The Doctrine of the Triumphal Processions

Definition and Description

There are two Triumphal Processions taught in the Scriptures: (1) Ascension of Christ after the resurrection. (2) Second Advent of Christ. The first triumphal procession took place on the day of our Lord’s resurrection when He ascended into the third heaven and arrived as Victor in the angelic conflict as a result of His strategic victory over Satan at the cross that was accomplished through His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths. The second triumphal procession will take place at the Second Advent of Christ when the resurrected Christ comes back with His bride, the church and orbits the earth and then descends and lands upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 12:7-14; 14:4; Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 19). Therefore, the first triumphal procession ended at the throne of God the Father which is located in the third heaven. Jesus Christ in a glorified resurrected body was seated at the right hand of God the Father. The second triumphal procession will end on planet earth.

Vocabulary

- Apekduomai (verb), “to disarm, to strip naked” (Col. 2:15).
- Arche (noun), “angelic rulers” (Col. 2:15).
- Exousia (noun), “angelic authority” (Col. 2:15).
- Deigmatizo (verb), “to make an example of, to make a spectacle of” (Col. 2:15).
- Thriambeuo (verb), “to lead in a triumph, to triumph over” (Col. 2:15).
- Anabaino (verb), “to ascend, to go up” (Eph. 4:8).
- Aichmaloteuo (verb), “to capture, to make prisoners of” (Eph. 4:8).
- Aichmalosia (noun), “group of captives” (Eph. 4:8).

Documentation

First Triumphal Procession:

Ephesians 4:8a Therefore it says, ‘When He (Jesus Christ) ascended on high (third heaven), He (Jesus Christ) led captive an army of captives. (NASB95)

Colossians 2:15 When He (God the Father) had disarmed the (angelic) rulers and (angelic) authorities, He (God the Father) made a public display of
them (Satan’s angelic armies), having triumphed over them through Him (Jesus Christ). (NASB95)

Second Triumphal Procession:

Matthew 24:29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. 31 And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.” (NASB95)

Luke 21:27 Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. (NASB95)

Revelation 1:7 BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. (NASB95)

Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” 3 And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” 5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” 6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those
who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”’ And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. 13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. 15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 And he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. (NASB95)

The First Triumphal Procession

The first triumphal procession of our Lord began with His ascension and culminated with His session. It began on earth and then passed through the first heaven, followed by the second heaven and terminating in the third heaven at throne of God the Father where Jesus Christ in a glorified resurrected body seated Himself at the right hand of God the Father as Victor in the angelic conflict.
The Lord Jesus Christ as the Creator of both heaven and earth created three levels of heaven according to the Scriptures and they can be classified as follows:

1. **first heaven**: Earth’s atmosphere.
2. **second heaven**: Stellar universe.
3. **third heaven**: Abode of God, the angels and the dead believers.

The present third heaven is abode of all three members of the Trinity and of *elect angels* as well as *all believers throughout* human history in every dispensation. It is the present location of the *Appeal Trial of Satan* and all the fallen angels before the Supreme Court of heaven. The present heaven will be *destroyed* at the termination of human history which is this appeal trial itself. The Lord Jesus Christ will create a *new* heavens and a new earth for the *eternal state* which immediately follows the Great White Throne Judgment at the *conclusion* of Appeal Trial which is the conclusion of human history itself.

The original languages of Scripture teach that there are three levels of heaven. This *multiplicity* of heavens is indicated in Hebrews 4:14 where our Lord at His *Ascension* is said to have “*passed through the heavens*” (accusative masculine plural noun *ouranos*). The first and second heaven are *not* specifically mentioned but the third heaven is discussed in 2 Corinthians 12:2. Logically speaking, it is evident that there *cannot* be a third heaven *without* also a first and second heaven.

Our Lord at His *final* ascension passed *through* the earth’s atmosphere, i.e., the first heaven (Acts 1:9-11). The third heaven is located billions and billions of light years away from the earth *above* the first and second heavens. A light-year in astronomy is the distance traveled by light moving in a vacuum in the course of 1 year, at its velocity of 186,282 miles per second. A light-year equals about 5.878 x 10,000,000,000,000 miles, or 63,240 astronomical units.

Paul states that “*inexpressible words, which a man is not permitted to speak*” are *heard* in heaven (2 Cor. 12:1-4). Heaven is the *place* where Paul says “*eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not entered into the right lobe of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him*” (1 Cor. 2:9). Heaven is a place of *beauty* (Rev. 21:1-22:7). It is a place of *eternal life* (1 Tim. 4:8). Both the present heaven and the new heaven are a place of *service* to God (Rev. 22:3). Heaven is a place of *worship* (Rev. 19:1-3). It is a place of *glory* (2 Cor. 4:17-18). There will be *no* tears or unhappiness in the new heavens and new earth (Rev. 21:3). The reason for this is that *only* perfect righteousness will be allowed in the new heavens and earth (2 Pet. 3:13). The *throne room* of God is located in the third heaven and from which proceed His judgments (Job 1-2; Isa. 6; Jer. 14:21; Psa. 14:2; 103:19; Acts 7:49; Heb. 12:2; Rev. 3:21; 19:4; 22:1). The *New Jerusalem* is located in heaven (Rev. 21:2). The *temple of God* is also located in heaven along with the tabernacle (2 Sam. 22:7; Isa. 6:1; Heb. 8). *God the Father’s house* is *located in heaven* (John 14:1-2). Our Lord Jesus Christ in
Hypostatic Union as part of His High Priestly prayer promised His Bride, the Church, a dwelling place in heaven (John 14:1-3).

The Church Age believer’s true home and citizenship is not on planet earth but in heaven (Phil. 3:20. The resurrection bodies of believers are located in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1-2). Heaven is the location of the winner believer’s Escrow Blessings (Eph. 1:3). It is the place where the resurrected humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ in Hypostatic Union conducts the government of the kingdom of God as the ruler of all creation including the third heaven (Psa. 110:1-2; Matt. 22:44; 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42; 22:69; Acts 2:33-34; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 3:20-22; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2). Sometimes heaven itself is said to be the throne of God (Isa. 66:1; Matt. 5:34; Heb. 8:1). God the Father’s house is said to be located in heaven (Psalm 61:4; John 14:1-2). The Trinity is said to dwell in the third heaven (1 Kings 8:12). Thus, God is often called the “the God of heaven” (Gen. 24:3, 7; 2 Chron. 36:23; Ezr. 1:2; Neh. 1:4; Dan. 2:37, 44). Heaven is now the place where the Lord Jesus Christ in Hypostatic Union presently sits at the right hand of God the Father intercessing for believers in the Church Age as part of His High Priestly Session (Heb. 8:1).

The third heaven is the location of the Supreme Court of Heaven which is composed of all three members of the Trinity Who are presiding over the Appeal Trial of Satan and the fallen angels. Heaven is served by innumerable angels, their hosts and families. It is the sphere of their existence (Matt. 18:10; Mark 12:25; 13:32; Eph. 3:15). They come from heaven and return to it either individually (Matt. 28:2; Luke 22:43), or in hosts (Luke 2:15). Elect angels or angels who did not enter into rebellion with Satan against God have access to heaven. Also, Satan and the fallen angels still have access to heaven because of their Appeal Trial (Job 1; Zech. 3). Old Testament saints are now located in the third heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ as a result of His trip to a compartment of Hades called Paradise (Luke 23:43; Eph. 4:8-10).

The third heaven is at this present time a place of conflict and has been for quite some time due to Satan and the fallen angels. The Appeal Trial of Satan is presently taking place in heaven where the Supreme Court of heaven resides. In fact, there will be war in heaven at the end of the dispensation of the Church which is actually the Rebuttal Phase of Satan’s Appeal Trial. Other religions depict heaven as a place of complete peace at this present time but the NT does not teach this. Heaven was and is, even in the period after Christ’s first Advent, a place of conflict. The triumphal procession of our Lord ended at the throne of God the Father which is located in the third heaven. The humanity of Christ in hypostatic union in a glorified resurrected body was seated at the right hand of God the Father as a result of His strategic victory over Satan and the kingdom of
darkness at the Cross where our Lord voluntarily died a substitutionary spiritual death.

The ascension of Jesus Christ refers to the vertical transfer of the glorified, resurrected human nature of Jesus Christ to the third heaven, which contains the throne room of God where He now sits at the right hand of the Father.

There are several passages, which refer to this historic event. It is referred to in both the Old and New Testaments.

Psalm 68:18 You have ascended on high, You have led captive Your captives; You have received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell there. (NASB95)

Luke 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 51 While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple praising God. (NASB95)

John 20:17 Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.” (NASU)

Acts 1:9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. 11 They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.” (NASB95)

Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.” 9 (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) (NASB95)

1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the
right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him. (NASB95)

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASB95)

Hebrews 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. (NASB95)

The ascension of Christ demonstrates the vertical travel capability of the resurrection body through the earth’s atmosphere, the galaxies of the stellar universe, and billions of light years in an instant, and then entering the third heaven where the throne of God is.

The original languages of Scripture teach that there are three levels of heaven: (1) First heaven: Earth’s atmosphere. (2) Second heaven: Stellar universe. (3) Third heaven: Abode of God, the angels and the dead believers.

This multiplicity of heavens is indicated in Hebrews 4:14 where our Lord at His ascension is said to have “passed through the heavens” (accusative masculine plural noun *ouranos*). Our Lord at His ascension passed through the earth’s atmosphere, i.e., the first heaven, the stellar universe and into the throne room of God (Acts 1:9-11; cf. Ephesians 1:19-21; Philippians 2:5-11).

The glorified, resurrected humanity of Christ in hypostatic union traveled billions and billions of light years passing through the first, second and third heavens by means of divine omnipotence in order to arrive at the right hand of God the Father in order to receive power, rank and authority over all creation and its intelligences.

The ascension of the humanity of Christ was another demonstration of divine omnipotence which characterized the dispensation of the hypostatic union. Omnipotence is an attribute of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The word omnipotence is a compound word from the Latin meaning “all powerful,” and is composed of the following: (1) *Omni*, “all.” (2) *Potence*, “power.”

Omnipotence is one of the characteristics of the divine essence. (Father: Mark 14:36 and Luke 1:37; Son: Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:3; Spirit: Rom. 15:13). God has limitless and infinite ability to do something (Gen. 18:14a; Psa. 147:5a; Isa. 40:26; Lk. 1:37). There is power in the Word of God (Psa. 33:6a; Heb. 1:3a; 4:12a; 11:3a; 2 Co. 6:7; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 3:5). The cross of Christ is the power of God, which delivers the believer from the sin nature, the cosmic system of Satan and Satan himself (1 Cor. 1:18). The Gospel is the power of God for salvation (Rom. 1:16).
All three members of the Trinity are omnipotent since they are co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal: (1) God the Father is omnipotent (Eph. 1:17; 2 Pet. 1:2-3). (2) Holy Spirit is omnipotent (Acts 1:8; Rm. 15:13, 19; Eph. 3:16; 1 Th. 1:5). (3) Word of God is omnipotent (Ro. 1:16; 1 Co. 1:18, 24; Heb. 4:12).

The Lord was brought back from the dead by three categories of divine omnipotence: (1) Omnipotence of God the Father sent back our Lord’s human spirit to the body in the grave (Acts 2:24; Rom. 6:4; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21). (2) Omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit sent back our Lord’s human soul to the body in the grave (Rom. 1:4; 8:11; 1 Pet. 3:18). (3) Omnipotence of God the Son raised His physical body from the grave (John 6:39-40, 54; 10:17-18).

The Lord Jesus Christ has the power to raise the dead (John 5:21; 6:40; 11:25). The same power that raised the humanity of Christ from the dead has been made available to every church age believer’s because of their union and identification with the Lord through the Baptism of the Spirit (1 Co. 6:14; Eph. 1:18-20).

The resurrection was the first great event to take place in the process of promoting the Lord Jesus Christ to sovereign ruler of history. The second was His ascension, which was the visible manifestation that God the Father promoted the glorified, resurrected humanity of Christ in hypostatic union to the highest position of power, rank and authority in all of creation. It was a visible manifestation of the vindication of Jesus Christ by the Father.

The ascension of the glorified, resurrected humanity of Christ in hypostatic union declares His enthronement as cosmic ruler with authority over all creation. Our Lord’s ascension was a visible manifestation before the angels and mankind that the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union was granted authority by God the Father over the following: (1) Creation (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:15-17; 2:10; 1 Pet. 3:22). (2) Church as the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). (3) Israel as the Son of David (Matt. 1:1; 20:30; Mark 10:47-48; Luke 1:32; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 3:7; 5:5; 22:16).

The ascension of Christ also denotes that the glorified, resurrected humanity of Christ in hypostatic union has been promoted to the position of authority in order to conduct the following five judgments: (1) Bema Seat Evaluation: Takes place at the Rapture of the Church and is the evaluation of the Church Age believer’s life after salvation (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:24). (2) Israel: Takes place at the Second Advent and is the removing unregenerate Israel from the earth leaving only regenerate Israel to enter into the Millennial reign of Christ (Ezek. 20:37-38; Zech. 13:8-9; Mal. 3:2-3, 5; Matt. 25:1-30). (3) Gentiles: Takes place at the Second Advent and is for the purpose of removing unregenerate, anti-Semitic Gentiles from the earth (Matt. 25:31-46). (4) Fallen
Angels: Takes place at the end of the appeal trial of Satan which runs co-terminus with human history and is execution of Satan and the fallen angels sentence for the pre-historic rebellion against God (1 Cor. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:10). (5) Great White Throne: Takes place at the end of human history and is the judgment of all unregenerate humanity in human history for the rejection of Christ as Savior (Rev. 20:11-15).

The following groups of regenerate human beings throughout human history will be subjected to a eschatological compulsory evaluation that the victorious, resurrected incarnate Son of God as Sovereign Ruler of the entire cosmos will conduct: (1) OT saints in heaven who lived during the dispensation of the Gentiles (Adam to the Exodus). (2) OT saints in heaven that lived during the dispensation of Israel (Exodus to First Advent). (3) All Church Age believers (Day of Pentecost to the Rapture). (4) Regenerate Jews who will live during the Tribulation (Post-Rapture to the Second Advent). (5) Regenerate Gentiles who will live during the Tribulation (Post-Rapture to the Second Advent). (6) Regenerate Jews and Gentiles who will live during the Millennial reign of Christ (Second Advent to Gog and Magog Rebellion).

The following groups of unregenerate human beings throughout human history will be subjected to a eschatological compulsory judgment that the resurrected incarnate Son of God as Sovereign Ruler of the entire cosmos will conduct: (1) Unbelievers who lived during the dispensation of the Gentiles (Adam to the Exodus). (2) Unbelievers who lived during the dispensation of the Jews (Exodus to the First Advent). (3) Unbelievers who lived during the Church Age (Day of Pentecost to Rapture). (4) Unbelievers who lived during the Tribulation (Post-Rapture to Second Advent). (5) Unbelievers who lived during the Millennium (Second Advent to Gog Rebellion).

All fallen angels including Satan himself have already been subjected to a judgment before human history but the execution of that sentence has been delayed because the Supreme Court of Heaven granted Satan and the fallen angels an appeal trial, which runs co-terminus with human history. The elect angels do not come under judgment for the very same reason that regenerate human beings don’t come under judgment because they have exercised personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

Every regenerate human being in every dispensation of human history must at some point in the future submit to an evaluation of their lives after salvation which will be conducted by the resurrected and sovereign humanity of Christ in hypostatic union. Regenerate Israel who lived during the Age of Israel and Tribulation period will evaluated at the 2nd Advent (Ezek. 20:37-38; Zech. 13:8-9; Mal. 3:2-3, 5; Matt. 25:1-30). Regenerate Gentiles who lived during the Age of
the Gentiles and Tribulation period will be evaluated at the 2nd Advent (Matt. 25:31-46). Church Age believers will be evaluated at the Bema Seat Evaluation of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 John 2:24). Regenerate Jews and Gentiles who lived during the Millennium will be subjected to a judgment at the conclusion of human history (Rev. 20:15).

Every unregenerate human being in every dispensation of human history must submit to a judgment, which will also be conducted by the resurrected and sovereign incarnate Son of God at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15). Every fallen angel has already been judged and sentenced to the Lake of Fire by the Supreme Court of Heaven before human history.

The execution of that sentence will not be carried out until the conclusion of the appeal trial of Satan and the fallen angels (Rev. 20:10). The Scriptures teach that the execution of Satan’s sentence to the Lake of Fire will not be executed until the end of human history. He will though be imprisoned for a thousand years. Satan must be thrown into prison at the Second Advent of Christ according to Revelation 20:1-3 before the millennial reign begins (Rev. 20:1-3).

All unbelievers will be removed from planet earth at the Second Advent of Christ and will be throne into the Lake of Fire with the beast and the false prophet (Jews: Ezek. 20-33-38; Gentiles: Matt. 25:31-46).

These judgments are designed to produce perfect government and environment on planet earth. During the millennial reign of Christ religion will be abolished from the earth because Satan, who is the author of religion will be imprisoned. The fallen angels have all been removed from the earth and a new civilization will begin with believers only. Satan will be released from prison after the millennium and will immediately start a rebellion against the Lord Jesus Christ. Theologians call this rebellion, the “Gog, Magog rebellion.” God puts down this rebellion decisively.

The appeal trial of Satan terminates after the Gog and Magog revolution (Rev. 20:7-9). The eternal state will take place after the execution of the sentence against Satan and the fallen angels when they are cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10). It will take place after the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-14).

Our Lord received His third royal title as “King of kings and Lord of lords, the bright morning star” which is a direct result of His execution of the Father’s plan of salvation.

There are five major events in relation to the appeal trial of Satan and the promotion of the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union to the right hand of the Father: (1) The humanity of Christ’s strategic victory over Satan through His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the cross (Ps. 22:1-3; Matt. 27:44-46; Mark 15:34; Rom. 5:6-10; 2 Cor. 5:14-15a; Heb. 2:9). (2) The resurrection of

Without the ascension of Christ, He would not be enthroned at the right hand of the Father as victor in the angelic conflict. Furthermore without the ascension, our Lord would not have received authority to dispatch the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and the communication of gifts (apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers) would not have been given to the church. Nor, would believers receive a spiritual gift since this is also contingent upon Christ being seated at the right hand of the Father (Ephesians 4:1-16). Nor would the believer be the beneficiary of Christ’s intercessory ministry after salvation if it were not for our Lord’s ascension, nor would he be the beneficiary of current positional truth, which states that the believer is seated positionally with Christ at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 4:14).

The Lord Jesus Christ session at the right hand of the Father points to His kingship (Rev. 4:2). When our Lord arrived in heaven and was seated at the right hand of God the Father He received a new royal warrant, a third royal title as the “King of kings and the Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16). This title has been granted to Him by the Father indicating His rulership over the Church of which He is the Head.

The Tribulation saints in heaven when singing the song of Moses proclaim our Lord as the “King of the nations” which He will assume at His Second Advent. The session of Christ is a public affirmation that our Lord is the victor in the angelic conflict (Heb. 1:13; 2:8).

Colossians 2:15 states that there was a triumphal procession by our Lord in heaven declaring Him publicly as Victor in the angelic conflict. Satan was publicly shown in heaven to be defeated when the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union sat down at the right hand of God the Father and was granted the power, rank and authority over the entire universe as ruler of the cosmos. If it were not for our Lord’s session, the believer would not have received the gift of the Holy Spirit, nor would spiritual gifts be authorized be given by the Holy Spirit at
salvation. If it were not for our Lord’s session, He would not be the beneficiaries of His controlling history, nor His intercessory prayer ministry at the Father’s right hand, nor would the believer be the beneficiary of current positional truth, which states that the believer is seated positionally with Christ at the Father’s right hand (Ephesians 2:1-10; Colossians 3:1-4).

The third event in the process of promoting the Lord Jesus Christ to sovereign ruler of history was His First Triumphal Procession. There are two Triumphal Processions taught in the Scriptures: (1) Ascension of Christ after the resurrection. (2) Second Advent of Christ. The first triumphal procession took place on the day of our Lord’s resurrection when He ascended into the third heaven and arrived as Victor in the angelic conflict as a result of His strategic victory over Satan at the cross, which was accomplished, through His voluntary substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths.

Ephesians 4:8a Therefore it says, “When He (the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union) ascended on high (3rd heaven), He (the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union) led captive an army of captives.” (NASU)

Colossians 2:15 When He (God the Father) had disarmed the (angelic) rulers and (angelic) authorities, He (God the Father) made a public display of them (Satan’s angelic armies), having triumphed over them through Him (the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union). (NASU)

The first triumphal procession of our Lord began with His ascension and culminated with His session. It began in the first heaven, passed through the second heaven and terminated in the third heaven at throne of God the Father where the humanity of Christ in hypostatic union in a glorified resurrected body seated Himself at the right hand of God the Father as Victor in the angelic conflict. The humanity of Christ in hypostatic union in a glorified resurrected body was seated at the right hand of God the Father as a result of His strategic victory over Satan and the kingdom of darkness at the Cross where our Lord voluntarily died a substitutionary spiritual and physical death on the cross.

The second triumphal procession will take place at the Second Advent of Christ when the resurrected humanity of Christ in hypostatic union comes back with His Bride, the Church and orbits the earth and then descends and lands upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 12:7-14; 14:4; Matt. 24:29-31; Rev. 19). He will then deliver Israel from her enemies and institutes His millennial reign on earth.

Paul uses in Colossians 2:15 uses the Roman Military Triumph as an analogy in order to teach the doctrine of the Triumphal Procession to members of the royal family of God in Colossae. The Romans would honor a victorious general with a triumphal procession through the city of Rome, in which captives and other spoils of battle were put on public display. In the same way, God the Father honored the
Lord Jesus Christ as Victor in the angelic conflict with a triumphal procession in the third heaven in which fallen angels were led captive as well as Old Testament believers released from Paradise which is a compartment of Hades.

The Roman triumphal processions were called in the Latin *Triumphus*. The word came from the Greek *thriambos*, the name of a procession honoring the god Bacchus. Among the Romans the highest honor that could be bestowed on a citizen or magistrate was the triumph or solemn procession in which a victorious general passed from the gate of the city to the capitol. The Triumph, organized by a curator, came into the category of religious processions.

According to custom, the general was laid claim to a triumph did not enter the city upon returning to Rome but gave his report to the Senate in the Temple of Bellona. If it was satisfactory, a date was set for his jubilant entrance. The battle celebrated had to be won under the auspices of the general, not his lieutenants; thus an underling who won would not be entitled to a triumph, but his superior would, even though the junior commander had clearly made the victory. Thousands of the enemy had to be killed in the battle (5000), with only minor losses to the Romans, and the battle had to be a legitimate one, not the result of a civil struggle. Peace had to follow the battle, and only high magistrates were allowed to be so honored.

During the late Republic these rules were broken. For example, Pompey the Great triumphed in 81 B.C. despite having held no major office and being only 24. Julius Caesar’s triumphs after the civil wars in the provinces (but no Pharsalus) were greeted with a sense of distaste. Caesar was typical, however, of the deteriorated Republic, for he celebrated his triumphs as a personal possession. From the founding the Empire by Augustus, only the emperors themselves received a triumph. The reason for this, officially, was that the legates (*legati Augusti pro praetore*) were viewed simply as the underlings of the emperor. They were not given triumphs, as the auspices were with their masters. Instead, the *legati* were recipients of the *ornamenta triumphalia*. The last known general to triumph, who was not a member of the imperial family, was Cornelius Balbus (2) in 21 B.C.

The procession formed outside the city, at whose borders the general and his troops were required to lay down their arms; thence it entered through a triumphal arch that set a fashion for a 1000 monuments. The procession, strewn with flowers, began at the *Campus Martius*, went through the *Porta Triumphalis* into the Circus Maximus and up the *Via Sacra* to the Capitol, where 2 white bulls were sacrificed. The streets were strewn with flowers, and the altars smoked with incense.
Trumpeters led the march with a band of musicians singing and playing triumphal songs. Towers or floats representing the captured cities, and pictures showing the exploits of the victors followed. Then wagons rumbled by, heavy with gold, silver, works of art, and other spoils. Seventy white oxen followed which were to be sacrificed, their horns gilded and heads adorned with headbands and garlands and then the captured chiefs of the enemy. The lictors (officers who attended chief magistrates appearing in public), carrying fasces (the officers insignia of office; it consisted of a bundle of rods bound with an ax with its blade projecting and was carried before magistrates as a badge of authority) adorned with laurel then followed. Then, there came a great company of musicians and dancers and a long train of persons carrying perfumes.

The general presented himself as follows: (1) Dressed in the robes of Jupiter Capitolinus, a purple tunic (the toga picta), embroidered with gold. (2) Wore a crown of laurel. (3) Carried in his right hand a laurel branch and a scepter in his left. (4) His face painted with vermilion. (5) A golden ball suspended from his neck. (6) He wore golden shoes. (7) He carried ivory scepter with an eagle on the top. (8) He stood erect in his chariot. (9) A public slave was by his side to remind him of the vicissitudes of fortune and of his mortality. (10) In the chariot with him might be his children and beside it his relatives; behind them his secretaries and aides. (11) Behind the general came the consuls, senators, and other magistrates, on foot. (12) The whole procession closed with the victorious army. (13) Some soldiers carried the prizes awarded to them, everyone wearing a crown; some praising their leaders, others deriding them; for it was an inviolable tradition that on these brief occasions the speech of the army should be free and unpunished, to remind the proud victors of their fallible mortality.

The victorious general was called in the Latin the triumphator. The triumphal procession was the highest honor attainable for an officer in the legions of the Republic; it could be won on land or sea, so long as certain requirements were met by the victor. Riding in an ornate chariot with him was a slave, holding a golden crown of Jupiter and continually uttered in his ear: Sic transit glori amundum, “the glory of the world shall pass away.” The slave repeated this to him over and over again that he was actually a man, so as not to make the god Jupiter jealous. The general mounted the Capitol to the Temple of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, laid his loot at the feet of the gods, presented an animal sacrifice, and usually ordered the captive chieftains to be slain as an additional thank-offering. It was a ceremony well designed to stir military ambition and reward military effort.

Marcellus’ triumph was memorable for the stolen statuary of Syracuse (212 B.C.). Scipio Africanus in 207 B.C. displayed 14,000 and in 202 B.C. 123,000 pounds of silver taken from Spain and Carthage. Many descriptions of triumphs
are extant. Germanicus’ triumph in 18 A.D. celebrated his humiliation of the Germans, but the most interesting and perhaps best known is the one sculpted on the Arch of Titus that rises above the Forum in Rome. It commemorates the defeat of the Jews in 70 A.D. by the Roman general Titus. It is represented by the famous 7 branched candlestick (portraying Christ) among all the booty. It was taken from the Herod’s Temple in Jerusalem. The ceremony brought the hero a great deal of charisma, and a consequence of this was that after the triumph of Cornelius Balbus in 19 B.C. no ordinary individual was allowed to have one. Henceforth triumphs were reserved for the Emperor and his family, even if the ruler had not been present on the battlefield. It was the Emperor’s Genius and Numen that had won the war. Good generals had to be content with the trappings of triumph.

The Jewish historian Josephus recorded the account of the triumphal procession of Titus and Vespasian after the former’s defeat of the Jews and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., “Now all the soldiery marched out beforehand by companies, and in their several ranks, under their several commanders, in the nighttime, and were about the gates, not of the upper palaces, but those near the temple of Isis; for there it was that the emperors had rested the foregoing night. And as soon as ever it was day, Vespasian and Titus came out crowned with laurel, and clothed in those ancient purple habits which were proper to their family, and then went as far as Octavian’s Walks; for there it was that the senate, and the principal rulers, and those that had been recorded as of the equestrian order, waited for them. Now a tribunal had been erected before the cloisters, and ivory chairs had been set upon it, when they came and sat down upon them. Whereupon the soldiery made an acclamation of joy to them immediately, and all gave them attestations of their valor; while they were themselves without their arms, and only in their silken garments, and crowned with laurel; then Vespasian accepted of these shouts of theirs; but while they were still disposed to go in such acclamations, he gave them a signal of silence. And when everybody entirely held their peace, he stood up, and covering the greatest part of his head with his cloak, he put up the accustomed solemn prayers; the like prayers did Titus put up also; after which prayers Vespasian made a short speech to all the people, and then sent away the soldiers to a dinner prepared for them by the emperors. Then he did retire to that gate which was called the Gate of the Pomp, because pompous shows do always go through that gate; there it was that they tasted some food, and when they had put on their triumphal garments, and had offered sacrifices to the gods that were placed at the gate, they sent the triumph forward, and marched through the theaters, that they might be the more easily seen by the multitude. Now it is impossible to describe the multitude of the shows as they deserve, and the magnificence of them all; such indeed as a man...
could not easily think of as performed either by the labor of workmen, or the variety of riches, or the rarities of nature; for almost all such curiosities as the most happy men ever get by piecemeal were here heaped one upon another, and those both admirable and costly in their nature; and all brought together on that day, demonstrated the vastness of the dominions of the Romans; for there was here to be seen a mighty quantity of silver and gold and ivory, contrived into all sorts of things, and did not appear as carried along in pompous show only, but, as a man may say, running along like a river. Some parts were composed of the rarest purple hangings, and so carried along; and others accurately represented to the life what was embroidered by the arts of the Babylonians. There were also precious stones that were transparent, some set in crowns of gold, and some in other ouches, as the workmen pleased; and of these such a vast number were brought, that we could not but thence learn how vainly we imagined any of them to be rarities. The images gods were also carried, being as well wonderful for their largeness, as made very artificially, and with great skill of the workmen; nor were any of these images of any other than very costly materials; and many species of animals were brought, every one in their own natural ornaments. The men also who brought every one of these shows were great multitudes, and adorned with purple garments, all over interwoven with gold; those that were chosen for carrying these pompous shows, having also about them such magnificent ornaments as were both extraordinary and surprising. Besides these, one might see that even the great number of the captives was not unadorned, while the variety that was in their garments, and their fine texture, concealed from the sight the deformity of their bodies. But what afforded the greatest surprise of all was the structure of the pageants that were borne along; for indeed he that met them could not but be afraid that the bearers would not be able firmly enough to support them, such was their magnitude; for many of them were so made, that they were on three or even four stories, one above another. The magnificence also of their structure afforded one both pleasure and surprise; for upon many of them were laid carpets of gold. There was also wrought gold and ivory fastened about them all; and many resemblances of the war, and those in several ways, and variety of contrivances, affording a most lively portraiture of itself; for there was to be seen a happy country laid waste, and entire squadrons of enemies slain; while some of them ran away, and some were carried into captivity; with walls of great altitude and magnitude overthrown, and ruined by machines; with the strongest fortifications taken, and the walls of most populous cities upon the tops of hills seized on, and an army pouring itself within the walls; as also every place full of slaughter, and supplications of the enemies, when they were no longer able to lift up their hands in way of opposition. Fire also sent upon temples was here
represented, and houses overthrown and falling upon their owners: rivers also, after they came out of a large and melancholy desert, ran down, not into a land cultivated, nor as drink of men, or for cattle, but through a land still on fire upon every side; for the Jews related that such a thing they had undergone during this war. Now the workmanship of these representations was so magnificent and lively in the construction of the things, that it exhibited what had been done to such as did not see it, as if they had been there really present. On the top of every one of these pageants was placed the commander of the city that was taken, and the manner wherein he was taken. Moreover, there followed those pageants a great number of ships; and for the other spoils, they were carried in great plenty. But for those that were taken in the temple of Jerusalem, they made the greatest figure of them all; that is, the golden table, of the weight of many talents; the candlestick also, that was made of gold, though its construction were now changed from that which we made use of: for its middle shaft was fixed upon a basis, and the small branches were produced out of it to a great length, having the likeness of a trident in their position, and had every one a socket made of brass for a lamp at the tops of them. These lamps were in number seven, and represented the dignity of the number seven among the Jews; and the last of all the spoils was carried the Law of the Jews. After these spoils passed by a great many men, carrying the images of Victory, whose structure was entirely either of ivory or of gold. After which Vespasian marched in the first place, and Titus followed him; Domitian also rode along with them, and made a glorious appearance, and rode on a horse that was worthy of admiration. Now the last part of this pompous show was at the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, whither when they were come, they stood still; for it was the Roman’s ancient custom to stay, till somebody brought the news that the general of the enemy was slain. This general was Simon, the son of Gioras, who had then been led in this triumph among the captives; a rope had also been put upon his head, and he had been drawn into a proper place in the forum, and had withal been tormented by those that drew him along, and the law of the Romans required that malefactors condemned to die should be slain there. Accordingly, when it was related that there was an end of him, and all the people had sent up a shout for joy, they then began to offer those sacrifices which they had consecrated, in the prayers used in such solemnities; which when they had finished, they went away to the palace. And as for some of the spectators, the emperors entertained them at their own feast; and for all the rest there were noble preparations made for their feasting at home; for this was a festival day to the city of Rome, as celebrated for the victory obtained by their army over their enemies, for the end that was now put their civil miseries, and for the commencement of
their hopes of future prosperity and happiness” (The Wars of the Jews Book 7, Chapters 5-6, pages 757-758).

1 Timothy 3:16 teaches that the ascension of Jesus Christ served to vindicate Him. In this verse, Paul presents a Christ hymn that expresses a common confession in the church and speaks of the mystery of godliness. This confession has six lines with each speaking of some aspect of Jesus Christ’s ministry. The first refers to the His incarnation and hypostatic union. The second is that Jesus Christ was vindicated by the Spirit, which refers to the Spirit raising Him from the dead and consequently vindicating Him since His resurrection demonstrates His claim of being the Son of God. The third line speaks of the angels bearing witness to this vindication by observing the Lord’s resurrection, ascension and session. The fourth refers to the proclamation of His redemptive work by the church among the nations. The fifth speaks of the fact that members of the human race trusted in Him as Savior. The sixth refers to the ascension of Jesus Christ.

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASB95)

Not translated is the “epexegetical” or “explanatory” use of the conjunction kai (καί) (keh), which introduces a statement that “explains” in specific terms the meaning of the noun aletheia, “of the truth” that concludes 1 Timothy 3:15. This use of kai appears in Romans 2:15, 5:14, 17, 7:10, 10:9 and 11:12.

Paul employs the “epexegetical” or “explanatory” use of the conjunction in 1 Timothy 3:16 indicating that the affirmation and hymn to follow identifies in specific terms the noun aletheia, “of the truth.” In other words, he is explaining what he means when he uses the word aletheia, “of the truth” in 1 Timothy 3:16.

He will first cite a common confession in the first century apostolic church regarding, namely “the mystery of godliness,” which refers to the revelation of Jesus Christ in which all precedence for the Christian way of life is derived from. It is saying that Jesus Christ is the truth. He is a revelation of the truth. This mystery is then spelled out further by Paul in theological and historical terms. He does this by employing a six-fold statement that was an affirmation of the first century apostolic church. The first statement is a reference to the hypostatic union of the Son of God, which was accomplished through the incarnation. In other words, this first statement refers to the First Advent of Christ. The second is that Jesus Christ was vindicated by the Spirit, which refers to the Spirit raising Him from the dead and consequently vindicating Him since His resurrection demonstrates His claim of being the Son of God. The third line speaks of the resurrection, ascension and session of Christ since the angels were present at all
three. Thus, the angels bore witness to His vindication. The fourth refers to the proclamation of His redemptive work by the church among the nations. The fifth speaks of the fact that members of the human race trusted in Him as Savior. The sixth refers to the ascension of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we will translate *kai,* “specifically.”

“By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness” is composed of the adverb *homologoumenos* (.nextToken:41) (owe-moe-low-who-mehnoce), “by common confession” and the nominative neuter singular form of the adjective *megas* (meh-gahs), “great” and the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* (ee-mee), “is” and the articular feminine singular form of the noun *eusebeia* (ef-sev-ee-ah), “of godliness” and the articular nominative neuter singular form of the noun *musterion* (me-stear-ee-own), “of the mystery.”

The adverb *homologoumenos* means “affirmatively” in the sense that the first century apostolic church “asserted as fact” the mystery of godliness, which is spelled out in the hymn defining specifically what the church asserted as fact. It speaks of the fact that the entire Christian community in Ephesus is obligated to acknowledge or affirm the truth of this confession or first century apostolic affirmation by both their words and conduct.

The adjective *megas* describes the revelation of Jesus Christ as superior in importance to the heathen religions including the worship of Artemis whose center was in Ephesus. The common cultic cry throughout Ephesus in the first century was “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.” Undoubtedly, Paul uses *megas* to emphasize the superiority of Christianity because it is based upon an historical person, Jesus Christ who performed extraordinary, supernatural deeds, which is confirmed by witnesses and evidence unlike the heathen religions of the world. Christianity is based upon Jesus Christ the truth whereas the heathen religions of the world are based upon the lies of Satan’s cosmic system.

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:15, the adjective *megas* means “great” in the sense of greater quality and importance. It contains a comparative idea and describes the revelation of Jesus Christ in the gospel as superior in importance to the heathen religions including the worship of Artemis. It is superior because it is based upon an historical person, Jesus Christ who performed extraordinary, supernatural deeds, which is confirmed by witnesses and evidence unlike the heathen religions of the world. Christianity is based upon Jesus Christ the truth whereas the heathen religions of the world are based upon the lies of Satan’s cosmic system.

The verb *eimi* means “to possess a particular inherit characteristic,” which is identified by the adjective *megas,* “superior.” This indicates that the mystery of
godliness possesses the inherent characteristic of being superior to the heathen mystery religions.

The present tense is a “gnomic present,” which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth. This indicates the mystery of godliness is “as an eternal spiritual truth” superior to the heathen religions of the world. The present tense is also a customary present tense used to signal an ongoing state indicating that the mystery of godliness exists in the ongoing state of being superior in quality and character to the heathen religions of the world. The active voice is a “stative” active indicating the same thing. The indicative mood of the verb is declarative meaning that it is presenting this assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement.

The noun eusebeia refers to conduct that honors God because it is based upon an accurate knowledge of His character, ways and will. It also denotes that this conduct honors God because it is in obedience to His commands and prohibitions and is empowered by His Spirit. This conduct expresses one’s reverence for God and is thus an act of worshipping Him. Therefore, the noun eusebeia means “the way of godliness or godly living” and denotes an attitude and resultant conduct that honors God and is an act of worshipping Him. This attitude and resultant conduct honors God and is an act of worshipping because it is produced by the power of the Holy Spirit and is based upon an accurate knowledge of His character, will, and ways. It is based upon faith in His Word resulting in obedience to His commands and prohibitions by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Eusebeia refers to proper Christian attitude and conduct that is produced by the Holy Spirit as a result of exercising faith in the Word of God resulting in obedience to the Word of God. So the word means “the way of godliness or godly living” in the sense that by the power of the Holy Spirit one is conforming their thinking and conduct according to the Father’s will, which is revealed by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. It means that one is conforming their attitude and conduct to the will of the Father as a result of faith in the Spirit’s teaching in the Word of God resulting in obedience to the Father’s will. Faith in the Word of God appropriates the power of the Holy Spirit resulting in conformity of their attitude and conduct to the will of the Father, which is revealed by the Spirit in the Word of God. This constitutes worshipping God.

Now, in context, Paul is referring to Jesus Christ as indicated by the six line hymn that follows this expression “the mystery of godliness” indicating that the noun musterion, “mystery” and eusebeia, “godliness” refer to the fact that Jesus Christ fully disclosed what godly living is all about. He perfectly revealed God’s character, will and ways by His earthly life, His First Advent. He perfectly exemplified godly living. In other words, He perfectly revealed to the human race
how God lives since He is the incarnate Son of God. Therefore, these two words are not used specifically of the Christian but rather are used to describe Jesus Christ. However, all precedence for the Christian way of life is derived from the Jesus Christ’s First Advent, His earthly life.

The article preceding *eusebeia* functions as a relative pronoun and is anaphoric meaning that it is pointing back to the noun *musterion*. The articual construction is designed to clarify the meaning of *musterion*. This leads us to the meaning of the genitive case of *eusebeia*, which is eexegetical meaning that the word is defining the ambiguous noun *musterion*. Thus, *eusebeia* is defining the term *musterion* and explaining it in explicit terms.

We see this exact same construction in 1 Timothy 3:9 where *pistis* was used with *musterion*. The noun *pistis* speaks of the gospel as a body of doctrine that the church believes. Therefore, not only is *pistis* synonymous with *musterion* but also *eusebeia*. Both are synonymous with *aletheia*, “truth.” *Pistis*, *aletheia*, *musterion* and *eusebeia* speak of the gospel from different perspectives. The noun *musterion* speaks of Jesus Christ who is the content of the gospel fully disclosing God’s plan of salvation through His death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through His earthly life, His First Advent. It speaks of the fact that He fully revealed what godly living is all about. In other words, He fully disclosed how a human being should live in order to honor God.

Therefore, *eusebeia* speaks of the gospel from the perspective that it is about the earthly life of Jesus Christ. In other words, it refers to proper attitude and conduct that is produced by the Holy Spirit as a result of exercising faith in the Word of God resulting in obedience to the Word of God. So Paul is saying with *eusebeia* and *musterion* that Jesus Christ, who is the content of the gospel, fully disclosed what godly living or in other words, He perfectly exemplified conduct or behavior that honors God. Therefore, we will translate τῆς εὐσεβείας, “which is the way of godliness.”

The noun *musterion* in 1 Timothy 3:16 means “mystery” and is used in relation to *eusebeia*, “godliness.” Both are explained in the six line hymn about Jesus Christ. Therefore, together, they refer to the fact that Jesus Christ fully disclosed what godly living is all about. He perfectly revealed God’s character, will and ways by His earthly life, His First Advent. He perfectly exemplified godly living. In other words, He perfectly revealed to the human race how God lives since He is the incarnate Son of God.

These two words are not used specifically of the Christian but rather are used to describe Jesus Christ. However, all precedence for the Christian way of life is derived from the Jesus Christ’s First Advent, His earthly life.
The Baptism of the Spirit identifies the believer with Christ in the sense that the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. It identifies the believer with Christ in His crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1). The believer can experience this victory and deliverance by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23; 8:1-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5-17). He will permanently experience this identification with Christ at the rapture of the church (Romans 8:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57).

Therefore, in 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun *musterion* speaks of Jesus Christ who is the content of the gospel fully disclosing God’s plan of salvation through His death and resurrection of Jesus Christ through His earthly life, His First Advent. It speaks of the fact that He fully revealed what godly living is all about. In other words, He fully disclosed how a human being should live in order to honor God.

Beginning with the relative pronoun *hos* we have a six-line hymn about the Lord Jesus Christ who is the content and subject of the gospel, which as we noted is further described by Paul as τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον, “the mystery, which is the way of godliness.” It is also described as *aletheia*, “truth” at the end of verse 15.

The six lines of this hymn make clear that the hymn is about Jesus Christ. That these six lines beginning with the relative pronoun *hos* is a hymn or at best a poem is the structural consistency of the clauses meaning each line has a passive verb followed by prepositional phrases employing the preposition *en* plus an anarthrous dative object. The only exception is the third line, which omits the preposition.

Furthermore, the assonance created by the presence in each line of the passive verb ending –*the*. Also, the masculine singular form of the relative pronoun *hos*, which does not have antecedent and refers to Christ corresponds to the six lines that speak of Him is further indication that the genre we are dealing with at this point in 1 Timothy 3:16 is a hymn.

These six lines are distinctly different from what has preceded at this point in the epistle and what will follow. The fact that these six lines begins with the relative pronoun *hos* indicates that they were taken from a creedal statement with *hos* pointing to Christ in the document from which these six lines were taken. The antecedent wasn’t included here in 1 Timothy 3:16 by Paul. Therefore, these six
lines in 1 Timothy 3:16 are in fact a fragment of hymn that was sung in the first century apostolic church in the worship service.

The structure of the hymn has been debated by scholars. Alford configure the hymn as one stanza with six lines emphasizing the continuous chronology of the hymn that describes the Lord Jesus’ earthly ministry. However, it ignores the obvious parallelism in the statement.

Another view held by Lock is that there are two stanzas of three lines. This would maintain the parallelism between “preached among the nations” and “believed on in the world.” The first stanza deals with Christ’s First Advent and the second the world’s reception of him (See Mounce, page 216).

Some see a chiastic structure with a a b c – c' b' a' pattern.

Who
a    was revealed in the flesh
b    was vindicated in spirit
c    was seen by angels
c'   was preached among the nations
b'   was believed in the world
a'  was taken up in glory

Under this arrangement the “a” sections serve as chronological bookends for the Lord’s First Advent and contrast the flesh and glory. The “b” sections contrast the spirit world and the realm of humanity. The “c” sections contrast the angels who are invisible to the incarnation and glorification with the nations of the world which are visible witnesses.

The third interpretation is held by most commentators such as Spicq, Jeremias, Dibelius-Conzelmann, Kelly, Gundry and Knight. This view interprets the statement with three stanzas of two lines. It emphasizes the parallelism between “appeared in the flesh” and “vindicated in spirit” as well as maintains the chronology from one stanza to the next. However, it breaks this parallelism between “preached among the nations” and “believed on in the world.” It views an antithetical parallelism in a chiastic structure a-b, b-a, a-b. Each couplet contains a parallel meaning flesh-spirit; angels-nations; world-glory.

The strongest view is the second for reasons Mounce gives in detail (Mounce, pages 217-218). However, he favors a two stanza arrangement, he writes, “The first stanza describes the mighty works of Christ: incarnation, resurrection, and ascension. The second stanza shows that the proper response is for the church to preach the gospel of Christ so people can come to faith and as a result Christ will receive the glory he deserves.” (ibid., page 218).
This author agrees with Mounce’s assessment that there are two stanzas. Within the first stanza there is a chronology with His incarnation mentioned first followed by the resurrection, ascension and session. Within the second stanza there is a chronology only between the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles who respond to the proclamation by exercising faith in Him. The sixth line speaks of the ascension, which obviously took place before the proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles.

Therefore, the mistake that is often made when interpreting this hymn in 1 Timothy 3:16 is that interpreting the six lines as being chronological. The third and sixth lines are references to the ascension. The first and six lines serve as bookends for the First Advent of Christ. The first and second lines take place before the ascension of Christ whereas the fourth and fifth lines take place after it.

“He who was revealed in the flesh” refers to the incarnation and resultant hypostatic union and “was vindicated in the Spirit” refers to the resurrection that vindicated Christ in that it demonstrated who He claimed to be all along, namely the Son of God. “Seen by angels” is a reference to the elect angels bearing witness to His vindication by observing and bearing witness to His resurrection, ascension and session. “Proclaimed among the nations” refers to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ after His ascension and “believed on in the world” refers to the response to this proclamation that continues to the present day. “Taken up in glory” is an obvious reference to the ascension.

Now, we must not lose sight of the fact that the hymn is to refute those pastors in Ephesus who taught false doctrine and the Judaizers who were leading them astray from the gospel. The gospel is about Jesus Christ and is a mystery that fully reveals through Christ, the Father’s plan of salvation for all mankind that was designed in eternity past. The proclamation of the gospel results in the salvation of both men and women and not the proclamation of the Ten Commandments. Therefore, the Judaizers and those pastors in Ephesus who follow their teaching are wrong. Also, the hymn teaches the church at Ephesus that unless there conduct does not adhere to the gospel it will not be proclaimed so that no one will believe.

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“He who was revealed in the flesh” is composed of the nominative masculine singular form of the relative pronoun hos (ὁς) (oce), “He who” and the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb phaneroo (φανερώω) (fah-na-ro-e-owe), “was revealed” and the preposition en (ἐν), “in” and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun sarx (σάρξ) (sarx), “the flesh.”
We have textual problem to address at this point in our exegesis. Some witnesses along with the Byzantine text read θεός, “God” for for ὁς (hos, “who”) (κε A c C2 D2 Ψ [88 pc] 1739 1881 Μ vgms). The reading ὁς, “who” has strong support (κ* A* C* F G 33 365 pc Did Epiph). The latter should be adopted because of strong external evidence and transcriptional probability meaning that this reading best explains the former reading.

Metzger explains, “The reading which, on the basis of external evidence and transcriptional probability, best explains the rise of the others is ὁς. It is supported by the earliest and best uncialss (κ* A* vid C* G) as well as by 33 365 442 2127 syr, hm, pal, goth hp Origen lat Epiphanius Jerome Theodore Eutherius acc. To Theodoret Cyril Cyril acc. To Ps-Oecumenius Liberatus. Furthermore, since the neuter relative pronoun ὁ must have arisen as a scribal correction of ὁς (to bring the relative into concord with μυστήριον), the witnesses that read ὁ (D* itd, g. 61. 85 vg Ambrosiaster Marius Victorinus Hilary Pelagius Augustine) also indirectly presuppose ὁς as the earlier reading. The Textus Receptus reads θεός with κε (this corrector is of the twelfth century) A2 C2 Dc K L P Ψ 81 330 614 1739 Byz, Lect Gregory-Nyssa Didymus Chrysostom Theodoret Euthalius and later Fathers. Thus, no uncial (in the first hand) earlier than the eighth or ninth century (Ψ) supports θεός; all ancient versions presuppose ὁς or ὁ; and no patristic writer prior to the last third of the fourth century testifies to the reading θεός. The reading θεός arose either (a) accidentally, through the misreading of ος as ΟC ΘMCM, or (b) deliberately, either to supply a substantive for the following six verbs or with less probability, to provide greater dogmatic precision.” (Metzger, Bruce M., A Textual Commentary On The Greek New Testament, Second Edition; pages 573-574; United Bible Societies, 2002)

The NET Bible has the following note, they write, “The Byzantine text along with a few other witnesses (κε A c C2 D2 Ψ [88 pc] 1739 1881 Μ vgms) read θεός (theos, “God”) for ὁς (hos, “who”). Most significant among these witnesses is 1739; the second correctors of some of the other mss tend to conform to the medieval standard, the Byzantine text, and add no independent voice to the discussion. A few mss have ὁ θεός (so 88 pc), a reading that is a correction on the anarthrous θεός. On the other side, the masculine relative pronoun ὁ is strongly supported by κ* A* C* F G 33 365 pc Did Epiph. Significantly, D* and virtually the entire Latin tradition read the neuter relative pronoun, ὁ (ho, ‘which’), a reading that indirectly supports ὁς since it could not easily have been generated if θεός had been in the text. Thus, externally, there is no question as to what should be considered original: The Alexandrian and Western traditions are decidedly in favor of ὁς. Internally, the evidence is even stronger. What scribe would change θεός to ὁς intentionally? ‘Who’ is not only a theologically pale reading by
comparison; it also is much harder (since the relative pronoun has no obvious antecedent, probably the reason for the neuter pronoun of the Western tradition). Intrinsically, the rest of 3:16, beginning with ὅς, appears to form a six-strophed hymn. As such, it is a text that is seemingly incorporated into the letter without syntactical connection. Hence, not only should we not look for an antecedent for ὅς (as is often done by commentators), but the relative pronoun thus is not too hard a reading (or impossible, as Dean Burgon believed). Once the genre is taken into account, the relative pronoun fits neatly into the author’s style (cf. also Col 1:15; Phil 2:6 for other places in which the relative pronoun begins a hymn, as was often the case in poetry of the day). On the other hand, with θεός written as a nomen sacrum, it would have looked very much like the relative pronoun: ΘΣ vs. ΟΣ. Thus, it may have been easy to confuse one for the other. This, of course, does not solve which direction the scribes would go, although given their generally high Christology and the bland and ambiguous relative pronoun, it is doubtful that they would have replaced θεός with ὅς. How then should we account for θεός? It appears that sometime after the 2nd century the θεός reading came into existence, either via confusion with ὅς or as an intentional alteration to magnify Christ and clear up the syntax at the same time. Once it got in, this theologically rich reading was easily able to influence all the rest of the mss it came in contact with (including mss already written, such as Η A C D). That this reading did not arise until after the 2nd century is evident from the Western reading, ὅς. The neuter relative pronoun is certainly a ‘correction’ of ὅς, conforming the gender to that of the neuter µυστήριον (mustērion, ‘mystery’). What is significant in this reading is (1) since virtually all the Western witnesses have either the masculine or neuter relative pronoun, the θεός reading was apparently unknown to them in the 2nd century (when the ‘Western’ text seems to have originated, though its place of origination was most likely in the east); they thus supply strong indirect evidence of ὅς outside of Egypt in the 2nd century; (2) even 2nd century scribes were liable to misunderstand the genre, feeling compelled to alter the masculine relative pronoun because it appeared to them to be too harsh. The evidence, therefore, for ὅς is quite compelling, both externally and internally. As TCGNT 574 notes, ‘no uncial (in the first hand) earlier than the eighth or ninth century (Ψ) supports θεός; all ancient versions presuppose ὅς or ὅ; and no patristic writer prior to the last third of the fourth century testifies to the reading θεός.’ Thus, the cries of certain groups that θεός has to be original must be seen as special pleading in this case. To argue that heretics tampered with the text here is self-defeating, for most of the Western fathers who quoted the verse with the relative pronoun were quite orthodox, strongly affirming the deity of Christ. They would have dearly loved such a reading as θεός. Further, had heretics introduced a variant to θεός, a far
more natural choice would have been Χριστός (Christos, ‘Christ’) or κύριος (kurios, ‘Lord’), since the text is self-evidently about Christ, but it is not self-evidently a proclamation of his deity. (See ExSyn 341–42, for a summary discussion on this issue and additional bibliographic references.) tn Grk ‘who.’ sn This passage has been typeset as poetry because many scholars regard this passage as poetic or hymnic. These terms are used broadly to refer to the genre of writing, not to the content. There are two broad criteria for determining if a passage is poetic or hymnic: ‘(a) stylistic: a certain rhythmical lilt when the passages are read aloud, the presence of parallelismus membrorum (i.e., an arrangement into couplets), the semblance of some metre, and the presence of rhetorical devices such as alliteration, chiasmus, and antithesis; and (b) linguistic: an unusual vocabulary, particularly the presence of theological terms, which is different from the surrounding context’ (P. T. O’Brien, Philippians [NIGTC], 188–89). Classifying a passage as hymnic or poetic is important because understanding this genre can provide keys to interpretation. However, not all scholars agree that the above criteria are present in this passage, so the decision to typeset it as poetry should be viewed as a tentative decision about its genre.”

The relative pronoun hos means “He” referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. This is indicated by the content of the six lines that speak of Him. Some contend that this word was not a part of the original hymn. However, it is more likely that it was since it would make more sense for Paul to use the antecedent of the word here than using hos. If hos wasn’t in the original hymn it would make more sense for Paul to use the name “Christ” here or “Jesus Christ” or “Christ Jesus” or “Lord Jesus Christ” or “Lord Jesus” rather than hos. The fact that Paul uses hos here rather than these names indicates that the word had Jesus Christ as its antecedent in the original statement and was lifted from this statement since for clarity sake it would make more sense for him to refer to the Lord Jesus Christ explicitly.

In 1 Timothy 3:16, 2 Timothy 1:10, Hebrews 9:26, 1 Peter 1:20, 1 John 1:2 and 1 John 3:5 and 8, the verb phaneroo means “to be revealed, to be manifested” and is used of the incarnation and subsequent earthly life of the Son of God, i.e. His First Advent. The word is used of not only the incarnation of the Son of God but His subsequent earthly life or First Advent. This is indicated by the prepositional phrase to follow ἐν σαρκί, “in the flesh,” which refers to the Son of God dwelling in a human body.

The incarnation speaks of the Son of God’s entrance into human existence. His First Advent speaks of the thirty-three year period in which He lived and died and rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. The context indicates that the emphasis with phaneroo in 1 Timothy 3:16 is upon the fact of His humanity rather than His incarnation since the hymn speaks of the events pertaining to Christ’s
First Advent. Therefore, *phaneroo* and the prepositional phrase “in the flesh” are a reference to the hypostatic union. The incarnation is implied but not the emphasis because of these events mentioned that took place during Christ’s First Advent. Of course, without the incarnation there would be no hypostatic union.

The idea conveyed by the verb is that the Son of God, who by virtue of His divine nature is invisible, was made visible to the human race by dwelling in a human body or clothing Himself with a human nature (cf. John 1:14)

The noun *sarx* refers to the impeccable human nature of the Son of God. The emphasis with this word is not the incarnation or the Son of God’s entrance into the human race through the virgin pregnancy. Rather, the emphasis is upon the hypostatic union or First Advent of Jesus Christ because the hymn mentions events in the life of Christ.

Further indicating this is the context. Paul is emphasizing with the Ephesian church that the Christian way of life is based upon the teaching of the gospel, which he calls “truth” (verse 15), and the “mystery of godliness.” The gospel is not only about His incarnation but also His earthly life, death and resurrection which provided salvation for all mankind. Paul is more concerned about the events of the First Advent or in other words, the Son of God living a human existence rather than the incarnation since the former provided our so great salvation.

The word appears often in the New Testament for the impeccable human nature of the Son of God.

**John 1:14** And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. (NASU)

**Romans 1:1** Paul, a slave owned by Christ who is Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel originating from God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures 3 concerning His Son, who was born as a descendant of David with respect to His human nature. (My translation)

**Romans 8:1** Therefore, there is now, as an eternal spiritual truth, never any condemnation, none whatsoever for the benefit of those in union with Christ who is Jesus. 2 Because, the life-giving Spirit’s authoritative power, by means of (the death and resurrection of) Christ, who is Jesus, has set you free from the sin nature’s authoritative power as well as spiritual death’s. 3 Because with reference to the Law’s inability in which it was always powerless through the flesh, God the Father accomplished by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. In fact, with regards to the sin nature, He (the Father) executed the sin nature by means of His (Son’s) human nature. (My translation)
Romans 9:1 I am speaking the truth in accordance with the code of Christ. I am by no means lying, while my conscience does confirm to me in accordance with the code of the Holy Spirit. 2 That, as far my feelings are concerned, there is always great sorrow as well as unceasing anguish in my heart. 3 In fact, I could almost wish that I myself could be accursed, totally and completely separated from Christ as a substitute for my brothers, specifically, my fellow countrymen with respect to racial descent. 4 Who indeed by virtue of their unique, privileged character are, as an eternal spiritual truth, Israelites. To them belongs the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the service and the promises. 5 To them belong the fathers and from them, the Christ with respect to human racial descent, the one who is, as an eternal spiritual truth, God over each and every living and non-living thing, worthy of praise and glorification throughout eternity. Amen! (My translation)

Ephesians 2:11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called ‘Uncircumcision’ by the so-called ‘Circumcision,’ which is performed in the flesh by human hands – 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (NASU)

Colossians 1:19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. 21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshy body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach. (NASU)

Hebrews 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. (NASU)

Hebrews 10:20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh. (NASU)
1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit. (NASU)

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, 2 so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (NASU)

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. (NASU)

2 John 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. (NASU)

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun sārx is the object of the preposition en, which functions as a marker of means indicating that the Son of God was revealed to the human race “by means of” His human nature. The preposition could also be a marker of a state or condition indicating that the Son of God was in the state or condition of being human. This works and makes sense and fits the context but so does the former. The question is that of emphasis.

The context would indicate that Paul’s emphasis is that of means since the next two lines in the first stanza contain instrumental ideas as well (means: “by the Spirit”; agency: “by angels”), which would suggest that the emphasis with the prepositional phrase ἐν σαρκί is that of means rather than condition. The emphasis is therefore as to “how” the Son of God was revealed to the human race by God. This corresponds to the next two lines, which respectively tell “how” Jesus Christ was vindicated and “by whom” he was observed at His resurrection, ascension and session and who testified to His vindication. Therefore, we will translate the prepositional phrase ἐν σαρκί, “by means of a human nature.”

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“Was vindicated in the Spirit” is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb δικαίω (dikaióω) (thee-kay-owe-owe), “was
vindicated” and the preposition en (ἐν), “in” and its object is the dative neuter singular form of the noun pneuma (πνεῦμα) (peh-nev-mah), “the Spirit.”

In 1 Timothy 3:16, dikaioo means “to vindicate” and is modified by the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι, “in the Spirit,” which refers to the Holy Spirit. Together, they refer to the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit raising Jesus of Nazareth from the dead on the third day in fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies and according to the Father’s will. This act “vindicated” Jesus of Nazareth in the sense that it demonstrated that His claims that He was the Son of God were true and that the accusations of His enemies were false and that His execution was a travesty of justice. The resurrection vindicated Jesus of Nazareth’s claims that He was the Son of God and that faith in Him alone was the only way to receive eternal salvation and escape eternal condemnation. It vindicated His claims that He was the Messiah of Israel and the fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic prophecies. Therefore, the Father vindicated His Son, Jesus Christ by raising Him from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. This vindication is mentioned in Acts 2:22-36, 3:11-15, 4:10-12, 10:34-43, Romans 1:4, 1 Corinthians 2:1-9, Ephesians 1:20-21, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 2:8-15, and 1 Peter 3:21-22.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the Lord Jesus Christ being vindicated by means of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit raising Him from the dead. The passive voice of the verb means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is of course the Lord Jesus Christ and the agency is expressed by the prepositional phrase ἐν πνεύματι. This indicates that the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit was the means by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, which vindicated Him. The Spirit vindicated Him by raising Him from the dead. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate dikaioo, “vindicated.”

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun pneuma refers of course to the Holy Spirit who is identified as the third Person of the Trinity. It is the object of the preposition en, which is a marker of means indicating that the vindication of Jesus Christ was “by means of” the power of the Holy Spirit. Although, an instrumental of means is not conceived as personal but “impersonal” the Person of the Spirit is not being emphasized here. Rather His power is presented as the instrument that raised Jesus of Nazareth from the dead, which consequently vindicated Him. Therefore, we can see that the figure of “metonymy” is being used here by Paul meaning that the Person of the Spirit is put for His power. So this prepositional phrase emphasizes that Jesus of Nazareth was vindicated “by means of” the power of the Holy Spirit.
1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“Seen by angels” is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb horao (ὁράω) (or-rah-owe), “was seen” and the dative masculine plural form of the noun angelos (ἀγγέλος) (ang-yell-loce), “by the angels.”

The verb horao means “to be observed” since it is in the passive voice and is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ being “observed” by angels at His resurrection, ascension and session. Thus, they bore witness to His vindication. It refers to the elect angels observing the Lord’s ascension into the third heaven, which was in fact a triumphal procession. His ascension and triumphal procession concluded with His session. Therefore, the verb horao refers to the act of the elect angels observing the Lord Jesus Christ observing His resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father. Thus, the word implies that the angels testified to the fact that God the Father had vindicated His Son Jesus Christ.

That the verb refers not only to the ascension of Christ, which was a triumphal procession into heaven, but also to the resurrection and session of Christ is indicated by the fact that the elect angels observed and were witnesses to the resurrection of Christ (Matthew 28:1-2; Luke 24:5-7, 23; John 20:12). They also were present at His ascension and observed it (Acts 1:10-11). They were present at His session in heaven since they worship Him in heaven (Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 1:6-9; Revelation 4).

Therefore, since the angels were present at the resurrection, ascension and session of Christ, it would be unwise to limit this second line to a reference to the ascension of Christ exclusively.

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the aorist tense of the verb horao is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the Lord Jesus Christ being observed by the angels during His resurrection, ascension and session and thus bearing witness to His vindication. The passive voice of the verb means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is of course the Lord Jesus Christ and the agency is expressed by the dative instrumental form ἄγγέλοις. This indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ was observed “by” angels during His resurrection, ascension and session, which served to vindicate Him. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate horao, “observed.”
The noun *angelos* refers to the elect angels and not the non-elect angels, which is indicated by the fact that the word is a dative of means rather than a dative of personal agency. The latter would mean that the noun is used to indicate the personal agent(s) by whom the action of the verb is accomplished. However, with the dative of agency, the person specified by the noun is portrayed as exercising volition. The verb *horao* means “to be observed” and there is no volition involved with seeing. The dative instrumental of means indicates that the noun in the dative is used to indicate the means or instrument by which the verbal action is accomplished. Usually, the noun in the dative is conceived as impersonal. However, the dative of means is distinguished from personal agency in that means involves an agent who uses it whether that agent is stated or implied. Therefore, the personality of the angels is not in view in 1 Timothy 3:16 but rather the emphasis with the dative is that they are presented as instruments in the hands of God in the sense that they bore witness to the Father’s vindication of His Son Jesus Christ. Thus, only the elect angels would have been used by the Father as instruments in observing the vindication of His Son since the resurrection, ascension and session of Jesus Christ demonstrated that the non-elect angels were defeated (Colossians 2:15).

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“Proclaimed among the nations” is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *kerusso* (κηρύσσω) (kear-ee-so), “proclaimed” and the preposition *en* (ἐν), “among” and the dative neuter plural form of the noun *ethnos* (ἐθνος) (eff-noce), “Gentiles.”

The verb *kerusso* refers to the Christian community led by the apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers “publicly proclaiming” the gospel of Jesus Christ “as heralds in a dignified and authoritative manner which commanded the respect and attention of the unsaved Jew and Gentiles who were exposed to it.”

The noun *ethnos* means “Gentiles” and is used to describe all those members of the human race who are not of Jewish racial descent. Specifically, it speaks of heathen Gentiles since the verb *pisteuo* in line five is in the constative aorist tense indicating the conversion experience of Gentiles. If it was a post-conversion faith and thus regenerate Gentiles, the verb *pisteuo* would be in the present tense. That the gospel was proclaimed to the Gentiles does not imply that the Jews did not have the gospel proclaimed to them. Quite to the contrary since the Christian community went to the Jews first with the gospel and then to the Gentiles according to the teaching of the New Testament (cf. Romans 1:16-17). Paul’s
emphasis is with the Gentiles since the Ephesian church was predominately Gentile.

*Ethnos* is the object of the preposition *en*, which is used in a distributive sense with respect to persons and is accurately translated as “among.”

1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“Believed on in the world” is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb *pisteuo* (πιστεύω) (pea-stev-owe), “believed” and the preposition *en* (ἐν), “in” and its object is the dative masculine singular form of the noun *kosmos* (κόσμος) (koez-moce), “the world.”

The verb *pisteuo* is in the passive voice and means to “to be believed upon” and refers to the non-meritorious system of perception of placing one’s “trust” or “confidence in” Jesus Christ as one’s Savior. The verb *pisteuo* refers to heathen Gentiles making the non-meritorious decision “to trust” or “place one’s absolute confidence in” the merits of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and His substitutionary spiritual and physical deaths on the Cross and resurrection in order to receive the gift of eternal life.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion heathen Gentiles placing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to receive eternal salvation and escape eternal condemnation. The passive voice of the verb means that the Lord Jesus Christ, as the subject was acted upon by heathen Gentiles in the sense that they placed their faith in Him for eternal salvation. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate the verb, “believed upon.”

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the noun *kosmos* means “humanity” and refers to the inhabitants of the earth arranged in tribes and nations or peoples (Acts 17:26; John 3:16; 1 Cor. 4:9; 1 John 2:2; 2 Pet. 2:5). The word refers to all the unsaved inhabitants of the earth who are enslaved to the old Adamic sin nature and to Satan and his cosmic system.

The word is a dative of personal agency, which means that the noun is used to indicate the personal agent(s) by whom the action of the verb is accomplished. With the dative of agency, the person specified by the noun is portrayed as exercising volition. Here we have the human race exercising volition as indicated by the verb *pisteuo*, which refers to unsaved members of the human race exercising faith in Jesus Christ for eternal salvation. Therefore, we will translate the noun *kosmos*, “by humanity.”
1 Timothy 3:16 By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (NASU)

“Taken up in glory” is composed of the third person singular aorist passive indicative form of the verb analambano (ἀναλαμβάνω) (ana-lambano), “taken up” and the preposition en (ἐν), “in” and its object is the dative feminine singular form of the noun doxa (δόξα) (thoex-ha), “glory.”

In 1 Timothy 3:16, the verb analambano refers to the ascension of Jesus Christ. The word is used in the exact same manner for the ascension of Christ in Acts 1:2, 11 and 22. The word refers to the vertical transfer of the glorified, resurrected human nature of Jesus Christ to the third heaven, which contains the throne room of God where He now sits at the right hand of the Father.

The aorist tense of the verb is a constative aorist describing in summary fashion the Lord Jesus Christ being taken upon into heaven by the power of God. The passive voice of the verb means that the subject receives the action of the verb from either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The subject here is of course the Lord Jesus Christ and the agency is expressed by the prepositional phrase ἐν δόξῃ. This indicates that the omnipotence of the Father was the means by which Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father. The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this Pauline assertion as a non-contingent or unqualified statement. We will translate analambano, “taken up.”

The noun doxa refers to the manifestation of the Father’s omnipotence, which He exercised by not only raising His Son Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day in fulfillment of the Scriptures but also by taking Him up into heaven and seating Him at His right hand.

It is the object of the preposition en, which is a marker of means indicating that Jesus Christ was taken up into heaven “by means of” the omnipotence of the Father. So we will translate the prepositional phrase ἐν δόξῃ, “by means of glory.”

Session of Christ

The ascension of Christ culminated at the right hand of the Father, which has resulted in His present session. There are many passages which refer to the session of Christ at the right hand of the Father (Matthew 26:64; 28:18; Mark 12:36; 14:62; Luke 20:42; 22:69; Acts 2:25, 33-34; 5:31; 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; 1 Corinthians 15:27; Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1-4; 1 Timothy 6:15; Hebrews 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 3:21; 4:2; 17:14; 19:16).
Psalm 110:1 The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” (NASU)

Daniel 7:13 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. 14 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. (NASU)

Matthew 22:41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: 42 “What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?” They said to Him, “The son of David.” 43 He said to them, “Then how does David in the Spirit call Him ‘Lord,’ saying, 44 ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet” ’? 45 “If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?” 46 No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question. (NASU)

Ephesians 1:15 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (NASU)

Ephesians 4:9 (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) (NASU)

Philippians 2:5 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in
appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NASU)

Hebrews 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. (NASU)

Hebrews 2:8 “You have put all things in subjection under his feet.” For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. (NASU)

The session of Christ was a fulfillment of prophecy since David prophesied in Psalm 110:1 that the Son of God would be seated at His right hand. Our Lord repeated this prophecy to the Jews in Matt. 22:44. Our fulfilled this prophecy when He was seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven. This prophecy is quoted several times in the Scriptures indicating its importance (Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; 10:12-13). Our Lord’s present session in heaven thus fulfills the Messianic prophecy of David in Psalm 110:1. As our Lord stated to the Jews, “If David then calls Him ‘Lord,’ how is He his son?” (Matt. 22:45). They could not answer Him a word. The answer is that David’s descendant would have to be God incarnate in order to fulfill the Davidic prophecy.

The session of Christ is also related to the believer’s position in Christ. At the moment of conversion the believer is placed in union with Christ through the baptism of the Spirit.

The Baptism of the Spirit identifies the believer with Christ in the sense that the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit causes the believer to become identical and united with the Lord Jesus Christ and also ascribes to the believer the qualities and characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ. It identifies the believer with Christ in His crucifixion (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20), His death (Romans 6:2, 7-8; Colossians 2:20; 3:3), His burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12), His resurrection (Romans 6:5; Ephesians 2:6; Philippians 3:10-11; Colossians 2:12; 3:1) and His session (Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1). The believer can experience this victory and deliverance by appropriating by faith the teaching of the Word of God that he has been crucified, died, buried, raised and seated with Christ (Romans 6:11-23;
He will permanently experience this identification with Christ at the rapture of the church (Romans 8:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 15:50-57). So the believer is identified with Christ as He is currently seated in heaven. The believer is now positionally higher than angels (Heb. 1 and 2).

Romans 8:34 teaches that our Lord intercedes for the believer as a part of His session at the right hand of God the Father. He intercedes for the believer in prayer and when Satan accuses the believer of sin (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; Revelation 12:10). The intercessory ministry of Christ is a part of His Priesthood (Heb. 2:17; 8:1). He is our faithful High Priest (Heb. 2:17). This could not be possible if it were not for the fact that our Lord has now been seated at the right hand of God the Father. Our Lord’s High Priesthood is permanent (Heb. 7:24). Every church age believer has been made a royal priest because of their union with their High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord holds three offices: (1) Prophet (2) Priest (3) King. His priesthood is superior to the Levitical priesthood in that He does not have to offer a sacrifice for Himself since He is impeccable. Instead He offered Himself as a substitute and became the Mediator of a New Covenant which was based upon His spiritual and physical death on the cross.

The Second Triumphal Procession

As we have noted, the Second Advent of Jesus Christ will constitute His second triumphal procession. At His “Second Advent,” the Lord Jesus Christ will destroy the Tribulational armies, have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:11-19), will imprison Satan for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3) and will establish His millennial reign on planet earth (Rev. 20:4-6).

At that time, the Lord and His armies will orbit the earth before landing on the Mount of Olives, which was the site of His Ascension (Acts. 1:9-11). There will be a great earthquake when our Lord’s foot touches the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1-8) and will be a unique day having neither day nor night (Zech. 14:7). The Lord Jesus Christ describes the Tribulation period in detail and His Second Advent in Matthew 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28.

Dwight Pentecost discusses the different views in Christianity regarding the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, he writes, “Historically, there have been four major views concerning the second advent of Christ. (A) The non-literal or spiritualized view. The non-literal view denies that there will be a literal, bodily, personal, return of Christ to the earth. Walvoord summarizes this view: A common modern view of the Lord’s return is the so-called spiritual view which identifies
the coming of Christ as a perpetual advance of Christ in the Church that includes many particular events. William Newton Clarke, for instance, held that the promises of the second coming are fulfilled by “his spiritual presence with his people,” which is introduced by the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, accompanied by the overthrow of Jerusalem, and ultimately fulfilled by continual spiritual advance in the church. In other words it is not an event, but it includes all the events of the Christian era which are the work of Christ. [This view is] . . . held by many liberals of our day. This view sees the second advent as being fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem, or the day of Pentecost, or the death of the saint, or the conversion of the individual, or any crisis in history or the individual’s experience. Their controversy is as to whether there will be a literal second advent or not. Needless to say such a view is based on disbelief in the Word of God or the spiritualizing method of interpretation. (B) The post millennial view. The postmillennial view, popular among covenant theologians of the post-Reformation period, holds, according to Walvoord: - that through preaching the Gospel the whole world will be Christianized and brought to submission to the Gospel before the return of Christ. The name is derived from the fact that In this theory Christ returns after the millennium (hence, post millennium). The followers of this view hold to a literal second advent and believe in a literal millennium, generally following the Old Testament teaching on the nature of that kingdom. Their controversy is over such questions as who institutes the millennium, the relation of Christ to the millennium, and the time of Christ’s coming in relation to that millennium. (C) The amillennial view. The amillennial view holds that there will be no literal millennium on the earth following the second advent. All the prophecies concerning the kingdom are being fulfilled in the inter-advent period spiritually by the church. Concerning this view it has been stated: Its most general character is that of denial of a literal reign of Christ upon the earth. Satan is conceived as bound at the first coming of Christ. The present age between the first and second comings is the fulfillment of the millennium. Its adherents differ as to whether the millennium is being fulfilled on the earth (Augustine) or whether it is being fulfilled by the saints in heaven (Warfield). It may be summed up in the idea that there will be no more millennium than there is now, and that the eternal state immediately follows the second coming of Christ. It Is similar to postmillennialism in that Christ comes after what they regard as the millennium. Their controversy is over the question as to whether there will be a literal millennium for Israel or whether the promises concerning the millennium are now being fulfilled in the church, either on earth or in heaven. (D) The premillennial view. The premillennial view is the view that holds that Christ will return to earth, literally and bodily, before the millennial age begins and that, by His presence, a

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ in Revelation 19

Revelation chapter 19 teaches extensively regarding the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:1-10 reveals the events in heaven leading up to the Second Advent, which is taught in Revelation 19:11-20:3.

In Revelation 19:1-6, John presents “hallelujah” choruses after the destruction of the city of Babylon by the great world-wide earthquake.

Revelation 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; 2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” 3 And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” (NASB95)

“After these things” refers to the events recorded in Revelation 17-18, which deal with destruction of religious Babylon by Antichrist (Revelation 17) and the destruction of politico-commercial Babylon by God (Revelation 18).

A “great multitude” forms the first chorus, which refers to the martyred dead of the Tribulation.

“Hallelujah” is the interjection hallelouia, which is the Greek rendering of two Hebrew words, the first is hal’lu and the second is the Hebrew name of God in the
shortened form, *Yahh*, and together they mean, “to sing praise, to give praise to the Lord.”

So the nature of these choruses in heaven is to give praise to the Lord. The content of their praise involves attributing salvation, glory and power to God for His permanent destruction of both religious and politico-commercial Babylon (verses 1-3) as well as giving praise for the permanent sovereignty of the Lord God over both the significant and insignificant (verses 4-6).

This multitude praises God’s power, righteousness and justice.

Revelation 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:4 records the “twenty-four elders and the four living creatures” forming a chorus that answers antiphonally to the first chorus of the martyred dead of the Tribulation, which formed a “great multitude.” The “twenty-four elders” represent the representatives of the church and the “four living creatures” represent the elect angels.

Revelation 19:5-6 records the final hallelujah chorus.

Revelation 19:5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” 6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” (NASB95)

This praise is prophetic for what is about to happen rather than for the judgment just executed upon Babylon since at this point Christ had not bodily assumed the sovereign rule of planet earth.

Revelation 19:7-10 records the proclamation of the wedding of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7 “Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (NASB95)

In order to understand the significance of what is recorded in Revelation 19:7-10, we must have some kind of understanding of the marriage custom in John’s day, which took place in three stages:
(1) Betrothal: The marriage contract was drawn up by the parents when the parties to the marriage were still children, which included a payment of a dowry. Though the marriage was not consummated as of yet, they were considered legally married.

The symbolism of this stage is fulfilled when the Christian became a part of the bride of Christ the moment they accepted by faith Jesus Christ as their Savior. The church age is the betrothal phase, the time when God is calling out a bride for His Son.

The payment of a suitable dowry was fulfilled symbolically when Christ gave His own life for the church age believer as a dowry. Today all believers are legally married to Jesus Christ and through living faithfully in the Word, they are kept as pure virgins, kept from Satanic apostasy or fornication (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-26 with Jam. 4:4).

(2) Presentation: When the couple reached a suitable age the father of the bridegroom would present the contract to the father of the bride. The bridegroom would then go to the house of the bride in the company of his friends and escort her to his home. This is the background for the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25:1-13.

During the betrothal phase the groom would prepare an apartment, a place to live in his father’s house. Homes, especially for the wealthy, were often very large complexes. Only the portions which were needed, however, were finished and furnished. When a son was to be married, another portion was completed to make ready for the new bride (John 14:2-3).

The rapture, or resurrection of the church, is the event which brings the groom to the bride and which takes the bride back into heaven. The groom and his friends would then escort the bride to their new home. The ceremony which followed was the “presentation” or actual marriage. The hand of the bride was placed into the hand of the groom’s father. He would then place it into the groom’s hand. This was considered the marriage ceremony. Ephesians 5:27 speaks of this presentation, but also of Christ’s present work of keeping the church pure and productive by loving her through the Word.

(3) The Marriage Feast (The Reception): The groom would invite many guests and gather all his friends to come to the marriage feast and view his bride. The millennium represents the marriage feast where Christ displays His bride, the church.

In the parable of Matthew 22:1-14 we have an illustration of this custom. The parable, however, pictures the rejection of Israel and Christ’s gracious extension of the invitation to all nations. Christ had prepared a great feast of spiritual
blessings, but Israel was too busy to be bothered so the offer was extended to the nations or the Gentile world (cf. Rom. 11:1-32).

In Matthew 25:1-13 we have another reference to the wedding feast only this time it refers to the millennium and the invitation is to come as guests to this great feast. The invitation is to Jews and Gentiles of the Tribulation to come to the marriage feast of Christ and His bride, the church. Of course, they can only come by faith in the groom. Faith alone in Christ alone is the wedding invitation; this provides the righteous garment necessary to get into the feast.

Revelation 19:7 records the announcement of the wedding feast or the millennial reign and not the announcement of the marriage, which already occurred in heaven following the rapture with the presentation of the church to the Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 19:9 makes this clear.

The marriage supper or millennial reign can now be announced and anticipated because Christ is about to return to remove all the enemies of God and unbelievers from the earth in preparing the earth for this great celebration of 1,000 years. However, for such an event the bride must be properly clothed and prepared so the groom may show off his new bride.

Revelation 19:8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (NASB95)

The bride refers to the church of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22f). Second, we are told, “His bride makes herself ready.” This brings out the aspect of personal responsibility of individuals. There is first the responsibility in relation to salvation.

To be a part of the bride, one must have believed in Christ as his or her personal Savior from sin. But the primary emphasis here relates to the issue of true spirituality which results in rewards or preparation for eternity. Men must personally and responsibly believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and then, as believers and as part of the bride of Christ, they must choose to walk by the Spirit of God according to the Word, by faith, so they can bear fruit or reproduce good works. This is what is meant by the statement, “makes herself ready.”

God’s part is brought with the statement in verse 8 that “it was given to her to clothe herself…” The words “was given to her” focuses our attention on God’s grace and refers, I believe, to two phases of His grace to all believers who make up the bride of Christ.

First, it refers to those gifts Christ has given to the church which enable believers to produce good works for God and to glorify Him. Second, “was given to her” also refers to the reward the Lord will give for faithful service or the righteous deeds done in the power of the Holy Spirit. The reward is a beautiful wedding garment to be worn at the wedding feast. This is clearly spelled out in the
next words of our text, “... to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.”

Revelation 19:9 Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” (NASB95)

Verse 9 has reference to the custom of inviting guests to the wedding feast as seen in Matthew 22 and 25. This passage records a beatitude, a pronouncement of blessing upon those invited. All men are invited, both Jews and Gentiles, but to enter and be a part one must accept the invitation and come with the right wedding garment, namely, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This means one must first accept the invitation to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12; 3:3, 16; Rom. 3:21-22; 4:5; Matt. 22:8-13).

Every guest must have on a wedding robe, a garment of righteousness, in order to be a part of the marriage feast or the millennial reign of the Savior. These guests are friends of the bridegroom (John 3:29).

Revelation 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” (NASB95)

John is overcome by the awesome revelation given to him and falls at the feet of the angel who gave him this revelation and he is rebuked by the angel for doing so. He had forgotten that one must always keep in mind that it is the message about God and His ways and not the messenger that is important whether men or angels. Revelation from God whether through an angel or man must always result in the worship of God and not the messenger. The messengers are simply servants as the angel tells John.

Revelation 19:11-20:3 records the “Second Advent” of Jesus Christ, which like the “First Advent” will be literally fulfilled. None of the details given in Revelation 19:11-21 corresponds to the “Rapture” of the church.

The “Rapture” of the church is distinguished in Scripture from the “Second Advent” of Jesus Christ. For example, the “Rapture” delivers the church from the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9) while the “Second Advent” delivers Israel from Satan, Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. The “Rapture” is seen only by the church and is therefore invisible to the world while the “Second Advent” is the visible manifestation of Christ on the earth (Revelation 1:7).

Revelation 1:7 “BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.” (NASB95)

The Lord claims His Bride at the “Rapture” but He returns with her at the “Second Advent.” (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10) The “Rapture” completes God’s program for the church (1 Corinthians 15:51-58) while the “Second Advent” is related to God’s program for Israel (Matthew 24).

The “Rapture” is a mystery (1 Corinthians 15:51-57), not known to Old Testament saints whereas the “Second Advent” is prophesied throughout the Old Testament canon. The “Rapture” leaves creation unchanged whereas the “Second Advent” entails a change in creation from corruption to perfect environment (Romans 8:18-22).

The “Rapture” does not fulfill God’s covenants to Israel whereas the “Second Advent” marks the beginning of their fulfillment through Christ’s millennial reign. The “Rapture” precedes the Tribulation whereas the “Second Advent” follows it as indicated by the chronology presented in the book of Revelation.

The church is nowhere found during the events of the Tribulation period recorded in Revelation 6-18 but appears as Christ’s bride in heaven in Revelation 19:1-10 and comes back with Christ at His Second Advent as recorded in Revelation 19:11-21.

Revelation 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (NASB95)

The “white horse rider” is a reference to Christ and is distinguished from the white horse rider in Revelation 6:2, which refers to Antichrist coming as a peacemaker during the first half of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

In the ancient world, the horse was an animal used for warfare, thus here it speaks of Christ making war against His enemies. During His First Advent, He came riding into Jerusalem on a donkey, which was an animal that symbolized peace, which He was offering to the nation of Israel, which they rejected when they crucified Him. The fact that Christ is on a white horse is alluding to the ancient Roman Triumph.

J. Hampton Keathley III commenting on this writes, “The Roman Triumph was the highest honor that could be bestowed on a victorious Roman general. It came from a Greek word that referred to a public and triumphal procession. The procession was a parade up the Via Sacra, the main street of Rome, that led from the Forum to the temple of Jupiter which lay on the Capitoline Hill. The General
was mounted on a white horse which was the symbol of a victorious triumph in the field over the enemies of the nation. First came the spoils of war which were eventually given to the general’s army and friends. Next came the captives who had been defeated and captured in battle, disarmed and in chains. Then came the General on his white horse followed by his family, friends, and his army. Later the prisoners were often executed by the soldiers, often one on one until they were all executed. Now compare the following Scriptures: in Colossians 2:15 we have a reference to Christ’s victory in battle via the cross. Here Christ is proclaimed as the triumphant General in the field of battle. Ephesians 4:7f speaks of Christ giving gifts to men as spoils of war following the victory over the Satanic hosts. (The first phase of the triumph.) Finally, Revelation 19:11 speaks of the removal of all enemies. (The final phase of the procession resulting in the execution of all enemies.)” (Studies in Revelation-Christ’s Victory Over The Forces Of Darkness, page 268; Biblical Studies Press; www.bible.org; 1997)

Revelation 19:11-13 presents a twelve-fold description of Jesus Christ when He appears at His Second Advent. The first description is that He is “faithful and true.” Our Lord is described as “faithful,” which means that He can always be counted on to keep His promises unlike rulers throughout human history who made promises they could not or did not fulfill. He is described as “true” meaning that He is the “real deal,” the perfect ruler for this world who always tells the truth because as to His divine nature, He is truth.

The second description “in righteousness He judges and wages war” means that every enemy of God on the earth is about to be judged and executed and removed from the earth and this is in accordance with His perfect righteousness. This stands in stark contrast to Christ’s “First Advent,” when He came full of grace and truth, not to judge but to bear the penalty of sin, to be judged for our sin. However, at His “Second Advent” He comes as Judge.

Revelation 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. (NASB95)

The third description of our Lord is that His “eyes are a flame of fire,” which is symbolic language for the fact that at His Second Advent, He will come to judge those on the earth in rebellion against God and to put down all unrighteousness.

The fourth description of Christ is that “on His head are many diadems,” which symbolizes Christ’s right to rule as absolute, sole ruler of planet earth.

The fifth description of our Lord is that “He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.”

The word “name” refers to our Lord’s character. Jesus Christ is unique as the God-Man in that He is the only member of the Trinity with a human nature and He
is the only member of the human race who has a divine nature as God, thus no one knows His name except Himself.

Revelation 19:13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (NASB95)

The sixth description of Christ is that “He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood,” which anticipates the defeat of His enemies (See Isaiah 63:1-6).

The seventh description of our Lord is that “His name is called the Word of God,” which refers to the fact that He is the Word of God incarnate.

Revelation 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. (NASB95)

This verse presents the eighth description of Christ at His Second Advent.

The armies following Christ are composed of two groups: (1) Elect angels (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:30-31; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7) (2) Overcomers from the church age (Revelation 19:1-8, 14). These “overcomers” from the church age are “clothed in fine linen,” which Revelation 19:8 describes as “the righteous acts of the saints.”

Revelation 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. (NASB95)

The ninth description of Christ when He comes back at His Second Advent is that “from His mouth comes a sharp sword so that with it He may strike down the nations,” which speaks of the fact that Christ will remove all His enemies from the earth.

The tenth description “He will rule them with a rod of iron” refers to Christ wielding absolute governmental authority over the entire earth during His millennial reign and will require all men to conform to His righteous and just standards and that He will not tolerate lawlessness or injustices. This description speaks of Christ acting the part of a shepherd by destroying the enemies of the sheep.

The eleventh description of Christ at His Second Advent is that “He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty,” which speak of a harvest of judgment that is deliberate and continuous until it is complete and demonstrates how much God hates sin and is an expression of God’s holiness.

Revelation 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:16 records the twelfth description of Christ when He returns at His Second Advent. This description refers to the majestic power of Christ since the robe in the ancient world was a symbol of majesty and the thigh suggested power.
Revelation 19:17-20:3 presents the conclusion of the Armageddon campaign, which began with the Russian invasion of Israel during the midway point of Daniel’s seventieth week.

The following is a chronology of major events that will take place during Daniel’s Seventieth Week that lead up to the Second Advent of Christ: The first event is the rise of the Ten Nation Confederacy called the Revived Roman Empire at the beginning of Daniel’s 70th week (Dan. 2; 7). From this we have Antichrist rising to power as the King of the Western Confederacy in Europe (Dan. 7:20, 24; 9:27; Rev. 13:1-10). The rise of the revived form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist during the first three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week will be accompanied by the formulation of a false religious system under the false prophet (Rev. 13:11-18).

The next major event will be Antichrist’s peace treaty with the leadership of Israel, which takes place after the rapture of the church and actually begins Daniel’s Seventieth Week. Toward the middle of Daniel’s Seventieth week, Michael the archangel and his legions of elect-angels will expel Satan and his legions from heaven (Rev. 12:7). Once Satan is thrown down permanently on the earth, he will inspire the leader of Russia and her allies to invade Israel during the midway point of Daniel’s Seventieth Week according to Ezekiel 38-39. Ezekiel chapters thirty eight and thirty nine reveals that the Lord Himself will destroy this invasion by Russia who will be accompanied by Georgia, Ukraine, Turkey, Iran, Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya.

The next major event will be Antichrist breaking his treaty with the Israel (Daniel 9:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4). The Russian led invasion of Israel will cause the Antichrist to break his treaty with Israel and occupy Israel according to Daniel 11:41. As a result as a result of the power vacuum in the world caused by the destruction of Russia’s military, the Antichrist will become a world ruler (Rev. 6:1-2; 13:5, 7; 17:12-13).

Antichrist will be worshipped world-wide (Daniel 11:36; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:14-15) and during this time Jerusalem will be occupied by Gentile armies (Revelation 11:1-2) and with it great persecution of the Jews.

With the sixth bowl judgment, the Eastern Confederacy will cross the Euphrates River and enter Palestine to do battle with the Antichrist and his armies (Revelation 16:12-16; Daniel 11:44-45).

The sixth bowl judgment is recorded in Revelation 16:12-16 and is directed at the Euphrates river in Iraq and dries it up.

The Euphrates is mentioned in Revelation 9:14 when the sixth trumpet was sounded resulting in the release of the fourth non-elect angels and a massive demonic army. This river formed the Eastern boundary of ancient Rome and its
conquests and it also forms the Eastern boundary of the land as promised to Abraham (cf. Gen. 15:18; Deut. 1:7; 11:24; Josh. 1:4).

The purpose of this sixth bowl judgment is to prepare the way for the invasion of Israel by the kings from the east to do battle with the armies of the Antichrist so that God might bring them into judgment at Armageddon.

“The kings from the east” in the original Greek text is literally “the kings from the rising sun” and is a poetical expression signifying the kings from where the sun rises, as China, Japan, India, Persia, and Afghanistan.

The word “war” in Revelation 16:14 is the Greek word polemos (povlemo$), which signifies a war, an entire campaign and not merely one isolated conflict or battle.

“Har-Magedon” is the name Armageddon, which is Greek transliteration of two Hebrew words, har and Megiddo, “the hill of Megiddo.”

The word Megiddo means “place of troops or “place of slaughter” and is also called the Plain of Esdraelon and the Valley of Jezreel. The area is about fourteen miles wide and twenty miles long and forms what Napoleon called “the most natural battlefield of the whole earth.”

The battle of Armageddon appears to be the result of the armies of the nations of the earth gathering on their own initiative, which is true but this is according to God’s plan from eternity past. Satan, Antichrist and the false prophet, the Satanic trinity, through demonic powers, will influence the nations and cause their rulers to assemble their armies for battle. This assembling of the world’s armies for World War III is designed by God to bring an end to Satan’s rule of planet earth and to establish His Son’s millennial reign.

Daniel 11:40-45, Zechariah 12 and 14 describes this war from Israel’s perspective and Revelation 19 records the outcome of this war. Therefore, the events recorded by John in Revelation 19:17-20:3 present the conclusion of the Armageddon campaign.

Revelation 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” (NASB95)

The angel’s invitation to the birds of the earth anticipates how devastating and complete Christ’s victory will be over the Tribulational armies.

Revelation 19:17-18 teaches that Jesus Christ will destroy all who resist Him regardless of class and status in life. It teaches the principle that God’s judgment upon man is no respecter of persons (See Romans 2:6-11).
**Revelation 19:19** And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. (NASB95)

The armies of Antichrist will be fighting the Eastern Confederacy in the valley of Jezreel, which is also called “Armageddon.” However, Revelation 19:19 teaches that they will stop pointing their weapons at each other and will point them at Christ.

“The beast” is a reference to the Antichrist who is identified by this designation in Revelation 13:1, 2, 3, 4; 14:9, 11; 11:7; 15:2; 16:2; 17:3; 19:20; and 20:10.

“The kings of the earth” would include the seven remaining kings of the ten nation European Confederacy (See Revelation 17:12-17; Daniel 7:18) as well as the kings of the East (Revelation 16:12-17).

**Revelation 19:20** And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. (NASB95)

“The beast” and the “false prophet” are the first human beings that will occupy the Lake of Fire and the rest of unsaved humanity will join them at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15). Notice that they are thrown “alive” into the Lake of Fire indicating a conscious existence in the place. Satan is not sent to the Lake of Fire until after the millennium when he starts one final rebellion, which God puts down (Revelation 20:7-10).

**Revelation 19:21** And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh. (NASB95)

This passage teaches that Christ’s victory over Antichrist, the false prophet and the kings of the earth and their armies is a total and complete and absolute one.

Revelation 20:1-3 records that Satan will be captured at the Second Advent of Christ and will be incarcerated for a thousand years.

**Revelation 20:1** Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. (NASB95)

The “abyss” is a prison for fallen or non-elect angels.

**Revelation 20:2** And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. (NASB95)

“The dragon” emphasizes Satan’s vicious and cruel character and emphasizes his end time activity and behavior.
“The serpent of old” draws our attention to Satan’s crafty character and reminds us of the Garden of Eden, the fall of man, his usurpation of man’s rule on earth, and his constant activity of temptation and deception.

“Devil” is the noun Diabolos, a legal term meaning “slanderer, false accuser.”

“Satan” is the noun Satanas, which is a legal term meaning “adversary.”

Revelation 20:3 And he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. (NASB95)

The fact that Revelation 20:3 teaches that Satan will be incarcerated for a thousand years at Christ’s Second Advent clearly implies that he is not incarcerated at this present time in history and won’t be until the Second Advent of Christ. In fact, 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that Satan is the “god of this world” at the present time and also deceives the entire world as well (1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:10).

The Lord Jesus Christ describes the Tribulation period in detail and His Second Advent.

Matthew 24:29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. 31 And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.” (NASB95)

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ in Zechariah 12

The Second Advent of Christ is further described in Zechariah chapter 12.

Zechariah 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him, 2 “Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah. 3 It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.” (NASB95)
Zechariah 12:1 indicates that this chapter is a prophecy concerning the future of the nation of Israel during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s seventieth week.

The phrase “a cup that causes reeling” is a prophetic phrase describing divine judgment, which in this context deals with the Gentile nations who war against Israel during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

“In that day” refers to the last three and a half years of Daniel’s seventieth week, which corresponds to the Armageddon campaign in which Gentile armies will occupy and surround Israel and Jerusalem itself.

Zechariah 12:4-9 describes the Lord Jesus Christ delivering Israel from the Gentile armies at His Second Advent.

Zechariah 12:4 In that day, declares the LORD, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5 Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.’ 6 In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem. 7 The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah. 8 In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. 9 And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.” (NASB95)

The Lord prophesied concerning the day He will deliver Israel from her enemies at His Second Advent.

Luke 21:25 “There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. 28 But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (NASB95)

Zechariah 12:10-14 records the Day of Atonement when the nation of Israel will mourn as a nation over their rejection of Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah and will acknowledge as such and will turn to Him for deliverance from Antichrist and the Tribulational armies. At that time, Israel will receive the Holy Spirit.
Zechariah 12:10 “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. 11 In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12 The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; 13 the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.” (NASB95)

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ in Zechariah 14

Zechariah also gives us further insight into the Second Advent of Christ.

Zechariah 14:1 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. (NASB95)

This summary verse announces the last future siege of Jerusalem in the “day of the Lord,” which is during the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

Zechariah 14:2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. 4 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. (NASB95)

The Mount of Olives will be split in half by the return of our Lord to the Mount of Olives. If you recall in Acts 1:9-11 upon our Lord’s ascension the angels told the disciples of our Lord that He would return in the same manner to the Mount of Olives in the future.

The statement that the Lord will stand “on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east” is a significant statement. This is not a casual statement. You will notice throughout Scripture that help for Israel is coming from the east. This is the reason the Jews pay great attention to that eastern gate, which
some call the golden gate. The Lord will come through the eastern gate at His Second Advent in the rebuilt Jewish temple.

Zechariah 14:5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! (NASB95)

When the Lord lands upon the Mount of Olives at His Second Advent to personally and bodily deal with His enemies and those of His people, the Jews, the Mount of Olives, dislodged by a severe and terrible earthquake, will dissolve into “an exceedingly great valley.” Therefore, there will be a vast alteration of the geography in Jerusalem in order that it might be the center of blessing to the world during the millennial reign of Christ.

Jerusalem will be the capital of the entire earth during the Millennium according to Isaiah 2:2-3.

Zechariah 14:6 In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. 7 For it will be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. (NASB95)

The Second Advent of Christ will be unique because Jesus Christ is unique since He is undiminished deity and true humanity in one Person forever, the God-Man.

The phrase “neither day nor night but it will come about that at evening time there will be light” indicates that the day of the Second Advent of Christ will be utterly different from any day in the history of the world. It cannot be day for all natural sources of light upon the earth will have failed, nor can it be light since there will be an awesome display of light reflected from the glory of the Lord, His angels and glorified saints. Nor can it be the mixture of day and night for twilight for the same reason.

The Lord prophesied concerning this day.

Mark 13:24 “But in those days, after that tribulation, THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, 25 AND THE STARS WILL BE FALLING from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. 26 Then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN CLOUDS with great power and glory. 27 And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth to the farthest end of heaven.” (NASB95)

Zechariah 14:8 And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea (Dead Sea) and the other half toward the
western sea (Mediterranean); it will be in summer as well as in winter. (NASB95)

Jerusalem, who throughout her history has been an inland city, will become a seagoing city, or port town at the Second Advent of Christ. The great earthquake caused by Christ landing on the Mount of Olives that is recorded in Zechariah 14:4 will change the entire central highland ridge from Geba of Benjamin (Josh. 18:24; 2 K. 23:8), located some 6 miles northeast of Jerusalem, to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, located 33 miles southwest of Jerusalem, an inhabited site in Zechariah’s day. All the land of Palestine specified here in verse 10 shall be transformed so as to become, like the Arabah.

The Arabah is the deep depression that extends from the Sea of Galilee, 652 feet below sea level to the Gulf of ‘Aqaba, and only 300 feet above sea level just west of Petra in Edom, making the Arabah the deepest depression on the surface of the earth. But the depth of the terrain was only one element that prompted the comparison by Zechariah to the Arabah.

Another was its level character. Josephus twice mentions “the Great Plain” in describing the Ghor or Rift, from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea (Wars 8.2; Antiquities 6.1). Hence, Zechariah used the simile “like the Arabah” to stress the exaltation of Jerusalem in emphasizing the depression of the surrounding hills and their being made as level as a plain.

Jerusalem shall be elevated and exalted instead of being imbedded in the midst of mountainous rough terrain that it is presently surrounded by.

Zechariah 14:9-11 describes the millennial reign of Christ.

Zechariah 14:9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate (North wall) as far as the place of the First Gate (Northeastern corner of the city) to the Corner Gate (northwestern extremity), and from the Tower of Hananel (at the opposite extremity of the “corner gate,” in the northeastern part of the city, Jer. 31:38) to the king's wine presses. 11 People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. (NASB95)

Zechariah 14:12-16 parallels Revelation 19:11-21 and describes in great detail the judgment that the Eastern and Western Confederacies will receive from Christ at His Second Advent.

Zechariah 14:12 Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. 13 It will come about in that day that a
great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. 

14 Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance. 15 So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps. 16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths (Feast of Tabernacles). (NASB95)

The Hebrew term for “plague” is the noun maggephah, which appears in Zechariah 14:12, 15 twice and 18 and refers to the direct judgment that Christ will administer to His enemies at His Second Advent.

Not only does Zechariah 14:12-16 teach that Christ will personally destroy His enemies but it also reveals that He will cause a great panic to come upon His enemies and those who are born-again from the tribe of Judah will fight while displaying super human valor as a result of being empowered by the Lord to do so. Thus the Psalmist warns the nations of taking a stand against Christ.

Psalm 2:1 “Why are the nations in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing? 2 The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, 3 “Let us tear their fetters apart and cast away their cords from us!” 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. 5 Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, 6 “But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain. 7 I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ 10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment; Take warning, O judges of the earth. 11 Worship the LORD with reverence and rejoice with trembling. 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish in the way, for His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!” (NASB95)

*The Second Advent of Jesus Christ Predicted in Daniel 2*

Daniel 2:34 “You were in a trance like state staring as a rock cut out but not by human hands struck the statue on its iron and clay feet so that it crushed them.” (Author’s translation)
In Daniel 2:34, the rock or stone refers to Jesus Christ, the God-man. The destruction of the feet by this stone represents His Second Advent, which will bring an end to Daniel’s Seventieth Week, all Gentile rule over Jerusalem and the world and will establish His millennial reign. In Daniel 2:35, the stone becomes a great mountain and fills the earth which refers to the millennial reign of Christ which constitutes God’s kingdom on earth. The stone striking the feet of the statue establishes God’s kingdom on earth forever according to a comparison of Daniel 2:34-35 with Daniel 2:44-45.

The chronology found in Daniel 2:34-35 and 2:44-45 teaches that the Second Advent establishes God’s kingdom on earth. This corresponds to what is taught in Revelation 19:11-20:6 and Zechariah 14:1-11.

That the stone refers to Jesus Christ and the stone destroying the feet of the statue refers to His Second Advent and the stone becoming a great mountain filling the earth coincides with these two passages of Scripture.

Daniel 2:44-45 makes clear that by this stone destroying the feet of the statue which represents the yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire, God will establish His kingdom on earth, which will never be destroyed.

Secondly, the chronology found in Revelation 19:11-20:6 teaches that at His Second Advent, Jesus Christ will destroy Antichrist and the false prophet, imprison Satan for a thousand years and establish His millennial reign.

Also, the chronology of Zechariah 14:1-11 teaches that Jesus Christ will establish His millennial reign by means of His Second Advent. The first seven verses of Zechariah 14 prophesy of Christ’s Second Advent and verses 9-11, speak of His millennial reign.

Zechariah 14:12-15 parallels Revelation 19:11-21, which both speak of Christ’s Second Advent whereas Zechariah 14:16 speaks of the millennial reign of Christ, which parallels Revelation 20:1-6, which does the same.

Therefore, in Daniel 2:34 and 2:44-45, the stone refers to Jesus Christ and the destruction of the feet by this stone represents His Second Advent, which will bring an end to Daniel’s Seventieth as well as all Gentile rule over Jerusalem and the world and establish His millennial reign, which constitutes God’s kingdom on earth.

The Lord Jesus Christ is referred to in other places of Scripture as the Rock or a stone. The term “rock” is an Old Testament for God and a Messianic title signifying that God’s people can rely on him for absolute protection and salvation.

In Scripture a rock often refers to Jesus Christ, Israel’s Messiah (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 8:14; 28:16; Matthew 21:33-45; 1 Peter 2:4-8). Rock as a title for Israel’s God appears in Psalm 78:35, Genesis 49:24, Deuteronomy 32:15, 18, 30, 2 Samuel 23:3, Psalm 42:9, Isaiah 30:29 and Habakkuk 1:12. The Messiah is the rock/stone
on which God’s living temple stands (Isaiah 8:14; 28:16; cf. Psalm 118:22; Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6-7). The Messiah’s kingdom is eternal and immovable like a rock (Daniel 2:34-35; cf. Daniel 2:44-45). There are consequences for rejecting the rock/stone, i.e. the Messiah (Matthew 21:44; cf. Luke 20:18; Romans 9:32-33; 1 Peter 2:4-8).

Romans 9:32b They stumbled over the stumbling stone. (NASB95)

“The stumbling stone” is composed of the articular dative masculine singular form of the noun lithos, “the stone” and the articular genitive neuter singular form of the noun proskomma, “stumbling.”

In the Greek New Testament, the noun is used in a literal sense of “stones” (Luke 17:2; 19:44; John 8:59; 10:31) and “precious stones” (Revelation 17:4; 18:12). It is also used of divine resources (1 Corinthians 3:12) and church age believers (1 Peter 2:4-5). Like the Septuagint, the word is used in a figurative sense for the Messiah of Israel and is thus used of Jesus Christ (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17f.; Acts 4:11/Psalm 118:22; 1 Peter 2:6-8).

In Romans 9:32, the noun lithos is used of the Lord Jesus Christ in relation to His rejection by the nation of Israel during His First Advent. The word is also used in this manner in Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17 and Acts 4:11. The apostle Peter employs lithos in the same manner with reference to nation of Israel’s rejection of Jesus of Nazareth in 1 Peter 2:8.

Daniel 2:34 tells the reader that this rock was cut out but not by human hands and Daniel 2:45 says that it was cut from a mountain. The mountain refers to God’s kingdom. Thus, the rock originates from God’s kingdom. Jesus Christ of course belongs to God’s kingdom in heaven. In Scripture, a mountain is often a symbol for a kingdom.

Since the ancient Orientals regarded kings and kingdoms synonymously, the rock or stone of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream must represent not only the future kingdom of God but also its King who will be the Messiah (Psalm 2:2, 6), the Son of God (Psalm 2:4-12), the Son of Man who comes with the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13-14). The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is that person (Matthew 16:16; 26:63-64). Therefore, the rock or stone represented the future kingdom of God and Jesus Christ Himself. Thus Jesus Christ’s millennial reign is an extension of God’s kingdom in heaven. Consequently, the prayer of the Lord “thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” will be fulfilled during Christ’s millennial reign.

The fact that rock was cut from a mountain but not by human hands signifies divine action and specifically an action accomplished by God the Father. The rock being cut from the mountain but not by human hands refers to the Father’s decision in eternity past to rule planet earth through His Son Jesus Christ. This is
indicated by the fact that the rock strikes the feet of the statue, which refer to the yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist. The rock destroys the statue with this action, which refers to the Second Advent of Christ which establishes His millennial reign. The mountain refers to the Father and His kingdom and the rock refers to Jesus Christ and His millennial kingdom. Thus, for this rock to be cut from this mountain signifies the act of the Father choosing His Son to establish His kingdom on earth.

Thus, Daniel 2:34 is teaching that Jesus Christ and His millennial reign are an extension of God’s kingdom in heaven since Jesus Christ is the Son of God and His millennial reign constitutes the Father’s kingdom on earth. It denotes that the Son and His millennial kingdom originates from the Father and His kingdom in heaven.

The rock striking the iron and clay feet of the statue represents Jesus Christ at His Second Advent striking Antichrist and his revived form of the Roman Empire with the result that it was destroyed. It indicates that Jesus Christ at His Second Advent will employ physical violence to overthrow Antichrist and his empire.

The feet of the statue refer to the yet Revived Form of the Roman Empire which is indicated by several factors. The feet of the statue represent an empire, which has not yet appeared on the pages of history. The Scriptures indicate that it will be an empire, which is connected to the Roman Empire but inferior in character of authority in rulership as well as power or strength. In fact, the Scriptures teach that it will be a Revived Form of the Roman Empire, which will be composed of a ten-nation confederacy which can be described as a United States of Europe. This is all indicated by several factors.

First of all, the feet of the image Nebuchadnezzar saw were composed of a mixture of iron and clay. The iron in the feet indicates that the empire represented by the feet is related to the lower legs of the statue, which we noted were composed of iron, which represented the Roman Empire. Also, Daniel does not say that the feet represent a fifth empire, which further indicates that the feet represent an empire which is connected to the Roman Empire.

The ten horns mentioned in Daniel 7:24 were ten kingdoms, out of which one horn will arise who will destroy three of the other kingdoms and lead the other seven and persecute believers in Jesus Christ. Daniel 7:26 says that this one horn called the “little horn” will be destroyed by God. Daniel 2:44-45 teaches that this ten nation confederation depicted as ten toes of the feet of the statue will be destroyed by the Second Advent of Christ, which is depicted as a stone cut of the mountain without hands.

Daniel 9:26 indicates that this little horn will be a Roman dictator as indicated by the phrase “the people of the prince who is to come.” “The people” were the
Romans who destroyed the temple forty years after the death of Christ. “The prince” refers to the little horn, i.e. the Antichrist indicating that the Antichrist will be a Roman. This verse teaches that he will come to power after 483 prophetic years, which ended with the death of Christ on the cross.

Daniel 9:27 says that he will make a seven-year treaty with the leaders of Israel, which will begin the final seven prophetic years called the seventieth week and during the middle of this seventieth week after three and a half years, he will break the treaty and stop the sacrifices in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem and declare himself God. Nothing in history corresponds to the events described during this seventieth week. The Second Advent of Christ has yet to take place.

Therefore, a comparison of Daniel 2:44-45 with Daniel 7:24 and 26 as well as Daniel 9:26-27 and Revelation 13 indicates that in the future, the little horn, i.e. the Antichrist will be the head of a ten-nation confederacy since he will be a Roman ruling over other nations which are close in proximity to him. Just as toes on a person’s feet are right beside each other so this ten-nation confederacy will be geographically beside each other.

Some commentators have attempted to find a ten-toe state of the statue in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. However, the facts of history do not fulfill the ten toes of the statue.

The iron that helped to compose of the feet of the statue describes as possessing the same character of authority in rulership of the Roman Empire, depicted by the lower legs on the statue. Also, the iron describes this yet future empire as possessing some of the power or strength of the Roman Empire. The clay that also helped to compose the feet of the statue describes this yet future empire as not possessing the same character of authority in rulership of the Roman Empire, depicted by the lower legs on the statue. Also, the clay describes this yet future empire as not possessing the same power or strength of the Roman Empire. This would indicate that the power of this yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist will possess some of the strength and power of the Roman Empire but will be very fragile. Therefore, the strong yet fragile composition of the feet of the statue indicates that the power and strength of the Revived Form of the Roman Empire is inferior to Rome.

The fact that the rock crushes the feet of the statue as a result of striking it represents Jesus Christ destroying the Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist at His Second Advent. It indicates that Jesus Christ victory over this empire will total and complete.

Daniel 2:44 “Now during those days of those kings, the God ruling the heavens will establish an eternal kingdom. It will never be destroyed. Therefore, this kingdom will never be left for the benefit of another nation. It
will crush so that it will destroy each and every one of these kingdoms. However, it will endure throughout eternity. 45 The great God has made known to the king that which will take place in those days to come because as you saw that the rock was cut out from a mountain but not by human hands and then it crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold. Because the content of the dream is true therefore, the interpretation is dependable.” (Author’s translation)

The prophetic statement “it will crush so that it will destroy each and every one of these kingdoms” refers to God the Father’s eternal kingdom crushing the ten nation confederacy (ten toes in Daniel 2:41, ten horns in Daniel 7:24) which will form the final and future stage of the fourth kingdom. It indicates that Jesus Christ’s victory over this ten nation confederacy will be total and complete. God the Father’s eternal kingdom as manifested through the Second Advent of Jesus Christ will replace completely any reminder of this ten-nation confederacy. Also, it will replace completely any reminder of Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian kingdom, the Medo-Persian Empire, as well as the Greek Empire of Alexander the Great and the Roman Empire since remnants of these kingdoms will be found in this ten nation confederacy. This is indicated by the fact that the body of the statue emphasized the continuity and integral relationship of the kingdoms represented in the statue. This means that though one kingdom might pass away, elements of it would be found in the kingdom, which follows it. Furthermore, His millennial government will cause these other forms of government to be totally and completely forgotten.

This prophetic statement also teaches that God’s kingdom as manifested by the Lord Jesus Christ’s Second Advent will cause this ten-nation confederacy which will form the final and future stage of the fourth kingdom under Antichrist to be brought to end or destroyed.

“Each and every one of these kingdoms” refers to the ten-nation confederacy which will compose the final and future form of the fourth kingdom who will reign during Daniel’s Seventieth Week under Antichrist’s authority. This is indicated by the fact that the ten toes in Daniel 2:41-42 and the ten horns in Daniel 7:7, 20, 24 as well as Revelation 12:3, 13:1, 17:3, 7, 12 and 16 correspond to each other. These verses are describing people and events which will take place during Daniel’s Seventieth Week (Daniel 9:24-27). Furthermore, Daniel 2:34-35 teaches that a rock, which refers to Jesus Christ’s Second Advent, struck the feet of the statue and not any other part of the body of the statue, which led to the destruction of the statue, which refers to an empire which has not yet appeared on the pages of history. Also, the iron in the feet indicates that the empire represented by the feet is related to the lower legs of the statue, which we noted were composed of iron.
which represented the Roman Empire. In fact, Daniel does not say that the feet represent a fifth empire, which further indicates that the feet represent an empire which is connected to the Roman Empire.

“It will endure throughout eternity” is another prophetic statement which presents the contrast is between the demise of this ten-nation confederacy, the remnants of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome and the eternality of the kingdom of God on earth. This statement emphasizes with the reader that God the Father’s eternal kingdom will stand forever as a result of Jesus Christ’s Second Advent destroying Antichrist’s ten-nation confederacy which will constitute the final stage of the fourth kingdom.

Daniel 2:45a is a comparative clause, which inverts the protasis and the apodasis since the latter is put first followed by the former. This is to emphasize with Nebuchadnezzar and the reader that the vision of the rock destroying the statue was a revelation from God about the future. The protasis says that the great God had made known to the king that which will take place in the days to come. The apodasis says that the rock was cut out from a mountain but not by human hands and then it crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold. The literal rendering of this comparative clause would be “Because as you saw that the rock was cut out from a mountain but not by human hands and then it crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold, the great God has made known to the king that which will take place in those days to come.” However, it makes better sense in English to render it as “The great God has made known to the king that which will take place in those days to come because as you saw that the rock was cut out from a mountain but not by human hands and then it crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold.”

The apodasis presents the reason why the great God has made known to Nebuchadnezzar what will take place in the future. God made known to the king what will take place in the future because as he saw a rock was cut from a mountain but not by human hands and then it crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver and gold.

“You saw” denotes that Nebuchadnezzar received a prophetic revelation in a dream which concerned itself with the empires of Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Revived Form of the Roman Empire and the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ. This was a prophetic revelation the king received regarding God’s plan for the planet earth, namely to install His Son Jesus Christ as King of the earth.

“The rock” refers to Jesus Christ since He is referred to in other places of Scripture as the Rock or as a stone. The term “rock” is an Old Testament for God

In Daniel 2:45, this stone is said to be cut from a mountain but not by human hands. In Daniel 2:34, this stone is said to strike the statue on its feet and crushes them. In Daniel 2:44-45, this stone is said to destroy the kingdoms represented by the body parts on the statue and will establish God’s kingdom on earth, which will never be destroyed. Both, Daniel 2:34 and Daniel 2:45 say that this stone was cut out of a mountain but not by human hands signifying the divine character of this rock or stone.

The destruction of the feet by this stone represents Jesus Christ’s Second Advent, which will bring an end to Daniel’s Seventieth Week, the times of the Gentiles and establish His millennial reign. The Lord Jesus Christ teaches in Matthew 24:29-31 and Luke 21:25-28 as well as the apostle John in Revelation 19:11-20:6 that the stone refers to Him since these passages teach that He will establish the Father’s kingdom on earth through His Second Advent. In Daniel 2:35, the stone become a great mountain and fills the earth which refers to the millennial reign of Christ which constitutes God’s kingdom on earth. The stone striking the feet of the statue establishes God’s kingdom on earth forever according to a comparison of Daniel 2:34-35 with Daniel 2:44-45. This corresponds to what is taught in Revelation 19:11-20:6 and Zechariah 14:1-11.

“Was cut” represents a divine action and specifically an action accomplished by God, which is indicated by the fact that the rock was cut from a mountain but not by human hands. It denotes that Jesus Christ and His millennial reign are an extension of God’s kingdom in heaven since Jesus Christ is the Son of God and His millennial reign constitutes the Father’s kingdom on earth. This verb denotes that the Son and His millennial kingdom originate from the Father and His kingdom in heaven.

“From a mountain” refers to the Father’s kingdom emphasizing that Jesus Christ originates from the Father’s kingdom and thus His millennial kingdom will perfectly manifest or embody on earth God’s kingdom, which is also in heaven.
“But not by human hands” is clarifying for the reader something about the rock or stone. It says that that the rock, which signifies Jesus Christ and His millennial kingdom and is an extension of the Father’s kingdom in heaven, was not chosen by human agency but by God the Father to rule the earth.

“It crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold” represents Jesus Christ destroying the Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist at His Second Advent, as well as any remembrance of the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Jesus Christ’s victory over these previous Gentile kingdoms will be total and complete but also it will be total and complete over all these previous Gentile kingdoms. His Second Advent will result in the destruction of any remnants of these previous Gentile world powers. Furthermore, His millennial government will cause these other forms of government to be totally and completely forgotten.

“The iron” is used with reference to the Roman Empire as well as the yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist during Daniel’s seventieth week since Daniel is speaking of the destruction of the entire statue by the rock. It is used here to teach that Jesus Christ’s Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will cause the fourth kingdom and its final stage under Antichrist to be totally and completely forgotten.

Since the metals of the statue decrease in value but increase in strength, the iron lower legs of the statue indicate that the character of the authority in rulership of Rome was inferior to Alexander’s Greece, Media-Persia and Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon. However, its military power or strength was superior to these three. The iron describes the final stage of the Roman Empire during Daniel’s Seventieth Week as possessing some of the character of authority in rulership of the Roman Empire. Also, the iron describes this yet future empire as possessing some of the military power or strength of the Roman Empire.

“The bronze” is used to describe Alexander the Great’s Greek Empire, which immediately followed the Media-Persian Empire. Since the metals of the statue decrease in value but increase in strength, the belly and thighs of bronze of the statue indicate that the character of authority in rulership of the Greek empire under Alexander the Great was superior to the fourth kingdom, the Roman Empire but inferior to the first two, Babylon and Media-Persia. However, its power or strength was superior to Babylon and Media-Persia and inferior only to Rome. It is used here to teach that Jesus Christ’s Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will cause this third kingdom to be totally and completely forgotten.

“The clay” is used to describe the yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist, which is represented by the feet of the statue and will be destroyed by Jesus Christ at His Second Advent. The clay describes this final stage
of the Roman Empire during Daniel’s Seventieth Week as not possessing the same character of authority in rulership of the Roman Empire. Also, the clay describes this yet future empire as not possessing the same power or strength of the Roman Empire. This would indicate that the power of this yet future Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist will possess some of the strength and power of the Roman Empire but will be very fragile. Therefore, the strong yet fragile composition of the feet of the statue indicates that the power and strength of the Revived Form of the Roman Empire is inferior to Rome. It is used here to teach that Jesus Christ’s Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will cause the final stage of the fourth kingdom under Antichrist to be totally and completely forgotten.

“The silver” is used to describe the Medo-Persian Empire, which conquered the Babylonian Empire. Since the metals of the statue decrease in value but increase in strength, the breast and arms of silver of the statue indicate that the character of authority in rulership of this empire was superior to the third (Alexander’s Greece) and fourth (Roman Empire) kingdoms but inferior to the first (Babylon). However, its power or strength was superior to Babylon but inferior to Alexander’s Greece and Rome. It is used here to teach that Jesus Christ’s Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will cause this second kingdom to be totally and completely forgotten.

“The gold” is used to describe the head of the statue, which represents Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylonian Empire according to Daniel 2:36-38. Since the metals of the statue decrease in value but increase in strength, the gold head of the statue indicates that the character of the authority in rulership of this empire was superior to the second (Media-Persia), third (Greece) and fourth (Rome) kingdoms. However, its power or strength was inferior to Media-Persia, Alexander’s Greece and Rome. It is used here to teach that Jesus Christ’s Second Advent and subsequent millennial reign will cause this kingdom to be totally and completely forgotten.

“The great God” describes the Father as one who possesses supreme authority over every creature and all of creation. He is the absolute sovereign authority over every creature and all creation with the Son and the Spirit voluntarily subordinating themselves to Him even though they are co-equal, co-infinite and co-eternal and all sovereign over all of creation and every creature

“Has made known” teaches that Nebuchadnezzar received revelation from God about the future of planet earth. This dream was a prophetic revelation, which concerned itself with the empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the final stage of the Roman Empire, namely the Revived Form of the Roman Empire. It also concerned itself with the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ.
“That which will take place in those days to come” refers to entities, events, circumstances, and persons in the future. Daniel 2:31-45 indicates that it refers to the revelation that God gave Nebuchadnezzar, which concerned itself with the future Gentile world powers as well as the future of the nation of Israel. It speaks of the kingdom of God being established on earth through the Lord Jesus Christ, and which kingdom He will establish at His Second Advent.

“Those days to come” refers to the extended period of time which begins with Nebuchadnezzar sacking Jerusalem in 605 B.C. culminating in the Second Advent of Christ and His subsequent millennial reign. This prophetic period is called “the Time of the Gentiles,” which refers to an extended period of time when the Gentiles are the dominant world powers and Israel is subject to those powers and extends from the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar (605 B.C.) and continues through the Tribulation (Revelation 11:2).

God gave Nebuchadnezzar this revelation about the future and sent Daniel to interpret this revelation for the king in order to evangelize him. The Father is attempting to get Nebuchadnezzar to forsake the worship of his gods and worship Him who is Daniel’s God and the God of the Jews. By giving the king of Babylon this revelation and then sending Daniel to interpret it for him demonstrated to Nebuchadnezzar that even though Daniel’s nation has been subdued by his nation, Daniel’s God is superior to Nebuchadnezzar’s gods. In fact, this revelation told Nebuchadnezzar that he is under the authority of Daniel’s God, who is the God ruling every kingdom under the heavens. Thus, this dream made clear to the king that he was accountable to Daniel’s God who gave him the dream in the first place.

Not only was the Father attempting to get Nebuchadnezzar to worship Him by giving the king this revelation about the future but also the Father was attempting to do the same with the necromancers, witches, astrologers and occult priests in the city of Babylon and the entire population of the city.

Nebuchadnezzar has been told by the Father through Daniel that the Father’s plan for planet earth is for His Son to rule over its inhabitants for a thousand years and then merge into the eternal state (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

Daniel 2:45b is composed of a causal clause followed by a result clause. The former presents the reason why Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream is dependable and the latter presents the result of Daniel’s presentation of the content of the king’s dream being true or exactly how the king saw it. The content of the dream appears in Daniel 2:31-35 and the interpretation in Daniel 2:37-45.

This statement in Daniel 2:45b is directly related to what Nebuchadnezzar demanded of his occult priests, witches, necromancers and astrologers, which is
that they tell him the content of his dream in order that he could be sure that they could interpret this dream.

Nebuchadnezzar feels that if they are so in touch with the gods, then the gods should be able to communicate the contents of his dream and not just give him the interpretation of it. If he communicated the contents of his dream, then they could come up with any interpretation that fits their imagination. Thus, he doesn’t trust them which is clearly indicated by his statement to them in verse 9 where calls them liars who will tell him something that is false.

So by demanding that they tell him what exactly he dreamed, Nebuchadnezzar could be sure that their interpretation of this dream is correct and the truth. If they tell him the contents of the dream, he could be sure that he has received the correct interpretation of the dream in that the gods had in fact given them the interpretation of his dream and passed it along to him. The king sensed that this dream is significant and related somehow to his kingdom and its future. Thus, he does not want speculation or the product of someone’s imagination but the truth and nothing but the truth since the future of his kingdom, he senses, is at stake.

Therefore, here in Daniel 2:45, Daniel is telling Nebuchadnezzar that he can be sure that his interpretation of his dream is dependable because he accurately presented to him the content of his dream just as he saw it.

The Second Advent of Jesus Christ Predicted in Daniel 7

Daniel 7:11 “I was continuing to stare in a trance like state at that time because of the sound coming from the boastful words which the horn was making a habit of speaking. I was continuing to stare in a trance like state when the beast was killed. In fact, its body was destroyed. Specifically, it was given over to the consuming fire.” (Author’s translation)

Following the vision of the Ancient of Days in verses 9-10, Daniel receives further revelation regarding the little horn and the fourth beast from which he came from. Here in verse 11, Daniel resumes a discussion of the little horn which he left off describing in verse 8. Daniel tells the reader in verse 11 that he was continuing to stare in a trance like state at that time because of the sound coming from the boastful words which the little horn was speaking. This parallels his last statement at the end of verse 8 in which he emphatically states that this little horn had eyes like a human being’s eyes as well as a mouth speaking boastfully. So this would indicate to the reader that verses 9-10 are parenthetical. These verses are also indicating to the reader who is behind the destruction of the fourth beast and the little horn, namely the Ancient of Days.
Then, in verse 11, after telling the reader he was continuing to stare in trance like state because of the sound of the boastful words which the little horn was making it a habit of speaking, he describes the destruction of the fourth beast, from which the little horn had originated. Daniel describes the beast being killed. Then emphatically states that its body was burned and specifically it was given over to the consuming fire. Remember that this fourth beast had ten horns from which emerged the little horn. So when this fourth beast is killed and burned with fire, all the horns including the little horn perished as well since they were attached to this fourth beast.

The fact that a river of fire was coming out from throne of the Ancient of Days and that the body of this fourth beast was given over to the consuming fire makes clear that the destruction of the fourth beast and the little horn was the direct result of the Ancient of Days judging them.

As we have noted in previous studies, the Ancient of Days describes in symbolic terms God the Father. The little horn is a reference to the Antichrist. The fourth beast is the Roman Empire and specifically the final form of this empire since the Antichrist will rule this final form of the Roman Empire during Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

This description of the fourth beast in Daniel 7:11 corresponds with the destruction of the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in Daniel chapter two (Daniel 2:34-35; cf. 44:45). Specifically, it corresponds to the supernatural rock striking the feet of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.

In Daniel 2:34-35, Daniel describes for Nebuchadnezzar the statue in his dream being destroyed by a rock cut out but not by human hands, which resulted in the rest of the image becoming like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The iron, clay, bronze, silver and gold which composed this enormous statue were crushed as one when the rock hit its feet. As we noted the feet were composed partly of iron and partly of clay which is symbolic of the final form of the Roman Empire which will be prominent during Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

In Daniel 2:44-45, Daniel says that this supernatural rock crushed into pieces the iron, bronze, clay, silver as well as gold, which represents Jesus Christ destroying the Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist at His Second Advent, as well as any remembrance of the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Jesus Christ’s victory over these previous Gentile kingdoms will be total and complete but also it will be total and complete over all these previous Gentile kingdoms. His Second Advent will result in the destruction of any remnants of these previous Gentile world powers. Furthermore, His millennial government will cause these other forms of government to be totally and completely forgotten.
Therefore, Daniel 7:11 and Daniel 2:34-35 and Daniel 2:44-45 are describing in symbolic or apocalyptical terms the Lord Jesus Christ destroying the Revived Form of the Roman Empire under Antichrist at His Second Advent, which terminates not only Daniel’s Seventieth Week but also the Times of the Gentiles. In Daniel chapter 2 and 7, the Holy Spirit through Daniel is describing a violent overthrow and destruction of Antichrist and the final form of the Roman Empire. This indicates that Jesus Christ will violently overthrow and destroy this final form of Gentile power.

Daniel 2 and 7 along with Revelation 19-20 make clear that the premillennial interpretation of the Bible is the correct one and not amillennial or post-millennial since these passages teach that the millennial reign of Christ takes place after the destruction of all Gentile power at His Second Advent. These passages teach that the millennial kingdom is brought about through the Second Advent of Christ and not by the actions of the church. They teach that the Father through His Son will first destroy all Gentile power and then will come the millennial kingdom.

Daniel 7:15 As for me, Daniel, my soul was distressed in the midst of my body. Specifically, the visions in my mind caused me to be terrified. 16 I went up to one from those standing nearby in order to request from him the truth regarding all this. Consequently, he spoke to me in order to make known to me the interpretation of these events. 17 ‘These great beasts, which are four in number, are four kings, who will arise from the earth’s inhabitants. 18 However, the saints belonging to the Most High will receive the kingdom. Indeed, they will possess the kingdom throughout eternity, yes throughout eternity, the ages.’ 19 Then, I desired to know the meaning concerning the fourth beast which was different from all the others, extraordinarily intimidating, its two rows of teeth composed of iron as well as its claws composed of bronze. It devoured as well as crushed. Specifically, it violently crushed the rest with its feet. 20 Also, I desired to know the meaning concerning the ten horns which were on its head as well as the one which emerged and in addition three fell by being in the presence of it. Specifically, that horn possessing eyes as well as a mouth making it a habit of speaking boastfully. Indeed, its appearance was more distinguished than its contemporaries. 21 I was continuing to stare in a trance like state as that horn was continually waging war against the saints so as to overpower them 22 until the One Ancient in Days intervened. Specifically, He rendered judgment in favor of the Most High’s saints. Then, the moment arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom. (Author’s translation)

Daniel describes in Daniel 7:21 the little horn continually waging war against the saints so as to overpower them. This is a picture of Antichrist waging war
against regenerate Jew and Gentiles during the Tribulation portion of Daniel’s Seventieth Week which occurs during the last three and a half years of this seven year period. Now, in Daniel 7:22, Daniel says that the little horn will be waging war against the saints so as to overpower them until the Ancient of Days intervened. He identifies specifically what he means by this divine intervention by telling the reader that the Ancient of Days rendered judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High.

Who is the Most High and who is the Ancient of Days here in Daniel 7:22? Is the Most High the Father and the Ancient of Days the Son or the other way around or are they both referencing the Son or are they both referencing the Father? There are several indications from the context that the Ancient of Days here in verse 22 is a reference to the Father and the Most High is a reference to the Son of Man who is God the Son according to the verses 13-14.

First of all, we know that the Ancient of Days is a reference to the Father throughout chapter seven since in verse 13, Daniel describes one like a Son of Man was coming upon the clouds of heaven. Specifically, He went up to the Ancient of Days in the sense that He approached His presence. Then, in verse 14, he tells the reader that the Ancient of Days gave governmental dominion to this Son of Man as well as honor and in addition sovereignty in order that each and every person belonging to the nations, ethnicities as well as language groups would serve Him. The Son of Man’s governmental dominion is described as an eternal governmental dominion which can never be taken away so that His kingdom is one which can never be destroyed. These verses make clear that the Son of Man possesses the prerogatives of God. He is sovereign like God and He is eternal like God since His kingdom He received from the Ancient of Days is described as eternal and indestructible. So it is clear that the Son of Man receives a kingdom from the Ancient of Days. The New Testament identifies verse 13 as the ascension and session of Jesus Christ and verse 14 describes Jesus Christ’s millennial kingdom on planet earth.

Now, in verse 22, the saints are said to take possession of the kingdom, which is a reference to the kingdom given to the Son of Man by the Ancient of Days as made clear by verses 13-14. Then, in verse 27, Daniel says that the sovereignty, dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under all of heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High (“Highest One” NASB95). Next, he says in the very next sentence that “His” kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom and all the dominions will serve and obey Him. “His” would then have to be the Son of Man since the Ancient of Days gave the Son of Man a kingdom and sovereign authority over the inhabitants of all the earth as we noted in verses 13-14. Verse 27 describes the kingdom of the “Highest One” or “Most High” as
everlasting which parallels the description in verse 14 that the Son of Man’s governmental dominion is eternal. Verse 27 also says that all the dominions will serve and obey the “Highest One” or “Most High.” This parallels Daniel’s statement in verse 14 that the Ancient of Days gave governmental dominion to the Son of Man as well as honor and in addition sovereignty in order that each and every person belonging to the nations, ethnicities as well as language groups would serve Him.

Throughout chapter seven, the Ancient of Days is the sovereign judge over the nations of the earth including Antichrist and the final form of the Roman Empire. The Most High is always associated closely with the kingdom received from the Ancient of Days as well as with the saints throughout chapter (verses 18, 22, 25, 27). The reason why the saints are closely associated with the Most High is because they will reign with the Most High and if they will reign with the Most High, the Most High must be the Son of Man since the Ancient of Days conferred an eternal kingdom upon the Son of Man who we know is Jesus Christ.

Therefore, when Daniel says in verse 22 that the Ancient of Days rendered judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, the Most High must be a reference to the Son of Man since the Most High is associated with the kingdom and the Son of Man received the kingdom from the Ancient of Days. Consequently, in verse 25, when Daniel says that the little horn spoke out against the Most High and wore down the saints of the Most High, the Most High would be the Son of Man.

The fact that the Son of Man is described as the Most High throughout the chapter indicates that He is deity. Of course, Jesus Christ who calls Himself “the Son of Man” in the Gospels is also identified in the New Testament as the “Son of God.”

In Daniel 7:22 when Daniel tells the reader that the Ancient of Days rendered judgment in favor of the saints of the Most High, he is referring to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. This event will not only bring about the end of Daniel’s Seventieth Week and the Times of the Gentiles but also result in the imprisonment of Satan for a thousand years. It will also result in the Antichrist being thrown alive into the eternal lake of fire along with the false prophet. This interpretation is indicated by Daniel’s statement in verse 26, which tells the reader that the little horn will have his dominion taken away, and will be annihilated and destroyed forever. Also, Revelation 19:11-21 makes clear that Antichrist will be taken alive at the Second Advent of Christ and deposited into the Lake of Fire. At His “Second Advent,” the Lord Jesus Christ will destroy the Tribulational armies, have Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:11-19), will imprison Satan for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3) and will establish His millennial
regain on planet earth (Rev. 20:4-6). So Daniel 7:22 speaks of the destruction of Antichrist and the final revived form of the Roman Empire, and which empire he will be the head of during Daniel’s Seventieth Week.

Therefore, in Daniel 7:22 when Daniel says that the Ancient of Days will render judgment in favor of the saints, it will result in the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. After this the saints take possession of the kingdom, which is a reference to the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. Thus, Daniel is a premillennialist.

Daniel 7:23 Thus, he said, ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all these kingdoms in the sense that it will devour the entire earth. Specifically, it will trample it down so that it crushes it. 24 Also, the ten horns are ten kings who will arise from this kingdom. Then, another will arise after them. However, he will be different in comparison to the previous ones. Specifically, he will conquer three kings. 25 Furthermore, he will issue statements against the Most High. Also, he will make it his habit of persecuting the Most High’s saints as well as attempting to change the times, yes even the Law. Indeed, they will be given into his power for a period of a time, times and a half a time. 26 However, the court will be convened with the result that they will take away his governmental dominion by destroying, yes, by killing him at the end. (Author’s translation)

In Daniel 7:25, Gabriel informed Daniel that the king represented by the little horn will issue statements against the Most High. He will also make it his habit of persecuting the saints of the Most High as well as attempt to change the times of worshipping the Lord, yes even the Law itself. The angel states emphatically that the saints of the Most High will be given into his power for three and a half years. The little horn refers to the Antichrist since it is identified with the Revived Roman Empire. In Daniel 7:19-26, he is described as waging war against God’s people up to the time of the Second Advent of Christ, which corresponds to the depiction of the Antichrist in Revelation (Daniel 7:11, 20-26; 8:25; Revelation 13:1-10; 19:20).

Now, in Daniel 7:26, the angel tells Daniel that in contrast to this war that the little horn will wage against God and His people, the Ancient of Days who represents the Father will convene the Supreme Court of Heaven. This will result in the Most High, Jesus Christ and His saints, taking away his governmental dominion. They will do this by destroying him, yes by killing him at the end of the last three and a half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week. These statements by the angel Gabriel interpret Daniel 7:11, which records Daniel telling the reader the fourth beast will be killed and its body destroyed by fire. It is also interprets Daniel 7:22 which says that the Ancient of Days who is the Father will intervene on behalf of the saints of the Most High who is the Son of Man who Jesus
interprets as being a reference to Himself. Daniel 7:26 also corresponds to Daniel 2:45, which records Daniel interpreting the rock in Nebuchadnezzar’s vision which was cut out from a mountain but not by human hands which crushed to pieces the statue in this dream.

So Gabriel is telling Daniel that the Antichrist will be killed violently, which will be the death of the fourth beast in Daniel’s vision which we know is the Roman Empire. The Revived Form of the Roman Empire represented by the ten horns on the head of the fourth beast along with the little horn will be destroyed by God. Revelation 19-20 makes clear that he will be killed violently by Jesus Christ Himself, who interprets Himself as being the Son of Man in Daniel chapter seven who is also described as the Most High in this chapter. 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and Revelation 19:20 speak of Jesus Christ killing the Antichrist Himself. Thus, by killing the Antichrist, God will bring an end to the Roman Empire and specifically the Revived Form of the Roman Empire which will be in existence during Daniel’s Seventieth Week.