

TYRANT

Rise of the Beast

Chronicles of the Apocalypse
Book One



BRIAN GODAWA

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A Story of the Book of Revelation

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Tyrant: Rise Of The Beast – A Story of the Book of Revelation
Chronicles of the Apocalypse Book One
1st Edition

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READ THIS NOTE. IT'S IMPORTANT

Chronicles of the Apocalypse is the conclusive sequel series to my *Chronicles of the Nephilim* series about the Biblical Cosmic War of the Seed. But one need not read the previous Nephilim series to be able to understand this Apocalypse series, though the literary and theological connections run deep.

This is the story of the Apostle John's writing of the Apocalypse during the time of the Roman Empire, the first major persecution and martyrdom of Christians, and the Jewish revolt of A.D. 66, that resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. My hope is that the original context of the ancient world in all its symbolic glory will come alive to the reader as you encounter the imagery in Revelation dramatically unveiled through its Old Testament and first century literary lens.

Creative License

I have tried to be as accurate as I can with the actual historical events and characters surrounding the Jewish revolt of A.D. 66 and the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. However, there are many details that we simply do not know with certainty because either the Bible or other historical sources are silent, or because there is disagreement over the facts. Because of this, I had to take some creative license to fill in the gaps or simplify for easier reading. But I tried to remain true to the spirit of the text if not to the letter.

For example, the New Testament letters such as John's Apocalypse, did not have chapter or verse numbers. They were originally letters written to various people and congregations. The chapter and verse numbers were added in the Medieval era for closer detailed study of the Scriptures. In *Chronicles of the Apocalypse*, I broke up the book of Revelation into "fragments" that correspond to our modern chapters for the purpose of making it easy for the modern reader to look up those Bible verses. It was a kind of creative license footnoting within the context of a narrative. I hope

the more demanding “Bible scholars” will forgive such petty contrivances for the sake of helpful annotation and storytelling.

Endnotes

I’ve included numbered endnotes for each chapter that provide detailed Biblical and historical substantiation behind the fictional story. As it turns out, half of the text of this book is endnotes. This may be my most heavily researched series of novels yet. Though using endnote numbers in a novel text is considered anathema by many, I chose to use them to provide proof for my fans who want to “fact check” and dig deeper. This is fiction based on fact. If you question anything I’ve written in a particular paragraph, simply check the closest endnote to that paragraph. You will find that the truth is stranger than fiction! The historical fulfillment is mind-blowing.

Besides, my fans have come to expect such documentation!

Brian Godawa

Author, *Chronicles of the Apocalypse*

He said to me, “But you, Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, until the time of the end.”

Daniel 12:4 (547 B.C.)

And he said to me [John], “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.”

Revelation 22:10 (A.D. 65)

Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.”

Matthew 23:36 (A.D. 33)

PART ONE

Antichrist

CHAPTER 1

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: ‘The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’”

— *The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ 2:1-7*

Ephesus

On the coast of Asia

A.D. 64

The dark lord Apollyon roamed unseen through the massive throngs of citizens filling the streets of the city. *His* city. Well, not entirely. Ever since the Nazarene had accomplished his coup d’état a generation ago, his despicable followers were watched over by a heavenly guardian. Ephesus

was no exception. Though the cowardly Angel of Ephesus was nowhere to be seen.¹

Apollyon gritted his teeth with anger at the thought. But as the Watcher of the Roman empire, he had too much authority over his stronghold to be worried about an uprising of Yahweh's minions. Apollyon owned most of the residents of Ephesus. His nemesis would not dare to show his face where the dark lord was now going. And Apollyon would not dare to rush his plan, as he built his forces from the unregenerate inhabitants of the earth. They were kingdoms in conflict and the tension was increasing toward world war. The Nazarene had outfoxed him and achieved atonement for sins through his death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of Yahweh. Apollyon still boiled with anger over his failure to figure out the plan and stop Messiah. Ever since Eden, he had been at war with the seed of Eve, from Enoch to Noah to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - and who could forget that treacherous messiah king, David – all the way to the Son of David.²

How could he have missed it?

At Babel, Yahweh had given the nations their inheritance. He confused the tongues, divided mankind and gave the people over to the rebellious Sons of God from his heavenly host. Those fallen angelic beings became the gods of the nations. They were called "Watchers," because they watched over the territories and lands they had been allotted. Apollyon's allotment was Rome. But Yahweh's inheritance would be the people of Jacob, the people of God.³

Apollyon's name in Hebrew was Abaddon, which meant "destroyer." But he liked the Greek version for its linguistic connection to the sun god Apollo, a personal obsession of his human pet, Nero Caesar. Nero was the earthly ruler of Apollyon's Rome. The Watcher god had gone by different names throughout the millennia: Nachash the ancient Serpent, Belial of wickedness, Helel ben Shachar the Shining One, Mastemah the hostile, Diabolos the devil, Satan the Adversary, and the Dragon. But his plan had always been the same: to destroy the people of God and the seed line of Messiah.⁴

As the legally appointed Adversary in Yahweh's heavenly court, he had prosecutorial powers to accuse humanity before God's throne. And accuse

them he did. He filed lawsuits against Israel for every single infraction of God's Law that he could uncover.⁵

It was easy. Israel was an unfaithful wife to Yahweh. More like a lustful harlot, actually. A harlot seeking to lay under every green tree with every idol of the nations. Ba'al, Asherah, Dagon, Molech. You name the false god, the Israelites fornicated with it. They had violated the covenant with their maker so often, it made Yahweh vomit.

It made Apollyon giggle with a juvenile glee.⁶

But Yahweh remained faithful and even gave his whore of twelve tribes a male heir. When that abominable Nazarene came upon the scene, he fooled everyone. Apollyon and the other Watchers, even Israel herself, thought Messiah was coming as military earthly deliverer to rescue his people. Instead, he played the sacrificial lamb and secured atonement for a remnant of his elect people. Messiah took away Apollyon's authority to prosecute God's people in heaven, and cast him down to earth like lightning.⁷ The Nazarene then became the first-born from the dead, legally disinheriting the gods of the nations, and led those principalities and powers, bound and gagged, in a triumphal victory into Tartarus before his ascension to his heavenly throne. Through death, resurrection and ascension, Yahweh undid the territorial allotment of Babel and legally claimed all the nations as his inheritance.⁸

*But you didn't get us all, Nazarene, thought Apollyon. And you left me here as the Watcher of Rome. Now Rome rules the world, making me the god of this world.*⁹

The remaining spiritual principalities and powers served Apollyon, who delegated authority based on the stronghold he was able to maintain in each city. Yahweh may have gained legal claim to the nations, but the historical acquisition of those territories would take time and effort. And Apollyon was not going to give them up without a fight.

A cult of Jewish religious fanatics followed the Nazarene, and within this short span of thirty years, spread their malignant cancer to the ends of the earth, thus loosening Apollyon's strangling grip. But the leaders and people of Israel as a whole had rejected their Messiah, which gave the Destroyer power over them. So he had successfully martialled the Jews to persecute the chosen few, now called *christianoï*, or Christians. It was a

vulgar term of derision meaning servants of Christ as opposed to *caeseriani*, servants of Caesar.¹⁰

Apollyon arrived at his intended destination, the top of a hill just north of the city, overlooking the vast metropolis. He looked up at the temple of Artemis, one of the manmade wonders of the world. Like the Parthenon in Athens, its huge stone Corinthian columns towered sixty feet above, giving mortals the sense of Olympus on earth. They called it the Artemisium.¹¹

Apollyon called it, “My fortress.”

But no one heard him. And no one saw him either. He remained invisible to the humans. If he allowed them to see him, he could appear to them as almost anything. His favorite current identity was a six foot tall rail thin androgynous being, both male and female, *neither* male nor female. He liked the chaos and defiance against Yahweh’s created order that the confusion of gender expressed. He wore a toga, sandals, plenty of jewelry to die for, and prided himself on his fabulous make up.

What a waste, he thought. *Maybe I should let these flesh bags see my glory. At least then my glamour will not go unappreciated.*

Ephesus was a city of glamour. A large commercial seaport on the west coast of the province of Asia, it became a major center of international trade, and with it, the key to implementing Apollyon’s plans for the Roman empire.

The enemy saw the city’s strategic value as well. Less than a decade ago, Paul, that meddling apostle to the Gentiles, had overstayed his welcome here and infected the inhabitants with his malicious messiah myth. The silversmiths caused a riot because their idol-making business had been severely undermined by Christian conversions. After that fiasco, Apollyon had labored long and hard to dig his talons back into the city. And now that disgusting old crank, the apostle John bar Zebedee resided here, causing the Watcher much anguish. Apollyon nicknamed him Thunderhead, as a mockery of his reputation as a bold “Son of Thunder.”¹²

Ephesus was also a treasure to Apollyon because it was the banking and financial center of the province. Vast sums of money flowed in to the great temple from devotees all over the continent. And that was why Apollyon was here. He walked up the stairway and entered the huge stone Artemisium.¹³

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A tall female divinity adorned in rich oriental garb stood bent over an altar at the far end of the sanctuary, her back to Apollyon as he entered.

“Sister!”

The goddess turned with a twitch of anger at being interrupted. In her hand was the corpse of a goat, its neck ripped to shreds. Blood dripped down the lips of the Great Artemis, Mother Goddess and Queen of the Cosmos. On her head was an elaborate headdress, the Zodiac across her neck, and a chest full of what looked like multiple breasts, but were actually leather pouches of magical sorcery for fertility. She was also a huntress of wild animals, so she was not a goddess to be trifled with.¹⁴

“Apollyon, dear brother and master, to what do I owe this honor?”

According to Greek myth, Artemis and Apollo were twin siblings, the offspring of Zeus.

In reality, Artemis was actually a male disguised as a goddess, since the fallen Sons of God were exclusively male. “She” was simply another demonic servant of Apollyon, one of the surviving principalities and powers left behind after Messiah’s victory over the gods of the nations. A victory that was not complete, for Yahweh had obviously failed to wipe them all out after seating his Son on the throne of David. And now Apollyon was making a comeback, building his forces for what Artemis knew was coming.

Apollyon said cryptically, “Behold, the time is near. I must show my servants the things which must shortly take place.”¹⁵

She gazed at him with curiosity.

He said, “It’s something old Thunderhead is now saying. But I too have been working on a plan and I need your help to initiate it.”

“Anything, my Lord.”

Apollyon pushed her aside and took the neck of the goat in his fangs, imbibing deeply.

Ah, blood, he thought as he sucked it dry. *Food of the gods*. Blood sacrifice connected worshippers with the divine in mystical union. He cast the carcass into the corner and wiped his lips with the back of his hand.

She gestured to the exit. “Walk with me in my garden, my lord. We will have privacy, and you can explain to me how I may be of help.”

A booming voice outside the temple interrupted their agenda. Artemis rolled her eyes and sighed impatiently.

Apollyon knew that voice anywhere. That annoying soul-piercing voice. “Speak of the enemy,” he said.

They walked out to the entrance of the Artemisium and saw a small man, nearing sixty years of age, with white hair and beard, preaching to passersby at the footsteps of the temple.

The apostle John.

“We should leave,” said Artemis.

“No. I want to hear what old Thunderhead is spewing today.”

John did not see the Watchers up at the top of the steps. He was intently focused on his public sermon, surrounded by a few of his followers. His voice was strong for such an old and weary soul. “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist! By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already!”¹⁶

Artemis grumbled, “That geriatric pissant is undoing everything Cerinthus has achieved.” Cerinthus was a local false teacher who denied the deity of Christ, among other useful heresies.¹⁷

“Stop complaining,” said Apollyon. “I am trying to hear him.”

John continued, “This is the last hour, and as I already told you that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour! Now the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. But if you believe and abide in Jesus Christ, when he appears you may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming!”¹⁸

Apollyon thought to himself, *There it is again. The apostolic announcement of being in the last hours before “his coming.”* He could feel the storm of war approaching.

Artemis grumbled again, “These Christians and their persecution complex. He thinks they’re victims now. Let us show him what real pain tastes like.”

Apollyon stopped her from descending the steps. He gestured to a figure standing off to the side, also unseen by the human crowd: the Angel of Ephesus, no longer absent. He was a tall heavy-built figure, dressed in a

hooded cloak that Apollyon knew covered armor and weapons beneath. Yahweh's soldiers were quiet and understated, but they were fierce competition for the dark lord and his forces.

The angel stared at Apollyon and Artemis, stiffened with hand on sword.

Apollyon said, "You would not get within yards of the apostle. Yahweh has something special in store for this one. He is the overseer of the most significant churches in Asia."

Artemis stared back at the distant glaring Angel of Ephesus. Apollyon was referring to a circuit of seven churches, beginning with Ephesus on the coast and circling inland from Smyrna around to Laodicea.

He said, "Asia was among the first to be colonized by the Christians for a reason. It is the physical center of the empire and therefore a communications hub for exporting their malevolent message to the rest of the world. And that is why I am going to visit those Asian cities to initiate my own plan."

Artemis said, "What is that, my lord?"

"I am going to cripple the enemy's ability to spread his propaganda and disinformation. Cut off the head of the lamb, starting with Ephesus."

Artemis asked, "And how are you going to achieve that?"

Apollyon mused, "When I was the great Adversary in Yahweh's heavenly court, they called me the 'accuser of the brethren.' Well, the Nazarene stripped me of that power and cast me down to this stinking exile of dirt. And now he is drawing all men unto himself."¹⁹

"Mount Zion," grumbled Artemis. Mount Zion was originally the location of the temple mount in Jerusalem. But the name became symbolic of the Jewish cosmic mountain of redemption, a spiritual symbol of God's kingdom in the age of Messiah. Since Messiah had come, that holy mountain was already growing as people from all the nations began streaming to it.²⁰

Apollyon nodded. "I have no legal jurisdiction over the children of God. But I *do* have it over the children of the devil. Yahweh left me as the prince of the power of the air. I no longer have the authority to prosecute. But I do have the ability to *persecute*."²¹

Artemis grinned deviously and said, "We could not destroy the Christ, but we *can* destroy his people, the body of Christ on earth."

“Exactly,” said Apollyon. “And I will destroy them all.”

He paused dramatically. He so loved drama. “And when he comes for his people, he won’t have any people left to receive him.”²²

She said, “But have you not been using the Jews already for that very purpose of persecution?”

“Yes,” He crowed. “But I have not yet used the real power I have. The power of Rome.”

Apollyon pulled Artemis away. “Come, show me this garden of yours.”

The Garden of Ortygia, a grove of terebinth trees, grew just outside the Artemisium. The terebinth was a kind of sacred oak through which the gods communicated to prophets and mystics. This was the legendary birthplace of Artemis, and the location of a sacred tree they now approached, known as the Tree of Life. At least that’s what they called it. Ever since the primeval Garden, the gods sought to construct their own royal parks with gardens and shrines as echoes of Eden, desperate attempts to recreate a paradise lost. The hanging gardens of Babylon had been the most memorable.²³

Staring at the sacred tree, Apollyon said, “How deep are your roots in this city?”

She said, “Sorcery is stronger than ever with the dispersion of the Ephesian Letters of Magic. Ephesus remains a significant spiritual influence across the empire.”²⁴

She stopped as if that was all there was to say. But Apollyon knew it was not. Not all was well in his Ephesus. He glared at her until she confessed, “Unfortunately, the cult of Nicolaitans has been seriously countered by the apostle John, and many have moved to Pergamum.”

“That is too bad,” said Apollyon. The Nicolaitans were a cult of Christian heretics that advocated blending pagan religions with the true faith, sexual immorality and eating food sacrificed to idols. Apollyon made a mental note to visit Pergamum as well.²⁵

Artemis brightened, “But there is good news. Do you remember Hymenaeus and Philetus?”

He said, “Those are the ones who were teaching that the Resurrection of the saints already happened. Nothing more than a spiritual symbol.”²⁶

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She said, “Exactly. They have a strong following now, along with your favorite gnostic, Cerinthus. And the Jewish community has been quite successful in suppressing the Way.”

Apollyon nodded with approval. The Way was what Christians called their detestable cult.²⁷

She continued proudly, “They offer sinners forgiveness upon the condition of repentance. A total rejection of their nation and their gods. But I offer criminals free refuge in my Asylum. Thieves, rapists, murderers, are all protected from the law if they can make their way into the sanctum of the temple. Christian atonement is merely spiritual, but mine offers release from earthly consequences as well. Now, who is more loving, I ask you?”²⁸

“Who is more enduring?” he challenged.

She said, “These Ephesian Christians have patient endurance, I will grant them that. But they have lost their first love. They have become so obsessed with doctrinal perfection, they no longer engage in works of faith. They are stone dead. Their lamp is out.”²⁹

He sighed with relief. “Excellent. Well done. I will take care of the apostle soon enough. Right now, I need your financial help. As I travel the circuit of the Asian cities I will stir up strongmen in Laodicea, Philadelphia, Sardis and others. But we need more than our true believers. We need financial incentive to hire protestors and bribe traitors. I need to prepare for what is coming.”

She scowled. She knew what was coming. All the principalities and powers knew what was coming; A mighty war in the heavenlies.

END NOTES: TYRANT: RISE OF THE BEAST

CHAPTER 1

¹ **The coup d'état of Jesus over the powers:** Ephesians 1:20–22; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Colossians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 4:8-10. The language of “triumphal procession” was based on the Roman military tradition. “It means to ‘celebrate a triumph,’ or more specifically ‘lead in triumph,’ as a victorious general leading his army with his defeated enemies in his train... In a manner anticipating the Fourth Gospel’s theology of glory, the cross and the ascension are merged into a single thought of triumph. The cross on which Christ died is compared to the chariot in which the victor rode in triumph.” James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: William B. Eerdmans Publishing; Paternoster Press, 1996), 168.

Supernatural guardians over God’s people: Revelation 1:20; 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7,14; Daniel 10:12-13, 21; Psalm 34:7; Matthew 18:20.

The angel of Ephesus: Revelation 1:20-2:1.

² Genesis 3:15; Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:7-12. For a creative depiction of this “War of the Seed” through the entire Bible, see the novel series, *Chronicles of the Nephilim* by Brian Godawa. www.chroniclesofthenephilim.com.

³ **Divine allotment of the nations under the heavenly Sons of God:** “When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.” Deuteronomy 32:8–9.

Heavenly host (Sons of God) as real supernatural entities and gods of the nations: Deuteronomy 4:19-20; 1 Enoch 6-7. For a creative depiction of this primeval fall and territorial allotment, see Brian Godawa, *Noah Primeval* (Los Angeles, Embedded Pictures, 2011) and *Enoch Primordial* (Los Angeles, Embedded Pictures, 2012). For a scholarly defense of the view see Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015).

Watchers as territorial supernatural authorities over mankind: Daniel 4:13, 23; 1 Enoch 20:1. “[the term Watcher] utilizes the arrangements of a human court to picture God’s management of the affairs of heaven and earth. An earthly king had watchmen, for instance, who were the eyes and ears whereby he controlled and provided for his realm (see n. 3:2.c). The heavenly king governs his realm by similar means, members of the Council of Yahweh (1 Kgs 22:19–22; Job 1–2; Ps 89:6–8 [5–7]; Jer 23:18) who act as his eyes (2 Chr 16:9; Zech 4:10; cf. 1:9), keeping him informed on the affairs of his realm and seeing that his will is put into effect throughout it.” John E. Goldingay, *Daniel*, vol. 30, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 88.

Israel as Yahweh’s allotted people: “When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.” Deuteronomy 32:8–9.

⁴ **Apollyon as Satan:** “This angel is named only here in Revelation [9:11 as Apollyon], and elsewhere in the OT and early Jewish literature is mentioned only in 4Q280 10 ii 7: “[Cursed be you Ange] of the Pit, and Spir[it of Aba]lddon” (Kobelski, Melchizedek, 43–44). While in 4Q280 and related texts these two titles are alternate ways of describing Belial, in Revelation it is not at all clear that the angel of the abyss is a designation for Satan, for he is carefully named elsewhere with a selection of aliases in two different contexts (12:9; 20:2), and neither Abaddon nor the angel of the abyss is mentioned again. The fact that ἄγγελος is articular here, however, suggests that the author expected the readers to be familiar with this figure, i.e., that the angel of the abyss is none other than Satan-Belial.” David E. Aune, *Revelation 6–16*, vol. 52B, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 534.

“The “Destroyer” in Rev. 9:11 is either the devil himself or an evil representative of the devil; either alternative receives confirmation from Jewish exegetical tradition on Exodus (see below). Rev. 12:3–4 and 13:1ff. are compatible with this conclusion, since there the devil and the Beast respectively are pictured wearing royal diadems and leading evil forces. This is also in line with the same conclusion already reached about the angel’s identification in 9:1.” G. K. Beale, *The Book of Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1999), 503.

Belial: 2 Corinthians 6:14-15. ““The personification of wickedness, treachery, or the like, as Belial. In most of its OT attestations, *bēliyya’al* functions as an emotive term to describe individuals or groups who commit the most heinous crimes against the Israelite religious or social order, as well as their acts.” S. D. Sperling, “Belial,” ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 169.

Helel ben Shachar: Isaiah 14:12-15. Though many scholars accept this passage as having two referents, one, a historical prophecy to the King of Babylon, and the other, a spiritual allusion to Satan’s pre-Edenic fall, David Lowe makes a persuasive argument that it has nothing to do with Satan. See David W. Lowe, *Deconstructing Lucifer: Reexamining the Ancient Origins of the Fallen Angel of Light*, (Seismos Publishing 2011).

Mastemah: “Mastemah appears as a noun meaning ‘hostility’ in OT (Hos 9:7–8) and Qumran writings. In Qumran literature the word is mostly connected with an evil angel (Belial) and in Jub. Mastemah is always a proper name for the leader of the evil angels.” J. W. van Henten, “Mastemah,” ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 553.

Satan as ancient serpent and dragon: “And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.” Revelation 12:9.

Job 1:6-12; Zechariah 3:1-2. “The Hebrew (*satan*) means something like “adversary,” “prosecutor,” or “challenger.” It speaks of an official legal function within a ruling body—in this case, Yahweh’s council. When Yahweh asks the *satan* where he has been, we learn that his job involves investigating what is happening on earth (Job 1:7). He is, so to speak, Yahweh’s eyes and ears on the ground, reporting what he has seen and heard.” Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible, First Edition* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 56–57.

Nero as Apollo: “Because he was thought to equal Apollo in music, and the sun in chariot-driving,.” Tranquillus, Gaius Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars: Nero* 6:53.

“Many commentators feel that the verse contains a derogatory reference to the Greek god Apollo and those emperors who claimed a special relationship to him. To name the king of the underworld Apollyon would be a cryptic way of saying that an emperor such as Domitian who liked to be regarded as Apollo incarnate was in reality a manifestation of the powers of the underworld. As early as the fifth century B.C., the Greeks had derived the name of Apollo from the same Greek verb as the root of Apollyon. The allusion is strengthened by the observation that the locust was one of the symbols of the god Apollo.” Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation, The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 191.

⁵ **The Adversary of God’s heavenly council (“the *satan*”) is an office appointed by God:** “In four OT passages *šātān* appears as an angelic being...Satan functions as an adversary against God’s people either by attempting to seduce them to do evil or by accusing them before God for their sins. But in each case Satan’s power is limited and he acts only within God’s permissive will. (Job 1-2, Zechariah 3:1)” D. P. Fuller, “Satan,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 340.

⁶ **Israel as adulterous harlot with idols:** Ezekiel 16:15-59; Ezekiel 23; 2Kings 17:7-17; Jeremiah 3:1-11; Hosea 1-2.

Yahweh vomiting out Israel: “But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations, lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you.” Leviticus 18:26–28.

⁷ **Satan's fall from heaven was not in the Garden, it was in the ministry of Christ:** "In Revelation 12, we see the origin of the notion that one third of the angels fell to earth with Satan at his fall. The only problem is that this event did not occur before the garden of Eden in a cosmic rebellion, it happened at the birth of Jesus Christ! Revelation 12:1-6 describes an apocalyptic parable of the cosmic war of the Seed of the Serpent (a dragon of chaos) and the Seed of the Woman (Israel/the Church). It describes one third of the angelic stars (Watchers?) joining Satan with the swipe of his serpentine tail. The dragon and his minions seek to devour the male seed (offspring) of the woman, but they fail and the child becomes king. And then the passage tells of a heavenly war:

Revelation 12:7-10 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God." Most Christians believe this is a reference to Satan's fall before the Garden of Eden incident, where he takes one third of the angels in heaven with him. But a closer look at the context reveals that this is not the case at all, but rather the opposite. The war in heaven does not happen before the Garden, it happens at the time of the incarnation of Messiah on earth! The woman (Israel) gives birth to a male child (Messiah, v. 5), who the dragon (Satan) seeks to devour (from Herod's slaughter of the innocents all the way to the Cross). That Messiah ascends to the throne in authority after his resurrection (v. 5; Eph 1:20-22), during which time that woman (Israel) flees to the wilderness (time of tribulation under the Roman Empire)." The war in heaven we see cannot be before the Garden because it says that the throwing down of Satan occurs with the coming of the kingdom of Christ! (v. 10). He is thrown down to earth and then seeks to kill the Christ (v. 13). Satan then seeks to make war with the rest of her offspring (God's people) which we see in history.

"Revelation 12 is an apocalyptic parable that is describing the incarnation of Messiah, his ascension to the throne of authority over all principalities and powers, and his suppression of Satan's power as the Gospel goes forth into the world." Brian Godawa, *When Giants Were Upon the Earth: The Watchers, the Nephilim, and the Biblical Cosmic War of the Seed* (Embedded Pictures, 2014), 154-155.

⁸ **Christ claiming the nations as his inheritance:** Psalm 2:8; Isaiah 2:1-5. For a fictional portrayal of this victory of Jesus Christ over the principalities and powers see Brian Godawa, *Jesus Triumphant* (Los Angeles, Embedded Pictures, 2015).

Christ's triumphal procession, with victory over the powers: Colossians 2:15 ¹⁵ He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Ephesians 4:8-10 ⁸ Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men." ⁹ (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

1 Peter 3:21-22 ²¹ Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.

Ephesians 1:20-22 ²⁰ that he worked 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 above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet.

⁹ "Satan is called "the ruler of this world" (Jn. 12:31, 14:30-31, 16:11), in 2 Cor. 4:4, "the god of this world." In Eph. 2:2 he is called the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." In fact, when Jesus was tempted by the satan in the desert, he offered Christ all the kingdoms of the world for his own "domain and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish" (Luke 4:6). It seems as if the satan is the only Watcher god in authority over the nations, like he has all the power." Brian Godawa, *When Giants Were Upon the Earth* (Embedded Pictures, 2014), 289." Much tradition identified Satan as the angel of Rome, thus adapting the angels-of-the-nations idea to the situation of Roman world-hegemony. Since Rome had conquered the entire Mediterranean region and much else besides, its angel-prince had become lord of all other angel-princes

of the vanquished nations. This identification was already explicit at Qumran, where Rome and the Romans (the “Kittim” of the War Scroll) are made the specific allies and agents of Satan and his host. Similarly in the New Testament, Satan as the ‘archon of this world’ (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) or ‘god of this aeon’ (2 Cor. 4:4) could scarcely avoid being identified as the special patron of Rome.” Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers: The Language of Power in the New Testament* (The Powers : Volume One) (Kindle Locations 405-409). Kindle Edition.

¹⁰ **Christianoi and Caesariani as titles:** Clinton E. Arnold, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: John, Acts., vol. 2* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 319.

¹¹ **The Artemesium:** Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Livonia, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Dove Booksellers, 2001), 48-49.

¹² Mark 3:17.

¹³ **Ephesus as financial center of Asia Minor:** “Broughton describes the temple of Artemis as ‘the biggest bank in Asia.’... it is clear that Artemis of Ephesus exercised a great deal of influence on the economic activity of both Ephesus and Asia Minor in our period, and greatly contributed to the financial welfare of the region.” Paul Trebilco, “Asia,” in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting: The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*, ed. David W. J. Gill, Conrad Gempf, and Bruce W. Winter, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; The Paternoster Press, 1994), 325–326.

¹⁴ **Description of the goddess Artemis and her connection to Apollo:** Paul Trebilco, “Asia,” in *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting: The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*, ed. David W. J. Gill, Conrad Gempf, and Bruce W. Winter, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle, Cumbria: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; The Paternoster Press, 1994), 317-18.

The bulbous objects on Artemis: “The meaning of the rows of bulbous objects on the chest of Artemis has proved a mystery to interpreters. Some early Christian interpreters identified them as female breasts and saw this as an expression of a fertility motif. This interpretation has not been generally accepted because of the differences in shape. Numerous other ideas have been suggested such as eggs, grapes, nuts, and even steer testicles. The latter view has a number of prominent adherents because in some of the ancient religions, mutilated body parts were attached to the cultic image of a deity. The most convincing explanation yet has recently been offered by Sarah P. Morris, Steinmetz professor of classical archaeology and material culture at UCLA, who concludes that the bulbous objects are comparable to leather goatskin pouches, called *kurša*, known from Hittite practices. These little bags were filled with magical material and used as fetishes. She observes that the Hittite tutelary deities associated with the *kurša* were often associated with protecting people and places and were frequently invoked in oaths and called upon in magical rites. She suggests that an ancient Anatolian cult image at Ephesus, to which rows of such bags were attached, was the predecessor to the image of the Ephesian Artemis. As such, the bags functioned as symbols for fecundity, spiritual power, and protection.” Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* (Zondervan, 20102), 45.

¹⁵ **Shortly take place:** Apollyon is mocking the Apostle John’s words in Revelation 1:1, but he realizes it is soon going to happen.

“When a writer says that an event will shortly and speedily come to pass, or is about to take place, it is contrary to all propriety to declare that his statements allow us to believe the event is in the far future. It is a reprehensible abuse of language to say that the words immediately, or near at hand, mean ages hence, or after a long time. Such a treatment of the language of Scripture is even worse than the theory of a double sense. Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics: A Treatise on the Interpretation of the Old and New Testaments* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1883), 495–496.

¹⁶ **These words that John preaches are directly from:** 2 John 7; 1 John 4:2–3.

¹⁷ **Heretics that John wrote against:** “Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.” 1 John 2:22.

For information on Cerinthus from early church father’s writings: Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.3.4; Eusebius, *Church History* 2.28.2; Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 1.26.1; Dionysius, quoted in Eusebius, *Church History* 2.28.4.

“Irenaeus claims that the Gospel of John was written as a response to the errors taught by Cerinthus and the Nicolaitans. Clement of Alexandria (Strom. 2.20; 3.4) attributed the heretical movement of the Nicolaitans to the misunderstanding of the followers of Nicolaus of Antioch.” - David E. Aune, *Revelation 1–5*, vol. 52A, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 149. “Eusebius records that the heretic Cerinthus taught an earthly kingdom of sensual pleasure (“the gratification of appetite and lust; i.e., in eating, drinking, and marrying”) to follow the resurrection (Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. 3.38.)” Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation, The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 368.

“One example was the Cerinthians. Cerinthus appears in early writings of the church as a kind of arch nemesis to the Apostle John. If the account of Irenaeus is accurate, which is by no means certain, considerable tension existed between the two. On one occasion, the story goes, John walked into a public bath-house and, finding Cerinthus already inside, he turned and hastened out the door, declaring, “Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within.” [*Irenaeus against Heresies*, 3.3.4]

“Since John lived in Ephesus, perhaps the conflict was inevitable. Whether the incident actually happened or not, the members of the church in Ephesus were barraged with assaults on the teaching of the Gospel. Cerinthus presented a twisted version, close enough to be confusing, different enough to draw people away.

“He claimed revelations supposedly written by a great apostle and insights which he maintained were given him by angels. Trained in the wisdom of the Egyptians, Cerinthus taught that Jesus was an ordinary human being, the natural son of Joseph and Mary. Though he believed Jesus was a righteous and wise man, Cerinthus asserted that Jesus was not God. After his baptism, Christ descended on Jesus in the form of a dove and through Jesus performed miracles and taught about the supreme God, the Father. Before the crucifixion, the non-corporeal Christ left Jesus, who then suffered and died, later to rise again.

“Cerinthus founded a sect named Cerinthian, after himself, and pursued a life devoted to the “pleasures of the body.” Comparison of John’s epistles with the teachings of Cerinthus indicates that correcting the false teaching was at least in the back of John’s mind as he wrote. For example, the statement that anyone who “denies that Jesus is the Christ” is a liar might well have been written to counter the Cerinthian claim that Christ came to Jesus and then left him.” Don Enevoldsen, *The Harlot and the Bride*, unpublished book (Don Enevoldsen, 2014), 81.

¹⁸ **These words that John preaches are directly from:** 1 John 2:18; 2:22; 5:19; 2:28.

¹⁹ **Accuser of the brethren:** Revelation 12:10.

Satan bound in the ministry of Jesus: (Matthew 12:27-29). In Rev 20:2-3, binding the satan if described as stopping his ability to “deceive the nations.”

Drawing all men to himself: John 12:32.

²⁰ **Drawing all nations to Mount Zion:** Isaiah 2:1-4.

The messianic mountain that would grow to fill the earth: Daniel 2:35, 44-45.

²¹ **Children of the devil:** John 8:44.

Prince of the power of the air: Ephesians 2:2.

Satan’s inability to accuse Christians: 1Peter 5:8; Revelation 6:9-11; 12:13-17; 13:7-8; 20:4-6.

²² **Armageddon and the Coming of the Lord:** Revelation 16:16; 19:11-21; 1Thessalonians 4:13-17.

²³ **Terebinth as sacred:** K. Nielsen, “Terebinth,” ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 850.

Tree of Life: “The name therefore may have been at first the embodiment of the thought that the Evangelist occupied in the service of the true God that position which they occupied in that of the Ephesian goddess, that he was the witness of the Truth, of which her worship was a counterfeit’ ... To the shrine of Artemis we must now turn. There are apparent analogies here with the ‘tree of life’, the

‘paradise of God’ and other concepts relevant to the Apocalypse. Two passages in the literary sources describe the foundation of the holy place of Artemis as a tree-shrine.” Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Livonia, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Dove Booksellers, 2001), 42-44.

Royal parks as sacred gardens: “The idea of the royal park in which the king walked passes easily into that of a sacred enclosure in whose innermost heart the deity was present... We may venture to see a series of partial parallels implicit in the background of the passage: the tree of life in the garden of Eden, the tree-shrine in the asylum of the goddess, and the cross, as Roberts placed it, in the paradise of God.” Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Livonia, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Dove Booksellers, 2001), 41-51.

²⁴ **Sorcery and magic at Ephesus:** Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata* 5.8.

The Ephesian Letters of Magic: “Closely related to worship of Artemis was the practice of magic, especially the world famous *Ephesia Grammata*, the Ephesian Letters. They were actually six mystical words, inscribed, according to Eustathius, a Greek bishop of the twelfth century, on the feet, the girdle and the crown of the statue of Artemis. The words were believed by many to carry magical powers for everything from healing to financial success to making people fall in love. They were renowned throughout the ancient world for almost as long as the temple of Artemis existed. Sale of copies of the letters was a significant part of the income of the city. The letters were not the only form of magic, however. A brisk business trafficked in all kinds of magical scrolls and charms. It is perhaps significant that the earliest use of the Greek word *mageia*, or sorcery, is attributed to Heraclitus, an Ephesian of the fifth century B.C.” Don Enevoldsen, *The Harlot and the Bride*, unpublished book (Don Enevoldsen, 2014), 80.

“The fame of Ephesus for the practice of magic was enhanced by the widely known “Ephesian Letters” (*Ephesia Grammata*) in antiquity. They were six magical words (or names) used in spoken charms or inscribed on amulets. Our first record of them comes from the fourth century BC. They were used for their power to ward off demonic spirits. One ancient writer refers to people who were “wearing fine Ephesian charms in little sewed bags.” As mentioned earlier, these bags may well be the bulbous objects of fetish material on the chest of the Ephesian Artemis. Plutarch claims that magicians instructed those possessed by spirits to repeat to themselves the magic words in the proper order to drive out tormenting demons. A couple of ancient sources relate a story of an Ephesian wrestler competing in the games at Olympia wearing the Ephesian Letters as an amulet on his ankles.⁴⁹ He was winning at his event until the amulet was removed and then experienced three successive losses. Such a story would have become proverbial around Ephesus as a demonstration of the power and effectiveness of the Ephesian Letters. The connection of Artemis to these magical practices is also borne out by the fact that she is called upon repeatedly in the invocations of magical texts.” Clinton E. Arnold, *Ephesians (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* (Zondervan, 20102), 48.

²⁵ **The Nicolaitans:** Revelation 2:6, 14-15. “The Nicolaitans are not merely a subgroup in the church who were more lenient toward pagan religion and society. In the letters their thought is called a teaching (Gk *didachē*; 2:14, 15, 20, 24), and they may have claimed inspiration for this teaching (2:20). Their leaders may have called themselves apostles (2:2) and prophets (2:20), and been actively seeking disciples. They were permissive about both eating meat offered to idols and immorality... The Nicolaitans appear to have gnostic tendencies. Irenaeus (Haer. 3.11.1) states that the Nicolaitans had disseminated doctrine similar in kind to the gnostic heresy of Cerinthus.” Duane F. Watson, “Nicolaitans,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1107.

²⁶ **Hymenaeus, Alexander and Philetus:** 2Timothy 2:17-18; 1Timothy 1:20.

²⁷ **Christianity as “The Way”:** Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 42.

²⁸ **Asylum of Artemis as criminal refuge:** Colin J. Hemer, *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia in Their Local Setting* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Livonia, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Dove Booksellers, 2001), 49.

²⁹ **This description comes from** Revelation 2:1-7.