of his life).*

Paige Patterson notes the significance of John's amazement at what he saw...

So perhaps what takes the apostle's breath away at this point is his recognition that this is a religious system purporting to be something it is not. Hence the word "unfaithfulness" or "prostitution" is used with regard to the scarlet woman. This strong imagery converging the ideas of deceit and wickedness may suggest a religious system purporting to represent the true God while actually doing the work of Satan. (pg. 203)<sup>5</sup>

Just as Israel denied the Lord when they sought to enthrone Saul and Shechem abandoned Gideon for Abimelech, so will many Christian leaders deny the Lord Jesus Christ when they seek to glorify the Man of Sin.

Not only does chapter 17 speak of the coming world church, but it also gives a detailed description of the political Antichrist...

The beast which you saw was, and is not, and is about to be ascending out of the bottomless pit and to be going away to destruction. And the ones dwelling on the earth will be amazed, whose names have not been written on the Scroll of Life before [the] laying of the foundation of [the] world [or, from [the] beginning of the creation of [the] universe], seeing that the beast was [or, when they see the beast that was], and is not, and

will come... There are also seven kings: the five fell, the one is, the other did not yet come. And when he comes, it is necessary [for] him to remain a short time. And the beast which was, and is not, is itself also an eighth, and is out of the seven, and is going away to destruction. -- verses 8, 10-11

To go into all the nuts and bolts of this complex chapter would take too much time and be quite disproportionate. There are a lot of different ideas about several of the features from this passage, but these issues don't change the overall outcome. For example, it's fairly immaterial who the other six kings are. I personally believe they are the six major evil entities mentioned in Revelation (i.e., Satan, and five fallen angels who are released from the pit). As BDAG points out, the term "king" can have the meaning of "one who possesses unusual or transcendent power" (pg. 170).<sup>6</sup> The lexicon gives an example from Revelation 9:11 where one of the fallen angels are mentioned as King of the Abyss.

Moreover, the Greek word for "king" has an extremely broad application. According to Liddell and Scott it was even a title given to the Greek gods such as Zeus<sup>7</sup>, all of whom could be seen as half-baked likenesses of hoary fallen angels. After all, the kingdom of the beast that is pictured, although European in origin, is a global government. There have been no such powers except in the spirit world. Also, there is a contrast between the Seven Spirits of God (which are within Christ) in Revelation 1:4, 3:1, 4:5, and 5:6, and the seven personages of Revelation 17:10 (see also Matthew 12:45-46).

But like I said, it doesn't really matter. What does matter however is that this is clearly referring to a person. A

“king” is not a kingdom. The whole beast itself is the kingdom and the seven heads are seven kings. Thus, the Antichrist is a future global ruler who will first be slain and then come back recharged as the eighth. Chillingly, he is described as someone who “was, and is not, and is about to be ascending out of the bottomless pit.” Anyone familiar with Revelation will recognize the fact that this is a play on one of the titles of divinity in the book. For example, the Trinity is described in Revelation 1. First the Father and the Holy Spirit are mentioned...

...The One being and the One [who] was and the One [who is] coming, and from the seven spirits which [are] [fig., the seven-fold Spirit who is] before His throne... -  
- verse 4

Then after describing the person and work of the Son in the next few verses, a composite picture of the divinity is given in verse 8...

“I am the Alpha and the Omega [i.e., the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet],” says [the] Lord God, “The One being and the One [who] was and the One [who is] coming—the Almighty!”

It’s clear that when the angel was telling John about this seventh king that he hadn’t yet arrived on the world scene, for he states that “the other did not yet come.” Thus, when he calls him the person who “was, and is not, and is about to be ascending out of the bottomless pit,” it is solely a title, a description of his person. God was, is, and is coming down from heaven via the incarnate Son. The beast is someone who will live, cease, and then return from Hades. I wrote that this was chilling, for if the angel is making a link between the person and work of God and

the person and work of the beast, seemingly this is because the Antichrist will be looked upon as a god.

Revelation 13 shows him as another lamb, and Revelation 17 as another god. Thus he is Antichrist. The false religion of the eschaton will help give him the aura of a theanthropic man.

Returning to our narrative, Jotham laid a curse upon this wicked coronation. If this new arrangement didn't please God then the parties involved would destroy each other. This detail finds its match in Revelation 17. World leaders don't really care about religion; it's just used as a public relations tool. This is as King James said centuries ago, "No bishop, no king." Well, God will curse this arrangement in the future, as bishop and king will stop the charade...

And the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her having been laid waste and will make her naked, and they will eat her flesh and will **burn her in fire**. For God gave into their hearts to do His mind [fig., purpose] and to make [fig., to be of] one mind and to give their kingdom to the beast until the words of God are completed [or, fulfilled]. -- verses 16-17

Just as Abimelech fulfilled the will of Jotham when he warred against the people of Shechem three years later (Judges 9:22ff), so will the beast be fulfilling God's mind when he decimates this mother of harlots in the midst of the 70<sup>th</sup> week (cf. Daniel 9:24-27).

Moving on, not only will the beast seek to destroy false Christianity, but he will seek to wage war against the nation of Israel as well. He will probably initially be as Solomon

and seek the rebuilding of a grand temple in Jerusalem (*which he will later desecrate, as Saul's ignominious sacrifice*). Yet God will not be pleased with his offering, and two witnesses will testify against it, as can be read in Revelation 11. This "pim" (*on a footnote, the Hebrew "pim" looks very similar to the Aramaic "pum," meaning "mouth" and "entrance" into a lion's den; this word is found several times in Daniel*) will seek to quiet these critics. When they are killed, there is this interesting verse...

And their dead body [will lie] on the open street of the great city (which spiritually [or, figuratively] is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified).  
-- Revelation 11:8

Jerusalem was meant to be the centre of God's blessing. It was the city of David, the chief spot in the land promised to Abraham. In the end times, God calls it "Egypt." Judeo-Christian religion will be the means of darkness and oppression. God will use the Antichrist to wipe the slate of false profession.

There is good news in the midst of all this mayhem. Although God will bring judgment to Jerusalem, he will remember his promise to Abraham. Recall earlier that I described how Jacob commanded his family to rid themselves of idols on their way to meet God...

So they gave to Jacob all the foreign gods which they had and the rings which were in their ears, and Jacob hid them under the oak which was near Shechem. -- Genesis 35:4 [*On a footnote, Abimelech was made king at an oak in Shechem (Judges 9:6).*]

After they cleansed themselves of these defilements, God met with Jacob at Bethel and his name was affirmed as



Israel (*signifying having power with God*). Soon after, they set out on another journey, and it is here that the town of Bethlehem is mentioned for the first time in the Bible. The next time this town features prominently is when God seeks to replace Saul and sends Samuel to this city of David's family...

[*God said to Samuel...*] "...You shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you." So Samuel did what the LORD said, and came to Bethlehem... -- 1 Samuel 16:3-4

The next important reference comes when Micah issued an amazing prophecy about the promised redeemer, the coming Messiah...

But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, [too] little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity. -- Micah 5:2

Finally, many centuries later, it features again in the New Testament...

Now Jesus having been born in Bethlehem of Judea in [the] days of Herod the king [i.e., Herod the Great, ca. 4 B.C.], look!, learned astrologers [or, Magi, and in verses 7, 16; cp. Acts 13:6] from [the] east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the One having been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at the rising [of the sun] [fig., in the east], and we came to prostrate ourselves in reverence [or, worship] before Him." -- Matthew 2:1-2

In the days of antiquity when the patriarchs resided in the East this signified the proliferation of idolatry and a departure from the Creator of heaven and earth. However,

at the birth of Jesus—the son of David, the son of Abraham, and the eternal Son of God—the light of heaven went forth to call all people of all ethnicities to repentance and sanctification. Whoever calls upon God, repenting of their sins and confessing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to be their only righteousness, shall recover (and far exceed) what Adam and Eve lost when they originally broke faith at the dawn of time. They will live forever in the unshakable Paradise of God (John 3:16).

#### **IV. Conclusion: The Resurrected Antichrist**

I first stumbled upon the “pim” theory in relation to 666 because of the death of Pim Fortuyn of Holland. That was back in 2002. He was very unique in his hour. To my knowledge there weren’t any major politicians like him. Now there are many. I’ve watched for 15 years as many people have followed in his footsteps. The alt-right movement is huge nowadays. Nationalism is huge, only it has been rebranded as “populism.” Pim’s comrade, Wilders, was a serious contender in the Dutch elections recently, as was the similar Marine Le Pen in France. Moreover, it was tapping into these sentiments that helped Donald Trump become president.

So will Pim rise again and amaze the world? Time will tell. If he did, it would be one of the biggest events the modern world has witnessed. Even when he faded from public view the first time there were obvious religious overtones...

In death as in life Pim Fortuyn, the maverick Dutch politician, has the power to provoke controversy, and a decision to show his coffin being dug up live on national television for reburial purposes has outraged many in the Netherlands.

The ceremony, which will take place in the village of Driehuis-Westerveld on the north-west Dutch coast today, has the blessing of Fortuyn's family and will be shown by commercial broadcaster SBS6. The station will also televise tomorrow's reburial in Italy, where the politician owned a holiday villa...

His murder in May at the hands of an apparently deranged animal rights activist led to an outpouring of grief on a scale compared to the death of Princess Diana, and gave him iconic status overnight...

"It will be the first time someone in the Netherlands has been dug up on TV," Willem Breedveld, a senior media commentator, said. "We normally don't do it out of respect for the dead. But [his supporters] want to show a sort of resurrection of Pim Fortuyn just like the resurrection of the lord, and that's blasphemy."

There are rumours that Fortuyn's body was never buried in his family grave but frozen and stored somewhere else for security and hygiene purposes. Suspicions were raised when people noticed that the hearse carrying his body from Rotterdam was not the same one that arrived at Driehuis-Westerveld, but nobody has been able to prove anything.<sup>8</sup>

Hmm.

In conclusion, I know this theory may pan out to be wrong in the end. I apologize to any of Pim's remaining family and friends who may be offended by this writing. If I'm wrong, please forgive me. If I'm right, may God forgive us all.

## V. Citations

<sup>1</sup> Johnson, Andrew. "Pim Fortuyn bids a bizarre farewell." [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/pim-fortuyn-bids-a-bizarre-farewell-185123.html). July 20, 2002. [http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/pim-fortuyn-bids-a-bizarre-farewell-185123.html]

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<sup>3</sup>Brown, Francis and S.R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003.

<sup>4</sup>Ringvald, Vardit. *Brandeis Modern Hebrew*. Lebanon, NH: University Press, 2005. (pg. 550)

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<sup>6</sup>Danker, Frederick William (editor). *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature (Third Edition)*. Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.

<sup>7</sup>Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: University Press, 1940 [*this is the last date*]

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<sup>8</sup>Osborn, Andrew. "Fortuyn exhumation to be shown on TV." [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com). July 19, 2002. [https://www.theguardian.com/media/2002/jul/19/broadcasting.farright]

# **What is Biblical Eschatology?**

## ***(An Extremely Brief Primer)***

By Anthony Dessay

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This writing has a simple goal: to bring the reader up to speed on what exactly is ‘Bible Prophecy.’ This is written from a futurist, evangelical, dispensational perspective. If that’s not your cup of tea, I understand. However, if you are interested in this subject or at least would like to become better informed, then please join me.

## **I. Introduction: What is Eschatology?**

“Eschatology” is the study of last things; yet, how can we be sure that the Bible even presents prophecy at all? The answer is simple: read the Bible and you will find the genre from start to finish. Much of it is yet to be fulfilled; also, much of it was clearly written with the very end of the world in mind. Thus, eschatology is a legitimate theological branch.

In order for this primer to remain brief, I’m going to have to present proof-texts sparingly. My favourite Scripture that proves the validity of eschatology is the twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel (which happens to be its last). This was written about five hundred years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even if you will only accept a later date for the book of Daniel, it clearly was written in BC times, and yet also very lucidly speaks of the end of the world. I will not relate the entire chapter, but will just recount about half of it in the interest of space...

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands [guard] over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. Many of those who sleep in the

dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace [and] everlasting contempt... But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase"... As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, "My lord, what [will be] the outcome of these [events?]" He said, "Go [your way,] Daniel, for [these] words are concealed and sealed up until the end time. Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand. From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, [there will be] 1,290 days. How blessed is he who keeps waiting and attains to the 1,335 days! But as for you, go [your way] to the end; then you will enter into rest and rise [again] for your allotted portion at the end of the age." -- verses 1-2, 4, 8-13

I know it's impossible to understand the context of everything that's being stated here if you don't have much of a background in the Bible. Several facts are obvious however, and these are the things I want to stress in this introduction.

First of all it's very clear that the end of the world is being spoken of. That's my main point: *the Bible teaches prophecy!* Most of the negative feedback I get as an independent writer comes from people who think that eschatology is a null and void topic. What do you make of this latter chapter of Daniel then? What else do you think is being spoken of here?

Second of all, there is the mention of a special three-and-a-half year period of time. The angel tells Daniel that when a particular abomination occurs, there will be about 1,290 days from that point until the very end. Three-and-a-half year periods feature prominently throughout the books of Daniel and of Revelation.

I have a free booklet online that details these passages entitled, “Unleavened: The Certainty of Eschatology.” It’s published under the name *Richie Cooley*, if you’re interested. Alternatively, I encourage you to simply read through the books of Daniel and Revelation for yourself. You’ll see this time designation crop up again and again.

The last thing I need to mention before moving on to our next topic is the broader context of this three-and-a-half year label. Like I said, it’s mentioned several times in Daniel (7:25; 12:7, 11-12) and Revelation (11:1-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5), being a reference to a particular passage from the former. In Daniel 9:24-27 we’re given the famous “70 weeks” pronouncement...

Seventy weeks [Or *units of seven*, and so throughout the chapter] have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin [Another reading is *seal up sins*], to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy [Lit *prophet*] and to anoint the most holy [place.] So you are to know and discern [that] from the issuing of a decree [Lit *word*] to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince [there will be] seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza [Or *streets*] and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing [Or *no one*], and the people



of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its [Or *his*] end [will come] with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined [Or *war will be decreed for desolations*]. And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations [Or *detestable things*] [will come] one who makes desolate [Or *causes horror*], even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate [Or *causes horror*].

So again, a lot is being said here, and it would take too long to try to expound it all in detail.

In short, about five hundred years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, Daniel found himself a captive, his home having been destroyed by the Babylonians. He was told by an angel that whenever the word goes forth to restore Jerusalem there would be about 490 years until the Messiah. This anointed leader would be killed, and Jerusalem would be destroyed by the people of a coming prince.

All of this happened just as it was prophesied. The Messiah came—the Lord Jesus Christ. He was crucified for the sins of his people, arose from the dead, and returned to heaven. A few decades later the Romans would come and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple within.

However, note that the angel who was telling Daniel these things left the final seven years separate. After all, the Messiah came, but his kingdom didn't. We still have “a week” to wait until it does. During this period, a Roman (i.e. European) leader will make a seven-year pact with

Israel. Halfway through this pact he will break it, and then three-and-a-half years later this entire age will come to a close.

So that's the full context of the three-and-a-half year periods. They are referring to this "70th week." This particular stretch of time is more or less what the book of Revelation is about.

Most of this primer will be concerned with laying out to you—in broad strokes—the contents of the book of Revelation. However, before doing that, a few other major eschatological events will come to pass. We need to cover those happenings first.

## **II. The Pre-Apocalypse**

So now that we've quickly established a rough outline for eschatology and are nearly ready to dive into the contents of Daniel's 70th week, we need to set the stage. It's probably not possible that a European leader could sign some important accord tomorrow with Israel and begin the countdown. Rather, several key components will most likely come first.

Now as I begin to get into the specifics of the end times, note that there is a big difference between claiming to be a prophet and seeking to merely be a prophetic commentator. I am not a prophet. I am merely seeking to provide commentary. The benefit to such writings is that they familiarize the reader with the variables that make up the conversation. Maybe upon further examination you'll not agree with my chronology or how I understand a specific Scripture. Maybe you're already abreast of the

conversation and will reject many of my constructs because of your preconceived views. All that is fine and well. I just wish to get the information more in the public forum. Moreover, I will try to make the reader aware of some of the major differences that exist out there amongst typical futurist constructs.

This pre-apocalypse chapter will be broken up into three subsections. It's nearly impossible to put these in order with confidence. I will give you my best estimation.

### **A. The Rapture**

The Rapture of the Church is a startling teaching. The belief is that prior to the end times the Lord Jesus Christ will take to heaven those who have called upon his name for salvation in repentance and faith. This will happen in the blink of an eye. It will be instantaneous. One minute two friends will be walking down the street, and then one will disappear. A husband will wake up to find his wife is missing. Cars may crash, and planes may fall. It will be a time of confusion and mayhem.

Of course none of this is pleasant for those left behind, and God takes no delight in the death of the dying. Yet, his kingdom is coming, and he is going to cause there to be more and more signs and wonders in order to get the world's attention.

Whenever the Rapture takes place there will likely be some time before the dust settles and people begin to search for answers. Doubtless many will have wild speculations, and probably UFOs will top the list of explanations. Moreover, because many Christians will still be around (*in that they*

*weren't truly saved*) and many extremely sinful people will have been taken (*in that they were truly saved, yet no one knew*), people will generally not give the obscure teaching concerning the Rapture a whole lot of credence.

As for the Scriptures that support this teaching, I again point you to a free booklet that I have uploaded about the Rapture entitled, "A Biblical Survey of the Rapture." In it I dedicate a lot more space and time to go through relevant passages. For now I would leave you with two quick quotes on the matter.

First, just to prove that the general idea of a "Rapture" is indeed Biblical, let's turn to 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18...

For this we say to you\* by [the] word of [the] Lord, that we, the ones living, the ones being left to the Arrival of the Lord, by no means shall precede the ones having fallen asleep [fig., who have died]. Because the Lord Himself with a shout of command, with a voice of an archangel [or, a chief messenger [of the Lord]] and with [the] trumpet of God, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first, then we, the ones living, the ones being left, will be caught up together with them in [the] clouds to a meeting of the Lord in [the] air, and so we will always be with [the] Lord! Therefore, be comforting one another with these words. [*See also the very similar 1 Corinthians 15:51-53*]

Next, to demonstrate that this Rapture precedes the judgments of the very end, let's turn to Revelation 3:10...

Because you kept the word of My patient endurance, I also will keep you from the hour of the trial, the one about to be coming upon the whole inhabited earth, to test the ones dwelling on the earth. [*See also a literal*

*translation of the very similar Isaiah 57:1; cf. also Matthew 24:36-44.]*

So the world will be in a major muddle because of this event. The Rapture will probably decimate the U.S., causing there to be a vacuum of power. Out of this vacuum Europe will likely grow stronger and unify. According to Daniel (chapters 2 and 7), the final European coalition will feature ten or eleven nations. Another region of the world that will seemingly benefit from the fall of the U.S. is the Russian axis. This conglomeration is featured in our next subsection.

## **B. A Mid-East War**

One of the prophetic events which the Bible goes into great detail about is popularly referred to as “The War of Gog and Magog.” Again, I have a free writing online that details the two chapters of the book of Ezekiel (38 and 39) which cover this future conflict. It is entitled, “The War of Gog and Magog (A New Translation and Commentary).”

Basically, a great northern country will lead an invasion of Israel from four directions. Specific nations are described, which are most likely Turkey, Iran, Sudan, and Libya. They will all converge upon Israel, and then God will destroy them. There is perhaps even the foretelling of a nuclear exchange between Russia and the U.S (Ezekiel 39:6).

Anyway, a lot of details are given in Ezekiel 38-39, making it a premier prognostication. For example, in a very modern way, other nations will question the coalition as it begins to swell (38:13). There is going to be a massive earthquake at the time of the incursion (38:19-20). There

will be a massive clean-up effort to bury the slain, which will last seven months (39:12). Also, Israel will burn the debris of the battle for seven years (39:9). It is because of this latter point that this conflict will likely take place before the seven-year covenant is signed.

Conservative commentators are very split as to when the war occurs. Many place it before the 70th week, while many others place it in the middle. Moreover, a few even combine it with the very last war (i.e., Armageddon) or with a battle to take place at the end of the Messianic Age. I completely reject these latter two notions. As for the first two, I think both are possible, or even a combination of both; however, I lean strongly towards it happening before the last seven years. Also it's worth noting that in recent years many prophecy students have stressed the possibility of another separate skirmish preceding the war of Gog/Magog, especially focusing on such nations as Syria and Lebanon.

Anyway, not only do I think that Ezekiel 38-39 indicates a pre-70th week conflict, but I also think this will greatly set the stage for many important eschatological events. One such happening is a two-pronged revival of a Judeo-Christian nature. This is the subject of the final subsection.

### **C. The 144,000**

So try and imagine the scene. First of all, millions and millions of people vanish. Society is rocked and there are many weird stories of these disappearances. Everything seems very shaken and strange, and people are generally awestruck. Then—perhaps weeks, months, or even a few years later—a giant Middle Eastern war erupts, and the

overwhelming surge of enemies are miraculously overcome by Israel. People will get a strong sense of the divine, feeling the palpable presence of the God of Israel.

There will be a good side and a bad side to this. The bad side is that carnal, unregenerate people becoming religious is never a good thing. Jim Jones was religious, as was David Koresh and Charles Manson. Being religious can be a very bad thing when it is wed to dilapidated sinfulness. The world's newfound concern for Judeo-Christianity will simply cause it to accept the Judeo-Christian Antichrist and False Prophet (two characters we'll focus on next), as well as ignite a desire to rebuild a worthless third Temple in Jerusalem. Also, many people will probably begin to speculate more wildly in attempt to circumvent the divine. I believe that by the time that the end days are over, society will have come to the erroneous conclusion that God is a space alien.

On the good side, many people will become awakened to the fact that there is a real God and that his Word is true. Many will take the Bible seriously, and many will be saved. We know that this is the case because of Revelation 7, where a tremendous multitude of believers is said to be redeemed in the midst of this final tribulation.

Revelation 7 also mentions a special group, popularly referred to by prophecy students as "the 144,000." They are described as being redeemed by God and being comprised of 12,000 people from the various 12 tribes of ancient Israel. I have two minds about this group. The most basic interpretation is to see this as extremely literal. Evangelicals generally see them as 144,000 Jewish men who are converted and then gallop across the globe with

the Gospel. I used to think that way, but I've changed my mind in recent years.

Although God will indeed ultimately bless every tribe of the Jewish people in fulfilment of the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I believe that such an ethnic stress is generally incompatible with the early parts of Revelation. The early worship of Israel is generally condemned, such as in chapter 11. Also, I've come to see a lot of resemblances between the 144,000 and the Rechabites of the book of Jeremiah. Thus, perhaps they will be an entire community, and not simply preaching men.

Anyway, in summation, they are probably either a mighty group of evangelists (*which is the majority view*), or simply a community that sees a mighty revival very early on (*which is my personal, minority view*), such as Beta Israel. They are an important component somehow, and I believe it's possible their conversion will even take place before the covenant is signed, although commentators vary widely as to when their redemption actually occurs.

So we've tried to establish the fact that the Bible indeed preaches eschatology, and we've tried to outline some of the major things that will probably precede the 70th week, also known as "the tribulation period" and "the apocalypse." Let's focus now on the apocalypse-proper. First, we'll generally cover the period by focusing on a small group of major players. Then, we'll cover the judgments and major events in order.

Also, I hope by this point that you've come to understand the gist of prophetic commentating. People see the War of Gog/Magog as taking place at different times, just as there are different theories about who the 144,000 are. Also,



there are differing views about when the Rapture will occur, as the pre-, mid-, and post-trib camps have battled with each other for many decades. However, the important thing is to realize that scarcely no one who accepts eschatology in a plain manner denies the existence of Gog/Magog, a literal 144,000, and a Rapture. So we may wrangle over some of the details, yet when the events occur, they will be clearly recognized, and the faith of many will thereby have good reason to sprout and grow.

After all, the last revival will be the best.

### **III. The First Half**

#### **A. The Witnesses and the Beasts**

As with much of Scripture, there seems to be a symmetrical pattern to the book of Revelation. The apex is chapter 12, where Israel is chased into the wilderness and the great tribulation (*the last three-and-a-half years*) is set to begin. Fittingly, on either side of this passage is chapter 11 (which describes two witnesses of God) and chapter 13 (which describes two beasts of the Devil).

Israel will have a choice. Who is really from God? Can the Antichrist really be from God? Is he some sort of sinful saviour, like Cyrus or Alexander the Great? Or rather is Jesus Christ the true King, whom the witnesses will be representing?

As for the witnesses, I think it's impossible to predict their career in detail before they appear. There are several things we can be sure about though. They will have supernatural abilities to do wonderful works, to include bringing plagues upon the earth (Revelation 11:6) and causing fire to come

out of their mouths (11:5). They will be killed and then will arise from the dead before many (11:7-11). Their resurrection will most likely take place at the mid-way point, just before the Antichrist chases faithful-Israel into the wilderness.

Exactly when they will minister is very hard to say. I take the view that it could be fairly early on, and that their death may even last longer than three-and-a-half literal days. I have no idea who they may be, but I think it's extremely dubious to see them as Moses and Elijah, as is a common assertion. I completely reject that notion, just as I don't think the False Prophet will be Aaron, although descriptive language is used in Revelation 13 which mimics that ancient priest.

No one will have to guess who they are, and no one can simply pretend. If fire doesn't come out of your mouth, it's not you. Despite being a great lover of hot sauce, I can safely affirm that it's not me. However, God can use anyone, so we should be excited at the possibility of being employed in such a mighty way.

As for the beasts, Revelation 13 gives us very detailed accounts of these figures. Because their careers are such an integral part of the apocalypse, I think it's best to relate these passages in full. Here's the first part of the chapter which describes the political beast, popularly known as the "Antichrist"...

And I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on its horns ten royal bands, and on its heads names of blasphemy [or, blasphemous names]. And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and its

feet like [those] of a bear, and its mouth like a mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave to it his power and his throne and great authority. And one of its heads [was] as [if] having been slain to death [fig., mortally wounded], and its wound of death [fig., fatal wound] was healed. And the whole earth marveled after the beast. And they prostrated themselves in worship [or, reverence, and in all references to the beast or dragon] before the dragon, the one having given the authority to [the] beast; and they prostrated themselves in worship before the beast, saying, “Who [is] like the beast, and who [is] able to wage war with it?” And a mouth was given to it speaking great [things] and blasphemy, and authority was given to it to make war forty-two months [i.e., 3½ years]. And it opened its mouth in blasphemy toward God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, [that is], the ones tabernacling [or, dwelling] in heaven. And it was given to it to make war with the holy ones and to overcome them, and authority was given to it over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all the ones dwelling on the earth will prostrate themselves in worship before it, the name of whom has not been written in the Scroll of Life of the Lamb having been slain before [the] laying of the foundation of [the] world [or, from [the] beginning of the creation of [the] universe]. -- verses 1-8

The first beast will be a political leader, rising to prominence on the back of European ascendancy. I believe a slain European politician will rise from the dead early on, probably shortly after the Rapture. He will be able to soak up a lot of the Judeo-Christian sentiment that is sweeping through popular culture. Initially a new Europe

will consist of ten or eleven nations, and three of these will be subjugated (*apart from Revelation, my other sources for these speculations are Daniel chapter 2, chapters 7-8, and 11:21-12:13*) by him in some way. He will almost certainly capitalize on the Russian threat as well, and this may cause Israel to seek his protection, as opposed to that of God (see Isaiah 28:15).

As I stated above, he will be greatly assisted in his Judeo-Christian façade by the False Prophet, described in Revelation 13:11-18...

And I saw another beast rising up out of the earth, and it had two horns like a lamb, and it was speaking like a dragon. And it exercises all the authority of the first beast before it, and it was making the earth and the ones dwelling in it that they should prostrate themselves in worship before the first beast, whose wound of death [fig., fatal wound] was healed. And it performs great signs, so that even fire is coming down from heaven on the earth before the people. And it leads astray [fig., deceives] my own [people], the ones dwelling on the earth because of the signs which were given it to do before the beast, telling the ones dwelling on the earth to make an image to the beast, the one having the wound of the sword and lived. And it was given to it to give a spirit [or, breath] to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast should both speak and make [it that] as many as would not prostrate themselves in worship before the image of the beast should be killed. And it makes all [people], the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the freemen and the slaves, that they shall give to them marks on their right hand or on their forehead, and that no one is able to buy or to

sell, except the one having the mark: the name of the beast or the number of its name. Here is the wisdom...it is the number of a person [or, of humanity]. And its number is six hundred sixty-six.

So like the witnesses, this False Prophet will be a miracle worker. It's possible that the two horns signify that two men will fill this office, at least for a time. He will be the toast of the town. His wonders will be broadcast far and wide; and he will give all this glory unto his compatriot, the Antichrist.

A major part of his program will be the "mark of the beast." He will cause everyone to get some sort of mark or implant or tattoo on/in their hand/forehead. We can clearly see how society is currently being structured for such a system to be implemented. Whoever receives this mark will go to Hell forever (Revelation 14:9-11), thus it's obvious that it will be seen as submission to the Antichrist and his kingdom.

It's important to understand that "666" is not 6-6-6. In the Greek it is six hundred, sixty, and six. There's a big difference. It's not *triple 6*, but *six hundred, sixty-six*. The only possible meaning is to see this number as contrasted to the 1,000 year Messianic Age of Jesus Christ, mentioned in Revelation 20. The Antichrist will be the king of a false Messianic Age.

I also see great significance in the Hebrew term "pim," as I've written about elsewhere.

Also, I'm not trying to be anti-Semitic at all; I'm very philo-Semitic. My God is a Jew. I worship a Jew every day of my life. I love all Muslims and Jews very, very deeply, no matter what anyone may say to the contrary. However,

I think there is merit to the idea that the Antichrist will be gentile and the False Prophet will be Jewish.

One reason why I think this way is owing to the mystery of the Hebrew “nuns” (equivalent to the letter “n.”) This is a subject I’ve always wanted to write about, but I’ve always felt that it’s just too abstract. I don’t think I could spell it out articulately enough. It would seem fairly limp and subjective. Long story short, there are a group of strange *nuns* that appear throughout the Hebrew text. I think the ones in Judges 18:30 and Psalm 107 go together. The one that appears in Judges 18:30 is found within the word “Moses,” and is spoken of in the context of a priest.

Then around Psalm 107:23-28 there are six of these letters, juxtaposed to the description of mariners in the ocean. Finally there is another nun next to Psalm 107:40, juxtaposed to kings/nobles wandering in the wilderness.

In the book of Revelation there is a very rich, meaningful comparison between the evil trinity of the Antichrist, False Prophet, and Satan (with five other fallen angels), in comparison to the real Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These *nuns* can be seen in two ways. They can be seen as representing the true or false Trinity.

Again, long story short, it’s interesting that the seven *nuns* in Psalm 107 picture the sea and kings, just as the first beast in Revelation 13. Mariners are a popular representation of gentiles in the Bible. That would leave the second beast to represent a Jew, given the fact that it appears within the name of Moses while describing a Levitical priest.

So having reviewed the major players, let’s now talk about the judgments.

## **B. The Seals**

The seal judgments are conveniently located in a single chapter in the book of Revelation (which is the 6th). However, to fully understand what is going on in that section you must first back up and read chapters 4 and 5. This portion basically describes the heavenly coronation of the Messiah. This is the fulfilment of the famous Messianic passage of Daniel 7...

I kept looking until thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took [His] seat; His vesture [was] like white snow and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne [was] ablaze with flames, its wheels [were] a burning fire. A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him; thousands upon thousands were attending Him, and myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; the court sat, and the books were opened. Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire...I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and [men of every] language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed. -- verses 9-11, 13-14

This is an extremely important passage when it comes to the understanding of salvation history. Written hundreds of years before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, it energized believers of Jehovah to look for a glorified saviour. Its effects can not only be seen in the Christian New Testament, but also in pre-Christian Jewish works such as the writings of Qumran and the book of 1 Enoch.

Interestingly, Beta Israel is a rare Jewish group, in that they believe the book of Enoch is canonical. While I don't hold to such a view, it is an extremely important document. It shows what the people of Jehovah were looking for a few hundred years (*on average; it is probably a composite document*) before the Messiah came. Men like Moses Maimonides intentionally circumvented Christian interpretations when it comes to the Messiah. I hope Beta Israel realizes that their book of Enoch is a thousand times more in keeping with Christianity than it is in keeping with modern Judaism.

There's a great new translation of the book of Enoch, made available through George Nickelsburg (University of Iowa) and James VanderKam (University of Notre Dame) [*The Hermeneia Translation*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012]. Note how much some of the passages from Enoch reflect the Son of Man from the book of Daniel...

There I saw one who had a head of days, and his head was like white wool. And with him was another, whose face was like the appearance of a man; and his face was full of graciousness like one of the holy angels. And I asked the angel of peace, who went with me and showed me all the hidden things, about that son of man—who he was and whence he was (and) why he went with the Head of Days. And he answered me and



said to me, “This is the son of man who has righteousness, and righteousness dwells with him...and all the treasures of what is hidden he will reveal...and his lot has prevailed through truth in the presence of the Lord of Spirits forever. And this son of man whom you have seen—he will raise the kings and the mighty from their couches ...” -- 46:1-4 [*portions*]

...And in that hour that son of man was named in the presence of the Lord of Spirits, and his name, before the Head of Days. Even before the sun and the constellations were created, before the stars of heaven were made, his name was named before the Lord of Spirits. He will be a staff for the righteous, that they may lean on him and not fall; he will be the light of the nations, and he will be a hope for those who grieve in their hearts. All who dwell on the earth will fall down and worship before him, and they will glorify and bless and sing hymns to the name of the Lord of Spirits. For this (reason) he was chosen and hidden in his presence, before the world was created and forever. And the wisdom of the Lord of Spirits has revealed him to the holy and the righteous; for he has preserved the lot of the righteous...For in his name they are saved, and he is the vindicator of their lives. -- 48:2-7 [*portions*]

For wisdom has been poured out like water, and glory will not fail in his presence forever and ever. For he is mighty in all the secrets of righteousness; and unrighteousness will vanish like a shadow, and will have no place to stand. For the Chosen One has taken his stand in the presence of the Lord of Spirits; and his glory is forever and ever, and his might, to all generations. And in him dwell the spirit of wisdom and

the spirit of insight, and the spirit of instruction and might, and the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in righteousness. And he will judge the things that are secret, and a lying word none will be able to speak in his presence; for he is the Chosen One in the presence of the Lord of Spirits according to his good pleasure. -- 49:1-4

So anyway, Revelation 4-5 is completely in keeping with Daniel 7:9-14 and these passages from 1 Enoch. The Son of Man is the Chosen One who is being given the right to bring the Kingdom of God to the earth. This comes in the form of a scroll in Revelation 5, sealed with seven seals...

And I saw in [the] middle of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in [the] middle of the elders, a Lamb having stood as if having been slain [i.e., Jesus, cp. John 1:29], having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits [fig., which is the seven-fold Spirit] of God being sent into all the earth. And He came and has taken [*the scroll*] out of the right hand of the One sitting on the throne. -- verses 6-7

It is the breaking of these seals which is pictured in Revelation 6, bringing the first judgments of the tribulation period upon the planet.

The first four judgments are what have become known as *the four horsemen of the apocalypse*. The first seal unleashes a rider on a white horse, best explained as the warlike prowess of the Antichrist. The second seal is war. The third is famine. The fourth is a popular Old Testament combination of various judgments, including destruction by plagues and beasts.

There are two ways to understand these horsemen. One way (*and doubtless it is the most popular*) is to see them as each traversing the entire globe. However, my (minority) view is that they will rather focus on specific quarters of the globe. There are several reasons why I believe this. First of all, a “fourth” is mentioned in connection with the fourth seal (6:8). Thus, this can mean a fourth of all people or simply a region which comprises a fourth of the earth.

Second of all, the judgments increase in intensity and expansiveness as they continue throughout the apocalypse. For example, the upcoming trumpet judgments clearly operate by thirds (cf. Revelation 8). The last plagues are apparently global in scope (cf. Revelation 16). Thus, it’s probable that these seals will be smaller—hence the notion of quarters.

It’s also worth noting that for the most part, none of these judgments will ostensibly be of divine origin, in and of themselves. On the contrary, the latter judgments will inescapably be from a supernatural source. These horsemen however can be explained in other ways, especially through the hysteria of global warming, etc. The main thrust of the seal judgments is the turning of nature on its head. Again, I have a translation and commentary of Revelation 6 for free online if you’d like to read more.

### **C. The Abomination**

The last two seals lead us up to the great mid-way point. This ultimately heralds the beginning of the last three-and-a-half year period.

Seal five shows the persecution that will befall believers. It's unclear why the persecution gets so fierce at this point. Perhaps the mark of the beast is being implemented in a major way. Perhaps people are just getting sick of the whole "God" thing. Either way, it will be a very difficult time to be a believer in Christ. The good vibes of Judeo-Christianity which followed the War of Gog and Magog will be over. People will become very hardened when it comes to the reality of Jehovah. There's not much left for God to do with the earth apart from destroy it.

However, he will give one more wonderful sign, as the witnesses are set to resurrect. This could occur at the season of the sixth seal. I also believe this seal happens concurrently with the "abomination of desolation." This desecration is referenced several times in Daniel 8-12, but its fullest description is given in the New Testament by Paul...

Now we request of you\*, brothers [and sisters], in regard to the Arrival [or, Coming] of our Lord Jesus Christ and of our gathering together to Him, for you\* not to be quickly shaken in mind nor to be disturbed, neither by spirit nor by word nor by letters as [written] by us, as [if] that Day of Christ has arrived. Let no one deceive you\* by any means, because [that Day will not come] unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of destruction [or, the one destined to be lost], the one being in opposition [or, being hostile] and puffing himself up with pride over every[thing] being called god or [every] object of worship, with the result that he sits down in the sanctuary of God as God, displaying himself that he is God. -- 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4

I'll give you the likely scenario in my opinion. This is based largely on Revelation 11-12, Psalm 48, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, as well as the entire book of Daniel...

The Antichristian party will organize a large gathering in Jerusalem, similar to Nebuchadnezzar's statue in Daniel 3 and his grandson's raucous party in Daniel 5. Many dignitaries and celebrities will join this circus. It will be as if he has been victorious and the Kingdom of God has been realized in him.

However, in the midst of this there will be several problems. First of all, it seems as if some of the political enemies of the Antichrist are causing massive pressure. Second of all, I believe the witnesses will rise from the dead at this time. Whatever the reasons, the Antichrist will use this opportunity to completely change his tune. He will storm the Temple and desecrate it. He will declare himself to be God. The whole gathering might simply be a ruse, similar to Jehu's call to the worshippers of Baal.

After this turning he will invade the Holy Land, and many believers will be chased out into the wilderness, where they will be supernaturally protected.

Now the gloves are off. The mystery of lawlessness has run its course. Humankind has reached its zenith of sin. Thus, God is about to take his gloves off as well...

## **IV. The Second Half**

### **A. The Trumpets**

The following afflictions are severely extreme. For all intents and purposes, they are like a horror movie come to

life. The trumpet judgments begin with four distinct plagues. They all seem linked to each other, similar to the four horsemen of the previous series.

All these plagues are connected to the scroll which the Lamb of God was given back in Revelation 5. In chapter 6, the first six seals were broken. Chapter 7 provides an interlude which depicts the sealing of the 144,000 and the throng of believers that will be saved during these Days of Awe. Chapter 8 picks up the action again, as the seventh seal brings out the seven trumpet judgments. The first four are sounded forth by angels in Revelation 8, and then two different afflictions are summoned by two more angelic trumpeters in Revelation 9.

The four in chapter 8 all involve heavenly bodies/debris falling to the earth in some way. The first is fire and a bloodlike substance falling to the earth and burning a third of it. The second and third trumpets are so important that I'll relate them in full...

And the second angel sounded [his] trumpet, and [something] like a great burning mountain was thrown into the sea, and the third of the sea became blood. And the third of the creatures in the sea, the ones having life, died, and the third of the ships were utterly destroyed. And the third angel sounded [his] trumpet, and a great star fell out of the sky [i.e., possibly a meteor or comet], burning like a torch, and it fell on the third of the rivers and on the springs of the waters. And the name of the star is called Wormwood [“Bitterness”], and the third of the waters became [fig., turned] into wormwood, and many of the people died from the waters, because they were made bitter. -- 8:8-11

Clearly this is a description of some sort of impact from asteroids or comets, etc. This fear has grown more and more pronounced in popular culture. It's funny how that has happened. We've almost come to the foregone conclusion that we will be struck by such an object one day soon, although this is a very rare fear in terms of world history, and statistically the odds are very low. Obviously this will be one of the most catastrophic events to have ever taken place.

I also believe that there will be a spiritual lesson to be learned. I've written in the past that Mt. Moriah (i.e., the Temple Mount) might fall with the great earthquake described in Revelation 11:13. This earthquake might be the one mentioned in the sixth seal, for when it is broken there will be a tremendous shaking as well...

And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and a great earthquake occurred, and the sun became black as sackcloth [made] of hair, and the whole moon became like blood. And the stars of the sky [i.e., possibly meteors or comets] fell to the earth like a fig tree having cast its unripe figs when shaken by a high wind. [cp. Joel 2:10; 2:31; Matt 24:29] -- Revelation 6:12-13

Obviously around the time of the abomination of desolation the powers of the heavens and the earth will be shaken. I think there might be something didactic about Moriah falling to the ground around the same time that this great asteroid—burning with fire—is cast into the sea. It's as if God proverbially picks up the Temple Mount and hurls it into the ocean...

But answering, Jesus said to them, “Positively, I say to you\*, if you\* are having faith and do not doubt, not

only will you\* perform the [sign] of the fig tree, but even if you\* say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and be cast into the sea,' it will happen." -- Matthew 21:21

It's interesting as well that the fall of Babylon is equated to a great stone being hurled into the sea (see Revelation 18:21 and Jeremiah 51:63-64). When the witnesses are resurrected people will no longer be able to laud the False Prophet in the name of Judeo-Christianity. It will be obvious that God has chosen to glorify the ministry of the witnesses. The only response sinful humanity will have at that point is to turn on God altogether. The next two trumpet judgments will push them even further down that path.

Also, just to round out the picture, the fourth trumpet is the darkening of the heavenly bodies, so that day and night might not shine for a third of their normal vibrancy. I see this merely as a result of the earthquakes and asteroids/comets.

As for the fifth and sixth trumpets, this is where the true horror comes into play. The Bible depicts great monsters terrorizing the earth. Their appearance is ghastly. The first group, summoned by the fifth seal, resemble locust-men, with long hair and lion's teeth. They will torture people for five months with the sting of scorpions, and during this period people will be unable to kill themselves. The designation of five months is similar to the waters of Noah's flood, which prevailed for 150 days (Genesis 7:24). Thus, these demons will literally flood humanity.

I've been fascinated by the work of the investigative journalist Linda Godfrey over the past few years. She has chronicled a vast array of strange, spiritual/freakish



animals that have been spotted across the U.S. over the past century or so. The value of her work is the proof (*in my opinion*) that demons are very fond of terrorizing people in bizarre, animalistic forms. Here's one selection from her vast collection...

...Chad Lewis, Noah Voss, and Kevin Nelson wrote *The Van Meter Visitor* to chronicle three days of mystifying terror when something not quite human paid a visit on the quiet village of Van Meter, Iowa, in the early 1900s.

...The first hint of weirdness came in the wee hours of September 29 when Ulysses Griffith, a local tool and farm implement salesman returning from a business trip, witnessed a strange unidentifiable light hop from rooftop to rooftop over the town's business area at about 1 a.m. He had no way to investigate at that time and was tired, so he continued home and went to bed.

The next evening at about the same time, the town physician—a Dr. Alcott—awoke to some bright light shining into his darkened bedroom. The good doctor grabbed a firearm and went out to confront what he probably supposed was a burglar. Instead, he was met with the strange form and horrific glare of the classic American gargoyle.

Lewis, Voss, and Nelson described the creature that stared back at the doctor as “half human and half animal,” with large, membranous wings and a blunted horn growing out of its forehead. The doctor pumped five bullets into it, but although he fired at fairly close range, the monster seemed unaffected.

...It appeared yet a third night, on October 1, at its preferred witching hour of 1 a.m., to a bank cashier named Clarence Dunn. He had headed to the bank to make sure the supposed “burglar” that had been lurking about the town left his place of employment alone. He was sitting inside, armed with a shotgun, when he heard a strange wheezing noise and then saw the telltale bright light beaming through the front window of the bank. He could make out a huge shadowy figure looming just outside, and he shot it right through the windowpane. When he ran to look, though, there was no dead creature lying outside, just a very large, three-toed print in the dirt.

The creature woke up another businessman who had fallen asleep as he guarded his store from his second-story apartment. He fired upon the dark shape he saw sitting on a wooden telephone pole on the street below, and like the banker, believed that he had hit it. Instead, the creature trained its eerie light straight at him...

...An armed posse organized and stationed itself at the mine shaft to wait for the creatures’ return. And return they did, at about 5:45 that morning, right about sunrise. As the pair of gargoyles came closer, the men all took aim and fired, but the only response of the creatures was to release a “putrid” odor that had also been smelled by one of the downtown businessmen. The creatures flew back into the mine shaft after apparently avoiding the hail of bullets and were never seen again.

This story brings to mind not just other bat-winged creatures but cryptids that usually go wingless, as well. The foul odor is a common feature of encounters with

Bigfoot or Sasquatch, and the inability to be downed by gunfire reminds me of many incidents involving Bigfoot and werewolf-like creatures. [*American Monsters*; New York: Penguin, 2014; pgs. 107-109]

Some of the entities mentioned in Revelation 9 are also said to come from the earth (verse 11), and there will likewise be an accompanying odour of sulfur/brimstone (verse 17). With all the smoky, dusty gloom brought by the fallen heavenly bodies, it will be impossible for people to know where these creatures came from. The bulk of them might simply be manifested out of the thin air anyway. However, they will doubtless be chalked up to an invasion of space aliens.

People are so ridiculously quick to jump to the conclusion that NASA is covering up visitations from aliens already. Every time a speck of debris gets close to an ISS camera, Twitter lights up. What will people think when they are being tortured by devilish locust-men?

The sixth trumpet brings more of the same, only this time death will be the result of a second wave of creatures. The monsters of the next wave will look more like lions, with fire coming out of their mouths and serpent-like tails. Because of the description of fire coming out of their front and back ends, many commentators have said that this is a depiction of modern military equipment. I strongly disagree, but owing to the popularity of this theory, I thought that it at least deserved a mention.

Either way, a third of all people will be killed by these beasts (9:18). It's also worth highlighting the fact that fallen angels are in charge of these two armies of demons in chapter 9. The locusts are controlled by a chief named

Abaddon, while four other angels are released from a prison of sorts that is located near the Euphrates, to lead the lion-like army.

I find great significance in this. The book of 1 Enoch—although not canonical—helpfully highlights the belief of early Judaism that Genesis 6 speaks of fallen angels coming to earth and being judged by God. Jude and 2 Peter certainly taught this. It's likely that these are the same creatures that will be released. The latter apocalypse is the Holy Spirit-filled Christ (*pictured as a Lamb with seven horns; Revelation 5:6*) versus Satan, Abaddon, the four Euphrates angels, and the Antichrist.

## **B. The Basins**

So let's pause for a second and consider salvation history. The first major Jewish holiday in the spring was Passover, where a lamb was slain in commemoration of the exodus from Egypt. Jesus Christ was also slain on Passover. A short while later he arose from the dead, coinciding with the waiving of the omer (see Leviticus 23:11). Seven weeks later the Holy Spirit was poured out from Jesus Christ upon his people, and this happened precisely on the Jewish festival of Shavuot. Then there is a long pause in the Jewish calendar when it comes to major holidays (such as the ones presented in Leviticus 23).

Finally the autumn comes and the holidays resume. The first is Rosh Hashanah, reminiscent of Shavuot; it features a famous shofar blast. This coincides with the Rapture of the Church (*not that this event has to happen precisely on this holiday, for no one knows the hour or the day*), which also features a famous horn (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1

Corinthians 15:52). This begins the time Jews call “the Days of Awe.” There are ten days from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, which are seen as sort of an interim to Judgment Day.

Using this template and understanding the end times as mimicking the Days of Awe, let’s review our timeline. First the Rapture occurs and the world is initially shaken. This eventually causes Gog to lead his invasion into Israel, which ultimately fails. The Antichrist is risen from the dead shortly after the Rapture, and the nation of Israel looks to this rising political star for future salvation. Instead of seeking their sustenance from Jesus of Bethlehem (meaning, “house of bread”), they will rely of clever carnality.

A seven year agreement is signed between this beast and Israel. While this is going on, the true Messiah is being given his eternal agreement in heaven, and begins to break the seals of it. This unleashes great fury in nature, which will last about three-and-a-half years. During this time the 144,000 and/or the witnesses will provide some sort of ministry, and the Gospel will prosper. As we approach the mid-way point (the great *Shabbat Shuvah*) things are beginning to turn dramatically. Christian persecution is rife and the Antichrist is about to enact the greatest season of blasphemy in history.

The mid-way point arrives and the Antichrist declares himself God. The witnesses are resurrected, a great earthquake occurs, and many Jews are converted; these are promptly chased into the wilderness. Shortly after this, the trumpets are blown, and the world is besieged by falling heavenly bodies and fallen angels. This leaves us with the

basin judgments (also called “bowls” or “vials”), leading to Armageddon, the great Yom Kippur.

These last plagues are so severe that they will only last for a short period. They cannot last for too long, or otherwise the whole planet would perish. When the Lamb broke the seventh seal, the seven trumpets were summoned. When the seventh trumpet is blown, the Kingdom has come, ushering these seven basins. With these plagues the world order will be completely overthrown. Here is the list from Revelation 16 of what is set to transpire...

1. Horrible sores on people (v. 2).
2. All the oceans are turned to blood (v. 3).
3. All the rivers (etc.) are turned to blood (v. 4).
4. People are scorched with great heat from the sun (vs. 8-9).
5. Darkness engulfs the kingdom of the beast (v. 10).
6. Physical and spiritual preparations are made for the Battle of Armageddon (vs. 12-16).
7. The greatest earthquake in world history occurs, and giant hailstones pelt the earth (vs. 17-21). This most likely coincides with the physical return of the Messiah to the land of Israel.

So whenever these basins have been poured out in full, the Lord Jesus Christ will be here again. The Great King, the Messiah of Israel will be set to reign for 1,000 years, according to the very clear teaching of Revelation 20.

Also of course, a word needs to be said about Armageddon. This battle features a massive collection of

global warriors who are set to destroy the Messiah. Again, I think it will be because they have become convinced that God is some sort of pernicious alien that must be overcome. The world will have officially watched one too many movies.

Anyway, the Messiah will make short work of this vast soldiery, vanquishing them with ease (see Revelation 19). By the way, Armageddon is not just a Christian teaching. It is also found in the Old Testament books of Isaiah (chapter 63), Joel (chapter 3 in the English Bible/4 in the Hebrew Bible), and Zechariah (chapters 12-14). It's hard to understand these passages through the rationalistic lens of Maimonides. What we have here rather is a divine Messiah, descending from heaven in the most splendid of ways...

Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. -- Zechariah 14:3-4

The greatest obstacle to Muslims and Jews accepting the claims of Jesus Christ is the doctrine of the Trinity. That's a shame, for radical monotheism doesn't really make any sense. It sounds good, but it's logically absurd. What's more "one," a stone or a tiger? Both are "one," right? Those who believe in radical monotheism are equivalent to someone who would say that only a stone is truly "one," since there is profound lack of any internal differentiation. The missiology scholar Tim Tennent presents this

argument adroitly. Speaking concerning the Muslim doctrine of “oneness,” also known as *tawhid*...

...Your objections stem from the same root. You interpret the doctrine of tawhid as either absolute, indivisible unity that cannot permit either descriptive attributes to break down God’s oneness into individual parts or as the personal distinctions inherent in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. However, all unity contains plurality. The idea of undifferentiated unity is only a theoretical construct of the mind or a mathematical abstraction. Ultimately, it is no different from nonbeing. In nature we discover that the lower the degree of differentiation something has, the less unity it has, meaning it is divisible or lacks the quality of indivisibility. For example, a stone has little internal differentiation. If you split a stone into two pieces, you have not destroyed the essence of the stone; you have only created two smaller stones. However, as you go up the chain of being and take, for example, a tiger and cut it into two pieces, you do not get two smaller tigers. In the act of dividing the tiger, you destroy the very essence of the tiger. A tiger, although a complex and internally differentiated creature, has an indivisible essence because it cannot be separated into parts without destroying that essence. Some creatures lower on the chain (like a praying mantis) can be severed into two parts and still live and move independently for some time. Because their differentiation is low, their unity is low. The more conscious and intelligent a being is, the greater the differentiation and the more profound the unity. A person possesses a mind, thoughts, and speech. He or she functions as a unity despite internal



distinctions. The same point could be made about the body, soul, and spirit of a person. The fact that God himself has internal differentiation does not contradict his indivisibility. In fact, we observe this harmony of plurality and unity in all higher life. When Muslims discuss tawhid, they often seem to confuse internal differentiation with external divisibility. This is a grave error. In short, unity does not necessitate singularity. [pgs. 158-159; *Christianity at the Religious Roundtable*; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002]

God has a form, or else what was Zechariah talking about? He said that Jehovah has feet! That form is his Son—the uncreated, eternal Word of God. He is coming; his judgment will be fierce, and his kingdom will be splendid. Let's review both now in summation of our little presentation of eschatology.

## V. The Finale

God made many promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the twelve tribes. Many are yet to be fulfilled. They have yet to truly possess an Eden-like Promised Land. In this age not even Shangri-La is Shangri-La. The real Shangri-La can be a fairly dangerous place from what I've read. However, the Lord Jesus Christ will come and recreate the world into an authentic Paradise. He will institute an age-long Feast of Tabernacles, which is the last Jewish festival in Leviticus 23. People will live long, worship God in peace, and prosper like never before...

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and

understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD...With righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked...And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious. -- Isaiah 11:1-2, 4, 6-10

There are also tribunals set to take place before and after this period. The first will be for the righteous, as those who died in Christ during the tribulation period will be raised to reign with the Messiah throughout his age. After this time, all those who died without Jehovah's salvation will be raised and will stand before God in order to be judged and condemned...

And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them, and the souls of the ones having been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and who did not prostrate themselves in worship before the beast nor its image and did not receive the mark on the forehead and on

their hand. And they lived and reigned [or, began to reign] as kings with Christ [for] the thousand years. And the rest of the dead did not live until the thousand years are completed. This [is] the first resurrection... And I saw a great white throne and the One sitting on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and a place was not found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, having stood before the throne, and scrolls were opened, and another scroll was opened, which is [the Scroll] of Life. And the dead were judged by the [things] having been written in the scrolls, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead, the [ones] in it, and death and the realm of the dead [Gr. hades] gave up the dead, the [ones] in them. And they were judged, each one according to their works. And death and the realm of the dead were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone was not found having been written in the Scroll of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. -- Revelation 20:4-5, 11-15

Everyone has two choices. Either you can be judged for your own sins, or Jesus Christ can be judged in your stead. Indeed, he was condemned as a sinner on behalf of the world when he was crucified. All you have to do to escape the justice of the Holy God is to accept that sacrifice, appropriating it for yourself through faith. Call out to God, repenting of your sins and accepting the sinless sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and you will be granted eternal life, escaping the everlasting torment of the lake of fire—the end result of the sentence of death. As Jesus Christ said (*and this is my favourite verse in the Bible*)...

Most positively, I say to you\*, the one hearing My word and believing [or, trusting] the One having sent Me has eternal life and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life! -- John 5:24

## **VI. Conclusion: Is Prophecy Profitable?**

I decided to write this booklet because I've felt for a while that it's time to hang up my writing spurs. I've written many short works under the name Richie Cooley, and I have mixed feelings about most (all?) of them. I feel like I did the best that I could, yet I still wish I could do it all again and do a much better job. My tone wasn't always what it should have been, and I lack any real talent for writing. Plus, I've been incredibly repetitive.

My main concern throughout my booklets has been to try to present people with reasons to believe in the Bible, especially focusing on prophecy. Since I've written so many scattered thoughts on the subject, I thought I would try to collect them all—one final time—for the sake of convenience and clarity, and set it apart from the others. I must force myself to go into retirement now. There is no point in adding words.

So we began this primer by trying to answer the question of whether or not the Bible even presents prophecy. Hopefully that issue has been firmly settled. Since the Bible does indeed teach prophecy, a question may remain: is eschatology practical? Absolutely. It has changed my life in every way that counts.

First of all, it indeed gives us reasons to believe, as Isaiah said while challenging the pagans...

Declare the things that are going to come afterward,  
that we may know that you are gods... -- 41:23

Second of all, it motivates us unto greater purity, as the  
Apostle John said...

...We know that when it [or, He] shall be revealed, we  
will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is!  
And every one having this hope [or, confident  
expectation] in Him, purifies himself, just as that One is  
pure. -- 1 John 3:2-3

Last of all, God will reward us for this interest, as the  
Apostle Paul said...

I have fought the good fight; I have finished the course  
[or, race]; I have kept the faith. Finally, [there] is laid up  
for me the victor's wreath [or, crown] of righteousness  
which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will give to me in  
that Day, but not only to me, but also to all the ones  
having loved His appearing. -- 2 Timothy 4:7-8

So I encourage you to believe in the Word of God, and  
seek purity while waiting to be rewarded by its Holy  
Author.