**The Time of Jacob’s Trouble**

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**Chapter One**

**The Final Seven Years**

*Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me*, *saying to me*, “*Come*, *I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters*,

*with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication*, *and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication*.”

*So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness*. *And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy*, *having seven heads and ten horns*.

*The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet*, *and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls*, *having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication*.

*And on her forehead a name was written*: *MYSTERY*, *BABYLON THE GREAT*, *THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*. (**Revelation 17:1-5**)

Beginning with **Revelation** chapter **six** and continuing through chapter **nineteen**, Scripture reveals events that will occur during and immediately following *the coming seven-year Tribulation*, “*the time of Jacob*’*s trouble*” (**Jeremiah 30:7**). This will be the time when the final seven years of Daniel’s Seventy-Week prophecy will be fulfilled (**Daniel 9:24-27**), completing a prophecy that began to be fulfilled about 2,450 years ago but was interrupted seven years short of completion almost 2,000 years ago, at the time of Christ’s crucifixion.

In this respect, the Tribulation period comprises the fulfillment of the last seven years of the previous dispensation (the Jewish dispensation), completing Man’s Day and bringing it to a close.

Israel and the Nations

Events occurring during these final seven years will revolve around *Israel and the nations*, with Israel occupying center-stage. This will be the prophesied time of the manifestation of God’s wrath upon the earth-dwellers at the end of Man’s Day. And the Jewish people during this time — scattered among the nations and *the central focus of God*’*s wrath*,because of their past actions (resulting in and centering on *harlotry*) — will be brought into such *dire straits* that they will be left with only one means of deliverance. In that day, they will turn to and call upon the God of their fathers, exactly as seen in the type in the book of **Exodus**, preceding their deliverance under Moses (**Exodus 1:8-3:10**).

God will use the judgments of the Tribulation (chapters **6-19a**) — judgments that will reach a severity unparalleled in man’s history (cf. **Matthew 24:21**, **22**) — to bring Israel to *the place of repentance*.Then, following Christ’s return and Israel’s national conversion and restoration to the land (**Ezekiel 36:24ff**; **37:1ff**), Gentile world power will be *destroyed* (chapter **19b**), with Israel subsequently occupying *the position for which the nation was brought into existence* (chapter **20a**).

1) The Seven-Sealed Scroll

All of the judgments during the Tribulation and immediately following at the time of Christ’s return are seen occurring within the scope of that which is contained in the seven-sealed scroll. That’s why a search was made in chapter **five** for an individual worthy to break the seals of *the scroll alone*, with nothing stated in this chapter about the subsequently revealed judgments under the seven trumpets and seven bowls (seen in chapters **8-11**, **15**, **16**). The reason for this is evident from revelation provided later in the book.

The seven trumpet judgments lie within the seventh seal and are revealed first when this final seal is broken; then the seven bowls of wrath, also lying within the seventh seal, are revealed when the seventh trumpet sounds (**8:1**, **2**; **11:15**; **15:1ff**). Thus, all judgments not seen within the breaking of the first six seals are seen in the trumpet judgments and bowls of wrath when the seventh seal is broken, making all of the judgments seen within the seals, trumpets, and bowls lie within the scope of the seven-sealed scroll.

The seven trumpet judgments and the seven bowls of wrath parallel one another. They have to do with the same judgments — the first trumpet with the first bowl, the second trumpet with the second bowl, etc. The latter (the bowls of wrath) simply form commentary, further descriptions, of the former (the trumpet judgments). This is why *a terminus* can be seen when both the seventh trumpet sounds (**10:7**; **11:15**) and the seventh bowl is poured out (**16:17**). It is *the same terminus*, *described in two different ways*.

Thus, once the seventh seal is broken, the door is then open for all of the remaining judgments to occur.

2) Structure of Chapters **6-19**

Also, note something about the layout of the book, beginning in chapter **six** and continuing through chapter **nineteen**. That which is seen in these chapters forms a chronology of events, but this chronology is interrupted numerous times throughout the book in order that additional, explanatory data can be supplied. And this explanatory data, forming commentary material, drops back and covers events that occur during *the same time* already covered by the preceding material.

This form of revelation is something that is seen throughout Scripture. A complete, chronological sequence of events is given. Then Scripture drops back and provides additional, explanatory data, again covering events during the same time-period that is already covered.

To illustrate, note **Revelation** chapter **twelve** in this respect. Verses **one** through **six** cover the complete sequence of events. Then the remaining verses in the chapter drop back and form commentary for the sequence of events already covered in the first six verses.

All of that which is seen beginning in chapter **six** and continuing through chapter **nineteen** is laid out in this manner. For example, the breaking of the first six seals in chapter **six** covers events occurring during the same time as events seen in chapter **seven**. Then chapter **seven**, dropping back in time, provides commentary material as it relates to Israel and the nations during the time when these six seals in chapter **six** were being broken, with different ensuing events that are seen when each of the seals was broken.

And, by dropping back in time like this, chapter **seven** begins setting the stage for the impartation of different types of commentary material surrounding Israel and the nations, with earlier material forming a foundation for later material. In this particular instance, 144,000 Jews, removed from the nation, are introduced; and later revelation surrounding the 144,000 in the book (chapters **11**, **12**, **14**) builds on the former.

Again, the preceding type of structure is seen throughout the book. And understanding how this book is structured cannot be overemphasized. It is not possible to properly understand the sequence of events depicted in **Revelation 6:1-19:21** unless this structure of the book is recognized.

3) Those in View

Then bear in mind that *Israel and the nations are in view* — *Israel first*, *then the nations* (cf. **Jeremiah 25:15-18**; **Ezekiel 5:5**). And though Israel will be the primary focus of God’s wrath during the time beginning in **Revelation** chapter **six**, judgment will befall the Gentile nations as well. Not only will the Jewish people find themselves scattered among the nations at this time but they will also be the object of an increasing anti-Semitism treatment at the hands of these nations, *resulting in God acting accordingly* (cf. **Genesis 12:3**; **Zechariah 1:14**, **15**).

(Note that the Jewish people will be experiencing God’s wrath and Satan’s wrath *at the same time* during the Tribulation.

*God*’*s wrath* will be designed to bring the Jewish people to the place of repentance, with a view to the nation fulfilling her calling during the ensuing Messianic Era.

*Satan*’*s wrath* will be designed to destroy the Jewish people, allowing him to remain on the throne, preventing the Messianic Era from ever being brought to pass.

By and through circumstances surrounding both God’s wrath and Satan’s wrath manifested toward the Jewish people, God, in His sovereign control of all things, will use Satan’s wrath to bring about that which His own wrath will be manifested to accomplish — *the repentance of the Jewish people*. The man of sin, to whom Satan will give *his power*, *throne*, *and great authority*, will actually be raised up and placed in power by God [**Daniel 4:17**, **25**, **32**] to accomplish this purpose [cf. **Exodus 9:15**, **16**; **Revelation 17:16**, **17**].)

Overview of Chapters Covering the Tribulation (**6-19**)

(The remainder of this **first** chapter will present a succinct overview of that part of the book of **Revelation** covering events during the Tribulation, leading into Christ’s return following the Tribulation [chapters **6-19**]. For a far more detailed exposition of this part of the book of **Revelation** [or the book as a whole], see the author’s book, The Time of the End.)

*Chapter* ***Six***: The first six seals are broken in this chapter, depicting judgments extending throughout the Tribulation. The breaking of the first four seals (vv. **1-8**) — depicting four horsemen riding forth, with ensuing events — actually cover, in skeletal form, events and judgments occurring throughout and immediately following the Tribulation, with the remainder of the book through chapter **nineteen** simply forming commentary to provide all the sinews, flesh, and skin to clothe the skeletal form seen in these opening eight verses (cf. **Ezekiel 37:1-14**).

The preceding, near the close of Scripture (near the close of Man’s Day), is set forth in *exactly the same manner* that is seen in the way Scripture opens and continues at the beginning, in the book of **Genesis** (at the beginning of Man’s Day).

Scripture opens with a skeletal framework — the first thirty-four verses, **Genesis 1:1-2:3** — covering time that is seen in all that follows. The remainder of Scripture, beginning in **Genesis 2:4**, simply forms commentary to provide all the sinews, flesh, and skin to fully clothe the skeletal framework set forth at the beginning.

Then Scripture closes in the same manner, beginning in **Revelation** chapter **six**. As a skeletal framework is set forth at the beginning of Scripture, so it is at the end of Scripture. God began His written Word in a particular way in the book of **Genesis**, and He closes His written Word in the same way in the book of **Revelation**.

*Chapter* ***Seven***: One hundred and forty-four thousand Jews are sealed in this chapter, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes — *an introduction to God*’*s evangels of the Tribulation*, *who will proclaim the message that is seen in* ***Matthew 24:14*** — with the evident results of their ministry, which are seen in the latter part of the chapter.

This chapter provides commentary material on particular events that occur during the time that are covered by the breaking of the first six seals in the previous chapter, which would cover the *time during all of the Tribulation*. It is evident from subsequent revelation that the 144,000 in this chapter are saved and set apart during the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation, with their ministry occurring during the last three and one-half years.

Thus, chapter **six** (the breaking of the first six seals) covers events during the entire seven years of the Tribulation from one perspective. Then, chapter **seven** (the bringing into existence the 144,000 Jewish evangels and the results of their ministry) covers events during the entire seven years of the Tribulation from another perspective.

*Chapters* ***Eight***,***Nine***: After the seventh seal is broken, beginning chapter **eight**, the first six trumpets are blown, depicting judgments occurring following Christ’s return at the end of the Tribulation. Note again that the previous breaking of the first six seals, actually the first four, carry matters to this same time — to the time of Christ’s return and judgments connected with His return, as seen through events depicted when the sixth seal was broken.

(As previously explained and dealt with in different places in this chapter, the book of **Revelation**, rather than being written in a strict chronological order, is structured like the rest of Scripture. A complete panorama of events is often given, followed by commentary. Scripture begins this way in the book of **Genesis**, and it ends this way in the book of **Revelation**.

In the preceding respect, Christ’s return at the end of the Tribulation is seen in three different places in *that section of the book covering the Tribulation and the time immediately beyond* [chapters **6-19**]. It is seen in *chapter* ***six*** [vv. **14-17**], in *chapter* ***fourteen*** [vv. **14-20**], and in *chapter* ***nineteen*** [vv. **11-21**].

For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author’s book, The Time of the End, Chapter 15, “The Great Seismos.”)

And, as previously seen, the seven bowls of wrath (chapters **15**, **16**) parallel the seven trumpet judgments. In this respect, of necessity, the bowls of wrath are revealed when the seventh seal is broken as well. They are not seen before this time, and all of the judgments lie within the scope of the seven seals of the scroll.

*Chapter* ***Ten***: An announcement is made concerning the blowing of the seventh trumpet, which is seen resulting in an end to all of the judgments connected with the seven-sealed scroll. And, as previously stated, matters can be presented in this manner because the seven bowls of wrath (though presented later in the book, in chapters **15**, **16**), parallel the seven trumpet judgments. Both are the same judgments.

A terminus relative to the trumpet (and bowl) judgments is seen in both chapter **ten** and the latter part of chapter **eleven**, which takes one to judgments in connection with the destruction of Gentile world power following Christ’s return at the end of the Tribulation.

Chapter **ten** opens with a mighty angel (the angel with the seventh trumpet) coming down from heaven, with the opened scroll from chapter **five** in his hand. He places his right foot upon the sea and his left upon the earth, signifying *total control*, *dominion*. He then raises his hand to heaven, evidently holding the opened scroll, and “*swore by Him who lives forever and ever* . . . *that there should be delay* [KJV: time] *no longer*” (vv. **1-6**).

That is to say, “delay” relative to the matter at hand — *the redemption of the inheritance* — had been completed. And the opened scroll showed that the seals had all been broken, the judgments had all occurred, the inheritance had been redeemed, and the Messianic Era could now be ushered in.

The preceding is why, in the latter part of chapter **eleven**, in connection with the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Scripture states:

*Then the seventh angel sounded*: *And there were loud voices in heaven*, *saying*, “*The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ* [lit., ‘The kingdom of this world is become that of our Lord, and of His Christ’]; *and He shall reign forever and ever.*” (v. **15**)

Also, note the“*mystery of God*” being finished in connection with the sounding of the seventh angel (**10:7**). “Mysteries” in Scripture have to do with *truths seen in the Old Testament that are opened up and revealed in the New Testament*.The “*mystery of God*” has to do with the subject of the book of **Revelation** — *the unveiling of Jesus Christ*, *fully revealing the Son*, *who is God* (**Revelation 1:1**). And at this point in the book of **Revelation**, a terminal point in the book, this will have been accomplished.

The “*mystery of God*” *will have been finished*; “the Son” *will have been fully revealed*.

Furthermore, “*finished*” relative to *the mystery of God* in **Revelation 10:7** is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, showing the matter as *finished in past time and existing in that finished state during present time*. *Nothing more can be added*; *nor can anything be taken away*.

*Chapter* ***Eleven***: This is the first of a number of chapters (chapters **11-14**, **17-19a**) that drop back and cover events occurring, at times, throughout the entire seven years (the same way events in chapter **7** were seen in relation to events in chapter **6**). And chapter **eleven** is one of the chapters that drops back to the beginning of the Tribulation and covers specific events occurring throughout this period. The ministry of the two witnesses occurs in this chapter, along with the city of Jerusalem being trodden under foot by the Gentiles for the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation (cf. **Daniel 9:26**; **Matthew 24:15ff**; **Luke 21:20-24**; **2 Thessalonians 2:3ff**; **Revelation 11:2**, **3**).

It is evident that the ministry of the two witnesses occurs during the first half of the Tribulation, for several reasons:

1. Their ministry appears to be centered in Israel, particularly in Jerusalem. Jerusalem though will be destroyed in the middle of the Tribulation, with the Jews in Jerusalem and the land of Israel either being killed, escaping to a place of safety specially prepared by God for them, or being sold as slaves throughout the Gentile world (cf. **Joel 3:6**; **Zechariah 13:8**, **9**; Matthe**w 24:21**, **22**; **Luke 21:20-24**; **Revelation 12:13-17**). The status of the Jews in Israel, their capital city, and their land during the last half of the Tribulation would result in conditions of a nature rendering it quite unlikely that the ministry of these two witnesses could occur during this time.
2. It seems evident from comparing **Revelation 11:13** and **Revelation 12:17** that the 144,000 previously introduced in chapter **seven** will hear the message from the two witnesses (or perhaps from individuals saved as a result of their ministry) during the first half of the Tribulation, resulting in their being saved and set apart during this time.

At the end of their ministry, the two witnesses will be slain; and their “*dead bodies*” will be allowed to lie, unburied, “*in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt*, *where also our Lord was crucified* [i.e., in *Jerusalem*]” (v. 8). Then, “*after* *three-and -a-half days*” (apparently marking off a day for each year of their previous ministry), *breath* will re-enter their bodies, they will stand “*on their feet*,” *great fear* will fall upon those seeing them, but *they will simply ascend* “*to heaven in a cloud*” (vv. **9-12**).

The “*cloud*” which will receive the two witnesses into the heavens will evidently be the same “*cloud*” that received Christ into the heavens at the time of His ascension — *the Glory of God* (cf. **Acts 1:9**; **1 Timothy 3:16**; **Revelation 11:12**).

This chapter, as previously noted, also records “*the voice of the seventh angel*,” introduced in the previous chapter (**10:7**; **11:15**). And, for evident reasons, the end of the matter is pictured again, pointing this time to *the goal* toward which everything in the book moves — *the kingdom of this world* (*under Satan and his angels*) *becoming the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ* (*under Christ and His co-heirs*).

*Chapter* ***Twelve***: More commentary is provided in this chapter. But one can’t begin at this point in the book. The previously provided commentary material has to be understood first in order to properly understand this chapter. And, in like manner, revelation in this chapter, along with revelation in previous chapters, is necessary in order to properly understand revelation in subsequent chapters. This is simply the manner in which the book has been laid out and structured.

This chapter, as with all of the book and the Bible as a whole, is rich in metaphors. Three metaphors are used to depict individuals or groups of individuals — *a woman*, *a dragon*, *and a man-child*.And all three are identified in the chapter.

Note something that Scripture doesn’t do.  *It doesn*’*t* provide revelation of this nature (metaphors) and then leave the interpretation to man. Rather, *Scripture is its own interpreter*, *not only when using metaphors but at all times*.

The “*woman*” can only be identified as *Israel* (from that which is stated about her in the chapter), the “*dragon*” is identified as *Satan* (v. **9**), and the” *man child*” can only be identified as “*the rest of her offspring*” (v. **17**) — the 144,000 previously introduced (chapter **7**) and about to be dealt with again (chapter **14**).

Note that the woman gives birth to the man-child *very near the middle of the Tribulation*. This birth will occur *following* that time when Satan and his angels have been cast out of their place in heaven, *following* that time when all seven heads of the beast have been crowned (which shows the timing of this event to be near the middle of the Tribulation), but before Jerusalem is destroyed in the middle of the Tribulation and the Jews then find themselves subjected to the beast’s wrath (vv. **3**, **4**).

(In the preceding respect, the gestation period for childbirth as it relates to the woman and man-child is seen covering at least most of the first half of the Tribulation, paralleling the ministry of the two witnesses. Individuals comprising the man-child will evidently be saved at different times throughout this period, progressively continuing to add to the total until the number is complete — 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel.

The child, prior to birth, will grow in this manner and ultimately become fully developed near the middle of the Tribulation [all 144,000 finally saved], with the woman then experiencing “*birth pangs*” and bringing forth the man-child [cf. **Matthew 24:8-14**; **Mark 13:8-10**, NASB].)

*Chapter* ***Thirteen***: Commentary is provided in this chapter for the beast (and his false prophet), who has already been introduced in the preceding chapter (v. **3**). The “*beast*” arises out of *the sea*, referring to *the Gentile nations*; and the “*false prophet*” arises out of *the earth* [or, *the land* (as opposed to “*the sea*”)], referring to *the land of Israel* (vv. **1**, **11**).

According to Daniel, the beast will arise from within the boundaries of the northern part of the Babylonian kingdom as it was divided following Alexander the Great’s death in 323 B.C. (**Daniel 8:8**, **9**). This territory today would cover parts of northern Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey. This man will be a Gentile ruler coming out of this part of the world, and his false prophet will evidently be a Jew coming out of the land of Israel.

*Chapter* ***Fourteen***: This chapter provides additional commentary material on the 144,000 in order to explain previous revelation. The 144,000, previously seen removed from the earth (**12:5**), are seen in heaven in this chapter (vv. **1ff**). Thus, it is evident that they will have to be sent back to the earth to carry out their ministry, which will occur during the last half of the Tribulation (cf. **Matthew 24:14**; **Mark 13:10**).

They will be removed from Satan’s jurisdiction either at the time of or shortly after their birth,i.e., shortly after a bringing forth of the full 144,000, the birth of the man-child (Satan will have previously been cast out of heaven and will no longer have access to this realm [**12:4**, **7-10**]). Then, at a later time, they will have to be sent back to the earth, allowing them to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to the Gentiles for the last three and one-half years of the Tribulation.

(This would have its parallel in Christ being taken to Egypt shortly after His birth, removed from Herod’s jurisdiction. Then He was later brought back to the land of Israel to subsequently proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to Israel for three and one-half years.

Or, note that both Paul and John were taken to isolated places [Paul seemingly to Arabia; John to Patmos] and then removed from the earth and taken into heaven to receive instruction or revelation [Paul (**2 Corinthians 12:1-7**; **Galatians 1:17**, **18**); John (**Revelation 1:9**, **10**)].)

The 144,000 will form *a first fruit of the nation* (v. **4**; “*first fruit*” is singular in the Greek text). Israel was called into existence to be God’s witness to the nations, to carry God’s message to the Gentiles throughout the earth (**Isaiah 43:1-10**). However, the Jewish people refused. They went the way of Jonah and eventually, because of their disobedience, found themselves in the same place Jonah found himself because of disobedience — “*in the sea*,” i.e., *scattered among the same nations to which they were supposed to have carried God*’*s message*, *in the place of death*, *to be raised on the third day*.

The 144,000, who will carry the message of the one true and living God to the Gentiles worldwide during the last half of the Tribulation, will form *a first fruit of the nation* with respect to the nation’s calling. Then *the entire nation will form the main harvest* and occupy a position of this nature during the Messianic Era, following the repentance, conversion, and restoration of the Jewish people near and at the end of the Tribulation.

Of particular interest is the statement introducing the identity of the 144,000 in verse **four**, along with that which is stated in verses **six** through **eight**.

In the introductory statement, the 144,000 are said to not be “*defiled with women*” (v. **4a**). That is, the 144,000, though out the nation of Israel, will no longer be seen associated with the nation’s defilement — a defilement shown numerous places in the Old Testament to be *harlotry* (e.g., **Isaiah 1:4-7**, **21**; **Jeremiah 3:1-14**; **Hosea 2:1-13**); and the nation’s harlotry is about to be brought into full view in the book of **Revelation**.

A first fruit of the nation will have been saved, and *cleansing* will have occurred (something awaiting the remainder of the nation); and, with this *cleansing*, they will find themselves referred to as “*virgins*,” in sharp contrast to the way in which the nation as a whole will still be viewed.

Then there is the mention of *good news to be proclaimed worldwide*, *in connection with judgment* (vv. **6**, **7**), which, contextually, would appear to be an allusion to the ministry of the 144,000 (though an angel is seen proclaiming the message, which would be in complete keeping with the way angels appear throughout the book — having a part in announcements, carrying out certain activities, etc.).

This angel though will not be the one actually proclaiming the message. The gospel message has not been committed to angels, but to man. Rather, it appears clear from the context that this angel has been placed in charge of, has the message that the 144,000 will proclaim during the last half of the Tribulation.

And this is immediately followed by attention once again being called to “*that great city* [or, ‘the great city’]” (the wording in the Greek text is always the same and can be translated either way).

The opening reference to “*the great city*” in **11:8**, identifying the city as *Jerusalem* (a name used in Scripture to refer to both a city and the Jewish people [e.g., **Lamentations 1:1-9**; **Matthew 23:37-39**]), associates the city with two places, with “Sodom” and “Egypt.” This reference — *showing sexual immorality of a very degrading nature* (seen in Sodom), *occurring in the world where the woman from chapter* ***twelve***, *Israel*, *resides* (typified by Egypt) — would be setting the stage for that about to be revealed concerning the city, or the Jewish people. Then vv.**14:8** and **16:19** provide the necessary additional information to finish setting the stage for that which is about to be revealed (in chapters **17**, **19a**), *metaphorically* associating “*that great city*” with a city in another geographical location, with *Babylon*.

(It appears evident that “*Babylon*” is used as *a metaphor* when referencing “*that great city*” in vv. **14:8** and **16:19**. Note the way similar metaphors are used when “*the great city*” is introduced in v. **11:8** [cf. **Isaiah 1:9**, **10**], along with the extensive use of other metaphors in the book. And this will be shown to be the correct way to view matters by and through verses of Scripture dealing with “*that great city*,” called “*Babylon*,” in chapters **seventeen** and **eighteen**.

That is to say, the context on both sides of vv. **14:8** and **16:19** will show, beyond question, that “*Babylon*” is used in these verses as *a metaphor*, in exactly the same sense that “*Sodom*” and “*Egypt*” are used as metaphors in v. **11:8** — referencing two related parts to a particular facet of defilement associated with *Jerusalem*, i.e.,with *the Jewish people*.)

Then note the sequence of events in the latter part of chapter **fourteen**, comparing this section of Scripture with the same sequence of events seen in chapters **seventeen** through **nineteen**.

The “*great city*,” previously introduced in chapter *eleven* and identified as *Jerusalem* (v. **8**) appears a second time in the book, in chapter **fourteen**, but is now associated with *Babylon and harlotry*. And this is accompanied by a reference to *the kingdom of the beast* (Antichrist) and its destruction at the time of Christ’s return (vv. **8-20**).

Exactly the same thing is seen again in chapters **seventeen** through **nineteen**. A more detailed exposition of “*that great city*” is accompanied by a more detailed exposition of *the kingdom of the beast* (chapters **17-19a**), followed by its destruction (chapter **19b**).

With all this as background material, sufficient detail has been given — based on numerous Old Testament references — for a proper understanding of that which is about to be presented in chapter **seventeen** through the first part of chapter **nineteen** (by and though the judgments depicted by the pouring out of the seven bowls precede the revelation in these three chapters). All previous revelation bearing on the subject forms the foundation for that seen in these three chapters, where “*that great city*” is seen as “*BABYLON THE GREAT*, *THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*” (**17:5**, **18**).

(Note Peter’s reference at the end of his first epistle to having written this epistle from “*Babylon*” [**1 Peter 5:13**]. Expositors often associate “*Babylon*” in this verse with *Rome*;others believe that Peter was referencing the literal city of *Babylon*. But it is quite unlikely that Peter ever traveled to either city. Peter was the apostle called to conduct his ministry among the Jews [**Galatians 2:7**], and the center of his ministry in this respect would be *Jerusalem*.

If Peter was using *a metaphor*, which appears far more likely than not, comparing Scripture with Scripture would limit the association of this metaphor to *only one city* — not Rome, but *Jerusalem.*)

*Chapters* ***Fifteen*** *and* ***Sixteen***: Chapter **fifteen** introduces the bowl judgments, and chapter **sixteen** provides details concerning the pouring out of all seven bowls, which, as previously seen, occur in conjunction with the seven trumpet judgments; and these bowls of wrath, as the corresponding trumpet judgments, bring all of the judgments seen within the scope of the seven-sealed scroll to an end (**16:17-21**).

In **Revelation 16:17**, the words “*It is done*” following the pouring out of the seventh bowl, are the translation of a perfect tense in the Greek text, the same tense used for the mystery of God being “*finished*” when the seventh trumpet was sounded in **Revelation 10:7**. Both refer to the same time, event, and end — an act showing that all action related to judgments connected with the breaking of the seals on the scroll *had been finished (in past time) and existed in that finished state* (*during present time*).

(Throughout Scripture God is seen using *numbers* to reveal specific truths, with all of Scripture established on *a numeric structure — a septenary structure*, at the beginning [**Genesis 1:1-2:3**]. Different numbers carry particular but different meanings. And, in this respect, in **Revelation** chapters **six** through **sixteen**, there are *three sets of sevens* comprising all of the judgments seen in the seven-sealed scroll from chapter **five** — seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven bowls.

“Three” is *the number of divine perfection*, and “seven” is *a complete number*, used throughout Scripture as *God*’*s number.* Thus, all of these judgments together show *divine perfection within God*’*s complete judgment upon the earth-dwellers during* “*the time of Jacob*’*s trouble*” — judgments covering time during Daniel’s Seventieth Week, *designed not only to redeem the inheritance but to bring Israel to the place of repentance*. *And this will result in a redeemed nation being restored to her land and placed at the head of the Gentile nations*, *followed by an end to and destruction of Gentile world power*.

Also by and through these judgments being brought to pass, the redemption of the inheritance will result in both the bride becoming the Lamb’s wife and Israel being restored as the wife of Jehovah — both necessary before the Son can reign and before Israel can occupy her God-ordained place as firstborn.)

*Chapters* ***Seventeen*** *through* ***Nineteen***: These three chapters deal with *a woman* and *a scarlet beast* (**17:3**).

The “*woman*” is associated with *Babylon*, referred to through the use of the word “*mystery*” (vv. **5**, **7**), called “*THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*” (v. **5**), and was previously introduced through different means in chapters **eleven**, **twelve**, **fourteen**, and **sixteen**.

And the “*beast*” (also referred to by the use of the word “m*ystery*” [v. **7**]) is associated with “*the seven heads*” and “*the ten horns*,” and was previously introduced different ways in chapters **twelve** through **sixteen**. The “*beast*” is then identified in verses **eight** through **fourteen**, and the “*woman*” is identified in verses **fifteen** through **eighteen**.

The two subsequent chapters in this book (Chapters 2, 3) deal with material in **Revelation** chapters **seventeen** through **nineteen**. Chapter 2 deals with Israel’s harlotry being brought to an apex in the kingdom of the beast, followed by an end to this harlotry. And Chapter 3 deals with the kingdom of the beast, the final form of the kingdom of Babylon, being brought to its end.

(A “mystery [Greek: *musterion*, meaning, ‘a hidden thing,’ ‘a secret’]” in the New Testament is usually defined as *something previously hidden but now revealed* [cf. **Romans 16:25**; **Ephesians 3:4**, **5**]. This definition though should not be thought of along the lines of something not found in previous revelation, for there is nothing in the New Testament that does not have its roots somewhere in the Old Testament. Rather, a “mystery,” in reality, pertains to *something previously made known* [e.g., *seen in the types*] *but not opened up* [*or fully opened up*] *to one*’*s understanding until a later point in time*.

The revealing of a mystery requires divine action [e.g., Christ, in time past, opened His disciples’ understanding by explaining previously revealed revelation surrounding mysteries (cf. **Matthew 13:10**, **11**; **Ephesians 3:2**, **3**); and the indwelling Spirit, today, leads individuals “*into all truth*” surrounding mysteries (cf. **John 16:13-15**; **1 Corinthians 13:2**)]. That is, the Spirit takes something in the Scriptures that cannot be understood [or fully understood] in and of itself and, through divine leadership [using additional revelation that casts light on the earlier revelation (comparing Scripture with Scripture under the leadership of the indwelling Spirit)], opens the matter to an individual’s understanding.)

“These are ‘mysteries’ [a reference to ‘the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens’ in **Matthew 13**] because men by nature and by their own abilities are unable to discover and to know them. It must ‘be given’ to a man ‘to know’ them. This divine giving is done by means of revelation. . . ”

— R. C. H. Lenski