

***We ended yesterday with the angel warning of the three woes which were to come on the earth. They tell us that as awful as the first four trumpets judgements have been, these will be surpassed by what is now coming upon the earth.***

Man's rebellion against God strangely gets progressively worse. They are aware that they have sinned against a Holy God and are in the middle of judgement, but they persist in their stubborn self-will against God.

These three woes are the ***fifth, sixth, and seventh*** trumpet judgements.

***The 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet and the third woe*** are synonymous and introduce the ***last half*** of the Tribulation and the bowl or vial judgements. This is where Satan is given full sway over the earth for a short period and you could say 'all hell breaks loose'.

#### *Revelation 9: 1 - 12*

Fifth Trumpet: First Woe Judgement and the Locusts from the Bottomless Pit

*<sup>1</sup>Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. <sup>2</sup>And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. <sup>3</sup>Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. <sup>4</sup>They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but **only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.** <sup>5</sup>And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. <sup>6</sup>In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them. <sup>7</sup>The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. <sup>8</sup>They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. <sup>9</sup>And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. <sup>10</sup>They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. <sup>11</sup>And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. <sup>12</sup>**One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things.***

This passage begins with a 'star' falling from heaven to the earth. As we have already seen when 'stars' are mentioned, they are angelic beings; this one is a fallen angel, sent for the purpose of unlocking the bottomless pit in which a demonic horde is imprisoned for such a time as this, and it is named Abaddon, or Apollyon – both mean '**destroyer**' or '**destruction**'.

It is the time for this horde to be unleashed **on the earth** for a season. Not all fallen angels are kept in this place – when we studied 'What happens when a person dies' and 'Angels', we saw that the angels who '*left their first estate*', (Genesis 6) some of those who fell when Satan rebelled against God, are

kept in chains in **Tartarus** until the Great White Throne judgement. But these hideous beings in Revelation 9 have a specific purpose in God's timetable, and so they are unleashed as the **fifth trumpet** blows and the **first woe** begins.

It is interesting to see that they have a limitation on their power – they do not have the authority to kill, but only to **torment** for five months. Furthermore, they cannot touch the ones who have been sealed by God Himself, only those who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads, so the 144,000, and other believers, are exempt from any harm in this **first demonic invasion**.

At no time is anyone other than God Himself in control of what is happening both in heaven and on earth. The purpose of God, in His absolute goodness, is to bring man to repentance and faith.

The five months of torment will eventually come to an end, but although mankind may see some relief, it will be very short lived –

### **Revelation 9:13 - 21**

Sixth Trumpet: Second Woe Judgement and the Angels from the Euphrates

*<sup>13</sup> Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, <sup>14</sup> saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." <sup>15</sup> So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. <sup>16</sup> Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. <sup>17</sup> And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulphur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone. <sup>18</sup> By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed—by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. <sup>19</sup> For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. <sup>20</sup> But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. <sup>21</sup> And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.'*

Although one woe is past, two other woes are yet to come. As terrible as the first woe is, it will be eclipsed by the terror of the **sixth trumpet** which introduces the **second woe**.

With the sounding of the sixth trumpet, the four fallen angels bound at the Euphrates River are released. These are the leaders of the **second demonic invasion**. Whilst the first invasion was led by one fallen angel, this is led by four. Whilst the first demonic horde only had *permission* to torment, this horde has *permission* to **kill** one third of the population of the earth. So this second woe is indeed worse than the first.

Incredible as it may seem, this army are given the authority to slaughter a third of the world's population, this is in addition to those who died as a result of the fourth horseman whom we met in chapter 6:8 where 25% of the population were killed as a result of the pestilence which followed the wars. (reminder here) *“<sup>8</sup>When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, "Come and see."<sup>9</sup> So I looked, and behold, **a pale horse**. And the name of him who sat*

*on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

*The fourth seal is opened and the rider on the sickly **green horse, or pale horse** comes forth. Seated on the horse was a rider named Death and Hades followed on behind. Note that there was given to them authority over a **quarter of the earth to kill**. Just who is in charge here? In this judgement one quarter of the world's population is destroyed."*

*As incredible as it may seem, this means that **one half** of the world's population will be killed during the first half of the Tribulation – 'the rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues, still not did repent of the works of their hands.'*

All this has little or no effect for we are told - they did not repent.

Since this trumpet judgement brings us close to the middle of the Tribulation period we find that about half of the world's unregenerate population will have died.

So the first nine chapters of the book have brought us almost to the middle of the Tribulation period.

The 7 seal judgements covered the first quarter, the seventh seal introduced the next quarter – the trumpet judgements – and now chapters 10:1 – 11:14 comprise a 'parenthetical section' - infill detail – which was given to John just before the prophecy concerning the last half of the Tribulation.

This section is to the trumpet judgements what chapter 7 was to the seal judgements – a description of conditions that exist **on the earth** during this particular period of time covered by the preceding judgements. You will remember that chapter 7 told us about the sealing of the 144,000 Jews that was happening on earth. These chapters tell us about the Mighty Angel and the little book and the two witnesses who again are literally **on the earth**. So we see the order going forth from heaven and then the results on the earth.

The chronology gets a little difficult at this point because there is so much going on. Rather than divert from our course, I will go on through the chapters, highlighting the significant events as we go along, but they may not be strictly in the correct order, because to bring them in the correct order would be to take the chapters out of sequence. If you understand my meaning! So -

### **Revelation 10:1 – 11:14**

#### **Revelation 10: 1 – 7**

The Mighty Angel with the Little Book

*<sup>1</sup>I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. <sup>2</sup> He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, <sup>3</sup>and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices. <sup>4</sup>Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them." <sup>5</sup>The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven <sup>6</sup> and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and*

*the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer, <sup>7</sup> but in the days of the sounding of the **seventh** angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.'*

Again we see what a prominent role the angels have in the book of Revelation. They are mentioned more than 66 times throughout the book, always in a position of service. This angel is glorious and he is huge! We shall shortly see another angel of similar proportions when we arrive at Revelation 18; they are endowed with great power and authority as we will see.

This particular angel straddles the earth and the sea indicating that he has authority over the land and the sea. Just as John is about to write what is being said, he is forbidden to do so which is reminiscent of Daniel being told to seal up the book until the appointed time. (Daniel 12:4) *"But you, **Daniel**, shut up the words, and **seal the book** until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall increase."*

Up to this point six of the seven trumpets have sounded, so there is yet one more. The results of the seventh trumpet are now announced by the strong angel – in the days of the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet the judgements of God will be completed. Just as the 7<sup>th</sup> seal judgement contained the 7 trumpet judgements, the seventh trumpet judgement will contain the 7 bowl judgements which will finish the judgements of God declared by the prophets.

All the prophecies dealing with the second half of the Tribulation will then be fulfilled. The seventh trumpet that contains the seven Bowl Judgements is the third woe. For this reason, it is the worst of all.

The little book contains all the information regarding the seventh trumpet.

### **Revelation 10: 8 – 11**

#### ***John Eats the Little Book***

<sup>8</sup>*Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth."*

<sup>9</sup>*So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth."*

<sup>10</sup>*Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. <sup>11</sup> And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."*

John's attention is focussed on the Little Book – in his mouth the taste was as sweet as honey, but it becomes bitter in his stomach. The clue to the meaning of this symbolic act is found in verse 11 which says John must now prophecy again *'about many peoples, nations, tongues and kings.'* This clearly shows us that the contents of the Little Book are prophetic, and especially pertain to the middle and second half of the Tribulation.

Revelation 10 then introduces us to the events of the middle of the Tribulation.

## Revelation 11:1 – 6

### The Two Witnesses

*<sup>1</sup> Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. <sup>2</sup> But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. <sup>3</sup> And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."<sup>4</sup> These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. <sup>5</sup> And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. <sup>6</sup> These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.*

On to the stage of prophecy now come the two witnesses. These were given power to prophesy for 1,260 days which is the equivalent of three and a half years.

Their identity is revealed in verse 4, they are the fulfilment of -

### **Zechariah 4:11 -14**

*<sup>11</sup> Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees—at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" <sup>12</sup> And I further answered and said to him, "What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?" <sup>13</sup> Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." <sup>14</sup> So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."*

From the way that they prophesy and the power they have, we can conclude that these two witnesses are Moses, whose body God took and hid from the eyes of Satan, (*Jude 9*) and Elijah, who was not. He was translated. We saw these before, during the ministry of Jesus Himself upon the earth, these were the two who appeared with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration.

**Matthew 17:3** *'And behold, **Moses and Elijah** appeared to them, talking with Him.'*

These two witnesses have power and authority and during the first three and a half years of the tribulation time, they will prophesy and give the gospel in Jerusalem and their warnings will be dire. Anyone who hears them will be in no doubt at all about the way of salvation or the penalty for unbelief. This will be in direct contrast to the powers being exhibited at this time by the antichrist. They will not be popular.

The measuring of the Temple area is a spiritual measuring of the hearts of the **Jewish** people, who are found to be hardened to the gospel pleas of the two witnesses and to the 144,000 who will also be witnessing around the earth at the same time.

### Revelation 11: 7 – 10

#### The Two Witnesses Killed

<sup>7</sup> When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. <sup>8</sup> And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. <sup>9</sup> Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. <sup>10</sup> And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.'

*Still on the earth now, from our text we see that when their testimony is finished, the beast is allowed to kill them according to God's predetermined purpose. We also see that the Holy City, Jerusalem, has degenerated to such an extent that the bodies of the two witnesses will be left in the street for three days for people to gloat over – it is so degenerate in fact that it is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt, which speak of immorality and materialism. The death of these two witnesses causes great merriment and rejoicing for a short time until we see -*

### Revelation 11: 11 – 14

#### The Witnesses Resurrected

<sup>11</sup> Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. <sup>12</sup> And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. <sup>13</sup> In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven. <sup>14</sup> The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Their rejoicing was short lived. The most amazing thing is taking place here, in front of many witnesses these two men are resurrected and ascend to heaven just as Jesus did, not only that, but the voice from Glory, speaks. Awesome as this is, it is followed almost immediately by a great earthquake which causes a tenth of the city to be razed to the ground and many people are killed. The good news is that *'the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.'* Finally God has their attention!

The beast here referred to is the Beast we will come to in Revelation 13. This is the first time we see this description of him – he comes up from the Abyss because he died and is resurrected as we will see later on. Do take note that he has **no power over** them until their work is finished, and the Lord calls them home. Revelation is **not** a book about the works of the devil; it is a book about the glory of God and the goodness of God towards unrepentant humankind, and a revelation of the exceeding sinfulness of sin.

### Revelation 11: 15 – 19

#### ***The Seventh Trumpet: The Third Woe Judgement***

<sup>15</sup> 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, and He shall reign forever and ever!" <sup>16</sup> And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and

worshiped God <sup>17</sup> saying “ We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned. <sup>18</sup> The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, and those who fear Your name, small and great, and should destroy those who destroy the earth.” <sup>19</sup> Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.

**When the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet is sounded it is a proclamation -**

### **Revelation 11:15 -**

*<sup>15</sup>The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and He shall reign for ever and ever’*

Here we see something amazing in heaven, in verse 19 the Temple of God was ‘*opened in heaven and the ark of His covenant was seen*’ and we get a glimpse of what surrounds the ark and the Glory and Majesty of God is expressed by the elders in their worship, who see that the culmination of all things is near and the time of the final judgement of Satan, and unbelievers, and the reward of the tribulation saints is about to take place. Not only this, the exposing of the Temple and the Ark, again speaks of its relevance to the nation of Israel and the Jews specifically.

This 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet contains the **7 vials or goblet judgements** which contain the **seven last plagues** which are to come upon the earth, but we don’t actually get to see them poured out until Revelation 16 because there are some interesting infill details we need to understand first.

This is where people frequently get muddled, because Revelation 12, 13 and 14 are parenthetical, this point is dropped temporarily and picked up again in Revelation 15, 16 and the chronological order is resumed.

What this parenthesis does is to tell us quite clearly why these Bowl Judgements are necessary. Revelation 12, 13 and 14 shows events on earth which **necessitate** the pouring out of the bowl judgements. We will see the counterfeit trinity’s activities and how they fail. Revelation 15...and I saw 7 angels having the 7 last plagues. ...Revelation 16 sees these plagues poured out over the earth – they follow one another in quick succession. The result of this horrendous judgement is that men blasphemed God because of the plague(s). So first, let’s have a look at -

### **Revelation 12:1 - 6**

The Woman, the Child, and the Dragon

*<sup>1</sup>Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. <sup>2</sup> Then being with child, she cried out in labour and in pain to give birth. <sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. <sup>4</sup> His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. <sup>5</sup> She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. <sup>6</sup> Then the woman fled into the wilderness,*

*where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days'.*

I am going to break this down into three sections, dealing first with the woman, then with the child, and finally with the dragon.

## **Revelation 12: 1 -2**

### ***The Woman***

Here we need to remember our rule, that when the scripture says things we take it **literally** unless we have good reason to do otherwise.

In his opening remarks in Chapter 12 John says *"Now a great **sign** appeared in heaven..."* Clearly then, we are looking at something which is not literal but figurative. **A sign**. The question is, who is the woman and what do the **'signs'** around her mean?

If we cannot identify her we will not understand the passage. The bible as usual is its own commentary. All we have to do is to find where the sun, moon and twelve stars are mentioned before - law of first mention - and the context in which they are mentioned.

Some of you will already be in advance of me, but go now to -

### **Genesis 37:5 – 10**

*<sup>5</sup> Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. <sup>6</sup> So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: <sup>7</sup> There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."<sup>8</sup> And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. <sup>9</sup> Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."<sup>10</sup> So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"*

From this passage we can see how useful it is to have the law of first mention. We can see clearly that the sun is Jacob, the moon, Jacob's wife, and the eleven stars are Joseph's brothers bowing down to him.

So the picture in **Revelation 12:1 - 2** refers to the **Jewish nation and the history of that nation** - very important if you are to interpret the book of Revelation correctly.

You will know that this nation began when God called Abram out of Ur of the Chaldees (or Babylonia) to make of him a nation. Abraham then had Isaac, who fathered Jacob and here is Jacob with his sons through which God established the nation of Israel. Jacob's name was changed from Jacob to Israel at the brook Jabbok where he 'wrestled' with God.



## **Genesis 32: 22 – 32**

<sup>22</sup> And he arose that night and took his two wives, his two female servants, and his eleven sons, and crossed over the ford of Jabbok. <sup>23</sup> He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had. <sup>24</sup> Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. <sup>25</sup> Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. <sup>26</sup> And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" <sup>27</sup> So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." <sup>28</sup> And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." <sup>29</sup> Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. <sup>30</sup> So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." <sup>31</sup> Just as he crossed over Peniel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. <sup>32</sup> Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.'

Clearly then the woman clothed with the sun is the **nation of Israel** – **not** Mary as some have said.

## **Revelation 12:5**

### ***The Child***

<sup>5</sup> She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.'

**Revelation 12:5** tells us that this '**man-child**' will rule the nations with a rod of iron. Question is do we see this reference anywhere else?

### **Psalm 2:7-9 -**

<sup>7</sup>"I will declare the decree: the LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. <sup>8</sup>Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. <sup>9</sup>You shall break them with **a rod of iron**; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'"

### **Revelation 2:27 –**

<sup>27</sup>He shall rule them with a **rod of iron**; they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' even as I also have received from My Father;'

### **Revelation 19:15**

<sup>15</sup>Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with **a rod of iron**. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.'

From these scriptures we are in no doubt that **Revelation 12:5** is a reference to Jesus, the Messiah.

## Revelation 12 : 3 -4

### **The Dragon**

*<sup>3</sup>And another **sign** appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. <sup>4</sup> His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.'*

Here we clearly see another '**sign**', this '**dragon**' with seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems on his heads. We will leave the explanation of what this is for the moment and concentrate on Satan's attempts to exterminate the nation of Israel which culminated in his incitement to crucify Jesus, which rebounded on him with disastrous results.

The Jewish nation has always been like a pregnant woman before Satan, the nation who would bring forth the Messiah, the One who would ultimately crush his head.

So from Abraham to the time Jesus died on the cross, the attack against the Jews was aimed at destroying the Messiah.

You can trace the line of Jesus through the Old Testament and you will see that Satan came within one small child of destroying the line through which Messiah was to come. (*2 Kings 11:1-16 and 2 Chronicles 22:10 –12*). Jesus is to come from the line of Judah, and this is going on in Jerusalem after the kingdom was divided into two with Israel occupying the northern territory and Judah occupying Jerusalem – if you want to see this kingdom division it is in 1 Kings 12:1 – 24.

From the moment of man's fall and the curse which came upon mankind, the earth and the serpent, Satan has sought to frustrate God's eternal plan of redemption, and his own ultimate destruction. So we see throughout history that he has targeted anyone who looked as though the Messiah could come through them. His whole work is to pollute mankind and make God out a liar because if he can do this, he won't spend eternity in the deepest, hottest part of the lake of fire! So in this passage he is depicted as standing as a **dragon** before the woman who is in childbirth, to try to consume the child before He is born, but the Child is caught up to God, depicting Jesus ascension to His Father in -

### **Acts 1:9 –**

*<sup>9</sup>Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. <sup>10</sup> And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel'.*

Clearly then the woman clothed with the sun is the **nation of Israel** – not Mary as some have said and the One who will rule the nations with a rod of iron is Jesus Himself.

## Revelation 12: 7 - 12

Satan Thrown Out of Heaven:

*“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, <sup>8</sup> but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. <sup>11</sup> And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. <sup>12</sup> Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”*

In this portion we see that war has broken out in heaven – and Satan loses. He is cast out and comes to earth in great wrath for his last attempt at killing the Jewish nation and believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whereas he has hitherto been mostly occupied with accusation of the saints, now he is thrust down and out on to the earth. Where his persecution begins in earnest. But we are told *‘they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives unto the death.’*

There is rejoicing in heaven because he has gone, but woe on the earth.

### **Revelation 12: 13 - 17**

#### ***The Woman Persecuted***

*“<sup>13</sup> Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. <sup>14</sup> But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. <sup>15</sup> So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. <sup>16</sup> But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. <sup>17</sup> And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.’*

So beyond doubt in this passage we are looking at the nation of Israel, Jesus and the devil’s attempt to kill both the Messiah and the nation of Israel. He has always sought the seed of the woman.

Satan is here depicted as being totally enraged at his inability to corner and kill the Jews. But the faithfulness of God is displayed in verse 14 as He provides her with *‘two wings of a great eagle’* and a degree of protection from Satan’s wrath against her for a period of three and a half years.

Water or floods in the bible usually signify great numbers of people, so it is likely that Satan enrolls armies here to track down the Jewish believers, however, the *‘earth helped the woman’* – it is not unknown for the earth to swallow up those who try to come against God’s anointed as it did in Numbers 16 and Korah’s rebellion. So we could conjecture here that this is what happens. There is a

huge earthquake, and the militants are swallowed up. Satan then turns his attention to the other believers and great is the persecution.

### **Revelation 13:1 – 10**

#### ***'The Beast'***

Here we find John standing on the sand of the sea and watching something happening. A beast arises from the sea like nothing he has ever seen, this beast appears to die and come back to life again, it receives worship, it makes war and it blasphemes God – it is a person who is fearless. It is given, or granted to this Beast to do these things and to have global authority. It appears that everyone, whose name is not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, will worship him.

We are filling in the detail here of what has been happening on the earth in the first half of the Tribulation, essentially whilst all the activity has been going on in heaven, the antichrist has been rising to power and whilst he managed to captivate a number of nations, not all of them were persuaded and a war breaks out during which he is killed, as he moves to take political control of the world.

Chronologically, this coincides with Satan being cast down from heaven. In the middle of the Tribulation, while war breaks out on the earth between the Antichrist and ten kings – or rulers - war also breaks out in the heavenlies and Satan is cast down and furious because he knows now that he only has three and a half years left to accomplish his plan.

At the point that the Antichrist is killed, Satan steps in and the 'Beast' is resurrected by demonic power, causing all people to be amazed and astounded at what they see (verse 3). Satan uses his power to bring about this astonishing miracle because he needs the Antichrist to be fully under his control, and from this point on the Antichrist is totally demonised as Satan enters him and then demands that all people fall down and worship him as god. The end of all things is near.

#### ***2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 -***

*<sup>3</sup>Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God'.*

With that quick précis let's relax, unpick the scriptures, and see where all this fits in. We will tackle Chapter 13 in two parts,

- the Beast from the sea, and
- the Beast from the earth

which will mean we will need to take time to look closely at the book of Daniel. Firstly, with that bit of understanding about what is happening let's look at –

### **Revelation 13: 1 – 10**

'The Beast from the Sea'

*<sup>1</sup>Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. <sup>2</sup>Now the beast which I saw was **like a leopard**, his feet were like the **feet of a bear**, and his mouth like the **mouth of a lion**. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. <sup>3</sup>And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast. <sup>4</sup>So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" <sup>5</sup>And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. <sup>6</sup>Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. <sup>7</sup>It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. <sup>8</sup>All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. <sup>9</sup>If anyone has an ear, let him hear. <sup>10</sup>He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.'*

Daniel tells us that it is God who raises up and removes kings or rulers, we do need to keep that in mind -

**Daniel 2:20-22.**

*'Blessed be the name of God forever and forever, for He removes kings and raises up Kings'.*

Now we need to refer back to -

**Revelation 6: 1 – 2**

*<sup>1</sup>Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, "Come and see." <sup>2</sup>And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.'*

**'The Beast' - a system and a person.**

On to the stage of history comes the **Antichrist**, he has a bow in his hand, but no arrow and as we saw before, his is a political victory to start with, not one won by war and bloodshed, he won by stealth. He has a crown which speaks of victory and this victory was **given** to him. This person is doing what he is doing – with God's permission, as Daniel said.

He has been on the scene during the first half of the tribulation, but it is in the **second half** that he is given **all power**. Just as God uses human beings to accomplish His objectives, so Satan in the same way, uses humans and this man is given **all** of Satan's power as we will see.

He does not gain control of the earth by war, but by diplomacy, he will offer a solution to the world's problems – be believed, used by Satan – and finally, destroyed by the stone cut without hands.

As this **'beast'** is unlike any animal we have ever seen, we apply the golden rule of interpretation *'when the plain sense of the scriptures makes common sense, seek no other sense'*.

The plain sense of this passage does not make any kind of sense, so we have to look elsewhere for the interpretation; since there are in our creation no seven headed animals, this composite picture of a leopard, a lion and a bear, must be a symbol.

*<sup>1</sup>Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. <sup>2</sup>Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.*

John sees this strange sight. The end time king and his kingdom rising from the **sea**, remember, represents a sea of people.

The characteristics of this '**beast**' are strange indeed and the only place in scripture where we can see a mirror of it is in various chapters in the book of Daniel. But before we go there, let us look first at the counterfeit trinity in order that we may better understand.

### ***The counterfeit trinity: Satan, the Antichrist, and the false prophet***

As God the Father gave all authority into the hands of the Son, so **Satan** will give all his authority to the **Antichrist**. Just as the True Son has a number of different names and titles, so does the counterfeit son. He also has a counterfeit death and resurrection and the power and authority of the great counterfeiter himself, Satan is given to him, just as the Father gave His power to the true Son.

The antichrist is given various names throughout the scripture,

- the seed of Satan Genesis 3:15,
- The little horn: Daniel 7:8,
- The king of fierce countenance: Daniel 8:23,
- the prince that shall come: Daniel 9.26,
- the wilful king: Daniel 11:36,
- the man of sin : 2 Thessalonians 2:3,
- the son of perdition 2 Thessalonians 2;3,
- the lawless one: 2 Thessalonians 2:8 ,
- the antichrist 1 John 2:8,
- the Beast: Revelation 11:7.

As Jesus is preparing His bride, so the Antichrist is preparing his through what we know as the New Age Movement.

The Antichrist will always have access to the demonic realm and ultimately the counterfeit son will accept the offer that the True Son rejected – *‘if you will fall down and worship me I will give you all this.’*

**The false prophet** will be indwelt by Satan himself and he will play the role of the counterfeit Holy Spirit, and as the Holy Spirit’s ministry is to call all men to worship Jesus, the ministry of the false prophet will be to call all men to worship to the Antichrist.

Jesus rejected that saying only One Person is worthy to be worshipped, but when this offer is made to the counterfeit son, he will accept it and that will mark the beginning of his rise to political, economic and religious domination of the world – his rise is described in –

#### **Daniel 8:23 – 25**

*<sup>23</sup>“And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes. <sup>24</sup>His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people <sup>25</sup>through his cunning he shall cause deceit to prosper under his rule and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human means.’*

#### **Daniel 11:36 – 39.**

*<sup>36</sup>“Then the king shall do according to his own will: he shall exalt and magnify himself above every god, shall speak blasphemies against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the wrath has been accomplished; for what has been determined shall be done. <sup>37</sup> He shall regard neither the God of his fathers nor the desire of women, nor regard any god; for he shall exalt himself above them all. <sup>38</sup> But in their place he shall honour a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honour with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things. <sup>39</sup> Thus he shall act against the strongest fortresses with a foreign god, which he shall acknowledge, and advance its glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and divide the land for gain.’*

#### **The false prophet:**

Humanity is incurably religious and a world dictator must provide people with an outlet for their religious inclinations. We have already seen that the Antichrist will come on the scene during the Tribulation period to take control of world government. We will see when we come to Revelation 17 that the existing religious system, will seek to dominate the Antichrist during the first three and a half years while he is working to consolidate his empire. He will resent this, and in an attempt to throw them off he will set up his own form of worship – the false prophet – the beast that arises from the **earth**.

#### **Revelation 13:11 – 18 -**

The Beast from the Earth

*<sup>41</sup> Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke*

like a dragon. <sup>12</sup> And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. <sup>13</sup> He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. <sup>14</sup> And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. <sup>15</sup> He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. <sup>16</sup> He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, <sup>17</sup> and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. <sup>18</sup> Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.'

This one looks like a lamb but is a dragon. This is the part of the counterfeit trinity that does the miraculous signs deceiving those who dwell on the earth and causing them to bow down and worship the Antichrist and receive his mark.

We can see from this passage that there is a very unholy alliance between these two men. The false prophet will be given power by the Antichrist himself, who in turn is powered by Satan. His whole purpose will be to work toward the complete dominance of the earth by the Antichrist, including a form of religion satisfactory to the Antichrist and the masses.

Eventually the Antichrist will so believe his own publicity that he will, like Nebuchadnezzar before him put a statue up to himself and demand worship on penalty of death.

### ***Imperialism:***

Now we need to look at the system of government that will come into power during the Tribulation period. It will not be like anything that we know now. This system will cover the economic, political and religious sphere. It will encompass all the worst things of ***all*** the oppressive regimes that have ever gone before it.

I will refer to this system or empire as '***Roman***' because the system which will come into force will be that which Rome introduced – ***imperialism***.

This is why in the book of Daniel, the fourth kingdom is constantly referred to as '***diverse***' or '***different***' from others before it. As we look at the book of Daniel we will see that Daniel constantly asks about the fourth beast and makes enquiries about it which are answered by the angel who invariably tells him it is '***diverse***' from all the others.

When Rome conquered a foreign country they were ***different or diverse*** in the way they went about occupation; they sent their own leaders in to assume rule. ***Romans*** were sent to rule the occupied country e.g. Herod, Pontius Pilate, Felix, Festus.



This was the policy of imperialism. *Rome was also different in that their Emperors set themselves up as 'gods' and demanded worship.* They were said to have the perfect way to run an empire. They had total authority over people's lives and were outside the law.

**This** is the system which will revive during the Tribulation period. Absolute rule. Imperialism. Israel has experienced imperial domination and occupation before, when Jesus came, Jerusalem was under the control of Rome, because they were in the 5<sup>th</sup> cycle of discipline, and in the Great Tribulation, she will experience this again.

God has always used nations against nations to bring His judgement and then He judges that nation, an example of this is in Genesis 15: 13, 14 -

*'<sup>13</sup>Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.<sup>14</sup> And also the nation whom they serve I will judge;'*

And we see it again in Isaiah 10 where He uses a wicked nation to punish Israel, and then in turn, punishes that nation because of the wickedness of their heart – we need to know God's ways with mankind –

**Isaiah 10: 5 – 19 -**

Arrogant Assyria:

**‘<sup>5</sup>“Woe to Assyria, the rod of My anger and the staff in whose hand is My indignation. <sup>6</sup>I will send him against an ungodly nation, and against the people of My wrath I will give him charge, to seize the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. <sup>7</sup> Yet he does not mean so, nor does his heart think so; but it is in his heart to destroy, and cut off not a few nations. <sup>8</sup> For he says, ‘Are not my princes altogether kings? <sup>9</sup> Is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus? <sup>10</sup> As my hand has found the kingdoms of the idols, whose carved images excelled those of Jerusalem and Samaria,<sup>11</sup> as I have done to Samaria and her idols, shall I not do also to Jerusalem and her idols?’” <sup>12</sup> Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Lord has performed all His work on Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, that He will say, “I will punish the fruit of the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his haughty looks.” <sup>13</sup> For he says: “ By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent; also I have removed the boundaries of the people, and have robbed their treasuries; so I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.<sup>14</sup> My hand has found like a nest the riches of the people, and as one gathers eggs that are left, I have gathered all the earth; and there was no one who moved his wing, nor opened his mouth with even a peep.”**

God’s response:

**“<sup>15</sup> Shall the axe boast itself against him who chops with it? Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws with it? As if a rod could wield itself against those who lift it up, or as if a staff could lift up, as if it were not wood! <sup>16</sup> Therefore the Lord, the Lord of hosts, will send leanness among his fat ones; and under his glory He will kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. <sup>17</sup> So the Light of Israel will be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame; it will burn and devour His thorns and his briars in one day. <sup>18</sup> And it will consume the glory of his forest and of his fruitful field, both soul and body; and they will be as when a sick man wastes away. <sup>19</sup> Then the rest of the trees of his forest will be so few in number that a child may write them.”**

Proof if we needed it, that it is God who is in control of history, and no-one else.

Now, we need to look at the book of Daniel.

What we see in the book of Daniel is God’s *kindness*, showing through prophetic dreams and visions the history of the world *as it relates to the Jewish nation*. From this we can accurately predict what is going to take place at the end of the age and chart a course through the whole of the Bible. Provided we keep in mind that this is written to the Jews, we will see what is being said, if we do not, we go into speculation and conjecture about what is happening setting it in the context of white Anglo-Saxon Protestantism! When you set it in the context in which it was written, it is not difficult to understand. It is when you exegete it *out* of context, problems start.

Daniel stands as a huge prophetic landmark, pointing both back and forward through history. It shows us what is meant by Jerusalem being trodden down of the gentiles, the permission of God for His judgement upon His people to be carried out by another nation, the rise and fall of the antichrist and the coming Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

We have seen that the Antichrist will die and be resurrected, but we still have no explanation for the strange beast –

## **Revelation 13:1 - 2**

*<sup>1</sup>Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. <sup>2</sup>Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.'*

Starting then with Daniel 2:31-45 where we see Daniel interpreting a dream for King Nebuchadnezzar, who is extremely troubled, in order to track down this beast that has seven heads and ten horns, and which looks like a leopard, a bear and a lion – first, Nebuchadnezzar's dream -