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The Magnitude of the End Time Crisis

By David Sielaff, April 2022

For background read the accompanying "[April 2022 Newsletter](#)"

The Magnitude
of the
End Time Crisis

The End Time crisis will not only occur on earth, it will also take place in the heavens, plural, which are (1) the atmosphere immediately above the surface of the earth, (2) what today we call "outer space" to the edge of the physical universe, and (3) even the heaven where God resides. Scripture tells of visible heavenly events occurring in history. When Christ returns, the number of spirit beings opposing and supporting Him is so great that the readers and listeners had little understanding of them. Today we often hear about large numbers, even if we do not fully grasp their significance.

Can you comprehend the number 7.9 billion of anything? Well, there are an estimated 7.9 billion people alive on earth now or in the near future. See the "Worldometer" website "[World Population Clock: 7.9 Billion People \(2022\)](#)." The site keeps a running tally and estimate of world population. In my August 2015 article "[God and Demographics](#)" I cite researcher Mark Jefferson who calculated the world population in 1914 to be 1.7 billion people. Compare that number of people in 1914 to the 7.9 billion people living now. That is a 460% increase in 107 years. However, only God knows what the real number was in 1914, or what it is today.

In 1914 the world population was less than the two most populous nations today. United Nations figures estimate a combined 2.8 billion people live in China and India. ("[Population Of India And China Combined?](#)") One billion more people live in China and India now than lived on earth in 1914. More than one out of every three people alive today reside in China or India.

What Will Happen On Earth

Dr. Ernest Martin lectured in 1981 about what will happen on earth when Christ returns. He gave an excellent "move by move" account and analysis transcribed for the ASK article "[New Prophetic Discoveries Concerning the End Time](#)." This information is extremely useful regarding important events during the Day of the Lord, particularly from various prophecies of Isaiah: actions of enemies opposing Christ at His coming, acts of the Antichrist, his false prophet, their human armies, and even spirit beings acting here on earth to oppose Christ when He returns. The details in the biblical text will surprise you.

There were also three useful maps (re-done by Henry Dye), to graphically show the movements of the actors: [1] Christ, [2] the heavenly host of angels, [3] all dead and alive believers are resurrected to immortality, and [4] the evil opposition forces and nations who attack Israel. At that time Christ will be "**shepherding all the nations with an iron club**" (Revelation 12:3). More information is given in two other articles by Dr. Martin: "[The Life and Times of the Antichrist Part 1](#)" and "[The Life and Times of the Antichrist Part 2](#)."

As I mentioned, **we believers resurrected from the dead, as well as believers still alive, will see many of these events take place.** Non-believing survivors will be greatly traumatized by their experiences. Also, keep these important facts in mind: every human being who ever died, every person alive today, or ever shall live — all will eventually be a brother or a sister of yours in Christ.

More Large Numbers

Jesus said that God our Father, knows the number of the hairs of our head (Matthew 10:30; Luke 12:7). While not a large number itself, it shows how much God cares for every human being. God told Abram:

“And He [YHWH] brought him [Abram] forth abroad, and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if you be able to number them’: and He said unto him, ‘So shall your seed be.’”

• *Genesis 15:5*

Also, an unknown Psalmist writes, **“He tells [counts] the number of the stars; he calls them all by their names”** (Psalm 147:4).¹

According to the “Astronomy Trek” article, **“How Many Naked Eye Stars Can Be Seen in the Night Sky?”** 9,096 stars are able to be seen by the naked eye (without magnification) with good eyesight and under optimal viewing conditions. That reduces to 4,500+ stars from each hemisphere of the globe, northern or southern.

With magnification, particularly those from satellites outside the atmosphere of earth, telescopes can see farther than ever. In the February 11, 2022 article **“How many stars are in the universe?”** from the magazine *Space*, this estimate is given (the “all caps” emphasis is mine). The links in the quote work.

“In October 2016, deep-field images from the Hubble Space Telescope suggested that there are about 2 TRILLION GALAXIES in the observable universe, or about 10 times more galaxies than previously suggested, according to the journal *Nature*. In an email with Live Science, lead author Christopher Conselice, a professor of astrophysics at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom, said there were about [click the link:] 100 million stars in the average galaxy.”

Feel free to multiply the estimated “2 trillion” galaxies by the estimated “100 million” stars per average galaxy and you will find that the number of stars in the creation is very large. The truth is, perhaps only God and Christ know how many stars there are in the “second heaven,” which is our physical universe.

We will know this also some day. We will travel among the stars. An even greater creation will be accomplished when God creates something far more amazing: **“For, behold, I create new heavens [plural] and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”** (Isaiah 65:17 and Isaiah 66:22, KJV). The creation of a new “heavens” [plural] with a new earth is also referred to in 2 Peter 3:13. A new heaven (singular) and a new earth is also presented in Revelation 21:1–5.

Things to Know About the Heavens, Plural

In the Old Testament the word translated **“heaven”** in the King James Version is always plural in the Hebrew texts and should be translated as such — **“heavens.”** Most modern translations honor this obvious fact. For example, Genesis 1:1 should read: **“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”** Again, it is always plural in form in the Hebrew Bible. The New Testament uses singular and plural forms of the words “heaven” or “heavens,” because the Greek is more specific than the Hebrew.

The “pale blue marble,” as earth is sometimes called, is a tiny speck of life in the vast creation God made through His firstborn son Christ Jesus. Yet, earth is special because God and Christ are in the process of creating human beings — multiple billions of them — to become children of God. All born of Adam will be brothers and sisters of Christ. He will not fail. You are the object of that creation. As Dr. Martin said: God is

¹ Why name the stars? Well, names are important. Every human being has a name. “YHWH” is God’s personal name (Exodus 3:15) that should not be profaned or denigrated in any way (Leviticus 22:32). The stars are named, probably for identification and reference, according to each star’s unique quality. No doubt each star is beautiful in its own way.

not in the salvation business; God is in the creation business.

Jesus told His disciples that there were secrets about the **“kingdom of the heavens”** that could be known only by Christ’s disciples during His teaching and ministry to the Jews:

“And the disciples came, and said unto him, ‘Why speak you unto them in parables?’ He answered and said unto them, ‘Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries [Greek *mysteria*, secrets] of the kingdom of heaven [Greek, *the heavens*, plural], but to them it is not given.”

• *Matthew 13:10–11, KJV*

Jesus told them there are angels in each of the three heavens in **“the Kingdom of the heavens.”**

Furthermore, Jesus taught the status of resurrected humans with regard to males and females: **“For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are AS the angels which are in heaven [Greek, *the heavens*, plural]”** (Mark 12:25).²

When we pray to God we should keep in mind to the proper use of “heaven” and “heavens”:

“And he said unto them, ‘When you pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven [singular], Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, as in heaven [Greek, *the heavens*, plural], so in earth.”

• *Luke 11:2, KJV*

God’s Army, the Heavenly Host

More than 860 years before Jesus was born, an army of the heavenly host appeared to Elisha the prophet:

“Now the one ministering to the man of Elohim rose early to get up, and he went forth, and behold, an army was surrounding the city with horses and chariots. ‘Alas, my lord,’ his lad asked him, ‘how shall we act?’

Elisha replied, ‘Do not fear, for those with us are more than those with them.’

Now Elisha prayed and said, ‘O Yahweh, uncloseth, I pray, his eyes so that he may see.’ Yahweh uncloseth the eyes of the lad, and he saw, behold, the hill was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. When they came down toward him, Elisha prayed to Yahweh and said:

‘Smite, I pray, this nation with dazzled perception.’ So He smote them with dazzled perception according to the word of Elisha.”

• *2 Kings 6:15–17, Concordant Old Testament*

An army of spirit beings was certainly not necessary to defeat a human army. Was the heavenly host there to protect them from opposition by other spirit attackers, representing the pagan gods? Was God showing off his power? We can only wonder now, but we can ask after we are glorified. Given what happened in Elisha’s time. They were there for a reason, not just to give a spectacle.

I show below that the presence of the heavenly host at Christ’s birth was also done to defend against both human and supernatural opponents. They were present not just to sing hymns praising the newborn Messiah and God. They were also there to protect him.

Some 200 years after Elisha, YHWH told the prophet Jeremiah that His army could not be counted:

“As the host of heaven cannot be numbered [by man], neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David my servant, and the Levites that minister unto me.”

• *Jeremiah 33:22, KJV*

Yes, YHWH has an army, as King Nebuchadnezzar wrote in a public letter to his subjects around the world:

² For more details see Dr. Martin’s [“Chapter 29: Marriage and the Family in the Resurrection”](#) in his book *Essentials of New Testament Doctrine*. There will be relationship between males and females in the resurrection, but not marriage.. See also Dr. Martin’s article, [“Do You Have a Guardian Angel?”](#)

“And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he [YHWH] **does according to his will in the army of heaven**, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, ‘What do you?’”

• *Daniel 4:35, KJV*

How did Nebuchadnezzar know about YHWH’s “**army of heaven**”? He likely learned about it from Daniel who may have told him about the events in 2 Kings 6:15–17 and Isaiah’s writings. Perhaps he paid attention to Daniel’s teaching after his release from seven years of insanity, and he remembered what happened to him (Daniel 4:34, 36).

Daniel tells about the time he had a vision of the Son of Man sitting on the throne to rule over the world:

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: **thousand thousands** ministered unto him, and **ten thousand times ten thousand** stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.”

• *Daniel 7:10, KJV*

This verse is cited in the Book of Revelation. The apostle John saw a similar vision about the throne in the third heaven where God Himself dwells. It is almost identical to Daniel’s vision.

“And I beheld, and I heard the voice of [1] many angels round about the throne and [2] the beasts and [3] the elders: and the number of them was **ten thousand times ten thousand**, and **thousands of thousands**; Saying with a loud voice,

‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.’

And every creature which is [1] in heaven [singular], and [2] on the earth, and [3] under the earth, and such as are [4] in the sea, and [5] all that are in them, heard I saying, ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever [Greek, “the eons of the eons”].’”

• *Revelation 5:11–13, KJV*

The translation “**ten thousand**” is literal for the Greek term “myriads,” therefore a myriad of myriads would be 10,000 times 10,000 which equals 100 million beings before the throne of the lamb. Even so, we might not understand correctly the Hebrew and Greek words. The second numbers “thousands of thousands” figure given is “**One** [or more] **thousands times one** [or more] **thousand**,” which is at minimum one million.

It is an odd way to present numbers, but those are the texts from Daniel’s time and in Revelation. It is possible Daniel and Revelation are referring to servants before the throne, and that the “**heavenly host**,” the army of God, may be a separate group of beings from those of Daniel chapter 7 and in Revelation chapter 5.

All The World’s A Stage — Old Testament Prophecies Future to Us

In Isaiah chapter 13 the subject of judgment upon Babylon is announced. The “**Day of the Lord**,” is introduced, YHWH tells Isaiah speaking about spirit beings in heaven:

“I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called **my mighty ones** [warriors] for mine anger, even **them that rejoice in my highness**. The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together: YHWH of hosts **musters the host of the battle**.

They come from a far country, **from the end of heaven** [“heavens” plural in Hebrew], even YHWH, and the **weapons** of his [YHWH’s] indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for **the day of YHWH is at hand**; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.”

• *Isaiah 13:3–6, KJV*

The destruction of Babylon is introduced in Isaiah chapter 13. It is later proclaimed in Revelation 14:8 and its future destruction is witnessed in vision by the apostle John in Revelation chapter 18.

“For the stars of heaven [plural in Hebrew] and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. ...

Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of YHWH of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.”

• *Isaiah 13:10–11, 13, KJV*

This same subject was spoken of by Jesus in Matthew, Mark, and Luke which I present later in this article.

Isaiah in chapter 34 again deals with the subject of the Day of the Lord (the Day of YHWH). The chapter begins with YHWH declaring that the wrath of God will come against all the nations. They are told to gather their military forces to receive their doom. The scenes begin by telling about God’s judgments on earth. Then the scene in the middle of verse 4 changes to focus on events in the heavens. I use the *Concordant Literal Version* for quoting this chapter 34 of Isaiah below:

**“Draw near, nations, to hear, And folk, attend!
Let the earth hear, and its fullness,
The habitation and all its offsprings.
For wrath has Yahweh against ALL the nations,
And fury against ALL their host; He will doom them;
He will give them up to slaughter.
Their slain, they shall be flung away,
And from their corpses their stink shall ascend;
The mountains will be melted from their blood,
And the vales [valleys] shall be putrefied;”**

• *Isaiah 34:1–4a, CLV*

The first scene begins with slaughter among the nations on earth. Many will die. In the middle of verse 34:4 action changes from events on earth to events in the heavens, plural in Hebrew. That means all three heavens are meant: [1] the atmosphere, [2] outer space (to the edge of the universe, if there is an edge, astronomers do not know), [3] including the heaven of God’s throne. [Continuing with Isaiah 34:4b] ...

**“ALL the host of the heavens shall DECAY,
And the HEAVENS will be rolled up like a scroll;
ALL their host shall DECAY as a leaf decays from the vine,
And like a decaying leaf from a fig tree.
When My sword has been SATIATED in the heavens [plural], ...**

• *Isaiah 34:4b–5a, CLV*

The scene changes back to earth, where the land of Edom will be judged. [Continuing with verse 5b] ...

**“Behold, on Edom it [YHWH’s sword] shall descend, And on the people I have doomed for judgment. A sword has Yahweh; it is full of blood [on earth AND in the heavens] ...
And a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ...**

For a day of vengeance has Yahweh, [Why?] A year of repayments for Zion's cause.

• *Isaiah 34:5b–6, 8, CLV*

This verse may be familiar to many from the King James Version. It says, **“It is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion”** (Isaiah 34:8). This same event has another name. It is known as **“the Day of the Lord.”**³

³ Isaiah 2:12, 13:6, 9; Jeremiah 46:10; Ezekiel 13:5, 30:3; Joel 1:15, 2:1, 11, 31, 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7, 14; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Corinthians 5:5, 2 Corinthians 1:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:2, and 2 Peter 3:10.

The prophet Jeremiah, who lived after Isaiah also was given a prophecy about the far future that is still future to us today:

**“But YHWH is the true God [Elohim],
he is the living God [Elohim], and
an everlasting [eonian] king:**

**at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.
Thus shall you [Jeremiah] say unto them,**

‘The gods [elohim] that have NOT made the heavens and the earth, even THEY SHALL PERISH from the earth, and [shall perish] FROM UNDER THESE HEAVENS.

[1] **He [YHWH] has made the earth by his power,**

[2] **He has established the world by his wisdom, and**

[3] **has stretched out the heavens by his discretion.’”**

• *Jeremiah 10:10–12, KJV*

Notice **“the gods.”** These are spirit beings created by YHWH. They promote themselves on earth to be powerful “gods” to the pagan Gentile nations. God is not talking about the metal, stone, and wood idols. They do not “perish” because such objects have no life. Why would God care if His people Israel worshipped nothing? The physical idols represent living beings who claim powers they do not possess.

YHWH told Jeremiah to say **“they shall perish.”** This means they shall die; they will cease to exist. Later they also will be reconciled to YHWH (Colossians 1:20, Philippians 2:10–11). Jeremiah is not referring to inanimate objects made of metal, stone or wood, but he does tell about the idols elsewhere in his prophecies. See my article [“Spirits Can Die.”](#) See Psalm 82:6 where the “gods” are prophesied to “die like men.”

The apostle Paul tells us later in 1 Corinthians 8:6:

“We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are CALLED gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge.”

• *1 Corinthians 8:4–7, KJV*

What Happened When Christ Was Born?

Revelation 12:7 says a “battle” (Concordant Literal New Testament) or a “war” (KJV) took place. Some kind of combat took place in heaven at the time of Christ’s birth, yet elsewhere there was no apparent sign of battle and peace was proclaimed on earth. No one on earth at that time seemed to notice or report what was happening above. Perhaps the fighting was not visible. We do not know — but we will know someday.

Remember, when Jesus was born, angels appeared who sang to the shepherds? What words did they sing? Try to imagine what that must have been like for those shepherds at night. After the astonishing event happened, they were compelled to tell everyone they encountered, even strangers, about their remarkable experience. Note again the narrative in Luke’s Gospel (King James Version) about Jesus’ birth:

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them [the shepherds]: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

‘Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And THIS

SHALL BE A SIGN unto you; You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.’

And suddenly **there was with the angel** a **multitude of the heavenly host** praising God, and [they were] saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **PEACE**, good will toward men.’

And it came to pass, as **the angels were gone away from them into heaven**, the shepherds said one to another, ‘Let us **now go even unto Bethlehem**, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us.’”

• **Luke 2:7–15**

Note these things you may not have noticed before:

- Mary “**brought forth her firstborn son**” was a phrasing used later in Revelation chapter 12 for the birth process.
- Was this event of such importance, enough for “**the angel of the Lord**” to speak to the shepherds? **Yes, it was that important!** This was the personal angel of YHWH, God our Father.⁴ He honored and supervised security for the Son of God, creator of all from His Father YHWH to become flesh.

It was the most important event since creation some 4000 years before. The creator (under God the Father, Colossians 1:14–17) emptied Himself (Philippians 2:5–8) and became flesh (John 1:14), like Adam and you, me, and us all. He became a human being, and the apostle Paul says He is a human being, in His glorified body at this moment (1 Timothy 2:5).

- The sudden and wondrous appearance of “**a multitude of the heavenly host**” at first frightened and then overwhelmed the shepherds with awe at the majesty of the event. Were the angels of the heavenly host there to rejoice at the event? **Yes, the text states that.**

Think of an additional possibility — that the heavenly host, led by the angel of the Lord were all there **to protect** Jesus, Joseph, and Mary from an attack by supernatural entities as described in Revelation chapter 12. Satan and his minions did not want this birth of the Messiah, the Son of God, to take place as prophesied.

- Was there a war in heaven about this time of Christ’s birth? **Yes, as you read below, Revelation 12 verse 7.** This was when actual combat between God’s angels and “**Satan and his angels**” took place. Note the context of when this occurred:

1. The angels appeared to the shepherds to announce this special birth, so they would spread the message about the miraculous birth and the celebration of angels.
2. The fighting took place soon after the birth of Jesus, whether before or after the angels appeared to the shepherds, we are not told.
3. Satan (portrayed in vision as a dragon) and his angels (messengers) try to abort the birth, or to kill the child.
4. Verse 12:7: “**Michael and his messengers battle with the dragon, and the dragon battles, with its messengers.**”
5. The dragon and his messengers lose the battle and are cast to earth.

⁴ This angel is a unique and powerful messenger from YHWH. (This angel was not Christ before He was born.) For details on who this angel was (and is), read or listen to “[Chapter 2: The Law Was Given By Angels](#)” (in the book *Essentials ...*) This angel of the Lord had permission to speak on behalf and in the name of God. That name is YHWH (Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 42:8). Christ has that same right to use that name to represent God His Father (as Paul says in Hebrews 1:4) and in Philippians 2:9–11:

“Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, and **given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**”

6. The angels were near the child and parents when they appear to the shepherds and announce the birth. They proclaim peace (because the battle was already won?) and tell of God's good will toward all people.
- The Shepherds were given a sign to look not up to the heavens, but to look on earth somewhere in their vicinity. They were told the child was already born and was to be found in a manger. They located Jesus and his family and went to tell everyone they could the miraculous events that they witnessed.

War in Heaven — What Else Happened at the Time of Christ's Birth

There were two important signs in Revelation chapter 12, presented below, one in verse 12:1 and another in 12:3.⁵ The word "another" in verse 12:3 is not unique or unusual, but it must be explained. Two Greek words are used in English translations to denote "another." Sometimes they are distinguished from each other, sometimes not. One word means "another" **of the same kind** while a different Greek word means "another" **of a different kind**. The word in verse 12:3 below are "another" of the same kind.

I put portions of the text side-by-side, because the events described happen at the same time, but from two different perspectives.

Simultaneous Events in Revelation Chapter 12:1–17

(from the Concordant Literal New Testament)

The Woman, the Child, Michael, and God's Messengers

¹ And **a great sign** was seen in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head a wreath of twelve stars.

² And being pregnant, she is crying, travailing and tormented **to be bringing forth**.

⁵ And **she brought forth a son**, a male, who is about to be shepherding all the nations with an iron club. And her child is snatched away to God and to His throne. ⁶ And the woman fled into the wilderness, there where she has a place made ready by God, that there they may be nourishing her a thousand two hundred sixty days.

^{7a} And **a battle occurred in heaven**. **Michael and his messengers** battle with the dragon, - - -

¹⁰ And I hear a loud voice in heaven saying, **"Just NOW came the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority**

The Dragon [Satan and Serpent], and His Messengers

³ And seen was **another sign** in heaven, and lo! a great fiery-red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and on its heads seven diadems [crowns].

⁴ And its tail is dragging a third of the stars of heaven, and casts them into the earth. And the dragon stands before the woman who is **about to be bringing forth**, that it may be devouring her child whenever she may **be bringing forth**.

^{7b} and **the dragon battles, and its messengers**. ⁸ And they are not strong enough for him [*Michael*], neither was their place still found in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was cast out, the ancient serpent called Adversary [*diabolos* in Greek] and Satan, who is deceiving the whole inhabited earth.

⁵ Dr. Martin's book, *The Star That Astonished the World* (free to read online) identifies the Star of Bethlehem. The first sign in Revelation 12:1 is identified and presents the exact time when Christ was born: September 11, 3 BC.

of His Christ, for the accuser of our brethren was **cast out**, [*Satan*] who was accusing them before our God day and night. ¹¹ **And they conquer him** [*Satan*] through the blood of the Lambkin, and through the word of their testimony, and they love not their soul, until death.

¹² Therefore, make merry, you heavens [*plural, all three heavens*], and **those TABERNACLING in them!** Woe to the land and the sea, for the descended to you having great fury, being aware that **brief is the season that he** [*the Adversary*] **has.**"

It [*the adversary*] was cast into the earth, and its messengers were cast with it. ¹³ And when the dragon perceived that it was cast into the earth, it persecutes the woman who brought forth the male.

¹⁴ And given to the woman were the two wings of a large vulture, that she may be flying into the wilderness into her place, there where she is nourished a season, and seasons, and half a season, from the face of the serpent.

¹⁵ And the serpent casts water as a river out of its mouth after the woman, that she should be carried away by its current.

¹⁶ And the earth helps the woman, and the earth opens its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon **casts out of its mouth**.

¹⁷ And the dragon is angry with the woman, and came away to do battle with the rest of her seed, who are keeping the precepts of God and who have the testimony of Jesus.

Revelation 12:1–17 Analysis, What Was Happening?

Verses 12:1 and 3. The text indicates the visions in verses 1 and 3 are the same type of celestial event in two different parts of the vision.⁶

These two verses give two perspectives of the same event: the birth of Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, called the Lamb of God (25x in Revelation), and the “Christ” which means Messiah (10x in Revelation). You can read Mary’s perspective as Jesus’ mother, see my article, “[Memory in Luke](#).” Luke says in the prologue to his Gospel that he had eyewitness accounts from many people (Luke 1:1–4). These were likely the same people the apostle Paul (who was helped by Luke), referred to in 1 Corinthians 15:1–8 where Paul gave his summary of the Gospel that he taught to the Corinthian *ekklesia*.

Verse 12:12. The word “**tabernacling**” indicates a temporary period of residence in a temporary dwelling of some sort. The term would be familiar to Jewish readers. This passage indicates that angels and likely other

⁶ The visions of the Book of Revelation were given to the apostle John in 60 AD and again some 30 years later. Four times it is said Christ will come “**quickly**” (Revelation 3:11, 22:7, 12, and 20). The vision was given a second time because some Christians were beginning to question and doubt the truth of the prophecy given in 60 AD. Read Dr. Martin’s analysis that the prophecy was given twice to John. See “[Chapter 20: When Was the Book of Revelation Written?](#)” from his book [Restoring the Original Bible](#). Read and examine his analysis. It presents an elegant biblical solution that makes sense.

Another “sign” of the SAME kind introduces the Seven Last Plagues in Revelation 15:1: “**And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God**” (Revelation 15:1).

spirit beings are living in all three heavens, either doing their assigned functions, or in rebellion. This verse says that those receiving the message are living there on a temporary basis, and they should rejoice because change is coming.

I give a quick synopsis of signs and wonders in the past and future in my June 2021 Commentary, "[Biblical Wonders In The Sky](#)." It introduces the article by a NASA scientist, "[UFOs in Antiquity](#)." For information specific about past signs in the sky, after Christ's resurrection and before the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem in 70 AD, see Dr. Martin's article, "[Signs of the Times in the First Century](#)."

Future Signs "In the Heavens"

There will be chaos before Christ returns. There will be another war in heaven. The signs in the sky may indicate that battles are ongoing. YHWH through Jeremiah warned his people Judah before their kingdom and the first Temple was destroyed:

"Thus says YHWH, 'Learn NOT the way of the heathen [Gentiles], and be NOT dismayed at the signs of heaven[s]; for the heathen are dismayed at them.'"

• **Jeremiah 10:2**

That is good advice for us today. Jeremiah was referring to "signs of heaven[s]" (always plural in Hebrew) happening in his days, not in the time of Christ's return, but Jesus referred to this Jeremiah passage and applied it to the time of His return:

At Pentecost Peter referred to a passage in the Book of Joel 2:30–31 that gave information about the future Day of the Lord, or the Day of YHWH. Peter said:

"And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come."

• **Acts 2:19–20**

Peter made that reference because he learned it from the teaching of Jesus during His ministry. Note below, the differences between Matthew and Mark passages describing the same events. The distinctions between them focus on different aspects of events, as both learned from Jesus.

Matthew 24:29–31 (CLV)	Mark 13:24–27 (CLV)
<p>²⁹ "Now immediately after the affliction [tribulation] of those days <u>the sun</u> shall be darkened and the moon shall not be giving her beams, and the stars shall be <u>falling from heaven</u>, and the powers of <u>the heavens</u> [plural] shall be shaken.</p> <p>³⁰ And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Mankind <u>in heaven</u> [singular], and then all the tribes of the land shall grieve, and they shall see the Son of Mankind coming on the clouds <u>of heaven</u> [singular] with power and much glory.</p> <p>³¹ "And He shall be dispatching His messengers [angels] with a loud sounding trumpet, and they shall be <u>assembling His chosen</u> from the four winds, from the extremities of <u>the heavens</u> [plural] to their extremities."</p>	<p>²³ "But in those days, after that affliction [tribulation], <u>the sun</u> shall be darkened, and the moon shall not be giving her beams, ²⁵ and the stars shall be <u>falling out of heaven</u>, and the powers <u>in the heavens</u> [plural] shall be shaken.</p> <p>²⁶ And then</p> <p>shall they be seeing the Son of Mankind coming in clouds with much power and glory.</p> <p>²⁷ And then shall He be dispatching His messengers [angels] and <u>assembling His chosen</u> from the four winds, from the extremity of the earth to the extremity of <u>heaven</u> [singular]."</p>

Passages in the Gospel of Luke focus on different matters than in Matthew and Mark. “[T]he heavens” plural are mentioned only once, but two places in Luke chapter 21 tell about “signs” in the sky:

“And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and **great signs shall there be from heaven.**”

• Luke 21:11

“And there shall be **signs** in [1] the sun and [2] the moon and [3] the constellations, and [4] on the earth pressure [distress] of nations in perplexity,

at the resounding of the sea and the shaking, at the chilling of men from fear and apprehensiveness of that which is coming on the inhabited earth,

for the powers of the **HEAVENS** shall be shaken. And then they shall be seeing the Son of Man-kind coming in a cloud with power and much glory.”

• Luke 21:25–27, Concordant Literal Version

A Future Attack From Under the Earth, Released Out of the Euphrates River

Read below **Revelation 9:12–21** (KJV), ten verses that tell of horror coming from the Euphrates River. Keep one thing in mind as you read this ... these are not human beings attacking and killing. The apostle John describes what he saw. It is not symbolic; it is an accurate vision of an event still future to us:

¹² “One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. ¹³ And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, ¹⁴ Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, “**Loose the four angels which are bound IN the great river Euphrates.**”

¹⁵ And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, [why?] **for to slay the third part of men.**

¹⁶ And the number of the army of the horsemen were **two hundred thousand thousand**: and I heard the number of them. ¹⁷ And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued [1] fire and [2] smoke and [3] brimstone.

¹⁸ By these three was **the third part of men killed**, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. ¹⁹ For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

²⁰ And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet **repented NOT of the works of their hands**, that **they should NOT worship devils**, and **idols of gold**, and **silver**, and **brass**, and **stone**, and **of wood**: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: ²¹ Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

In ten verses a very strange but major event is described, a true horror. The number of those performing the horror is also astonishing. This is a punishment sanctioned by God. Those killed are some of the worst people in the world. We do not know how many die from this horror. The death toll could be between one to two billion people, depending how many people are still be alive after the prior events.

Verses 12–13. These verses set the stage for the Second Woe. In vision John is in heaven before the altar in God’s temple watching the events occur.

Verse 14. The four angels are — as you read these words — still “**bound IN the great river Euphrates.**” In the future they will be “loosed.” Their intent and purpose is to kill the third part of men. Because they were bound, they likely are not God’s angels, but they are termed “angels” in most translations. “Messengers” is perhaps a better approximation to the meaning of the Greek plural term *aggelous*.

Verse 15. The supernatural “angels” are killers. They wait for a reason, but we are not told why. Then they release an army of other supernatural beings.

Verse 16. The army led by the angels seem to come out of nowhere. They may be led by the angels, or maybe they were simply released from their confinement and they ran wild on their own. The text does not say if they also come out of the Euphrates. They will kill with great pain. There are 200 **million** (“**two hundred thousand thousand**”) of them.

Verse 17. Each of the supernatural “**horsemen**” (as they are termed) is mounted on a supernatural creature that also has ability to maim and kill human beings. The casualties will be up to 1/3 of whatever is their target population. The riders together with their mounts add up to **400 million supernatural beings** killing every human being they can find. It sounds ridiculous when explained, but that is what the text says, and physical death of human beings is what they will do.

The text says the 400 million creatures suddenly appear, kill one third of humanity, and then are not mentioned again. Spirits can die,⁷ particularly when they are in our physical realm on earth. They can be killed with physical weapons. Perhaps every one of these killing riders and beasts will be killed, one at a time, with human weapons. We shall see. Are they going to Israel? The text does not say where they go. Nothing else about them is said after verse 9:21. No one has identified them elsewhere in Scripture.

Verse 18. Their attack to kill people is made by three weapons of the riders and their mounts. The Greek word “men” for those killed is *anthropon*, plural, which means human beings descended from Adam. It does not mean “males.” I believe the message of the Book of Revelation is primarily directed to Israel and not to the world. Nor is it directed to the *ekklesia*, except to give information and warning to the Body of Christ. This attack and mass killing is a judgment from God upon evil people. All the “woes” are God’s judgments.

That being said, the scale of this attack, the numbers of attackers and the numbers of the victims demand the reader to take this account as affecting the entire world. This is a judgment from God upon unbelievers, especially idolators involved with idolatry. The most disgusting sinful acts are associated with such idolatry. With world population approaching 8 **billion** people (and this Revelation chapter 9 event will not occur for at least two decades from now, and probably more), a worldwide death toll from this event alone would be greater than 2+ **billion** people, depending how many survive God’s earlier punishments.

Verse 19. These beings appear in verse 16 and disappear in verse 19. Nothing more is heard of them. They are not human beings in vehicles or aircraft. These are living creatures, supernatural in origin, not machines. They do not fly, differing from the first Woe in Revelation 9:1–9 which torments but does not kill anyone.

Verses 20–21. These verses, perhaps, tell us the targets of the 400 million killers. The human survivors refuse to stop their idolatry. They seem to have returned to the basest form of spirit worship even to making idols made from base substances.

Our Reaction To This Future Horror

While reading about all this horror understand that nothing the “powers of the heavens” can do will damage our relationship with God or Christ:

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, ‘For your sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that

neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature [Greek: *creation*, which includes “creatures”],

shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

• **Romans 8:35–39**

Later, Paul in Ephesians 3:14–15 writes: **“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in [the] heavens and earth is named.”** This is precisely what Paul wrote to

⁷ See my July 2020 article “[Spirits Can Die](#).” See also my June 2020 article, “[The End Time? Not Yet!](#).”

the *ekklesia* at Philippi:

“Wherefore, also, God highly exalts Him, and graces Him with the name that is above every name, that in the name of Jesus **every knee should be bowing,**

celestial [heavenly, “of the heavens”] **and**

terrestrial [earthly, “of the earth”] **and**

subterranean, [sub-earth, “below the earth”]

and every tongue should be acclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord, for the glory of God, the Father.

• *Philippians 2:9–11*

To the *ekklesia* at Colosse, Paul emphasizes the totality of God’s salvation through Christ:

¹⁵ “Who is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn of every creature:**

¹⁶ For **BY** [Greek *en*, trans. “in”] **him were ALL THINGS created,**

- that are in [the] **heaven** [Greek *ouranois*, “heavens” plural], **and that are in earth,**
- **visible and invisible,**
- **whether they be**
 1. **thrones, or**
 2. **dominions, or**
 3. **principalities, or**
 4. **powers:**

ALL THINGS were created BY [Greek *di*, trans. “through”] **him, and FOR him:**

¹⁷ And he is **BEFORE** all things, and **BY him all things consist.** ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church [*ekklesia*]:

[He] **who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead;** that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; ²⁰ And, having made peace through [Greek *dia*, also “through”] **the blood of his cross** [stake],

by [Greek *di*, “through”] **him to reconcile all things unto himself;**

by [Greek *di*, “through”] **him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven** [Greek *ouranois*, “heavens” plural].”

• *Colossians 1:15–20, KJV*

In these verses note that the heavens, plural, were created by the Son (verse Colossians 1:13), the Lord Jesus Christ (verse 7). He made everything in the heavens, including all creatures living in them. Each of these heavenly or celestial beings have different responsibilities whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all created by God the Father through the Son of God.

“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: **for you have created all things, and for your pleasure** [for your “will,” Greek *thelema*] **they are** [now!] **and were created** [in the past].”

• *Revelation 4:11*

It is possible that the words “**they are ... created**” could be understood to mean at the moment John viewed the vision, as well as in the past, God was still actively creating. See my Commentary, “[God’s Ongoing Creation](#)” and Dr. Martin’s article “[Creation of Life in Contemporary Times](#).” As you know, people are being born (“created”) at the present time, and more will be “created” on earth during the 1,000 years reign of Christ after He takes full active control of the earth. Also, creation continues in the heavens at present and during the Millennium. This includes living beings that are not human. The living beings are more important than

the physical creation. One of Christ's achievements after He begins to rule all creation will be, as Colossians 1:20 above states, similar to what Paul said years earlier to the *ekklesia* at Corinth:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, HE is a new creature [in Greek a “new creation”]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and has committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, ‘be you reconciled to God [in the imperative mood].”

• *2 Corinthians 5:17–20, KJV*

As Paul was an ambassador for Christ, so too will some of us who have knowledge of and accept the glory of the Mystery, go out as ambassadors to help reconcile the heavens, as Paul said later in Ephesians:

“Wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery [secret] of his will, according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself:

That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one ALL THINGS in Christ, both which are in heaven [Greek, “in the heavens,” plural], and which are on earth; even in him:

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both

[things] which are in heaven [Greek, “the heavens” plural], and

[things] which are on earth;

even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will.

[Why?] **That WE should be to the praise of his glory, [we] who first trusted in Christ.”**

• *Ephesians 1:8–12*

God's will for all mankind is that all will be saved (1 Timothy 2:3–6). Universal salvation will be fulfilled [**“in the dispensation of the fullness of times”**] because His will is always ultimately fulfilled (Ephesians 1:11), even when opposed.

“For our conversation [*citizenship* or *realm*] is in heaven from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”

• *Philippians 3:20–21*

Conclusion

How many still want to be alive when Christ returns? Even protected by God, life will be unpleasant for everyone. Even under God's protection, life will be difficult. If you are an adult, you very likely will not have to worry, we will be dead many years when the end comes. Our younger children and grand children will have to be strong, for these events and Christ's return will likely happen during their lifetimes.

There will be a Part 2 in a separate article. There is more information to present.

David Sielaff, April 2022