

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a sunset. The sky is a mix of deep blue, orange, and red, with wispy clouds. Below the horizon, there is a dark silhouette of a tree line. In the foreground, there is a body of water reflecting the colors of the sunset, with some reeds or grasses visible on the left side.

Hell is Made Holy

Third Edition

How the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Revelation
Show that the wicked and hell cease to exist

David Aaron Beaty

Jeremiah 31:40 NASB20 "And the entire valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be uprooted or overthrown ever again."

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David Aaron Beaty

DavidAaronBeaty.com

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Acknowledgments

This book is dedicated to my loving parents, who supported me throughout the process of writing this book. Their love and support throughout my life have helped me to understand who God is and how much He loves me. I am forever grateful to my parents, and forever grateful to God that my parents and many of my family will be with me in eternity. An extra special thanks to Kevin Switzer and Gary Beaty for their high quality editing work which they contributed to this book. They are His faithful and approved servants.



Book Synopsis

Revelation 14:10-11 and 20:10 seem to be some of the strongest verses in the Bible supporting the idea that the wicked will be tormented for eternity. Their language seems to be quite clear, "*The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever.*" *Hell is Made Holy* demonstrates that this language is very likely intentionally borrowed from the symbolism of the endlessly rising smoke of the Old Testament sacrificial system where it has nothing to do with endless torment. *Hell is Made Holy* also explores numerous other unique intentional pointing phrases in Revelation which are pointing to the same phrases being used in the ancient Greek and Aramaic Old Testaments. These Old Testament Bibles were the Bibles of John's ancient audience of Revelation. In the Greek and Aramaic Old Testaments these phrases are defined and used in ways which are clear indications that the wicked ultimately cease to exist.

What's new to the third edition?

1. Inserted chapter 13 and changed old chapter 13 to chapter 14 in order to show how the Old Testament sacrifices were highly characterized by their smoke going up to God just as the smoke of the sacrifice of the wicked is in Isaiah 34 and Revelation 14:11.
2. Pages 239 to 247 show the potential connection between the smoking corpses in Targum Isaiah 34:3 and the smoking wicked Revelation 14:11.
3. On pages 355 to 358, added scripture to show biblical language describing the concept of the smoke of sacrifices rising up to the clouds and heaven to satisfy God. This clarifies the same language being used in Jeremiah 51 to describe the sacrifice of the wicked.
4. A large portion of chapter 9, which is showing how the wicked are the sea which are "*no more*" in Revelation 21:1, is significantly strengthened and reworked with additional evidence.
5. Addition of explanation of how prophecies pertaining to pre-millennial events can also contain prophecy regarding post-millennial events is added on pages 259 to 269.
6. Addition of a brief discussion of Psalm 37:20 at the end of chapter 14, pages 438 to 439, which demonstrates that

several ancient translators understood the verse as agreeing with the central thesis of this book, namely that the fate of the wicked is to be destroyed up in smoke in the manner of a sacrifice.

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Introduction

[Numbers 6:24-26 NASB20] 24 The LORD bless you, and keep you; 25 The LORD cause His face to shine on you, And be gracious to you; 26 The LORD lift up His face to you, And give you peace.'

Israeli archeologist Gabriel Barkay was born into almost impossible circumstances during World War II in the Nazi imposed ghetto in Budapest Hungary. His first memories of hearing the Hebrew language as a child, were of his father placing his hands on his head and pronouncing the priestly benediction over him as a blessing. The priestly benediction is found in Numbers 6, shown above. Many years later in 1979, Barkay was supervisor over an archaeological site at Ketef Hinnom which led to the amazing discovery of two small silver scrolls which are the oldest written biblical scriptures in existence today, dating to the 7th century BC. These scrolls contain the same two verses from Numbers 6 above which Barkay's father used to pronounce over him. This illustrates that even in the most difficult trials of life God is standing over us whispering His love and blessings over us and directing our lives into valuable purpose and meaning under His watchful care. Whatever circumstances you may be in, God is with you working His plan for your good if you desire to follow Him.

The story of Gabriel Barkay's experience with scripture that I've related above is just one example of how God's word is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. God's Spirit, His miracles, and His supernatural voice indwell the words of the Bible. With this in mind, I want to encourage you to read this book, not looking only to hear what I have to say, or only to hear what your own thoughts and opinions tell you. Instead I want to invite you to pray to God that he would supernaturally reveal to you truth through the scriptures that I show in this book. If you pray continually as you read this book and look to God to speak to you through the scripture it contains, then you will have taken the best path. This is how we should always approach God and His word, not relying only on our own intellect or the intellect of others, but ultimately relying on the power of God to reveal the truth to us:

[James 1:5 NASB20] 5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

It is my prayer that this will be the path that you will take, and I pray that God will bless you with wisdom, whether you agree with my conclusions in this book or not. May He Bless you and keep you. May His face shine upon you and give you peace.

Sincerely,
David Aaron Beaty

Many of the details of Gabriel Barkay's story above are from his own words in his appearance in a Youtube video entitled "*The OLDEST copy of Scripture ever found!*". The video is available on a Youtube channel entitled "*Expedition Bible*" which belongs to author and archaeologist Joel P. Kramer. Even more additional very interesting details about the silver scrolls and their discovery are given in the Youtube video for those who are interested.

What you must know to read and understand this book.....

1. Terms and phrases used in this book which are likely to be unfamiliar to the layman are defined in the glossary in the back of the book. Some terms and phrases used in the glossary to define other terms and phrases are underlined where they appear in the text of the definitions. These underlined terms and phrases have their own glossary entry. The first few appearances of each word or phrase in this book which has a glossary entry is marked with a superscript G and underlined like this, word^G.

2. Unless otherwise specifically noted, each suggested scripture passage for reading should be looked up and read in the NASB 2020 edition translation to avoid poor translation which may cover up important phrasal language connections and similarities between passages intended by this author for

the reader to see. The NASB 2020 edition and virtually all other Bible translations of the Greek New Testament and Hebrew Old Testament referenced in this book are currently available for free on at least one of blueletterbible.org, biblegateway.com, studybible.info, or biblehub.com.

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Chapter 1

The Purpose of this Book

If you did not read the previous introductory section of this book entitled, "*What you must know to read and understand this book*", starting on page 3, please double back and give it a read. Otherwise, you may have a very difficult time following the narrative of this book. The ongoing debate today between those holding to the conditionalist^G view of hell versus the traditional view of hell usually follows a fairly consistent pattern. The conditionalist^G or annihilationist^G view describes the punishment of hell as involving both a temporary torment and then a final cessation of existence, body and soul. The traditional view is endless conscious torment for eternity. In the traditional view, the wicked live forever in hell. In most debates, the conditionalist^G debater provides a large volume of scripture verses very clearly describing the death of the souls of the wicked, their ultimately being no more, and their finally being ashes at the final fulfillment of all biblical end times prophecy. The traditionalist's^G most effective responses usually consist of only just a few of the most stubborn verses in scripture. These verses, at face value, are a stark and seemingly undeniable contradiction to the large volume of scripture verses just presented by the conditionalist^G. Many listeners of the debate leave with some degree of confidence in the conditional view because

of the sheer number and clarity of the passages presented by the conditionalist^G debater. Some of the listeners remain unwilling to abandon the traditional view though. Even those who come away from the debate feeling some confidence in the conditional view are many times still left with some doubt. The passages which most often keep people holding on to the traditional view, or just keep them having some doubt about the conditional view, are Revelation 14:10-11 and Revelation 20:10:

[Revelation 14:11 WEB] The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

[Revelation 20:10 WEB] The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet are also. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Many very effective and very convincing passages, which are external to the two passages above, can be given by the conditionalist debater which demonstrate that the two passages above cannot describe endless torment. For example, similar language is found in Revelation 19:3 about the destruction of Babylon, but then we see in Revelation 18:21, Babylon will be "no more". It won't be smoking and burning for all endless time:

*[Revelation 19:3 WEB] A second said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up **forever and ever.**"*

*[Revelation 18:21 WEB] A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down, and will be found **no more** at all."*

Arguments like this are effective, and there are many of them, but even these still leave the doorway open for some doubt about the judgment of the wicked. If Revelation 14:10-11 and Revelation 20:10 are not describing endless torment, then what is the direct explanation as to why they use language which so strongly seems to support it?: "*the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever*", "*they will be tormented day and night forever and ever*". It would seem that a direct explanation as to why this language is used would be very useful. One of the primary goals of this book will be to provide a strongly supported and direct explanation for these two passages. Many attempts at this have been undertaken, but I believe God may have shown this author a few new things to add to this topic which are very revealing.

As promised in the book synopsis, I will also focus on discussing Old Testament passages which John has intentionally linked to Revelation to explain his narrative.

He creates these connections by borrowing phrases and words which are also used by the ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint^G, and the ancient Aramaic^G translations of Old Testament books called the Targums^G. The Septuagint^G was likely the primary written Bible of the literate people in John's audience, and many of John's audience would have also been listening to the readings of the Aramaic^G Targums^G in the Jewish synagogues. As such, John extensively used words and phrases which also appear in the Septuagint^G and the Targums^G in his text of Revelation to connect his ancient audience to the meaning of his narrative. These connected passages may provide new information for many modern readers on the topic of hell, even those who have devoted a significant amount of time studying the topic. This is primarily due to the fact that the modern church has discarded the Septuagint^G and the Targums^G because of their imperfections. The imperfections of the Septuagint^G and the Targums do not change the fact that they contain content which John re-used in Revelation. Their imperfections do not change the fact that they contain potentially very valuable explanations of the content which John has used from them. This means that they are well worth exploring and that is what we will do. I hope you will enjoy this journey, and with that let's dive in!

Chapter 2

The Dead Sea Scrolls Textual Variant

As you may know, the phrases and wording used in Revelation 14:10-11, Revelation 20:10, and even in Revelation's treatment of the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 19:2-3 all point^G to the same wording as it is used in Isaiah 34. This may not be readily obvious, but it is due to the fact that all three of Revelation 14:10-11, Revelation 20:10, and Revelation 19:2-3 share common language with each other. The three are bound together in this way. Because of this, if one or even two of them has language which points^G to Isaiah 34, this in some sense makes all three of them point^G to Isaiah 34. See all three Revelation passages and Isaiah 34:10 below to recognize the shared language of the three which binds them together as a group and causes all three of them to point^G to Isaiah 34:10:

*[Isaiah 34:9-11 WEB] 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, its dust into **sulfur**, and its land will become **burning** pitch. 10 It won't be quenched **night** or **day**. Its **smoke will go up forever**. From generation to generation, it will lie waste. No one will pass through it forever and ever. 11 But the pelican and the porcupine will possess it. The owl and the raven will dwell in it. He will stretch the line of confusion over it, and the plumb line of emptiness.*

*[Revelation 14:9-11 WEB] 9 Another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. He will be tormented with **fire** and **sulfur** in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 The **smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever**. They have no rest **day and night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*

*[Revelation 19:2-3 WEB] 2 for his judgments are true and righteous. For he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." 3 A second said, "Hallelujah! Her **smoke goes up forever and ever**."*

*[Revelation 20:10 BSB] 10 And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of **fire and sulfur**, into which the beast and the false prophet had already been thrown. There they will be **tormented day and night forever and ever**.*

As you can see, all three passages have some combination of two or more of the following elements: *fire and sulfur, torment, smoke goes up, forever and ever, day and night*. This binds the three passages together. Jesus further binds the three passages above together by telling us that the

judgment of wicked people will in some way be like the judgment of the devil and his fallen angels. So in some sense Jesus is saying that Revelation 14:10-11 and Revelation 20:10 are talking about something similar:

[Matthew 25:41 WEB] Then he will say also to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels;

In Revelation, John even further binds together and associates the judgment of the wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 and the judgment of satan in Revelation 20:10, by using a two-step maneuver. In the first step he gives us a very strong indicator that the fire and sulfur and the smoke of their torment going up forever and ever described in Revelation 14:10-11 won't actually happen to wicked people until after the millennium in Revelation 20. John accomplishes the second step further on in Revelation 20 by describing the post-millennial judgment of the wicked using the literary bridge, "*lake of fire*" to describe the judgment of the wicked as being similar to the judgment of satan. John reveals that both satan and wicked people will be thrown into the same place, the "*lake of fire*". This two-step maneuver binds together and similarizes the judgment of the wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 and the Judgment of satan in Revelation 20:10. The first step of the two-step maneuver is described in the Revelation 19 passage below. There John seems to be saying that antichrist's army in the

pre-millennial battle of Armageddon are not yet thrown into the lake of fire at their pre-millennial defeat. They are simply killed with the sword coming out of Jesus' mouth at the battle of Armageddon at Jesus' second coming. Recall that these are very likely those who have taken the mark of the beast as described in Revelation 14:10-11:

[Revelation 19:19-21 WEB] 19 I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him who sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet who worked the signs in his sight, with which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat on the horse, the sword which came out of his mouth. So all the birds were filled with their flesh.

And then here in Revelation 20 below we very likely see the post-millennial resurrection and judgment of the beast marked evil army of Armageddon that were only killed with Jesus' sword in the pre-millennial passage above:

[Revelation 20:7-15 BSB] 7 When the thousand years are complete, satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—to assemble them for battle. Their

number is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they marched across the broad expanse of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. But fire came down from heaven and consumed them. 10 And **the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, into which the beast and the false prophet had already been thrown.** There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. 11 Then I saw a great white throne and the One seated on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw **the dead, great and small, standing before the throne.** And there were open books, and one of them was the Book of Life. And the **dead were judged** according to their deeds, as recorded in the books. 13 **The sea gave up its dead, and Death and Hades gave up their dead, and each one was judged according to his deeds.** 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death—the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone was found whose name was not written in the Book of Life, **he was thrown into the lake of fire.**

Notice in the Revelation 20 passage above how the "lake of fire" in verses 10 and 15 further connects the judgment of wicked people with the judgment of satan. This is the second step in the two-step maneuver that further binds together and similarizes the judgment of the wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 and the Judgment of satan in Revelation 20:10.

The view of Revelation 14:10-11 that I have just presented recognizes it as a two-part prophecy with one part being a prophecy for the simple pre-millennial bodily sword slaying of those who are beast marked during the tribulation, and one part being a farther future prophecy of their final Revelation 20 post-millennial judgment in the lake of fire when they are resurrected. See the two parts again labeled below:

*[Revelation 14:9-11 WEB] 9 Another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, 10 **(Part 1)** -> he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. **(Part 2)** -> He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*

In support of this two-part prophecy view, we can see that within the book of Revelation there are two other places where "Part 1" labeled above, a cup of God's payback or wrath is associated with pre-millennial or second coming events. And then there is another passage in Jeremiah 25 which has the "Part 1" cup of wrath appearing again in what

looks to be a worldwide, second coming, pre-millennial judgment description, similar to those described several times in Revelation. The specific references are here:

Revelation 16:13-21; Revelation 18; Jeremiah 25:15-38

Did you notice how in all this discussion of binding together and associating the descriptions of the judgment of wicked people and of satan in Revelation 14:10-11; 19:2-3; and 20:10 that the post-millennial judgment of wicked people in the lake of fire in Revelation 20:15 was also shown to be closely associated with the other three passages? The judgment of wicked people in Revelation 20:15 gets tied in and bound together with the other three passages via the "*lake of fire*" literary bridge as mentioned before. This in effect creates a situation where discovering a well supported interpretation^G of Revelation 14:10-11 also gives us a well supported interpretation^G of the post-millennial judgment of wicked people in Revelation 20:15. The two passages are describing the same thing, so to understand either is to understand both. As I mentioned previously, this same type of cross pollinated interpretation^G could also play a role between Revelation 14:10-11 and Revelation 20:10. The two are related, so understanding one will help us to understand the other. And of course, we can see now that in some way all four of Revelation 14:10-11; 19:2-3; 20:10; and 20:15 are being pointed^G as a group to Isaiah 34. So if we can understand Isaiah 34, then we will have significant

progress understanding all of them. That is the goal. We will start towards that goal first by strengthening the connection between Revelation and Isaiah 34, and then we will see that there is more than meets the eye in Isaiah 34. This is especially true if we consult the Dead Sea scrolls^G.

The phrasal links between the four previously mentioned Revelation passages and Isaiah 34 are very well attested in the various different ancient forms of the Old Testament which give us evidence of the content of Isaiah which would have been in existence at the time of John's writing of Revelation. See the passages here:

1. Masoretic text^G - as it is shown being used by the Jewish Publication Society's Old Testament Bible entitled, "*The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*":

*[Isaiah 34:10 JPS] It shall not be quenched **night nor day**, **The smoke thereof shall go up for ever**; From generation to generation it shall lie waste: None shall pass through it for ever and ever.*

2. Aramaic^G Targum^G - as it is shown in "*The Aramaic Bible*", volume 11, "*The Isaiah Targum*":

*[Isaiah 34:10 Targum Jonathan] **Night and day** it shall not be quenched; **its smoke shall go up for ever**. From*

generation to generation it will be desolate; none shall pass through it forever and ever. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 68)

3. Syriac Peshitta^G - as it is shown in "*Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text*":

*[Isaiah 34:10 LAMSA] It shall not be quenched **night nor day; its smoke shall go up for ever**; and it shall lie waste from generation to generation; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.*

4. Latin Vulgate^G - as it is shown in the first edition 1910 translation of the Clementine Vulgate in "*The Second Tome of the Holie Bible Faithfully Translated Into English, out of the Authentical Latin*", also known as the "*Douay Rheims Bible*":

*[Isaiah 34:10 DOUAY] **Night and day** it shal not be quenched, **the smoke therof shall goe up for ever**: from generation unto generation it shal be desolate, there shal none passe by it world without end.*

As you can see, the English translations of the various ancient versions above give us a lot of evidence that the first century AD content of Isaiah 34:10, in one or more ancient form, described burning "*night and day*" and "*smoke going up forever*", just as we see in Revelation 14:11. I will be delving into this much deeper later on, but I will say here

that scholarship such as that found in the 2011 book *"The Targums a Critical Introduction"* by Paul V.M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton describes how some of the content of the Targum of Isaiah dates to before the time of the writing of the book of Revelation. I will leave it for your research, but all the other ancient versions that I show above are accepted by scholarship as providing some evidence of what the text of the Old Testament was in the 1st century AD. And now we have come to the place in the evidence where the Dead Sea scrolls^G are useful to discuss. *"The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible"* by Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich is an English translation of the ancient biblical manuscripts^G found in the Dead Sea caves. Pertaining to Isaiah 34:9-10 they have placed the important note that I show below in between the lines of their translation:

"From the end of verse 9 through the end of verse 10 the punctuation of 1QIsa^a shows that the series of clauses was intentionally divided in a way different from that chosen in the Masoretic Text."

Their translation of Isaiah 34:9-10, which follows, shows how the phenomena described in the note above impacts the content of the verse. See their translation of Isaiah 34:9-12 from the Great Isaiah Scroll^G, also known as 1QIsa^a, below and then an English translation of the Masoretic text^G just below that for comparison:

[Isaiah 34:9-12 DSSB Dead Sea scrolls] 9 It streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur, and its land will become pitch. 10 It will burn night and day and will never be extinguished. Its smoke will go up from generation to generation, and it will lie waste forever and ever. No one will pass through it. 11 The Pelican and the porcupine will possess it, and the owl and the raven will dwell in it. Over it he will stretch a line, and chaos, and plumb lines of emptiness, and its nobles. 12 They will call it No Kingdom there, and all its princes will be nothing.

[Isaiah 34:9-12 NASB20 Masoretic] 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, And its loose earth into brimstone, And its land will become burning pitch. 10 It will not be extinguished night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever. 11 But pelican and hedgehog will possess it, And owl and raven will dwell in it; And He will stretch over it the line of desolation And the plumb line of emptiness. 12 Its nobles--there is no one there Whom they may proclaim king--And all its officials will be nothing.

Do the phrases, "It will burn night and day", "will never be extinguished", "Its smoke will go up from generation to generation" from the Dead Sea scrolls^G version far above sound anything like a short description of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifices^G, also known as the "burnt offering", in Exodus 29:38-46; Leviticus

6:8-18; and Numbers 28:1-8? If so, maybe this sheds some light on the meaning of Revelation 14:10-11; 19:3; 20:10; & 20:15 which are all intentionally connected to Isaiah 34? Many English translations of the Bible do not have the word "smoke" used at all in any of the Old Testament descriptions of burnt offerings or the continual morning and evening regular sacrifices^G in Exodus 29:38-46; Leviticus 6:8-18; and Numbers 28:1-8. In spite of this, many more literal translations^G do use the word "smoke". We will be discussing at length in chapter 13 why using the word "smoke" is the correct translation, and generally why the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice^G is very highly characterized by its smoke going up. For now, we can look at a scholarly and moderately literal translation^G such as the NASB 2020 edition to see some of the smoke in the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice^G:

*[Leviticus 6:12-13 NASB20] 12 'The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out, but the priest shall burn wood on it every morning; and he shall lay out the burnt offering on it, and offer up in **smoke** the fat portions of the peace offerings on it. 13 'Fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it is not to go out.*

The note pertaining to Isaiah 34:9-10, shown again below, from "The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible" refers to "punctuation":

"From the end of verse 9 through the end of verse 10 the punctuation of 1QIsa^a shows that the series of clauses was intentionally divided in a way different from that chosen in the Masoretic Text."

Of course though, we can see from actually looking at Isaiah 34:9-12 in the ancient parchment manuscript^G of the Great Isaiah Scroll^G (also called "1QIsa^a") from Cave 1 of the Dead Sea scrolls^G, there are virtually no punctuation marks used, as we would think of them. The Great Isaiah Scroll^G has spacing between words, but no punctuation. As of November 2024, photographs of the entirety of the scroll can be viewed at the web address of *"The Israel Museum, Jerusalem"* below to see the lack of punctuation, or it can be viewed in the 1974 book *"Scrolls From Qumran Cave I, The Great Isaiah Scroll, The Order of the Community, The Pesher to Habakkuk"*:

<http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah>

One big clue we have to gain just a basic understanding of the note found in the book, *"The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible"* regarding *"punctuation"* is the fact that several additional, but very important, Hebrew Vav letters appear in the Dead Sea scrolls^G text of Isaiah 34:9-10, Scroll 1QIsa^a, which do not appear in the Masoretic text^G. The Hebrew letter Vav is frequently used to represent our English word "and". Inserting "and"/Vav can be a way to help distinguish the end

of one thought and the beginning of another in the flow of a Hebrew narrative. It is used somewhat like we would use a period to mark the end of a sentence. If we compare the electronic transcriptions^G of the Masoretic text^G of Isaiah 34:9-10 and the text of Scroll 1QIsa^a, we can see where these important additional letters Vav appear in Scroll 1QIsa^a versus their absence in the Masoretic text. I am showing both the electronic transcriptions^G for comparison on the next few pages. Remember to read backwards from right to left like a Hebrew, as these transcriptions are in the forward Interlinear^G format. The reader does not need to be able to read the Hebrew words in the interlinear^G passages below. The reader should just observe how the Dead Sea scrolls, 1QIsa^a version of the passage adds in four Hebrew Vav letters which effectively adds the word "and" into the passage four times:

1QIsa^a has an additional letter Vav that you don't see here in this transcription of the Masoretic text

And its loose earth into pitch Its streams will be turned 9
 ה / עפר / ו לו זפת ה / נחלי ה ו / נהפכו

burning pitch its land And | will become into brimstone
 בערה לו זפת ה / ארצ ה ו / היתה לו גפרית

forever It will | be quenched not or day night 10
 לו עולם תכבה לא ו / יומם לילה

it will be desolate to generation From generation Its smoke will go up
 תחרב לו דור מ / דור ה / עשנ ה יעלה

through it will pass None and ever forever
 ה / ב עבר אין נצחים לו נצח

Interlinear Bible screenshot

snippet above from:

blueletterbible.org, NASB Isaiah 34:9-10 with Hebrew text from the Westminster Leningrad Codex^G

1QIsa^a has three additional letters Vav that you don't see here in this transcription of the Masoretic text

These two letters Vav seen here in the text of 1QIsa^a do not appear in the Masoretic text

לזפת	נחליה	ונהפכו	
to·pitch	wadis·her	and·they will be overturned	
ארצה	והייתה	לגפרית	ועפרה
land·her	and·she will be	to·sulphur	and·dust· <u>her</u>
זלוא	לילה ויומם	ובערה	לזפת
and·not	and·by day night	and·burner	to·pitch
יעלה	לעולם	תכובה	
he will ascend	to·eternity	she will be <u>extinguished</u>	
	לדור	מדור	עשנה
	to·generation	from·generation	smoke·her
נצחים	לנצח	ותחרב	
forever	to·victory of	and·she will be <u>desolate</u>	
	עובר בהא	ואין	
	in·her crossing	and·does not exist	

Interlinear Bible passage
above from: LDSSIB Isaiah
 34:9-10 with Hebrew text
 from 1QIsa^a, The Great Isaiah
Scroll^G of the Dead Sea scrolls

These two letters Vav
 seen here in the text of
 1QIsa^a do not appear in
 the Masoretic text

(It also may be important to note here that the book, LDSSIB, *"The Lexham Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew-English interlinear Bible"*, from which the Hebrew passage above is taken, reveals to us that none of all the numerous different Isaiah manuscripts^G found at the Dead Sea caves, as of the publishing of the 2016 edition of *"The Lexham Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew-English interlinear Bible"* have any differences in their text from what we see above in the Isaiah 34:9-10 text of the Great Isaiah Scroll^G, 1QIsa^a. *"The Lexham Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew-English interlinear Bible"*, LDSSIB, does not reveal to us if there are any other Isaiah manuscripts^G found at the Dead Sea which specifically contain Isaiah 34:9-10. It only informs us that there were none with different text as of 2016.) The Interlinear^G English translations of the Masoretic text and 1QIsa^a which I have just shown above are obviously not very easy to decipher due to their interlinear^G format and highly literal translation^G style. In spite of this, they do show how the four additional Hebrew letters Vav serve to insert the equivalent of three of our English word "and" which effectively bump the time modifying adverbial phrases back one clause, so to speak. All four of the time duration modifying adverbial phrases in verse 10 convert so that they each go from describing the duration of the action coming after them in the text over to describing the duration of the action coming before each of them in the text. If we clean up the interlinear^G English translations of 1QIsa^a and the Masoretic text that I just showed, this becomes more

evident. Below I show the English of each interlinear translation^G with the words rearranged in our familiar left to right reading style for readability. I have also added punctuation and capitalization to help show the shift of the pairing of each adverbial phrase with the action it modifies. When you compare the two translations you can see how the adverbial phrases are shifted back in 1QIsa^a, versus the Masoretic text:

[Isaiah 34:9-10 Masoretic, rearranged NASB per blueletterbible.org] 9 Will be turned Its streams into pitch, and its loose earth into brimstone, and will become its land pitch burning. 10 Night or day not It will be quenched. Forever will go up its smoke. From generation to generation it will be desolate. Forever and ever none will pass through it.

[Isaiah 34:9-10 1QIsa^a LDSSIB, Dead Sea scrolls] And·they will be overturned wadis·her to·pitch, and·dust·her to·sulfur, and·she will be land·her to·pitch. And·burner night and·by day, and·not she will be extinguished to·eternity. He will ascend smoke·her from·generation to·generation, and·she will be desolate to·victory of forever, and·does not exist in·her crossing.

Compare the two interlinear translations^G above again with the English translation of 1QIsa^a found in "The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible" here below:

[Isaiah 34:9-10 1QIsa^a DSSB, Dead Sea scrolls] 9 It streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur, and its land will become pitch. 10 It will burn night and day and will never be extinguished. Its smoke will go up from generation to generation, and it will lie waste forever and ever. No one will pass through it.

By doing this comparison we can see how "*The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*" English translation of 1QIsa^a shows the adverbial phrases shifted in the same way that they are in the English interlinear translation^G of 1QIsa^a from "*The Lexham Dead Sea Scrolls Hebrew-English interlinear Bible*". So we can have some significant confidence that 1QIsa^a really does shift all four of the adverbial phrases in verse 10, effectively changing the meaning of verse 10. The evidence for this type of adverbial shift in verse 10 does not stop there though. R.R. Ottley was a biblical scholar who was the reviser of the introduction volume to the famous "Swete's" critical edition^G of the Septuagint^G, "*The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint*" by Henry Barclay Swete. Ottley, in Volume 1 of his own book written in 1909 entitled "*The Book of Isaiah According to the Septuagint*", on page 194 has a note at the bottom in regard to the Masoretic text of Isaiah 34:10 which reads:

"Some rearrange the clauses, joining the adverbial phrase of each clause to the previous one, and leaving the last unqualified." (Ottley, 1909, pg. 194)

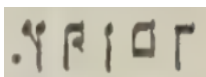
Does that look familiar? Ottley is basically telling us that some scholars even translate the Masoretic text of Isaiah 34:10 so that it agrees with Isaiah 34:10 of the Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QIsa^a. So now we see that it is possible to read both the Masoretic text and the Dead Sea scroll, 1QIsa^a of Isaiah 34:10 the same. The large volume of evidence in support of the 1QIsa^a, Great Isaiah Scroll reading of Isaiah 34:10 does not stop there though. We will see that ancient Greek codices^G Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Sinaiticus in their Septuagint Old Testaments all can be translated with sound translation techniques to show in Isaiah 34:10, the burning night and day, it not being extinguished forever/eternity/"for an age", and the smoke going up for generations. This means that just like the Dead Sea Isaiah scroll, 1QIsa^a, they also give us a reading which sounds a lot more like the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice^G and its closely associated peace offerings, drink offerings, and grain/meal offerings as it is described in the Old Testament in Exodus 29:38-46; Leviticus 6:8-18; Numbers 28:1-8; Leviticus 3; and Leviticus 7:29-36. This of course helps make this content and wording in Isaiah 34:10 align and fit right in with the rest of the abundant sacrifice language found in any version of Isaiah 34. Of course, codices^G Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Sinaiticus are easily

among the most utilized and authoritative ancient manuscripts of the Bible that are used today in biblical textual criticism^G. Keep in mind that many modern translations fail to correctly use the word "smoke" in any of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifice passages just listed: Exodus 29:38-46; Leviticus 6:8-18; Numbers 28:1-8; Leviticus 3; and Leviticus 7:29-36. As mentioned before, we will address this discrepancy at length in chapter 13.

Before we go into the discussion of how Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Sinaiticus agree with the Great Isaiah Scroll, we need to have a brief discussion about punctuation marks in ancient biblical manuscripts. The discussion will of course be brief because it is well known that many of the earliest biblical manuscripts had very little to zero punctuation marks. If you went and looked directly at the Great Isaiah Scroll as I suggested, you already saw its lack of punctuation marks. In his 1914 second edition of his introduction volume to his famous critical edition^G of the Septuagint on pages 321 to 322, Henry Barclay Swete says the following regarding punctuation marks:

"Further, in the MSS. used by the LXX the words seem not to have been separated by any system of punctuation or spacing. On the Moabite stone and in the Siloam inscription a point has been used for this purpose, but the Phoenician inscriptions are without punctuation, and so were probably

the early Biblical rolls. The division adopted by the LXX is frequently at variance with that of the Masoretic text, and is sometimes preferable to the latter, sometimes inferior; but the differences witness to the absence of divisions in the Hebrew MSS. and the non-employment of the final letters,



(Swete, 1914, pgs. 321 to 322)

If you went to the web address I showed to look at the Great Isaiah Scroll, you can see that what Swete said even holds some truth regarding the Great Isaiah scroll. There is no punctuation as we modern people think of it. If we inspect Isaiah 34:9-10 in the ancient Greek Septuagint Codex^G Vaticanus manuscript, we see something similar to what we see in the Great Isaiah Scroll. Isaiah 34:9-10 is in the right hand column on page 1,033 of the manuscript. Page numbers are written directly on each page of the manuscript. There are virtually no punctuation marks appearing in the manuscript. There are diacritical accent marks over the tops of the letters, as we see commonly in Greek texts, but punctuation marks are almost totally missing. As of December 2024, photographs of the entirety of Codex^G Vaticanus can be seen at the web address below of the "*Digital Vatican Library*" or in the book "*Bibliorum sacrorum Graecorum Codex Vaticanus B -- Codex Vaticanus Graecus 1209*".

https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.1209

Modern scholar C.E. Hill on page 71 of his recent 2022 book *"The First Chapters, Dividing the Text of Scripture in Codex Vaticanus and its Predecessors"* confirms what we can see by direct inspection of Codex^G Vaticanus. Making a general statement about the entire Greek Codex Vaticanus he says that punctuation is used only rarely. By this we can safely assume that he means punctuation marks, as we modern people normally think of them, and not other mechanisms of pauses between complete thoughts such as the use of the Greek word for "and". On page 31 of his 1981 book, *"Manuscripts of the Greek Bible"*, biblical scholar Bruce M. Metzger, speaking in regard to ancient Greek manuscripts of the Bible, says, *"Marks of punctuation occur only sporadically or not at all in the most ancient manuscripts."* Go figure! We can go to the web address that I showed above and see directly there in Codex Vaticanus what Metzger is talking about. It has no punctuation. The Chester Beatty papyri collection also confirms what Metzger says. The collection contains many of the oldest New Testament and Old Testament portions of the Bible in Greek. Armed with that information, regarding the lack of punctuation marks in Codex Vaticanus, let's look at a recently done highly literal^G English translation of Codex Vaticanus in Isaiah 34:8-11 to see how punctuation marks interact with or alter the meaning of the passage in Codex Vaticanus. In the front matter of the 2019 second edition of the *"Lexham English Septuagint"* it describes in painful detail how the authors have taken great care to create an English

translation which is strictly faithful to the specific text of Henry Barclay Swete's *"The Old Testament in Greek According to The Septuagint"*. The front matter of the *"Lexham English Septuagint"* even goes on to describe how they have translated so literally as to even preserve the archaic wording of idioms in the text. It's clear that they have strived to prevent their translation from causing any obstruction of the specific meaning of the Greek Septuagint text. The underlying Greek Septuagint text that the *"Lexham English Septuagint"* uses, Swete's *"The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint"* is a diplomatic edition of the Greek Septuagint, which contains primarily the Greek text of the ancient Codex Vaticanus manuscript of the Septuagint. It uses other ancient Septuagint Greek manuscripts to fill in the missing Greek words of the Septuagint where Codex Vaticanus is missing the text. In Isaiah 34 of the 1894 edition of Swete's *"The Old Testament in Greek According to the Septuagint"*, Volume 3, we can plainly see that Swete has used Vaticanus by the letter "B" being displayed in the margin. As you may know, "B" is the sigla symbol for the Vaticanus manuscript and it is Swete's convention to tell you on every page which ancient manuscript he is using in his main Greek text by putting its sigla symbol in the margin. What all this technical talk amounts to is that Isaiah 34:8-11 in the *"Lexham English Septuagint"* strives to be a very literal and accurate English translation of the ancient Greek Septuagint manuscript Codex Vaticanus. Going further, the details of this technical

talk inform us that Isaiah 34:8-11 in the "*Lexham English Septuagint*" can be relied upon to accurately observe how punctuation marks being added in an English translation can interact with or alter the meaning of the passage in Codex Vaticanus. With that said, let's look at the strict translation of Codex Vaticanus of Isaiah 34:8-11 in the "*Lexham English Septuagint*" below. As you read, pay special attention to the rhythm of the text created by the string of successive and repetitive complete thoughts. Pay special attention to the word "and". As you may know, it is extensively used to help make you aware of where each complete thought begins and ends:

[Isaiah 34:8-11 LES2 Septuagint] 8 For it is a day of the Lord's judgment and a year of the repayment of Zion's judgment. 9 And its ravines will be turned into pitch, and its land into brimstone; and its land will be like pitch burning 10 night and day, and it will not be extinguished for eternal time, and its smoke will go up above; for generations it will be desolate and for a long time. 11 Birds and hedgehogs and ibises and ravens will settle in it, and a desolate measuring cord will be cast upon it, and donkey-centaurs will dwell in it.

Did you notice anything awkward in the way that the punctuation marks in the text interact with your keeping of the rhythm of complete thoughts created by the word "and"? When you get to the complete thought in the middle of verse 10, "*and its smoke will go up above;*" you

may have noticed that the semicolon at the end of this phrase completely trips up your rhythm, like somebody sticking their foot out in front of you as you're running down the aisle of the classroom of your eighth grade English class. The two complete thoughts coming before it each have an action which is followed by an adverbial time duration modifying phrase or word. The complete thought "*and its smoke will go up above;*" unlike the two coming before it has no time duration modifying phrase because of the semicolon. The semicolon effectively strips the time modifying adverbial phrase off of one thought and pushes it to the next complete thought, breaking what is most likely the intended rhythm ofand~action~adverb.....
and~action~adverb.....and~action~adverb.....
 and on and on and on. As you may see, this isn't the only awkward snaggle created by the use of this semicolon. The semicolon, and the use of the next period which follows it, force the next complete thought to very awkwardly have two adverbial phrases piled onto one action: "*; for generations it will be desolate and for a long time.*" Following the divisions created by these punctuation marks feels like being forced to play like a drummer who's well out of time and rhythm with the rest of the band. One potential solution we could use to get into rhythm with the band would be to follow the advice of scholar Bruce M. Metzger and just ignore the punctuation marks we see in the "*Lexham English Septuagint*" English translation. After all, we know that Codex Vaticanus doesn't have any

punctuation marks in it, so doing this type of thing is very reasonable. Referring to Bruce M. Metzger's 1981 book *"Manuscripts of the Greek Bible"* again on page 32 we find a plain description of how Metzger believes that punctuation marks should be treated in those manuscripts in which we do find them:

"Although the Exegete can learn something concerning the history of the interpretation^G of a passage by considering the punctuation of a passage in the manuscripts, neither the editor nor the translator need, of course, feel bound to adopt the punctuation preferred by scribes."
(Metzger, 1981, pg. 32)

So first let's see what the *"Lexham English Septuagint"* translation looks like if we simply remove the punctuation, verse numbers, and sentence capitalization. Of course, there are no verse or chapter numbers breaking the flow of thought in the ancient manuscripts. These were added many centuries later. Pay close attention to the word "and". When you read, try to follow the natural rhythm that the word "and" creates:

[Isaiah 34:8-11 LES2 Septuagint – minus: punctuation, versification, and sentence capitalization] for it is a day of the Lord's judgment and a year of the repayment of Zion's judgment and its ravines will be turned into pitch and its land into brimstone and its land will be like pitch burning

night and day and it will not be extinguished for eternal time and its smoke will go up above for generations it will be desolate and for a long time birds and hedgehogs and ibises and ravens will settle in it and a desolate measuring cord will be cast upon it and donkey-centaurs will dwell in it

Did you detect anything familiar when you read while following the rhythm of the word "and"? It sounds a lot like the Dead Sea scrolls version of the passage, doesn't it? The burning is going on night and day, the smoke is going up for generations, and it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age, just as we see it in the Dead Sea scrolls following the Old Testament language of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice^G and its associated peace, drink, and grain/meal offerings. To show the rhythm that I am describing even more distinctly, here's the "*Lexham English Septuagint*" translation below again, except now with the punctuation and sentence capitalization made to conform to the natural rhythm of the passage created by the word "and":

[Isaiah 34:8-11 LES2 Septuagint - with punctuation and sentence capitalization altered - versification removed] For it is a day of the Lord's judgment, and a year of the repayment of Zion's judgment, and its ravines will be turned into pitch, and its land into brimstone, and its land will be like pitch burning night and day, and it will not be extinguished for eternal time, and its smoke will go up above

for generations. It will be desolate, and for a long time birds and hedgehogs and ibises and ravens will settle in it, and a desolate measuring cord will be cast upon it, and donkey-centaurs will dwell in it.

It may be worth stopping to ask two questions here. If John's ancient audience had no punctuation in their ancient version of the Septuagint, would they have read Isaiah 34:8-11 in a way that awkwardly strips the adverbial phrase off of one thought and then awkwardly piles two adverbial phrases on to the next one? Or would they have followed the simple rhythm of the word "and", taking a simple elegant reading like you see in the translated and punctuated passage above? The answer to this seems obvious. You may be unconvinced, because we are looking at English translations in which things frequently get lost. Here below is a painfully literal^G forward interlinear^G Greek and English translation of Isaiah 34:9b-11a which allows you to see that the rhythm of the word "and" which I am referring to does legitimately exist in the actual Greek words of Codex Vaticanus. The Greek text I'm showing is transcribed directly from the photographed facsimile^G of Codex Vaticanus with the same word order and diacritical accent marks found in Vaticanus. It is not essential for the reader here to be able to read the Greek words of the next several passages shown. The reader should just read the English words, positioned under the Greek words, to

observe how the word "and" is used to indicate the beginnings and endings of each complete thought:

[Isaiah 34:9b-11a Vaticanus original translation]

καὶ ἔσται ἡ γῆ αὐτῆς ὡς πίσσα
and will be the earth of it as pitch

καιομένη νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ οὐ
burning night and day and not

σβεσθήσεται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα χρόνον καὶ
will be extinguished into the age time and

ἀναβήσεται ὁ καπνὸς αὐτῆς ἄνω εἰς
will ascend the smoke of it up into

γενεὰς αὐτῆς ἐρημωθήσεται καὶ εἰς
generations of it it will be desolated and into

χρόνον πολὺν ὄρνεα καὶ ἐχεῖνοι καὶ
time long birds and hedgehogs and

εἴβεις καὶ κόρακες κατοικήσουσιν ἐν αὐτῇ
ibises and ravens will dwell in it

I previously mentioned both codices^G Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus. It turns out that we can divide the beginnings and endings of the complete thoughts of Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus just like we did with Vaticanus above. Doing this, they can both be translated within the bounds of proper translation technique in a way that shows the burning going on day and night, the fire not being extinguished forever/eternally/for an age, and the smoke going up for generations; just as they are in the Dead Sea scrolls manuscript, 1QIsa^a, The Great Isaiah Scroll. Of course, this makes the language of Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus more aligned with the Old Testament language of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. This is the same as we have just observed for Codex Vaticanus. The ancient codices Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus are different from Vaticanus in that they both do contain punctuation. They both have "separation points" or dots that act somewhat like our period marks to "divide" or mark the beginnings and endings of each complete thought in the text. We will utilize Bruce Metzger's expert permission again and remove these separation points in order to follow the convention of the earliest Greek manuscripts of the Bible which have no punctuation marks. Instead, we will follow the natural rhythm of the word "and", in order to recognize the beginnings and endings of each complete thought. Just as I showed for Vaticanus, here again below is a painfully literal^G forward interlinear^G English and Greek translation of Isaiah 34:9b-11a from Sinaiticus. The Greek

text is an accurate transcription of the Sinaiticus manuscript. It has no diacritical accent marks as Sinaiticus has none:

[Isaiah 34:9b-11a Sinaiticus original translation]

και εστε αυτης η γη καιομενη ως πισσα
and is of her the earth burning as pitch

νυκτος και ημερας και ου σβεσθησεται
night and day and not will be quenched

εις τον αιωνα χρονον και αναβησεται ο
into the eternal time and will rise up the

καπνος αυτης ανω εις γενεας
smoke of her upward into generations

ερημωθησεται και εις χρονον πολυν
will be desolated and into time long

ερημωθησεται και κατοικησουσιν εν αυτη
will be desolated and will dwell in it

ορνεα και εχεινοι και ειβεις και κορακες
birds and hedgehogs and ibises and ravens

And then here below is a highly literal^G regular translation of the same Isaiah 34:9b-11a Sinaiticus text above with punctuation added to follow only the rhythm of the divisions indicated by the word "and":

[Isaiah 34:9b-11a Sinaiticus original translation] And her land will be burning as pitch night and day, and it will not be quenched into the age of time. The smoke of it will ascend up into generations. It will be made desolate, and into much time it will be made desolate, and in it will dwell birds, hedgehogs, ibises, and ravens.

Doing just the same thing over again for Alexandrinus below, we remove the separation points appearing in the ancient manuscript, and show both a highly literal forward Interlinear translation^G, and a regular English translation with punctuation marks following the rhythm of "and". Just as before, the Greek text of Alexandrinus is an accurate transcription with no diacritical accent marks since the Alexandrinus manuscript also has none:

[Isaiah 34:9b-11a Alexandrinus original translation]

και	εσται	αυτης	η	γη	καιομενη	ως
and	will be	of her	the	earth	burning	as

πισσα νυκτος και ημερας και ου
pitch night and day and not

σβεσθησεται εις τον αιωνα χρονον και
will be extinguished into the age time and

αναβησεται ο καπνος αυτης ανω εις
will ascend the smoke of her up into

γενεας ερημωθησεται και
generations it will be made desolate and

κατοικησονται εν αυτη ορνεα και εχιδνοι
will dwell in her birds and hedgehogs

και ιβεις και κορακες
and ibises and ravens

[Isaiah 34:9b-11a Alexandrinus original translation] And her land will be burning as pitch night and day, and it will not be extinguished for an age of time, and the smoke of it will ascend upwards for generations. It will be made desolate, and in it will dwell birds and hedgehogs and ibises and ravens.

So once again, in Alexandrinus above, we have the burning going on night and day, the smoke going up for generations,

and it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age; just as we see it in the Dead Sea scrolls following the Old Testament language of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice^G and its associated peace, drink, and grain/meal offerings. All five of the translations of Isaiah 34:9b-11a I've just showed for Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Alexandrinus have been checked for accuracy and proper translation technique by a PhD level scholar in the classical languages, which of course include Greek. I've labeled these five preceding verified translations as "original translation". We could keep going and even show that the very popular "Rahlfs" semiecllectic^G Septuagint text edited by Alfred Rahlfs, also known as "*Septuaginta: id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*" can legitimately have its complete thoughts divided like Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, and Alexandrinus as I just showed. As you can see, there is easily more than sufficient evidence to show that the Dead Sea scrolls exhibit a well supported reading of Isaiah 34 which can be agreed with by both the Masoretic text and the Septuagint.

Chapter 3

The Dead Sea Scrolls Variant Points to the Old Testament Sacrifices

Where does this lead us in regard to Isaiah 34 and John's pointing^G to it in Revelation with his use of the phrases like *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night."* in Revelation 14:11; 19:3; and 20:10? For the book of Revelation, John and the Holy Spirit's original ancient audience in the seven churches in Asia Minor would have been exposed to the Old Testament in primarily three different ways. One of those would have been the Aramaic^G Targums^G being read aloud by the priests or scribes in the Jewish synagogues. Another would have been the Greek Septuagint, as the Septuagint was the most commonly utilized Old Testament in the first century AD. Greek was the lingua franca^G of the eastern Mediterranean area. We see this in the fact that the New Testament authors quote the unique wording of the Septuagint far more than they do the Hebrew text. Lastly, some small portion of the ancient audience of Revelation would have been able to read or understand the spoken readings of the Hebrew Old Testament. It is often mentioned in scholarly writings that the Hebrew language was significantly confined to those involved in religious scholarship and religious leadership by the time of Jesus. If

you add this basic knowledge of the composition of John's audience with the information I have shown so far about which ancient translations of the Bible showed phrases like *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"* and which ancient translations instead showed the phrases like *"its smoke goes up for generations"*, *"it burns night and day"*, *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"* in Isaiah 34, you can easily see how John's ancient audience, working together as a group, would very likely have been able to have knowledge of both variant readings. Those variant readings of course being one which showed phrases like *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"*, unlike the Dead Sea scrolls, and also a variant reading which instead showed phrases like *"its smoke goes up for generations"*, *"it burns night and day"*, *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"* like the Dead Sea scrolls. Just to refresh your memory about which ancient translations could have had which variant readings, here's a summary list:

1. Some first century AD close ancestor of the Masoretic text (also known as the Proto-Masoretic text⁶) - possibly either variant reading according to R.R. Ottley's comment about the Masoretic text being able to be divided and read either way.

2. Septuagint - either variant reading if ancient readers tended to divide the rhythm of the thoughts and phrases both ways depending on the personal preference of the reader, just as modern scholars do.

3. Targum - variant reading with phrases like, *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"* - Since Targum Jonathan of Isaiah was likely circulating already in the 1st or early 2nd century AD, and it was likely a translation of the commonly circulated 1st century AD ancestor of the Masoretic text (also known as the Proto-Masoretic text^G), Targum Jonathan of Isaiah may give us additional evidence that the Proto-Masoretic text^G could be read to show the variant reading with phrases like *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"*.

4. Dead Sea scrolls text, The Great Isaiah Scroll, 1QIsa^a - variant reading with phrases like *"smoke goes up from generation to generation"*, *"it burns night and day"*, *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"* - Forced to read this way by the additional Hebrew Vav letters it contains which effectively insert the word "and" four times.

So we can deduce from the list above and with the basic knowledge of John's audience that it was very likely that the

content of Revelation 14:11; 19:3; and 20:10 would have led them straight to both variant readings of Isaiah 34. We can clearly see that John and his audience knew of the variant reading with phrases like, *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"* because John quotes from it in Revelation 14:11 and 19:3, *"the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever"* and *"her smoke rises forever and ever"*. And then from the evidence I've just showed, we know it's highly likely that they were also reading the other variant with phrases like the Dead Sea scrolls, *"its smoke goes up from generation to generation"*, *"it burns night and day"*, and *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"* in the Septuagint and in the Proto-Masoretic text⁶. What's the point of all this? The point is that a variant reading with phrases like this, *"its smoke goes up from generation to generation"*, *"it burns night and day"*, *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"* is more like the content of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice because it has a total of three phrases which can all easily be understood to be describing the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. Conversely a variant reading with phrases like this, *"its smoke goes up forever"*, *"it will not be extinguished night or day"*, *"from generation to generation it will be desolate"* is significantly less like the content of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. It only has two phrases which could be describing the continual morning and evening regular

sacrifice. To make such an outrageous claim that Isaiah 34 is applying the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice onto the judgment of the wicked at the second coming, the connection needs to be confident. Having three connecting phrases instead of just two significantly helps to make the case. Even a two phrase connection might give us some confidence, but three is much better when trying to support such a seemingly unbelievable application of symbolism.

So with the knowledge of both variant readings of Isaiah 34, John's ancient audience very likely would have been led straight to the Old Testament and the language of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice as you see in these next six passages which follow, from Isaiah 34 and the Pentateuch^G. These phrases can very reasonably be interpreted to be a description of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice: *"its smoke goes up from generation to generation", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"*. Isaiah 34 below is from the Dead Sea Scrolls:

*[Isaiah 34:2-10 DSSB, Dead Sea scrolls] 2 For the LORD is angry against all the nations and furious at all their host. He has doomed them and has determined that they be **slaughtered**. 3 Their slain and their corpses will be cast down, and their stench will rise up. The mountains will be soaked with their **blood**. 4 The valleys will be split, all the*

host of the heavens will fall, and the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll. All their host will wither, like a leaf withering off the vine or like withering off the fig tree. 5 Indeed my sword will be seen in the heavens. Watch, it will come down upon Edom, upon the people I have doomed for judgment. 6 The Lord has a sword filled with **blood, gorged with fat**, with the **blood of lambs and goats**, with the **fat of rams' kidneys**. Indeed the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. 7 The **wild oxen will fall with them and the young bulls with the mighty steers**. Their land will be **drunk with blood and their soil saturated with fat**. 8 Indeed the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur, and its land will become pitch. 10 It will **burn night and day** and will **never** (olam, "forever", **Strong's^G h5769**, just as in three of the **Pentateuch^G** passages which follow) **be extinguished** (tikbe, "quenched" or "extinguished", **Strong's^G H3518**, just as in Leviticus 6:8-18 which follows). Its **smoke will go up from generation to generation**; and it will lie waste **forever and ever**. No one will pass through it.

Take care to notice how in Numbers 28:1-8 and Exodus 29:38-46, which follow, the drink offering and grain offering (grain offering is also known as the "meal offering") are integrated into the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. This means that the language of the drink offering and grain offering are also the language of the continual

morning and evening regular sacrifice. This recognition is of special benefit because when we get to Leviticus 6:8-18, far below, we can understand that the language of the description of the grain offering it contains is also the language of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. This is useful because the description of the grain offering has even more content which is seen too in Isaiah 34, strengthening the connection. The reader should also be aware when reading the following sacrifice description passages from the Pentateuch^G that the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice is frequently just referred to as the "burnt offering".

*[Numbers 28:1-8 WEB] 1 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Command the children of Israel, and tell them, 'See that you present my offering, my food for my offerings made by fire, as a pleasant aroma to me, in their due season.' 3 You shall tell them, 'This is the offering made by fire which you shall offer to Yahweh: male lambs a year old without defect, two day by day, for a **continual burnt** offering. 4 You shall offer the one lamb in the **morning**, and you shall offer the other lamb at **evening**, 5 with one tenth of an ephah of **fine flour for a meal offering**, mixed with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil. 6 It is a **continual burnt** offering which was ordained in Mount Sinai for a pleasant aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh. 7 Its **drink offering** shall be the fourth part of a hin for each lamb. You shall pour out a **drink offering** of strong drink to Yahweh in the holy place. 8 The*

other lamb you shall offer at evening. As the meal offering of the morning, and as its drink offering, you shall offer it, an offering made by fire, for a pleasant aroma to Yahweh.

[Exodus 29:38-46 WEB] 38 "Now this is that which you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day continually. 39 The one lamb you shall offer in the morning; and the other lamb you shall offer at evening; 40 and with the one lamb a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour mixed with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil, and the fourth part of a hin of wine for a drink offering. 41 The other lamb you shall offer at evening, and shall do to it according to the meal offering of the morning and according to its drink offering, for a pleasant aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh. 42 It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the Tent of Meeting before Yahweh, where I will meet with you, to speak there to you. 43 There I will meet with the children of Israel; and the place shall be sanctified by my glory. 44 I will sanctify the Tent of Meeting and the altar. I will also sanctify Aaron and his sons to minister to me in the priest's office. 45 I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. 46 They shall know that I am Yahweh their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them: I am Yahweh their God.

[Leviticus 6:8-18 NASB20] 8 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 9 "Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the law for the **burnt offering**: the burnt offering itself shall **remain on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning**, and the **fire on the altar is to be kept burning on it**. 10 'The priest is to put on his linen robe, and he shall put on linen undergarments next to his body; and he shall take up the fatty ashes to which the **fire** reduces the burnt offering on the altar and place them beside the altar. 11 'Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments, and carry the fatty ashes outside the camp to a clean place. 12 '**The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out** (tikbe, not be "quenched" or "extinguished", **Strong's**^G H3518, just as in Isaiah 34:10), **but the priest shall burn wood on it every morning**; and he shall lay out the burnt offering on it, **and offer up in smoke the fat portions of the peace offerings on it**. 13 'Fire shall be kept **burning continually** on the altar; it is **not to go out** (tikbe, "quenched" or "extinguished", **Strong's**^G H3518, just as in Isaiah 34:10). 14 'Now this is the law of the **grain offering**: the sons of Aaron shall present it before the LORD in front of the altar. 15 'Then one of them shall lift up from it a handful of the fine flour of the **grain offering**, with its oil and all the incense that is on the **grain offering**, and he shall offer it up in **smoke** on the altar, a soothing aroma, as its memorial offering to the LORD. 16 'And Aaron and his sons are to **eat** what is left of it. It shall be eaten as unleavened

*cakes in a holy place; they are to **eat it** in the courtyard of the tent of meeting. 17 'It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it as their share from My **offerings by fire**; it is most holy, like the sin offering and the guilt offering. 18 'Every male among the sons of Aaron may **eat it**; it is a **permanent** (olam, "forever", **Strong's**^G H5769, just as in **Isaiah 34:10**) ordinance throughout your **generations**, from the **offerings by fire** to the LORD. Whoever touches them will become consecrated.'"*

As you can see in Leviticus 6:12 above, the fat of the peace offerings was to be regularly added to the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. Animal fat, when burned, produces much more smoke than other parts of the animal's body, and even more smoke than the burning of wood. This means, in some sense, that the characteristics of the peace offering that I show in the next two passages which follow are also the characteristics of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. This in turn means that the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice is even more characterized by abundant smoke which goes up "*forever*", throughout the "*generations*", and comes from a fire that is "*not to go out*" or "*be extinguished*". That sounds like Isaiah 34 right? And as you can see, Isaiah 34 far above has several of the characteristics of the peace offering described in the next two peace offering passages that I

show below. There are a lot of fatty animals with big old kidneys in Isaiah 34 right?

*[Leviticus 3:1, 3-6, 9-17 NASB20] 1 'Now if his offering is a sacrifice of peace offerings, if he is going to offer from the herd, whether male or female, he shall offer it without defect before the LORD. ... 3 'From the sacrifice of the peace offerings he shall then present an offering **by fire** to the LORD, **the fat** that covers the entrails and all the **fat** that is on the entrails, 4 and the **two kidneys** with the **fat** that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the **kidneys**. 5 'Then Aaron's sons shall **offer it up in smoke** on the altar on the burnt offering, which is on the wood that is on **the fire**; it is an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD. 6 'But if his offering for a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD is from the flock, he shall offer it, male or female, without defect. ... 9 'From the sacrifice of peace offerings he shall then bring as an offering by fire to the LORD, **its fat**, the entire **fat** tail which he shall remove close to the backbone, the **fat** that covers the entrails, and all the **fat** that is on the entrails, 10 and the two **kidneys** with the **fat** that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the **kidneys**. 11 'Then the priest shall **offer it up in smoke** on the altar as food, an offering by **fire** to the LORD. 12 'Now if his offering is a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD, 13 and he shall lay his hand on its head and slaughter it in front*

of the tent of meeting, and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. 14 'From it he shall present his offering as an offering by **fire** to the LORD, the **fat** that covers the entrails and all the **fat** that is on the entrails, 15 and the two **kidneys** with the **fat** that is on them, which is on the loins, and the lobe of the liver, which he shall remove with the **kidneys**. 16 'The priest shall **offer them up in smoke** on the altar as food, an offering by **fire** as a soothing aroma; all **fat** is the LORD'S. 17 'It is a **permanent (olam, "forever", Strong's^G H5769, just as in Isaiah 34:10) statute** throughout your **generations** in all your dwelling places: you shall not eat any **fat** or any blood.'"

[Leviticus 7:29-36 NASB20] 29 "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'He who offers the sacrifice of his peace offerings to the LORD shall bring his offering to the LORD from the sacrifice of his peace offerings. 30 'His own hands are to bring offerings by fire to the LORD. He shall bring the **fat** with the breast, so that the breast may be presented as a wave offering before the LORD. 31 'And the priest shall offer up the **fat in smoke on the altar**, but the breast shall belong to Aaron and to his sons. 32 'And you shall give the right thigh to the priest as a contribution from the sacrifices of your peace offerings. 33 'The one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood of the peace offerings and the **fat**, the right thigh shall be his as his portion. 34 'For I have taken from the sons of Israel the breast of the wave offering and

*the thigh of the contribution from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons as their allotted portion **forever** (olam, "forever", Strong's H5769, just as in Isaiah 34:10) from the sons of Israel. 35 'This is the allotment to Aaron and the allotment to his sons from the offerings by **fire** to the LORD, on that day when he presented them to serve as priests to the LORD. 36 'These the LORD had commanded to be given them from the sons of Israel on the day that He anointed them. It is their allotted portion **forever** (olam, "forever", Strong's H5769, just as in Isaiah 34:10) **throughout their generations.**'"*

So with the full picture of all the Old Testament descriptions of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice and its closely associated peace offerings, drink offerings, and grain offerings, it becomes clear that Isaiah 34 is imposing the language of the Old Testament sacrificial system onto the fiery judgment described in Isaiah 34. Even many of the same Hebrew words are used right in the most directly related verse, Isaiah 34:10, as in the Old Testament descriptions of the peace offering and the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. See the Dead Sea scrolls version of Isaiah 34:9-10 again below. All six of the underlined boldened English words in the Isaiah 34 passage below have the same Hebrew word used in the five lengthy Pentateuch^G passages I just showed previously pertaining to

the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice and its closely associated drink, grain, and peace offerings. For clarity, I am also showing English word equivalence conversions below for two of the six words which are translated with different English words in Isaiah versus the preceding Pentateuch^G passages I showed:

Never = forever = permanent = olam = עולם = Strong's H5769

be extinguished = go out = tikbe = כבה = Strong's H3518

*[Isaiah 34:9-10 DSSB] 9 It streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur, and its land will become pitch. 10 It will **burn night** and day and will **never** (olam, "forever", Strong's H5769) **be extinguished** (tikbe, "quenched" or "extinguished", Strong's H3518). Its smoke will go up from **generation** to **generation**, and it will lie waste forever and ever. No one will pass through it.*

So you can see above that the fiery judgment in Isaiah 34 is covered in the language of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifices and its closely associated drink, grain, and peace offerings. Even the same Hebrew words are shared. Could this mean something for Revelation 14:11 & 20:10 which are pointing to Isaiah 34?

Even if the Holy Spirit's original ancient audience of Revelation only had the variant reading with phrases like,

"its smoke goes up forever", "it will not be extinguished night or day", "from generation to generation it will be desolate" in Isaiah 34, the overall abundance of sacrifice symbolism throughout Isaiah 34 could very likely still have pointed them to the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice and its closely associated offerings in the Old Testament. As you have seen in all the passages I just showed you, the sacrifice symbolism in Isaiah 34 is strikingly similar to that of the Pentateuch^G. Additionally, it may be helpful to note that near the end of the first century, the mental image of the 24 hour, 7 Day a week column of smoke rising above the temple from the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice may still have been fresh in the minds of many of John's readers of Revelation. With this image fresh in their minds, what would they have thought when they followed John's pointing phrases from Revelation to Isaiah 34 and saw, *"the smoke goes up forever"* and *"it is not extinguished day or night"* along with the numerous other phrases and words describing sacrifices? We may not instantly draw that connection today from these phrases, but then we have never been firsthand witnesses to a practically endless column of smoke rising over the temple. The first Christians in the 4th or 5th century AD who ultimately popularized the traditional view of hell, may also have been unable to picture the 24 hour a day, 7 day a week column of smoke over the temple that goes up forever and is not extinguished day or night. Even we modern people though can recognize the never ending column of smoke

rising over the temple in the Dead Sea scrolls version of Isaiah 34. We can recognize the never ending smoke from generation to generation as very likely being the same as that of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifice and the smokey fat burning peace offerings. With the little bit of extra help that is shown in a variant reading like the Dead Sea scrolls, "*smoke will go up from generation to generation*", "*it burns day and night*", it will "*never be extinguished*" we can easily see a mental image of the endlessly rising smoke column of the Old Testament sacrificial system. Can you picture it?

It will probably be helpful for me to pause at this point to give a higher level summary of where I'm going with all this and roughly how we will get there. In the very simplest terms, the smoke of the destruction of the wicked that goes up forever and ever in Revelation is very likely John and the Holy Spirit saying that the meaning of the endless smoke of the defeat and judgment of the wicked in Revelation is equal to the meaning of the virtually endless smoke of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice established in the Old Testament. There in the Old Testament, in Exodus 29:38-46, we see a description of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice along with its meaning also being explicitly stated. The explicitly stated meaning is that God has delivered his people from the bondage of an evil army and an evil empire (Egypt), God has come down to earth to dwell with his people (in the

tabernacle⁶), God is their God, they are his servants. These are all just the same elements of the coming of God to dwell with his people which is described throughout the book of Revelation. This symmetry helps to convince us that it is in fact the endless smoke of the Old Testament sacrificial system that John is pointing to. Primarily, John equates the endless smoke and its meaning in Revelation to the endless smoke and its meaning in the Old Testament with the use of a quoted phrase in Revelation, "*the smoke goes up forever and ever*". This quoted phrase leads us to a passage where the phrase is quoted from. The passage is Isaiah 34, and it very likely symbolically describes the defeated wicked as being the endlessly smoking continual morning and evening regular sacrifices. Isaiah 34 is a description of the second coming of Jesus. There in Isaiah 34, we see that the symbolic endless smoke of the defeat of the wicked literally stops, just as the endless smoke of the Old Testament sacrificial system also literally stopped. This clues us in that it is the meaning and the results of the non-literal symbolic endless smoke which will literally go on without end, "*forever and ever*". In other words, the endless smoke is a symbol at the second coming in Isaiah 34, just as it was a symbol in the Old Testament. Only the results are endless. The meaning is endless. God's deliverance of His people and His togetherness with them described in Revelation will have no end. All those who are evil are defeated, their smoke goes up forever and ever, and God is forever with His people dwelling among them. Remember that we must

consult more literal Bible translations^G of the Old Testament (such as the NASB) to see any correctly translated signs of "*smoke*" going up in the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice and in the other burnt offerings described in the Pentateuch.

As I have already shown you, the wording of Isaiah 34 in the Dead Sea scrolls is slightly different from what we see in our modern Bibles. These slight differences make it a little more clear that the wording and content of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifice is being used to describe the defeated wicked at Jesus' second coming in Isaiah 34. We will also see that there are numerous very obvious and very intentional language and content similarities between the tabernacle^G inauguration in the Old Testament and the second coming of Jesus. So could the symbolic endless smoke of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifices that started at the coming of God to the tabernacle^G inauguration in some way be the same as the symbolic endless smoke that starts at the second coming of Jesus in Isaiah 34 and in Revelation? Of course it could be because the tabernacle^G inauguration and the second coming of Jesus have numerous other clear similarities. We will explore these similarities in depth.

Chapter 4

The Second Coming Fulfills the Old Testament Sacrifices

To begin filling in the details of the synopsis I just provided at the end of the previous chapter, here are some good passages to help demonstrate that Isaiah 34 is in fact a description of the second coming of Christ and His ensuing casting of fire on the earth:

- Revelation 17:14 - Jesus is the lead General at the second coming, the Lord of lords, the King of kings.
- Revelation 19:11-16 - Jesus, the Lord of lords, the King of kings can be recognized again battling at the second coming against the nations, with his sword, treading the wine press, while wearing his bloody robe.
- Isaiah 63:1-6 - Jesus can be recognized again battling against Edom at the second coming, on the day of vengeance, scattering their blood on the ground, treading the wine press, while wearing his bloody robe.
- Isaiah 34:1-10 - Jesus can be recognized again battling against Edom and the nations, with his sword, at the second coming, scattering their blood on the ground, on the day of vengeance.

These passages above demonstrate that Isaiah 34 is the coming of the presence of Jesus/God, similar to how God comes in the tabernacle^G inauguration in Leviticus 9. In both the second coming description of Isaiah 34 and the tabernacle^G inauguration we have all six of the elements from the following list. Isaiah 34 and the tabernacle^G inauguration sharing these six elements demonstrates to us that these phrases in Isaiah 34, *"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/ eternally/for an age"* can of course be the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice which first started at the tabernacle inauguration, because Isaiah 34 is full of other elements from the tabernacle inauguration.

1. Similar introductory statements by God, with the same Hebrew word being used for *"Come near"*, qarab, Strong's word^G H7126:

*[Leviticus 9:7 NASB20] 7 Moses then said to Aaron, "**Come near** to the altar and offer your sin offering and your burnt offering, so that you may make atonement for yourself and for the **people**; then make the offering for the **people**, so that you may make atonement for them, just as the LORD has commanded."*

*[Isaiah 34:1 NASB20] 1 **Come near**, you nations, to hear; and listen, you **peoples**! Let the earth and all it*

contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.

2. Fire comes from God/Jesus to consume the sacrifices at the second coming in Isaiah 34 and at the tabernacle inauguration in the Old Testament.

[Leviticus 9:23-24 NASB20] 23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting. When they came out and blessed the people, the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. 24 Then fire went out from the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the portions of fat on the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell face downward.

3. The types of sacrificed animals in Isaiah 34 being used to represent the wicked are all the same in the tabernacle inauguration of the Old Testament. - Three of the types of animals named in Isaiah 34 (goat, ram, and bull) use the same Hebrew words, found in the types of sacrifices that were done in the tabernacle inauguration parallel accounts in Leviticus 8-9 and Numbers 7. The other two animal types used in Isaiah 34 (lamb and wild oxen) can also be shown to appear in the tabernacle inauguration, but the specific Hebrew words used in Isaiah 34 represent specific subsets of sheep and cattle. I assume that "cattle", as I am using the word, are what we typically call "cows" of any sex or age. The exact Hebrew word for lamb which is used in Isaiah 34

does not appear in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, but with the use of various academic resources we can see that **it is a word for "fat lamb", "lamb raised for slaughter", or "young ram for slaughter"** (Tregelles, 1857 | Brown, 1906 | Koehler, 1994-2000 | Harris, 1980). (A young ram is a male lamb.) Lambs are sacrificed in the tabernacle inauguration accounts. Resources to consult in order to confirm the animal facts that I just related are *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, *Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon*, *Hebrew Aramaic^G Lexicon of the Old Testament*, and *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*. The Hebrew word for "wild oxen" in Isaiah 34 also does not appear in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, but "wild oxen" are a subset of cattle. Cattle do appear in the tabernacle inauguration accounts. ***Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon* defines the Isaiah 34 Hebrew word for "wild oxen" as "wild ox" (Brown, 1906). The *Hebrew Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* gives as one of its possible definitions, "wild bull" (Koehler, 1994-2000). "Ox" is just another word for a male cattle that has been castrated specifically to use for work, or can just be used as another word for any cattle.**

4. God is delivering or has just delivered his people by the defeat of a massive army at both the second coming and the tabernacle inauguration. - The second coming by its very nature is the deliverance from the kingdom and evil of the antichrist, satan, and the mass of wicked people. At the tabernacle inauguration God has just delivered his people

from the army of the Egyptians, and in Exodus 29 he mentions this deliverance directly in His stated intended symbolism for the entire sacrificial system. This is the same sacrificial system of the tabernacle which is inaugurated in Leviticus 9 and Numbers 7:

*[Exodus 29:38-46 WEB] 38 "Now this is that which you shall offer on the altar: two lambs a year old day by day continually. 39 The one lamb you shall offer in the morning; and the other lamb you shall offer at evening; 40 and with the one lamb a tenth part of an ephah of fine flour mixed with the fourth part of a hin of beaten oil, and the fourth part of a hin of wine for a drink offering. 41 The other lamb you shall offer at evening, and shall do to it according to the meal offering of the morning and according to its drink offering, for a pleasant aroma, an offering made by fire to Yahweh. 42 It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the Tent of Meeting before Yahweh, where I will meet with you, to speak there to you. 43 There I will meet with the children of Israel; and the place shall be sanctified by my glory. 44 I will sanctify the Tent of Meeting and the altar. I will also sanctify Aaron and his sons to minister to me in the priest's office. 45 I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. 46 They shall know that I am Yahweh their God, who **brought them***

out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them: I am Yahweh their God.

5. All the different types of animal sacrifices defined in the Pentateuch which are done at the inauguration of the tabernacle are represented by at least two elements in Isaiah 34. For every sacrifice type, the two elements appear in the specific instructions in the Pentateuch for that sacrifice type. Those various elements common to Isaiah 34 and the Pentateuch are: fat, blood, smoke going up for generations, kidneys, the correct animal (lamb, goat, ram, ox, bull), burning day and night. The sacrifice types performed at the tabernacle inauguration are: sin offering, burnt offering ("*burnt offering*" is synonymous with continual morning and evening regular sacrifice), and peace offering. This helps to demonstrate that Isaiah 34 as a whole is not just pointing to any specific single sacrifice type, but is pointing to all of the sacrifice types and generally to the tabernacle inauguration.

6. The smoke starts to go up from generation to generation and the fire starts to burn night and day in the tabernacle inauguration in Leviticus 9, just as it does in the symbolic sacrifice imagery at the second coming in Isaiah 34. - The burnt offering mentioned in the tabernacle inauguration in Leviticus 9 is the very first iteration of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice whose smoke goes up from generation to generation, and is burning night and day, just

as it is seen in the second coming in Isaiah 34. This again helps demonstrate that Isaiah 34 is pointing to the entire sacrificial system as it is first inaugurated and operated at the tabernacle inauguration. We can be confident that the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice appears in Leviticus 9 in the tabernacle inauguration because of these specific verses below:

First in the tabernacle inauguration account we see that the burnt offering is "*offered according to the ordinance*".....

*[Leviticus 9:16-17 WEB] 16 He presented the burnt offering, and offered it **according to the ordinance**. 17 He presented the meal offering, and filled his hand from there, and burned it upon the altar, in addition to the **burnt offering of the morning**.*

If we skip back a few chapters we see that this "*ordinance*" that is being referred to in Leviticus 9 above is the defining of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. Also notice the fat of the peace offering below going onto the burnt offering to produce loads of smoke, which will go up from generation to generation, forever.....

*[Leviticus 6:8-13 WEB] 8 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 9 "Command Aaron and his sons, saying, '**This is the law of the burnt offering**: the burnt offering shall*

*be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning; and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. 10 The priest shall put on his linen garment, and he shall put on his linen trousers upon his body; and he shall remove the ashes from where the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. 11 He shall take off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. 12 The **fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it, it shall not go out; and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning.** He shall lay the burnt offering in order upon it, **and shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings.** 13 **Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.***

"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"

So can these phrases above from Isaiah 34 be symbolism from the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice which commenced at the tabernacle inauguration? Of course they can. One can easily see from the six element list that I've just presented above that Isaiah 34 is full of other elements from the tabernacle inauguration. To see this though, we must continue to keep in mind that many modern translations incorrectly erase the word "smoke"

from the descriptions of any burnt offerings described throughout the Pentateuch. The NASB and various other more literal translations^G do show it though. As I mentioned previously, we will discuss at length in chapter 13 why the "*smoke*" should appear in the translations.

If we expand out our net a little bit and look at what similarities exist between the second coming as it is described all over the Bible and the tabernacle inauguration, we find even more similarities between the two. These of course can be used by association to further strengthen the connection between the second coming in Isaiah 34 and the tabernacle inauguration. Strengthening this connection can further help to convince us that of course, the phrases like "*its smoke goes up for generations*", "*it burns night and day*", "*it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age*" in the second coming description of Isaiah 34 are the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice which started at the tabernacle inauguration, because the second coming has numerous other similarities to the tabernacle inauguration. Could these phrases in the Isaiah 34 description of the second coming be the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice from the tabernacle inauguration? Of course they could. Isaiah 34 is describing the second coming, and the second coming has numerous other similarities to the tabernacle inauguration. Take a look:

1. At the Tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming of Jesus, God's presence comes in the morning.

- Leviticus 9:16-17 - tabernacle inauguration in the morning
- Malachi 4:1-3 - Jesus the *"sun of righteousness"* that rises like on a morning
- Hosea 6:1-3 - Jesus' appearance is the *"dawn"* with refreshing *"rain"*
- 2 Samuel 23:3-7 - Jesus rules like the *"light of the morning"* after *"rain"*
- Psalm 46 - the second coming happens when *"morning dawns"*
- Psalm 101 - destruction of the wicked and *"dwelling"* with God, at the second coming, happens in the *"morning"*
- Exodus 12 - Christians are the *"firstborn"*, spared by the blood of the Lamb
- Hebrews 12:23 - Christians are the *"firstborn"* from among the dead
- Isaiah 26 - firstborn from the dead at the rapture are the *"dew"* of the *"dawn"*
- Psalm 110 - the firstborn *"dew"* are born from the *"womb of the dawn"*. Dawn always happens in the morning.
- Zephaniah 3 - Jesus returns on the *"morning"* of the second coming bringing *"justice to light"*
- John 4:14 - Jesus is the *"fountain"* of *"living water"*

- Deuteronomy 33:1-3, 26-29 - Jesus, the "*fountain*", comes from the heavens with His "*sword*" riding the clouds as in Revelation and Daniel, enters the promise land at the second coming with his army of Christians, "*the holy ones*", coming from "*Seir*" in Edom as in Isaiah 63, and "*dawns*" on His people.

Why does Jesus always enter the promise land with his people through Edom, the country that totally denied God's people access to the promise land in the Old Testament?

- Habakkuk 3 - Jesus comes from "*Teman*" which is in Edom, like the "*sunlight*", at the second coming, after the sun and moon are obstructed as seen numerous times in second coming prophecies
- Isaiah 60:1-14 - Jesus, the "*light*" comes and "*rises*" upon his people, some of whom may have just been raptured like a "*cloud*" of flying "*doves*". In the Septuagint, verse 8 reads:

[Isaiah 60:8 CAB] Who are these that fly as clouds, and as doves with young ones to Me?

- Isaiah 63:1-6 - Who is this?
- Song of Solomon 6:4,10 - Like Isaiah 63 above, "*who is this?*", looking "*down*" as He comes from heaven at the second coming, like the "*dawn*" with His "*army*" of saints?

- Zephaniah 3 - See specifically NIV, ASV, ESV, KJV, NKJV, or WEB - Jesus unleashes the "*fire of His jealousy*" at the second coming
- Song of Solomon 8:5-6 - Who is this?, returning at the second coming with the fire of His jealousy, coming up from the wilderness, possibly from the desert land of Edom, with his warrior army bride, the church of the saints just awakened from the dead to birth from their mother Israel?
- Psalm 90 - Jesus "*returns*" in the "*morning*" with "*graciousness*"
- Luke 1:76-79 - Jesus, the "*Sunrise*", returns at the second coming to "*visit*" His people

2. At the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming, the priests kill the sacrifices and God/Jesus burns them with fire. - Christians become priests. Christians return as warrior saint priests with Jesus to fight in the battle of Armageddon. As in Isaiah 34, the wicked are a fiery sacrifice at the second coming. Ergo, the priests kill the sacrifices at the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming.

- 1 Peter 2:5,9 - Christians are priests
- Revelation 1:6 - Christians are priests
- Leviticus 9:24 - God burns the sacrifices at the tabernacle inauguration
- Isaiah 66:5-20 - Jesus burns the wicked at the second coming

- Revelation 7:9 - saints in white robes
- Revelation 19:11-19 - saints in white robes in battle
- Isaiah 26:19 - raptured and resurrected Saints are "*dew*"
- Psalm 110 - See specifically NIV, CSB, or NRSV - the "*dew*" join in the battle
- Psalm 149 - the Christians, the "*Godly ones*", wield "*swords*" at the second coming to help execute God's "*vengeance*"
- Revelation 17:12-14 - See specifically AMP - the Christians, the "*chosen and faithful*", fight "*on His side*" at Jesus' second coming
- Zechariah 14:1-9 - the Christians, Jesus' "*holy ones*" will return with Jesus at the second coming when He "*fights*" on a "*day of battle*"

3. At the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming, the High Priest and the priests are covered in blood. - Jesus is the High Priest at the second coming. The saints are the priests at the second coming following Jesus into battle.

- Leviticus 8:30 - high priest and priests are covered with blood
- Hebrews 3:1; 7:26-27 - Jesus is the High Priest at the second coming and into the millennium, which is why there is no human high priest in the millennial temple described in Ezekiel 40 to 47.

- Isaiah 63:1-3 - Jesus at the second coming is covered in blood
- Revelation 19:11-14 - Jesus at the second coming is covered in blood
- Ezekiel 45:18-19 - the corners of the altar get covered in blood
- Zechariah 9:9-17 - See specifically AMP, NRSV, or NKJV God's "*people*", the priests, get covered in blood like the corners of the altar

4. The priests are consecrated with blood and fitted with new priestly robes before the coming of the presence of God at the tabernacle inauguration and before the second coming. - Christians who are priests at the second coming, are the guests at the wedding feast of the marriage of the Lamb. The saint/priest/guests invited to the wedding feast are consecrated before the feast starts.

- Leviticus 8:1-30 - Priests consecrated with blood and fitted with new robes
- Revelation 7:9-14 - Christian priests consecrated with Jesus' blood and fitted with new white robes
- Zephaniah 1 - God's "*guests*" at the second coming "*sacrifice*" have been "*consecrated*", blending together the language of the second coming and the wedding feast, hinting at the equalness of the two.
- Revelation 16:13-21; 19:1-6 - Babylon is burned as a part of the second coming. Directly preceding the

wedding feast in the Revelation 19 text, the burning of Babylon is described by, "*HER SMOKE RISES FOREVER AND EVER*", pointing to the second coming "*sacrifice*" of the wicked in Isaiah 34, hinting that this sacrifice of Babylon in Revelation 16 & 19 may be the sacrifice at the wedding feast mentioned in Zephaniah 1 above.

- Revelation 19:7-19 - God's guests at the wedding "*feast*" have been consecrated with Jesus' blood and fitted with new white robes. Directly following the wedding feast in the Revelation 19 text, the birds dining on the bodies of the slain at Armageddon is also called a "*feast*". This blends the language of the second coming Armageddon battle with the language of the wedding feast hinting at the equalness of the two.
- Matthew 25:1-13 - The virgins who are the saints must be ready for the coming of the groom for the wedding feast, because they don't know the "*day or the hour*" of Jesus' second coming.
- Matthew 22:1-14 - The Christian wedding guests who are accepted into the wedding feast at the second coming must be wearing the proper attire. The proper attire is just the white robes washed in the blood of the lamb in Revelation 7:9-14 just referenced above.

5. The High Priest/high priest wears the crown at the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming. Aaron the high priest wears the crown at the tabernacle

inauguration. Jesus the High Priest wears the crown at the second coming.

- Revelation 14:14-20
- Leviticus 8:7-9
- Hebrews 3:1; 7:26-27

6. With some reasonable interpretation, in both the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming, two individuals who are major promoters of false religion are burned to death in an isolated targeted judgement from God that is specific to them. In both the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming they are burned with fire and are also deposited in a place outside the camp.

- At the tabernacle inauguration these are Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu. At the second coming these are the antichrist and the false prophet.

- Leviticus 10:1-7 - Aaron's sons make up their own way to give offerings to God and are burned to death, then carried outside the camp
- Revelation 20:9 - The Old Testament "*camp*" is equivalent to Jerusalem in biblical speak, at the time of the second coming
- Revelation 20:10-15; Matthew 25:40-42; Matthew 18:9 - The "*lake of fire*" is the sentence for wicked people, the devil, the antichrist, and the false prophet. The place of judgment for people and the devil is the same place. Gehenna is the sentence for

wicked people. Ergo, Gehenna is the *"lake of fire"*. The word *"hell"* with its highly questionable traditionalist^G connotations is written into the Bible by highly assumptive translation which is heavily instilled with traditionalist^G interpretation. The real word is *"Gehenna"* which is a proper place name for the Valley of Hinnom, outside the camp, outside the city, on the south and southwest sides of Jerusalem. To emphasize this fact, this author checked six of the most dominant Greek lexicons and dictionaries. All six acknowledge that the word Gehenna is a proper name for the actual valley of Hinnom. None of the lexicons and dictionaries checked by this author lacked this acknowledgment.

- Mark 9:47-48 - Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, is a literal cursed valley *"where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched"*, outside the camp/Jerusalem in Isaiah 66.
- Isaiah 66:22-24 - Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, *"where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched"*, is literally just outside the camp/Jerusalem. People literally walk by it and see the dead bodies of those who have just been judged, just as they would have seen the dead bodies of Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:8 - antichrist *"eliminated"* and brought to an *"end"*
- Daniel 7:11 - antichrist *"killed"*

- Revelation 19:19-21 - This passage very likely describes the annihilation^G and killing of antichrist and the false prophet outside the camp, outside the city, if we interpret 2 Thessalonians 2:8 and Daniel 7:11 above as annihilation^G of body and soul. More on this later though. With this interpretation they are deposited outside the camp just like Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu.
- Revelation 19:19-21; Revelation 20:10 - The antichrist and the false prophet "*are*" very likely not still in the lake of fire from having been thrown there at the beginning of the millennium. The Greek words do not, with any confidence, indicate whether they, "*had been thrown there*" or still "*are*" or "*were*" there. There actually is no being verb there, so there is no clearly explicit verb tense. The verb and its tense must be elided or assumed from the context. "*Are there*" would be a translation which follows only a very rare way that Greek elided verbs are used. "*Had been thrown there*" or some other synonymous phrase is much more likely to be the correct way to use the elided verb according to a world class expert in Greek, scholar G.K. Beale, who also happens to favor the traditionalist^G view of hell in which the antichrist and the false prophet typically should "be" in hell for the entire millennium and into eternity. Other world class scholars who are also avowed traditionalists support just using "*were there*" or "*had been thrown*" there or something like it.

Some world class translators who have done very popular and respected Bible translations choose to use, "*were there*" or "*had been thrown*", or something synonymous with these past tense phrases. See sources:

- a. G.K. Beale, 1999, *New International Greek Testament Commentary, The Book of Revelation*, pgs. 762 & 1031
- b. Andrew Steinman, Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society, March 1992 Issue, *The Tripartite Structure of the Sixth Seal, the Six Trumpet, and the Sixth Bowl*, note 18 @ bottoms of pgs. 77 to 78.
- c. Buist M. Fanning III, Clinton E. Arnold, 2020, *Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Revelation*. See their copyright page in the front matter and Chapters 20 & 26 - They do a fresh translation of their own, and put past tense "*were*". In their commentary on Revelation 20:10 and 14:11 they show that they are avowed traditionalists.
- d. John Christopher Thomas & Frank D. Macchia, 2016, *The Two Horizons New Testament Commentary, Revelation*, See Preface section & commentary section for Revelation 19:1 to 21:8 - They do a fresh translation of their own of just a short snippet of the verse, mixed in

with the lines of the commentary, and put "*were cast*", and then state plainly that they are traditionalists.

e. AMPC (Amplified Bible Classic Edition), ESV, NRSV - all translate past tense "*were*"

f. NIV - "*had been thrown*"

g. A large percentage of all translations italicize the word that they use to translate it, communicating that the word is a nonexistent, assumed elided verb whose tense must be chosen based on contextually based interpretation^G and not just translation.

7. At the tabernacle inauguration and at the second coming God/Jesus descends to earth and takes up residence in His temple/tabernacle. - God's presence takes up residence in the tabernacle at the tabernacle inauguration. Jesus takes his place on the throne in Ezekiel's millennial temple at the second coming.

- Ezekiel 43:10-11,18; 40-48 - God gives numerous chapters full of the specific architectural details and instructions for observances and says to "*observe its entire plan*" and mentions "*the day it is built*", hinting that this temple is not symbolic only.
- Ezekiel 43:4-9 - Jesus says he's going to enter the temple from the "*east*", and live in the temple, the place of his "*feet*".

- Isaiah 60:1-17; Isaiah 34; Leviticus 3 - Jesus, the sunrise, "*rises*" over and "*appears*" to His people at the second coming. The Jews are "*gathered*" back together as in many other passages about the beginning of the millennium. The Temple, the "*place of his feet*", is built and "*beautified*" and the "*altar*" becomes active. The "*peace*" of Jesus' millennial reign begins after the wicked are made to be a peace offering with "*fat*", "*blood*", "*smoke*", "*kidneys*", "*rams*", "*goats*", "*lambs*" as described in Isaiah 34 at the second coming, and as described in the instructions for the peace offering in Leviticus 3 at the tabernacle inauguration. To see the sameness of the peace offering animals in Leviticus 3 and in Isaiah 34 we need some details about the Hebrew animal words in both passages. **The Hebrew word for "*herd*" in Leviticus 3 is a specific word which means any animal of any age or sex from the herd of cattle, meaning cows, bulls, or calves. The Hebrew word for "*flock*" in Leviticus 3 is a specific word for any sheep or goat of any age or sex. A "*ram*" is a male adult sheep. An "*oxen*" is one of the "*herd*", possibly intended for the use of work, and possibly castrated (Brown, 1906 | Koehler, 1994-2000).** See sources:

- a. *Hebrew Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*
- b. *Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon*

- Ezekiel 47:1, 12 - Water flows from the temple giving life to trees with "*leaves for healing*"

- Ezekiel 43:1-4 - Jesus with the "voice" like the "sound of many waters" from Revelation enters Ezekiel's millennial temple from the "east"
- Revelation 1:12-18 - Jesus the "Son of man" from Daniel 7:13, with "hair white like wool" from Daniel 7:9, with "eyes like a flame of fire", with a "voice like the sound of many waters", with "the sharp two-edged sword coming out of his mouth", who has come back from the dead is identified. This is the same Jesus entering Ezekiel's millennial temple "with the voice like the sound of many waters" as in Ezekiel 43:1-4 above.
- Zechariah 14:1-9 - Jesus arrives to be the "King over all the earth" at the second coming "battle" with his army of Christians, "holy ones", with his "**feet** on the Mount of Olives". Jesus arrives "east" of Jerusalem and water begins to flow out of Jerusalem, just as in Ezekiel's millennial temple.
- Revelation 19:11-19 - The same Jesus, the same "army" of Jesus, and the same rule of Jesus' over the nations are described here in Revelation 19 as are described in Zechariah 14 and Revelation 1 above.
- Joel 2-3 - At the second coming, Jesus is "in the midst of Israel", "dwelling on Zion", in Ezekiel's millennial house/temple from which, "a spring will go out from the house of the Lord", just as it does in Ezekiel 47:12.
- Revelation 19:14-15 - It is Jesus who "treads the wine press" at the second coming. This identifies Jesus who treads the winepress in Joel 2-3 above as the One who

takes his place in Ezekiel's millennial temple that has water flowing out from it.

- John 10:11-19; Hebrews 13:20-21; Ezekiel 34:2-28; Ezekiel 37:11-28 - Jesus, the "*One Shepherd*", who figuratively is "*David*", at his second coming will take up residence in Ezekiel's millennial temple/"*sanctuary*"
- Zechariah 6:9-14; Isaiah 11:1-16; Jeremiah 23:5-6 - Jesus, "*the Branch*" will return at the second coming, "*build the temple*", "*sit and rule on the throne*", and be the King and "*priest*". Be extra sure to read these in the NASB 2020 edition, so the meaning is not obscured.
- Haggai 2:2-9 - The pathetic second temple, which was rebuilt in the sixth century BC, is not Ezekiel's "*glorious*" millennial temple which will be rebuilt in a time of "*peace*" in the millennium after the second coming. The second temple was frequently not "*glorious*" and never saw "*peace*".
- After Jesus' second coming there is an operational system of ongoing sacrifices for sin associated with Ezekiel's millennial temple. The millennial sacrificial system involves the feast of booths which involves sacrifices. The sins still being addressed by the millennial sacrificial system are very likely those of the sinful mortal earthbound remnant of Israel and the nations who physically survive through the tribulation and the fiery second coming. They live on into the millennium as unraptured, unperfected, offspring producing mortals who are ruled with Jesus' "*rod of*

iron" and with the ruling administrative system of Jesus' perfected raptured immortal saints. The millennial sacrificial system is not the system of the Old Testament, but an altered one with all the things that have been fulfilled by Jesus being eliminated. - Zechariah 12-14; Leviticus 23:34-36; Ezekiel 40:39; 42:14; 44:19-24; 45:17-25; 46:18-24; 47:21-22; Isaiah 65:17-23; Revelation 12:1-6; Jeremiah 31:1-9; Isaiah 13:6-13; Joel 2:30-32; Isaiah 60:10-14; Revelation 3:20-22; Isaiah 45:13-23; Jeremiah 3:14-17; Isaiah 10:16-22

- Isaiah 19 - After the second coming, the remnant of Egypt comes to the millennial temple to "*worship with sacrifice and offering*"
- Jeremiah 33:14-18 - After Jesus' second coming, burnt offerings and grain offerings and sacrifices will be given at Ezekiel's millennial temple.
- Isaiah 66:15-21 - When Jesus returns at the second coming, He will choose some of the mortal unraptured remnant of Israel to be "*priests*" and "*Levites*" serving in Ezekiel's millennial temple, just as in the book of Ezekiel.
- Note: Ezekiel's millennial temple is often understood by Bible interpreters as a purely symbolic construct which will never really exist. This is frequently due to the fact that the theology of an ongoing sacrificial system and temple does not seem to fit the mainstream of Christian theology. In some sense, this

is correct. The New Testament makes it clear that those who have become immortal, perfected, resurrected, and raptured Christians no longer need to make sacrifices. End times prophecy throughout the Bible in numerous places though describes a class of mortal, imperfect people who survive through the tribulation and the second coming. Then they go on to live, die, sin, bear offspring, and repopulate the earth during the millennium. Some of them even take part in a rebellion against God at the end of the millennium in Revelation 20. It is very likely only this unraptured, unperfected, mortal remnant which is also seen in scripture numerous times, having to participate in the ongoing sacrificial system of Ezekiel's millennial temple. It is very likely this unraptured, unperfected, mortal remnant that must be ruled with Jesus' "rod of iron" during the millennium. A careful analysis of Ezekiel's millennial temple shows that numerous items in the Old Testament sacrificial system are eliminated in Ezekiel's millennial temple system. These are just the items that Jesus has fulfilled. Just a few examples may be: the ark of the covenant, the temple veil, the evening sacrifice of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice, the day of atonement, and the human high priest. This demonstrates that Ezekiel's millennial temple is not a disjointed violation of Christian theology. It is a well thought out continuation of God's plan for the redemption of sinful mankind, even of

those who survive through the tribulation as sinful mortals. Interpreting Ezekiel's millennial temple to be purely non-literal symbolism also creates a conundrum for interpreters who do so. If Ezekiel's millennial temple is completely de-literalized, all of the tightly related numerous passages which share the same content must also be completely de-literalized. These tightly related passages are just the ones throughout the Bible that I have just shown which repeat many of the things described in Ezekiel's millennial temple system. So a consistent de-literalization of Ezekiel's millennial temple and all the numerous related passages would make much of the rest of end times prophecy crumble like a house of cards into an almost meaningless symbolic black hole which would have no real literal results with practical worth to God's people. At this point, I believe I've shown ample scriptural evidence above to demonstrate the temple/tabernacle parallelism between the second coming and the Old Testament tabernacle inauguration.

"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"

So could these phrases above from the Isaiah 34 description of the second coming of Jesus be the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice from

the coming of God to the tabernacle inauguration? Of course they could. Isaiah 34 is describing the second coming, and the second coming throughout the Bible has numerous other similarities to the tabernacle inauguration and its abundant sacrifices, as you can see from the seven item list I've just shown.

The numerous parallels that I just showed above between the coming of God to the tabernacle inauguration and the events of the second coming of Jesus make it a lot more believable that the destruction of the wicked at the second coming is actually a parallel reflection of the sacrifices made and begun at the tabernacle inauguration. We might even say that the second coming is not only a parallel reflection of the tabernacle inauguration but an actual physical literal fulfillment of it. The tabernacle inauguration and the sacrificial system which was established along with it, as I have already described, are directly described by God in Exodus 29 as symbolic of God's moral cleansing of His human priests, His Deliverance of His people from the army and rule of Egypt, His togetherness with His people, and His being their God. These are all just the same literal physical characteristics of Jesus' second coming. Jesus literally returns with his newly consecrated and freshly white robed army of Christian priests, literally delivers his people from a wicked army, takes up literal physical residence among his people in the millennial temple, and becomes his people's literal ruling and crowned

High Priest King/God in a more physical literal sense. With all these things being considered, we are being almost irresistibly pushed in the direction of understanding the tabernacle inauguration and its sacrificial system as being prophecy about end times events which has its literal physical fulfillment in the events of the book of Revelation. Aside from the numerous clear symbols of the sacrificial system which appear frequently throughout Revelation (incense altar, altar, lamp stand, sacrificial bowls, temple etc. etc.) there are several more not so obvious pointers in Revelation which indicate that the destruction of the wicked is a sacrifice. These additional pointers to the wicked being a sacrifice help us to gain even more confidence that John in Revelation is using the phrase, *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever"* to point to sacrifice symbolism being applied to the sacrifice of the wicked in Isaiah 34: *"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"*. Would John use the Revelation 14:11 phrase, *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever"* to point to a symbolic sacrificing of the wicked in Isaiah 34? Of course he would. We will see that he is clearly pointing to a symbolic sacrificing of the wicked in several other places in Revelation. Let's look at those now. We'll see that several of these additional pointers are written in a way that only the ancient audience of Revelation would recognize them. We will try to think like an ancient audience and see what we see.

Chapter 5

The Wicked are a Sacrifice

As I mentioned previously in this book, many of those in John's ancient audience of the Book of Revelation would have been familiar with the Aramaic Targums^G which were Aramaic translations of books of the Hebrew Bible. Before delving into the Targums, the reader needs to understand that generally speaking, the Targums are not strictly pure translations of Old Testament scripture. They are a blend of commentary and translation. In other words, they mostly consist of strictly translated scripture from Hebrew to Aramaic, but they also contain interpretive alterations and insertions which reflect the religious beliefs of the Jewish people who produced the Targums. This probably leads most modern Christians to just ignore the Targums altogether because, *"They must be completely worthless and corrupt because they are altered scripture."* Although many of us modern Christians will take this approach, this is definitely not what the Apostle John did. There's very significant evidence that John and the Holy Spirit used wording and phrases in the New Testament which are only found in the Targums to help communicate clearly with those familiar with the Targums. One of the most prominent examples of this is found in John's use of the phrase *"the Word"* to equate Jesus with the living and breathing person who is the very Word of God. Of course

John does this in his gospel of John with his famous intro to Jesus, the Star of his gospel book:

*[John 1:14-15 WEB] 14 **The Word** became flesh, and lived among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John testified about him. He cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me, for he was before me.'"*

John and the Holy Spirit do this again though in Revelation:

*[Revelation 19:12-13 WEB] 12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has names written and a name written which no one knows but he himself. 13 He is clothed in a garment sprinkled with blood. His name is called "**The Word** of God."*

This clear equating of the Word of God with the qualities and capabilities of the Person, Jesus, is popping out of every corner of the Targum books of the Old Testament, many of which have been determined by Targum scholars to contain many wordings, phrases, and concepts which predate Christianity. On the other hand, this personification of God's Word as a person is very hard if not impossible to find in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible from which most of our modern Old Testament Bibles are translated. It is extremely easy to observe this by looking in an English

translation of the Targums such as the series of books which make up the set entitled "*The Aramaic Bible*". It might be beneficial for one to limit their search for the person, the "*Word*", to those Targum biblical books in the larger Targum book groups entitled, "Targum Jonathan" and "Targum Onkelos". Targum Onkelos consists of the Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Targum Jonathan consists of the Jewish named subset of biblical books referred to as the "Nevi'im" or "Prophets". The books of the Prophets are Joshua, Judges, 1&2 Samuel, 1&2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. These Targum book groups, Jonathan and Onkelos, generally contain the Targum biblical books with the earliest dates of writing, many of which are believed by Targum scholars to have been written in their first phase of development around the same time that the New Testament was being written. I will be discussing this more later, but scholars also believe they contain much material which predates Christianity altogether. If you search for the "*Word*" in Targums Jonathan and Onkelos you will find the person, the "*Word*", doing just about everything that a person does except for buying groceries and mowing the lawn. If you do the same exercise looking in a translation of the Hebrew Old Testament in your modern Bible, you might see something that looks a little bit like personification of the Word if you look really long and squint really hard. In the "*The Aramaic Bible*" book set, wherever you see the

word, "Memra" this is the person, the "Word" of God. "Memra" means "Word". "Memra" is just a phonetic transliteration^G into English of the Aramaic word meaning "Word" in English. Just a few examples of the "Word", "Memra" being portrayed as a person are here below from Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah:

[Jeremiah 3:20 Targum Jonathan] Thus, as a woman deals falsely with her husband, so have you lied against my Memra, O House of Israel, says the Lord."
(Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 57)

[Jeremiah 6:8 Targum Jonathan] Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Memra loathe you; lest I make you desolate like the land of Sodom which is not inhabited."
(Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 66)

[Jeremiah 31:9 Targum Jonathan] When they were exiled, when they were weeping, they were taken into exile: but on their return from among their exiles I will bring them near with great mercies. I will lead them to streams of water by a straight road: they shall not stumble on it, for my Memra will be like a father for Israel, and Ephraim is beloved before me. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 131)

[Jeremiah 31:28 Targum Jonathan] So it shall be that, as my Memra rejoices over them to uproot and to break, and to

split and to destroy and to do evil, so my Memra will rejoice over them to build and to establish, says the Lord.

(Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 133)

[Jeremiah 42:5 Targum Jonathan] But they said to Jeremiah: "May the Memra of the lord be among us as a true and faithful witness, if we do not act according to every word in which the Lord your God has sent you to us,

(Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 159)

If you look up these passages above in your modern English Bible, almost all of which are based on the Hebrew Masoretic text, you will see no signs of a person being the "Word". All this has led some scholars to believe that there is a strong case that the personification of the "Word" in the writings of the Holy Spirit in Revelation and the gospel of John are borrowing this phenomenon from the language of the Targums. See sources:

- a. John L. Ronning, 1954, "*The Jewish Targums and John's logos theology*"
- b. Paul V.M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton, 2011, "*The Targums a Critical Introduction*", pgs. 423 to 436

The idea that John has referred to the Targums in Revelation is further strongly supported by his wording used in Revelation 2:11 & 2:17, shown below. As you can see, John

associates both the "ears" that "hear" directly and the "new name" indirectly with the "second death":

[Revelation 2:11 WEB] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who overcomes won't be harmed by the second death.

[Revelation 2:17 WEB] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he who receives it.

In the English translation of Isaiah 22:14 & 65:15 from Targum Jonathan from the "The Aramaic Bible", set of Old Testament Targum books, Volume 11, shown below, we see that the Targum translator has done the same thing that John has in Revelation above, associating the "ears" that "hear" and the new "name" with the "second death":

[Isaiah 22:14 Targum Jonathan] The prophet said, With my ears I was hearing when this was decreed before the LORD God of hosts: "Surely this sin will not be forgiven you until you die the second death," says the LORD God of hosts. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 44)

[Isaiah 65:15 Targum Jonathan] You shall leave your name to my chosen for an oath, and the LORD God will slay you

with the **second death**; but his servants, the righteous, he will call by a **different name**.

(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 124)

The similarities between these four verses I just showed are obviously striking. If we read Isaiah 22:14 & 65:15 again below, translated from the Masoretic Hebrew text, the clear connection to the "second death" is essentially broken:

[Isaiah 22:14 WEB] Yahweh of Armies revealed himself in my ears, "Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die," says the Lord, Yahweh of Armies.

[Isaiah 65:15 WEB] You will leave your name for a curse to my chosen; and the Lord Yahweh will kill you. He will call his servants by another name,

The combination of the "ears that hear", the "Word", the "new name", and the "second death" in Revelation, creates a strong connection to the Targums that essentially demolishes the theory that this is just coincidence. John is very likely borrowing from the Targums. As you may know, the phrase "second death" appears three more times in Revelation, and John makes it very clear that he is using the phrase as an equivalent to "the lake of fire", hell. As of 2022, if you performed an exhaustive search through essentially all of ancient literature written very close to or before the New Testament, written in the common

languages that John's ancient audience would have been exposed to, you would find that the phrase "*second death*" appears only in the Aramaic Targums^G, with just one exception. This author did that search and so have numerous scholars with the same result. The search done throughout all of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic ancient documents built up in large exhaustive academic online databases only finds the phrase "*second death*" in the Aramaic Targums^G with one exception. The one exception is a clearly unrelated use of the phrase in the work of the 1st to 2nd century AD Greek philosopher Plutarch where he describes the second death as the second death of the soul which leads into, "*a blessed and divine life*". This is in Plutarch's work "*Moralia*" in his book entitled "*The Face on the Moon*" on page 942 in the old Stephanus page numbering system. This exclusivity of the evidence and the other connections to the Targums that I've just shown make a very strong case that the Holy Spirit in the writings of John is intentionally borrowing from the Targums in order to communicate known concepts with His ancient audience. Aramaic was one of the common languages in Asia Minor in the late first century AD, and many of the Jews of the seven churches of Revelation who frequented the synagogues there would very likely have been hearing the readings of the Targums in the synagogues. In the book of Acts, a synagogue is even mentioned directly as being located in the city of one of the seven churches of Revelation at Ephesus:

[Acts 18:19 WEB] He came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

Also, the evidence is "all but irrefutable" within scholarship that the Targums are translations which were intended to be read in the synagogues (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, intro pg. xxiii). We will see that it is very likely that this practice of Targum reading in the synagogues had begun before the time of Jesus and the writing of the New Testament. So it is very likely that John and the Holy Spirit in Revelation are speaking the biblical language of the common people when they use phrases found in the Targums.

One concept that John's audience may have associated with the Targum phrase "*second death*" is the concept of the wicked becoming a "*sacrifice*" in God's judgement against them. Of course this is just the same concept of the wicked being a sacrifice that John elsewhere points to in Revelation with his use of phrases like "*the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever*" borrowed from the sacrifice language of Isaiah 34. In Targum book subsets Onkelos and Jonathan, which have substantial scholarly support to contain concepts and wordings which predate Christianity, the phrase, "*second death*" appears only six times. Two of these appearances are in the Targum

Jonathan of Jeremiah 51. One of the passages for example from the Targum reads:

*[Jeremiah 51:39-40 Targum Jonathan] 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and they shall die the **second death**, and shall not live for the world to come, says the Lord. 40 I will hand them over **like bulls to the slaughter, like rams, with goats.** (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 187)*

Does the animal slaughter language in the passage above ring any bells? Of course this is the same type of sacrifice language we've already seen in Isaiah 34 being pointed to by Revelation 14:11 and 19:3 with the use of pointing phrases like, "*smoke rises forever and ever*". If we further inspect Jeremiah 51, we find that its general content and numerous specific unique phrases are full of very obvious parallels to both Isaiah 34 and to the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 17-19. This makes it even more possible that John is using the Targum phrase "*second death*" in Revelation to point his Aramaic speaking audience directly to Jeremiah 51. It makes it likely that the animal slaughter language seen in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51:39-40 above is in fact also sacrifice language, even though the word "*sacrifice*" does not specifically appear in it. Our modern Bibles translating the ancient Hebrew Masoretic text also show the animal slaughter in Jeremiah 51:40. The various parallels between Jeremiah 51 and each of Isaiah 34

and the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 17-19 are as follows:

1. Babylon/Edom are destroyed: Jeremiah 51, Isaiah 34, and Revelation 17-19

2. People symbolized as animals being slaughtered and/or sacrificed:

- Jeremiah 51:40 WEB - *"I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams with male goats."*
- Isaiah 34:6 WEB - *"Yahweh's sword is filled with blood. It is covered with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Edom."*

3. Nations get drunk on the wine of Babylon:

- Jeremiah 51:7 WEB - *"The nations have drunk of her wine; therefore the nations have gone mad."*
- Revelation 17:2 WEB - *"Those who dwell in the earth were made drunk with the wine of her sexual immorality."*

4. Babylon is on many waters:

- Jeremiah 51:13 WEB - *"You who dwell on many waters, abundant in treasures, your end has come"*

- Revelation 17:1 WEB - *"Come here. I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters"*

5. Babylon/Edom are desolate animal habitations:

- Jeremiah 51:37,43 WEB - *"Babylon will become heaps, a dwelling place for jackals, an astonishment, and a hissing, without inhabitant." ... "No son of man passes by it."*
- Revelation 18:2 WEB - *"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, and she has become a habitation of demons, a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird!"*
- Isaiah 34:10,11 WEB - *"From generation to generation, it will lie waste. No one will pass through it forever and ever. But the pelican and the porcupine will possess it. The owl and the raven will dwell in it."*

6. God says "come out" from Babylon to avoid God's punishments:

- Jeremiah 51:45 NASB20 - *"Come out from her midst, My people, And each of you save yourselves From the fierce anger of the LORD."*
- Revelation 18:4 WEB - *"Come out of her, my people, that you have no participation in her sins, and that you don't receive of her plagues"*

7. Rejoicing/Joy over the destruction of Babylon:

- Jeremiah 51:48 WEB - "*Then the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, will sing for joy over Babylon; for the destroyers will come to her from the north,' says Yahweh.*"
- Revelation 18:20 WEB - "*Rejoice over her, O heaven, you saints, apostles, and prophets; for God has judged your judgment on her.*"

8. Babylon will sink like a stone at its destruction:

- Jeremiah 51:63-64 WEB - "*It will be, when you have finished reading this book, that you shall bind a stone to it, and cast it into the middle of the Euphrates. Then you shall say, 'Thus will Babylon sink, and will not rise again because of the evil that I will bring on her; and they will be weary.'*"
- Revelation 18:21 WEB - "*A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thus with violence will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down, and will be found no more at all.'*"

9. Dead bodies are lying around everywhere in Babylon/Edom:

- Jeremiah 51:4 WEB - "*They will fall down slain in the land of the Chaldeans, and thrust through in her streets.*"

- Isaiah 34:3 WEB- *"Their slain will also be cast out, and the stench of their dead bodies will come up."*

10. It is the day of *"God's Vengeance"* in Edom and Babylon:

- Jeremiah 51:6 WEB - *"Don't be cut off in her iniquity; for it is the time of Yahweh's vengeance."*
- Isaiah 34:8 WEB - *"For Yahweh has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion."*

11. Details of the destruction of Babylon/Edom are recorded in a *"book"*:

- Jeremiah 51:60 WEB - *"Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come on Babylon, even all these words that are written concerning Babylon."*
- Isaiah 34:16 WEB - *"Search in the book of Yahweh, and read: not one of these will be missing. None will lack her mate. For my mouth has commanded, and his Spirit has gathered them."*

With all the points of parallelism above between Jeremiah 51, Isaiah 34, and Revelation 17-19 we can easily see that the three passages are strongly related like the points of a solid triangle. Given that, is it possible that John in Revelation would point to the content of Jeremiah 51 in the Targums by using the unique Targum phrase *"second death"*? Of course it's possible. He's already filling up Revelation directly with Jeremiah 51 content in

Revelation 17-19. Of course it's possible. He's already pointing to Jeremiah 51 type of content found in Isaiah 34 with his use of Revelation pointing phrases like, *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night"* in Revelation 14:11; 19:3; & 20:10. With all this considered, it makes sense to entertain the possibility that John in Revelation could again be pointing here to the idea of the wicked being a sacrifice in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 when he quotes the Targum phrase *"second death"* which is also found in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51.

"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"

So is it possible that phrases like these above which Revelation is pointing to in Isaiah 34 are applying the symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice onto the slaying of the wicked at the second coming? Of course it's possible. One can easily see from the evidence that I've just presented that John may be doing something just like this again by pointing to the sacrifice of the wicked in Jeremiah 51 with his use of the Targum phrase *"second death"*.

The connections that I have just described between the second death and the Targums, for some will generate more

questions than answers. For those doubting these connections it will be useful to know that there are more of these. They are obvious in both the sayings of Jesus and in the other New Testament writings. A very important one is the fact that Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65:5-6 equates the second death with hell/Gehenna just as John does in Revelation. Here's the targum passage:

[Isaiah 65:3-6 Targum Jonathan] 3 a people who incite to anger against my Memra before me continually, sacrificing in your gardens of the idols and offering up spices upon bricks; 4 who sit in the houses they build from the dust of tombs, and reside with the corpses of the sons of men; who eat swine's flesh, and abominable broth is in their vessels; 5 who say, "Get behind, do not come near me, for I am more clean than you." These, their anger is as smoke before me, their retribution is in Gehenna where the fire burns all the day. 6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will not give them respite while they live, but theirs is the retribution of their sins; I will hand over their bodies to the second death." (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pgs. 123 to 124)

This Targum passage above sounds a lot like the rotting dead bodies in Gehenna/hell that Jesus and Isaiah describe here in these two passages:

[Mark 9:47-48 WEB] 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into God's Kingdom

with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, 48 'where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched.'

[Isaiah 66:22-24 WEB] 22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me," says Yahweh, "so your offspring and your name shall remain. 23 It shall happen that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh will come to worship before me," says Yahweh. 24 "They will go out, and look at the dead bodies of the men who have transgressed against me; for their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."

The Aramaic Targum version below of the Hebrew Isaiah 66 passage above shows the Targum translator making the same connection as Jesus. The Targum translator below does just like Jesus does in the Mark 9 passage above and he labels this place of bodies and unquenchable fire as "Gehenna". Take a look at the Targum version:

[Isaiah 66:23-24 Targum Jonathan] 23 From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all the sons of flesh shall come to worship before me, says the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth and look on the bodies of the sinful men who have rebelled against my Memra; for their breaths will not die and their fire shall not be quenched, and the

wicked shall be judged in Gehenna until the righteous will say concerning them, We have seen enough."

(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 128)

Of course you can see the Targum translator in Isaiah 66 above has done some rather questionable interpretive changes, but in spite of this, his translation still creates a connection between the New Testament and the Targum by labeling the place of the dead bodies and fire as "*Gehenna*" just as Jesus does in the New Testament. Some who may be a little overzealous to support the doctrine of traditionalism will look at the Isaiah 66 passage above from the Targum and say, "*There we have a torment of endless duration.*" This is in spite of the fact that the passage describes an end of the punishment, "*until the righteous will say concerning them, We have seen enough.*" That end point of the punishment is of course very unusual from an evangelical Christian point of view, but nonetheless it is clearly there. The Targum ideas that the torment of the wicked at the end of Isaiah 66 is "*Gehenna*" and that it will last only for a finite, but long, amount of time may be concepts that date at least back to the time of the 1st century Rabbi Akiva who lived between 50 and 135 AD. **The Mishnah^G, in Eduyoth 2:10, records the words of Rabbi Akiva where he identifies the judgement at the end of Isaiah 66, "*where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*", as being Gehenna, and Akiva interprets the Isaiah 66 description of judgment as meaning that the judgment will last only for one year.**

(Flesher, 2011, pg. 392) Seeing interpretations so closely mirroring Rabbi Akiva's in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah gives us valid evidence to support the idea that some concepts found in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah are at least as old as Rabbi Akiva from the 1st or early 2nd centuries AD. In turn, this gives us more reason to believe that ideas and phrases from a Targum of Isaiah may have been referred to in the book of Revelation written near the end of the 1st century AD. According to Rabbinic Judaism^G, the Mishnah^G is a written record of the Oral Torah^G which allegedly was passed down orally for centuries since the time of Moses. The Oral Torah^G is not the Torah, the first five biblical books of Moses, but is a very large additional group of rules and traditions which Rabbinic^G Jews believe are mandatory to follow. The written Mishnah^G was composed in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. In addition to the likely fingerprints of Rabbi Akiva, **Targum Jonathan of Isaiah also contains other earmarks of having 1st century AD content which came from even before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, intro pgs. xxiii to xxiv).** Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 28:1 below, which assumes the ongoing existence of the temple "*sanctuary*" and the high priest who wears the "*turban*", just as he does in the Old Testament, is an example of this:

[Isaiah 28:1 Targum Jonathan] Woe to him who gives the crown to the proud, the foolish master of Israel, and gives the turban to the wicked one of the sanctuary of his praise,

which is on the head of the rich valley of those wounded with wine! (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 54)

This again urges us to entertain the idea that the New Testament book of Revelation may contain Targum Isaiah concepts or phrases which were John's approach to communicating in a way his Aramaic speaking audience may have known.

There are more similarities and connections that can be described between the Targums and the New Testament. Targum scholars Paul V.M. Flesher and Bruce Chilton have devoted the entirety of chapter 17 in their 2011 book, *The Targums a Critical Introduction*, doing precisely that. Robert Hayward in volume 12, *The Targum of Jeremiah*, page 27 of the Targum book set *The Aramaic Bible*, also describes more similarities and connections between the New Testament and specifically Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah. Of the New Testament connections to the Targums that Flesher, Chilton, and Hayward list, some that this author found to have no Hebrew Old Testament parallels are shown in the five numbered verse comparisons which follow. These five I show below might have parallels in the Septuagint or elsewhere though as some of the parallels shown by Flesher, Chilton, and Hayward did have parallels to the Hebrew Old Testament that this author was able to find with very deep electronic searches:

1. *[Isaiah 50:11 Targum Jonathan] Behold, all you who kindle a fire, who grasp a sword! Go, fall in the fire which you kindled and on the sword which you grasped! This you have from my Memra: you shall return to your stumbling. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 99)*

[Matthew 26:52 NASB20] 52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword will perish by the sword.

2. *[Isaiah 27:8 Targum Jonathan] With the measure you were measuring with they will measure to you, because you were sending away and distressing them, muttering against them in speech, becoming strong against them as a day of cursing. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 53)*

[Matthew 7:2 NASB20] 2 "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

3. *[Isaiah 5:22-23 Targum Jonathan] 22 Woe to those who are heroes at drinking and men of possessions in getting drunk from old wine, 23 who acquit the sinner because they received from him mammon of deceit and wickedly take away the innocence of the innocent! (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 12)*

[Luke 16:9 WEB] I tell you, make for yourselves friends by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when you fail, they may receive you into the eternal tents.

4. *[Isaiah 8:19 Targum Jonathan] And when the Gentiles that you are among say to you, "Inquire of oracles and necromancy, those who chirp and twitter," is not this the way of the Gentiles who serve idols? The people inquire of their idols, the living from the dead. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 20)*

[Luke 24:5 NASB20] 5 and as the women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why are you seeking the living One among the dead?"

5. *[Jeremiah 32:5 Targum Jonathan] And he shall carry Zedekiah to Babylon, and he shall be there until his memorial comes in before me, says the Lord: if you wage war with the Chaldeans, you shall not prosper.'" (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 136)*

[Acts 10:4 HCSB] Looking intently at him, he became afraid and said, "What is it, lord?" The angel told him, "Your prayers and your acts of charity have come up as a memorial offering before God.

As you've seen by all the concepts and phrases that are shared by both the New Testament and the Targums, it

appears as if both Jesus and John made the assumption that their audiences had already been exposed to the Targums and knew materials from them well. This notion is supported by the witness of the 1st century AD Jewish historian Josephus Flavius. **Josephus records that by his time the Torah was being listened to in the synagogues every week by men who would "*desert their other occupations and assemble to listen*". For this to occur, an Aramaic translation, whether read aloud or recited from memory, would have necessarily been offered. This would have allowed the common Aramaic speaking Jew to understand God's word. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 3 to 7)** The notion that the Targums existed before Christianity is also supported by Targums found among the Dead Sea scrolls. **Portions of the Targums of Job and Leviticus were found at Qumran (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. ix).** Taking into consideration all the numerous phrases and concepts which the Targums and the New Testament share leads us to the conclusion that there were "pre-Christian Targums"^G which were written, circulated, and existing well before Christianity. Josephus and the Targums found among the Dead Sea scrolls, as mentioned above, also help lead us to this conclusion. I will continue to use the term "pre-Christian Targums"^G as I have just defined it going forward throughout this book. One might deny that these pre-Christian Targums^G were in written form, instead favoring the theory that they were just an oral tradition that was memorized and passed along from person to person.

For this to happen, numerous specific concepts and specifically worded phrases found in multiple books of the Bible would need to be memorized by numerous people and then recited aloud frequently in a widespread geographical area over the course of decades without the numerous specific concepts and specifically worded phrases themselves being lost in this very tenuous process. Lots of people across a widespread geographic area would also need to be frequently gathering with each other both reciting and memorizing the passages with their specific wording without the aid of any written manuscripts. All this would necessarily have to happen in order for the specific concepts and specifically worded phrases in the Targums to become widespread and well known enough through strictly oral transmission for Jesus and John to use their material and expect their audience to be familiar with it. If you believe an oral transmission like this is possible, I have some very useful swampland I would like to sell you for a good price. It is provable and repeatable that if one person orally tells another person something and then that person tells another person something and then that person tells another person something, by the time you get to the last person you have nothing like what was said by the first person. Unique, specifically worded phrases and specifically worded concepts uttered by the first person are very likely to be lost in transmission. Have you ever played the party game of telephone? It does seem plausible that rough general ideas may be preserved in a decades long oral

transmission, but the effective preservation of a high volume of specific, fine-tuned wording and phrases like we see in the Targums just does not seem to fit into the realm of what is possible. **Targum scholar Bernard Grossfeld, regarding the Pentateuch only, asserts that written Targums of the Pentateuch must have been in existence and circulating in Israel before the writing of Targum Onkelos of the Pentateuch due to sufficient references being scattered throughout the ancient Jewish Rabbinic^G literature. He estimates that Targum Onkelos was initially written sometime from the beginning to the middle of the 2nd century AD. He asserts that the scriptural interpretations found in Targum Onkelos "*rest*" "*upon*" the "*tradition*" of Rabbi Akiva. With what looks to be some degree of speculation, he goes on even further to say that written Targums of the Pentateuch which preceded Onkelos were likely in existence even back into the 1st century BC due to the fact that the much less popular book of Job already had a Targum by this time. (Grossfeld, 1990, Vol. 6, pgs. 32 to 34) Recall that Rabbi Akiva lived between 50 and 135 AD. Grossfeld's comments generally provides us with some indirect scholarly support for the idea that written pre-Christian Targums^G were instrumental in preserving and disseminating the many Targum phrases and concepts which found their way into the New Testament. Even if you are steadfast in believing that the pre-Christian Targums^G were only a body of orally transmitted fully memorized Aramaic translations, you will still be able to**

follow some or maybe all of the points that I will be making in regard to what the Targums may reveal about concepts in the New Testament.

Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah shows signs of containing very early material just as Targum Jonathan of Isaiah and Targum Onkelos do. **Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah shares many conceptual or phrasal similarities with the Dead Sea scrolls, Josephus, the New Testament, Pseudo-Philo's *Book of Biblical Antiquities*, and the Septuagint. All of these sources are known to be of 3rd century BC to 1st century AD origin, and Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah's commonalities with them demonstrates, "*that certain basic exegetical points*" of Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah are "*older than 70 A.D., and are of possibly pre-Christian origin*". (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 26 to 28) The type of Aramaic which Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah uses justifies a view which places its origins in the timespan of the 1st to 2nd centuries AD. The geographical terms it uses point to an origin before the Jewish bar Kohkba rebellion against Rome in 132 AD. Its perspective looking forward to the destruction of the temple and its perspective on the still existing temple priests both point to an origin for Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah of before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 35 to 37)**

Are the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan that we actually have on hand now an accurate reflection of the

content of the pre-Christian Targums that the audience of John and Jesus would have known? Maybe some biblical books found in Onkelos and Jonathan are themselves pre-Christian Targums, or at least some of them may have been written before the book of Revelation which was written near the end of the 1st century AD. Jesus and John were clearly quoting from pre-Christian Targums in order to prompt their audiences to call to mind Targum concepts which would add to or clarify their teachings. If we as modern people are going to benefit from this same type of supplementation and clarification which results from being familiar with Targum concepts, then we must study Targum concepts and phrases which we know at least could really be from pre-Christian Targums. These must be pre-Christian Targum concepts and phrases which have not been corrupted by editing which occurred well after the writing of the New Testament. Whether the specific Targum concepts and phrases that I am referencing in this book (such as the "*second death*") from Targums Onkelos and Jonathan are pre-Christian, without any later editing after the writing of the book of Revelation, may be a debatable topic. I will simply present to you the evidence that I know of on this topic and leave it up to you or others to do further research on this. As you have seen, the Targums which I have been focusing on are Jonathan and Onkelos because they are known to have the earliest dating of writing. This might indicate that they are the Targums which are most likely to be pre-Christian Targums or that they are the Targums that

are most likely to just contain concepts and wording which accurately reflect the pre-Christian Targums. Whether we can rely on Jonathan and Onkelos to accurately provide us with pre-Christian Targum concepts though is not a simple question. Although the writing of Targums Jonathan and Onkelos can not be definitively dated to have happened before the writing of Revelation, **there is good evidence to show that many of the unique concepts and wording that only they contain are clearly dated to be pre-Christian (Kim, 2008, pgs. 83 to 85 | Flesher, 2011, pg. 386).** All the Targum phrases and concepts which I have already demonstrated to be common to both the New Testament and Targum Jonathan are some of that "good evidence".

As you may have noticed, in my discussion this far I have generally been referring to Jonathan and Onkelos. The only individual books in Jonathan and Onkelos which contain the phrase, "*second death*" are Deuteronomy of Onkelos and Isaiah and Jeremiah of Jonathan. Since Jonathan contains several biblical books which scholarly work demonstrates were primarily authored well after the New Testament, I will attempt to show only dating evidence which pertains in some way to the books of Jonathan and Onkelos that the second death appears in, namely Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. The "*second death*" is the main Targum concept we are interested in for this discussion, so that limitation is appropriate. It just so happens that Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah are some

of the books in Jonathan and Onkelos which several of the most prominent Targum scholars claim very early authorship for. Not all Targum scholars have agreed with this assertion of early authorship. The dating estimates of the several prominent scholars who assert early authorship differ, but they generally describe their writing to be in the 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD. There is even some scholarly support for the idea that all three of them were initially written before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. The dating of these Targums Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos is not so simple though. The several prominent Targum scholars all assert that these Targums underwent a first phase of development in Israel sometime in the previously mentioned 1st to mid 2nd centuries AD. This first phase of development they refer to as the "Tannaitic" development phase. After the 132 AD bar Kohkba rebellion against Roman rule in Israel, when much of the Jewish religious leadership went into exile again in Babylonia, these scholars assert that Targums Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos all underwent a second phase of development or editing in Babylonia during the exile. They assert that this second phase was complete by the early 4th century AD. This second phase is referred to by these scholars as the "Amoraic" phase of development. If correct, this multistage development would mean that Targums Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos may contain concepts and phrases from both the Tannaitic and later Amoraic phases of

development. These prominent scholars have confidence that specific characteristics from both the Tannaitic and Amoraic phases can be detected in the Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos. To a large degree, this detection is done with literary analysis that takes into account how the individual concepts and phrases in these Targums relate to other accurately dated ancient documents, and also how they relate to accurately dated historical events occurring from the 1st to 4th centuries AD. These scholars have focused on some of the various different individual phrases or concepts found in these Targums and have been able to confidently date them individually with far more precision than can be achieved for any one of these Targum books as a whole. This author is not aware of an existing fully developed, in-depth literary dating analysis that has been specifically done for the concept and phrase "*second death*" as it is described in the Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos. So this author cannot say with certainty that the way that the "*second death*" is defined by its use in the Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos is strictly a pre-Christian definition which would have been well known by John's ancient audience of Revelation. There is some literary dating evidence for the Onkelos and Jonathan definition of the second death that I will show in chapter 6, but this evidence does not seem completely conclusive to this author. With the knowledge this author has, I can only say that the definition of the "*second death*",

as it is described in Onkelos and Jonathan, may be purely pre-Christian. This only creates the distinct possibility that Targums Jonathan and Onkelos define the "*second death*" identically to how John and his ancient audience of Revelation would have understood it. In spite of that, it is outside the scope of this book to delve into a comprehensive literary dating analysis of the concept and phrase "*second death*" as it appears in the Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos. I would like to urge others to find or perform the full literary dating analysis, if either is possible. This might give significant confidence that the definition of the "*second death*", as it is found in Jonathan and Onkelos, is the same concept that John uses in Revelation. As we will see in chapter 6, the definition of the "*second death*" in these Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos has no conformance with the traditional view of hell, and some very significant signs of conformity to conditionalism. So the literary dating analysis may have significant value for supporting conditionalism. For those who would like to delve a bit deeper and check my sources for the generalized dating details I have just provided in this paragraph, I have provided a numbered list below of additional more granular dating information with citations for the Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Jonathan and Onkelos:

1. Targums Onkelos and Jonathan display a very high degree of linguistic standardization, containing very uniform characteristics imposed onto the Jewish Literary Aramaic which they are written in. This standardization is not observed in Jewish Literary Aramaic documents before Onkelos and Jonathan. Accomplishing this type of standardization throughout a large body of work such as Onkelos and Jonathan during the times of upheaval and war which commenced at the time of the destruction of the temple in 70 AD is unlikely as it would require an established and stable source of religious authority and scribal training which would not likely exist during a time of war and upheaval. This supports the idea that the first phase of development of Onkelos and Jonathan was accomplished before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. Analysis of the concepts contained in Onkelos and Jonathan also support this same pre-70 AD first development phase date. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 273 to 274) The reader should call to mind that this dating would place the writing of the Targums of Deuteronomy, Isaiah, and Jeremiah of Onkelos and Jonathan before the writing of Revelation which likely occurred nearer the end of the 1st century AD.

2. Targum Onkelos, which includes Deuteronomy, was developed in a two phase process. It was initially

written sometime in the first two centuries AD in Israel, then later revised in the 3rd or 4th centuries AD in Babylonia. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 84 to 85)

3. The study of various Aramaic dialects and their development in Judaism mandates that the first development phase of Onkelos, including Deuteronomy, had to have occurred between 50 to 150 AD (Flesher, 2011, pg. 157).

4. One of the "*most definitive statements*" on the subject of the dating of Targum Onkelos, which includes Deuteronomy, was made by Professor Goshen-Gottstein. Professor Goshen-Gottstein's stance is that the first phase of the development of Targum Onkelos was completed between 70 and 135 AD in Israel. (The first phase development is referred to as "Proto-Onkelos".) Proto-Onkelos was then transferred to Babylonia in the mid 2nd century AD where it underwent further "*redaction and changes*". (Grossfeld, 1990, Vol. 6, pgs. 10 to 11)

5. The first phase of the development of Targum Onkelos, which includes Deuteronomy, was completed sometime from the beginning to the middle of the 2nd century AD in Israel (Grossfeld, 1990, Vol. 6, pg. 33).

6. Targum Jonathan of Isaiah also shows internal signs of having been completed in two phases of development, the Tannaitic phase in Israel and the later Amoraic phase in Babylon. It shows characteristics belonging to the period just after the destruction of the temple in 70 AD and also characteristics indicative of the perspectives of the rabbis in Babylon in the 4th century AD. (Flesher, 2011, pg. 173)

7. Analysis of the scriptural interpretations found in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah support the assertion that its first phase of development occurred before the Jewish bar Kohkba rebellion against the Romans in 132 AD, and then the second phase was completed in the 4th century AD. Targum Jonathan of Isaiah contains interpretations which pertain to the concerns of the translators of the first Tannaitic phase of development in Israel. It also contains interpretations which pertain to the concerns of the translators of the second Amoraic phase of development in Babylon. (Flesher, 2011, pg. 181)

8. The extensive analysis of the scriptural interpretations found in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah by scholar Bruce Chilton has indicated that Targum Jonathan of Isaiah received its first Tannaitic phase of development in Israel by Jonathan ben Uzziel who

***"flourished"* between 70 and 135 AD. Chilton's work further indicates that Targum Jonathan was *"perhaps incomplete"* after the first phase, and then was completed in its second Amoraic phase of development in Babylon by Rabbi Joseph bar Hiyya of Pumbeditha, who died in 333 AD. Rabbi Joseph bar Hiyya of Pumbeditha is identified in the Babylonian Talmud^G as the second phase Targum translator. The two stage development model is supported by a consensus of scholars. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 174 to 175)**

9. The first Tannaitic phase of development of Targum Jonathan of Isaiah in Israel may or may not have resulted in the translation of the entire book of Isaiah. Some of the translation may only have been completed for the first time in the second Amoraic phase of development in Babylon. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, intro pg. xxiv)

10. Targum Jonathan of both Isaiah and Jeremiah contain scriptural interpretations which demonstrate that they were both created in a two phase development, with the second Amoraic phase being characterized by *"revision"* during the late 3rd and early 4th centuries AD. The first Tannaitic phase of development is evident in the interpretations in these Targums which are associated with the historical events occurring between the destruction of the

temple in 70 AD and the bar Kohkba revolt against the Romans in 132 AD. (Flesher, 2011, pg. 226)

11. The *"origins"* of Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah are from the land of Israel, during or slightly before the 1st century AD. The *"foundations of it were laid already"* by the early 2nd century AD. It *"continued to grow and receive attention"* until the 4th century AD. Its *"basic substratum"* is from the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, although *"its roots"* may be even older. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 36 to 38)

12. Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah underwent the same two-stage development as Targum Jonathan of Isaiah, with the first Tannaitic phase occurring *"in the decades prior to the bar Kohkba revolt"* in 132 AD and the second Amoraic phase during the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 199, 208 to 211)

There is another very important question which may occur to those who are trying to decide whether or not they will believe that the New Testament is using concepts and wording found in the Targums. Which came first the chicken or the egg? Did Jesus and the New Testament authors use pre-existing Targum concepts and phrases, or did the very Jewish writers of Targums Jonathan and Onkelos load up their work with Christian concepts and

phrases invented by Jesus and the New Testament authors? A relatively confident answer to this question can be derived from the fact that Targums Onkelos and Jonathan were and still are the property, possession, and production of Rabbinic Judaism^G, which since its inception just after the time of Jesus has intentionally and overtly rejected Jesus as its Messiah. See below, for example, an excerpt from the Babylonian Talmud^G in which Rabbinic^G Jews express an open claim of origination and acceptance of Targums Onkelos and Jonathan. In the Babylonian Talmud^G in Megillah 3a we read:

"The Gemara cites another ruling of Rabbi Yirmeya or Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba. Rabbi Yirmeya said, and some say that it was Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba who said: The Aramaic translation of the Torah used in the synagogues was composed by Onkelos the convert based on the teachings of Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua. The Aramaic translation of the Prophets was composed by Yonatan ben Uzziel based on a tradition going back to the last prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The Gemara relates that when Yonatan ben Uzziel wrote his translation, Eretz Yisrael quaked over an area of four hundred parasangs [parsa] by four hundred parasangs, and a Divine Voice emerged and said: Who is this who has revealed My secrets to mankind?"

(KTB, 2014, Vol. 12, Megillah 3a)

In the Babylonian Talmud^G excerpt above we can see: a hint of the use of the Targums for reading in the synagogues, the Rabbinic^G influence on Targums Jonathan and Onkelos, the authorship of Targum Onkelos of the Torah by the convert Onkelos, and the authorship of Targum Jonathan of the Prophets by Yonatan (Jonathan) ben Uzziel. So the writers and editors of Targums Onkelos and Jonathan would have had zero desire to extensively poach Christian sayings and concepts to put in their Targums. This does not mean that Targums Onkelos and Jonathan are composed of only tainted anti-Christian materials which would have never been quoted or referenced by Jesus and the New Testament authors. As I've described previously, there's a very strong case that Onkelos and Jonathan contain many pre-Christian Targum concepts and phrases which Jesus and the New Testament authors deemed fully worthy of quotation and use. These pre-Christian Targum concepts and phrases were very likely content that the Aramaic speaking 1st century AD ancient audiences of Jesus and the New Testament authors would have been very familiar with. Although Rabbinic Judaism's^G extensive involvement with Targums Onkelos and Jonathan should obviously motivate us to approach them with caution, at the same time it also can assure us that many of the phrases and concepts they contain are not simply poached from Jesus and the Christians. Instead, Rabbinic Judaism's^G extensive involvement with Targums Onkelos and Jonathan supports the idea that the phrases and concepts which appear in both the New Testament and

in Onkelos/Jonathan were in existence before the New Testament. Based on this then, Onkelos and Jonathan should be expected to be an odd blend of some anti-Jesus content stuffed in with all the other pre-Christian Targum content which I've already shown you is used extensively in the New Testament. So Onkelos and Jonathan should contain a blend of content made up of some pre-Christian Targum materials which are harmonious with Christianity and some post-Jesus Rabbinic additions which are intentionally designed to contradict Christianity. They should contain some content which accurately explains New Testament Christian content, and some which overtly contradicts the New Testament. From this author's point of view, it does seem clear that Onkelos and Jonathan accurately clarify and explain some of the Targum concepts found in the New Testament. It's instances like these where Onkelos and Jonathan may be very useful in understanding Christianity. It's noteworthy though that none of the New Testament content which I have shown so far to have likely accurate clarifications in Onkelos and Jonathan has any direct bearing on the central doctrines of Christianity which sharply contradict Rabbinic Judaism. If Onkelos and Jonathan are characterized by Rabbinic Judaism, then we would expect to see some content in them which refutes the central doctrines of Christianity. This is exactly what we find. In the New Testament in Galatians 3:13 we find a quote of Deuteronomy 21:23 where Paul is recognizing a prophecy in Deuteronomy which supports Jesus' role of

bearing God's curse against sin in our place for us on the cross:

[Galatians 3:13 WEB] Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. For it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree,"

In Galatians above Paul is likely quoting from the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy here:

[Deuteronomy 21:22-23 LES1 Septuagint] 22 "But if there is a sin in someone, there shall be a judgment of death, and he shall die, and you shall hang him on a tree. 23 His body shall not sleep upon the tree; rather, with a funeral you shall bury him in that day, for all who hang on a tree are cursed from God. And you shall not defile the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a portion."

For reference, here is an English modern translation of Deuteronomy 21:22-23:

[Deuteronomy 21:22-23 WEB] 22 If a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him the same day; for he who is hanged is accursed of God. Don't defile your land which Yahweh your God gives you for an inheritance.

And then here below is Deuteronomy 21:22-23 of Targum Onkelos where we may see an anti-Christian Rabbinic alteration. Notice how the description of sin is relocated so that it is much more directly attributed to the one being hanged, and the curse that Jesus took in our place has mysteriously vanished. This helps to erase Jesus from the passage, as Jesus was of course sinless and took on the curse we deserve:

[Deuteronomy 21:22-23 Targum Onkelos] When a man guilty of the judgment of death is put to death, and thou hast hanged him on a gibbet; his body shall not remain upon the gibbet, but thou shalt surely bury him on that day: for he was hanged because he had sinned before the Lord; and thy land which the Lord thy God hath given thee to inherit shall not be defiled. (Etheridge, 1865, pg. 522)

Jesus is further erased from the Targum Jonathan of Isaiah in the famous messianic chapter 53. Here in an English modern translation of Isaiah 53:5 we see the prophecy of Jesus being crucified for our sins:

[Isaiah 53:5 WEB] But he was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought our peace was on him; and by his wounds we are healed.

Then in the Targum Jonathan of Isaiah, Jesus has mysteriously disappeared and been replaced with the temple. Also, in what may be an unchristian like manner, forgiveness of sins comes merely through just an attachment to Messiah's words:

[Isaiah 53:5 Targum Jonathan] And he will build the sanctuary which was profaned for our sins, handed over for our iniquities; and by his teaching his peace will increase upon us, and in that we attach ourselves to his words our sins will be forgiven us. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 104)

In Targum Jonathan of Zechariah we also find Jesus being conspicuously erased. **Targum Jonathan of Zechariah has a close relation to the Targums Jeremiah and Isaiah of Jonathan, simply being part of the same larger work of Targum Jonathan, but it also has the same dating scheme of having its first Tannaitic phase of development completed in Israel before the 132 AD bar Kohkba revolt against the Romans. It also underwent the same second Amoraic development phase of "revision" in Babylonia in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD as we have discussed for Targums Jeremiah and Isaiah of Jonathan. (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 199, 226)** Here below in an English modern translation of Zechariah 11 and 12 we see the prophecies of Jesus being betrayed for 30 pieces of silver by Judas, and the prophecy of his crucifixion:

[Zechariah 11:12-13 WEB] 12 I said to them, "If you think it best, give me my wages; and if not, keep them." So they weighed for my wages thirty pieces of silver. 13 Yahweh said to me, "Throw it to the potter, the handsome price that I was valued at by them!" I took the thirty pieces of silver, and threw them to the potter, in Yahweh's house.

[Zechariah 12:10 WEB] I will pour on David's house, and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they will look to me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, and will grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves for his firstborn.

Just as with the other Targum passages, Jesus mysteriously vanishes. I know Jesus can miraculously vanish if he wants to. Jesus has done this before, but this seems much more likely to be the doing of a Rabbinic Jewish scribe who has rejected Jesus. See the altered Targum passages below:

[Zechariah 11:12-13 Targum Jonathan] 12 And I said to them, 'If it is good in your eyes fulfil my will; and if not, refrain.' And some people fulfilled my will." 13 And the lord said to me, "Write a record of their deeds on a writing tablet and cast it into the Sanctuary, into the care of an official, because my fear was precious in their eyes." So I wrote a record of their deeds on a writing tablet and cast it into the Sanctuary of the Lord, into the care of the chief official.

(Cathcart, 1989, Vol. 14, pgs. 214 to 215)

[Zechariah 12:10 Targum Jonathan] And I will pour upon the House of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of mercy and compassion, and they shall entreat me because they were exiled; and they shall mourn for him just as they mourn for an only son and shall lament for him as they lament for a firstborn.

(Cathcart, 1989, Vol. 14, pgs. 218 to 219)

As I mentioned before, all these characteristically Rabbinic Jewish alterations to the Targum texts clearly add evidence to the assertion that Targums Jonathan and Onkelos have not been intentionally loaded up with the copied sayings of Jesus and the New Testament authors. The Rabbinic Jews who clearly rejected Jesus would have had no interest compiling a collection of Christian sayings in their Targums Jonathan and Onkelos. It is far more likely that Targums Jonathan and Onkelos have much pre-Christian Targum content in them which Jesus and the New Testament authors quoted from frequently to speak in religious language and phrases that their Aramaic speaking audiences were very familiar with. We might be tempted to think that the anti-Christian alterations found in Targums Jonathan and Onkelos indicate that they are a poisoned well from which we can learn nothing about the sayings of Jesus and the New Testament authors. Extreme caution should be used applying this characterization to Targums Jonathan and Onkelos though, as it may lead to us missing out on the light

they may shed on enigmatic New Testament phrases such as the "*second death*" which clearly have their origin in the Targums.

Using Targums as a resource to understand Jesus and the New Testament is not an invention of this author. Prominent targum scholars such as Bruce Chilton and Paul V.M. Flesher give enthusiastic endorsements to the Targums as an aid to understanding the New Testament and the 1st century AD Judaic setting it developed in. Some cited quotations of these endorsements from Flesher and Chilton are below:

"The Targumim are a rich source of that form of early Judaism where the folk and the expert (i.e., rabbinic) aspects of the religion met. For that reason, serious students of the New Testament should read them to help them comprehend the religious and social context within which Jesus taught and in which his movement first developed, especially in the years before the transition to a Hellenistic social milieu and the Greek language." (Flesher, 2011, pg. 386)

"If modern scholars hope to understand the scriptural knowledge of average Jews of this period—as opposed to the highly educated yet small rabbinic elite—then they need to turn away from the Hebrew text and toward the Aramaic Targums which provided that knowledge."
(Flesher, 2011, pg. 338)

"The insight which the Targum offers into devotional, as distinct from professional, Judaism is all the more valuable because in its Tannaitic phase it reflects developments in the period before and immediately after A.D. 70."

(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, intro pg. xxvi)

The Revelation theme that the wicked are a sacrifice does not stop at its likely reference by the second death. Yet another example of a pointing reference to this theme is very likely accomplished by John's use of a very rare Greek word construction where he puts two of the Greek word for age, αἰών, Strong's word^G G165, back to back with no other word between them in Revelation 14:11. This rare phrase only occurs once in the entire New Testament right here in Revelation 14:11. The specific phrase in Revelation 14:11 which is best supported by the ancient New Testament manuscripts with the headword^G or lemma altered to specific forms is: "αἰῶνας αἰώνων". English translations, of course, translate this odd phrase somewhat incorrectly as "*forever and ever*" in order to make it read smoothly. For textual critics, this two word phrase in Revelation 14:11, Strong's "G165 G165" in all of its various inflected forms^G, with no additional word between the two words, is supported by ancient manuscripts: Chester Beatty papyri P47, Codex Alexandrinus, and Ephraemi Rescriptus. Only three of the four great uncial^G manuscripts contain Revelation 14:11. Of these three great uncial^G manuscripts,

only the Sinaiticus manuscript inserts the word "τῶν" between the two words of the phrase. The two word phrase in Revelation 14:11 is also supported by the prolific New Testament Greek critical editions^G: Wescott Hort, Nestle Aland, Society of Biblical Literature Edition, Robinson Pierpoint, Stephanus Text, Textus Receptus, Family 35, and the Hodges Farstad Majority Text^G. So whether you fall into the majority text^G camp or the critical text^G camp of New Testament textual criticism^G, the rare word construction is still very well supported by the ancient manuscripts and essentially all top textual criticism^G scholarship. A comprehensive search in the largest online academic database of ancient Greek documents in existence as of 2024, the TLG[®], Thesaurus Linguae Graecae[®], only finds this phrase (comprised of two back to back occurrences of Strong's word^G G165) in one other place in ancient documents written before the New Testament. (This holds true for all possible combinations of all possible inflections^G, singular or plural, of the two instances of Strong's word G165 used in the phrase "G165 G165".) Guess where it can be found? You guessed right! "G165 G165", in any of its inflected forms^G, only appears in the Septuagint, and then it only appears in just five of the Psalms: 19, 21, 22, 37, & 132 and once in the apocryphal short story of Susanna. An excerpt from the TLG[®] website says:

"The TLG[®] Digital Library contains virtually all Greek texts surviving from the period between Homer (8 c. B.C.) and the

fall of Byzantium in A.D. 1453 and a large number of texts up to the 20th century."

(October 10, 2024; <https://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/history.php>)

It is also a repeated finding in scholarly works that this rare phrase can be found nowhere in any ancient Greek writings before the Septuagint. So it is very likely the case that it is an entirely unique "Septuagintism", designed by Septuagint translators to enable the Greek language to effectively express the meaning of the Hebrew text. It should be noted that the Septuagint is only represented in the TLG[®] by the semieclectic text^G, "Rahlfs", Septuagint, aka "*Septuaginta: id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*" and not by the specific texts of the very numerous existing ancient manuscripts of the Septuagint. There may be other occurrences of the rare two word phrase in textual variants^G from various other ancient manuscripts. **For example, searching for the phrase with all possible combinations of inflections**^G in Swete's Septuagint reveals one additional occurrence of the phrase in a textual variant^G in Psalm 45:6 of Codex Vaticanus, which is the primary ancient manuscript used by Swete. Swete generally only uses other manuscripts for his main text when Vaticanus is missing portions. As indicated by Swete, the Vaticanus textual variant^G in Psalm 45 is not present in manuscripts Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, R (Psalterium Graeco-Latinum Veronense), and T (Psalterium Turicense), and is supported by no other of the ancient manuscripts considered

important enough by Swete to use in his textual criticism^G (Swete, 1891, Vol. II, pg. 271). It's worth noting too that searching the entire critical apparatus^G in Swete's Septuagint for all possible inflection^G combinations of the rare two word phrase, "G165 G165", reveals no other occurrences of it in addition to the seven that I've mentioned now. **Additionally, the five Psalms 19, 21, 22, 37, 132 and the Susanna passage can all be confirmed to have the rare two word phrase, "αἰῶνα αἰῶνος", in the more updated "Gottingen Septuagint" critical edition^G, "Vetus Testamentum Graecum". The Gottingen Septuagint does not have the rare two word phrase in Psalm 45 as Codex Vaticanus does (Rahlfs, 1931, Vol. X | Ziegler, 1954, Vol. XVI, Part 2).** The Gottingen Septuagint, as you may know, is generally seen as the latest, most dominant Septuagint critical edition for the biblical books it contains.

The occurrences of the rare two word phrase, "G165 G165", found in the Old Testament Septuagint are all the variant where each of the two G165 words are singular like this, "αἰῶνα αἰῶνος", "age age" instead of plural. Revelation 14:11 has the plural variant like this, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages" as I previously showed. This does not break the connection between the Old Testament Septuagint and New Testament phrase though. In the Bible, the phrase expressed in Strong's numbers, "G165 G165", that we are looking at so closely has a close cousin phrase, "G165 G3588 G165" which has the definite article, G3588, ὁ,

ho sandwiched into the middle of it. "G165 G3588 G165", throughout the Bible, can be literally translated as *"ages of the ages"*, *"age of the age"*, or *"age of the ages"*. Almost without exception, the New Testament shifts from the Old Testament's frequent use of the singular phrasal version *"age of the age"*, "αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος" over to the frequent use of the plural phrasal variant *"ages of the ages"*, "αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων". This clues us in that the New Testament very likely has also done the same thing with the highly related cousin phrase that we are focusing on in Revelation 14:11, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "G165 G165". It just repeats the same maneuver and shifts the Old Testament use of the singular phrase variant "αἰῶνα αἰῶνος", *"age age"* over to the plural variant, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", *"ages ages"* in its single New Testament use in Revelation 14:11. The connection between the New Testament plural and Old testament singular phrase is not broken. The New Testament is very likely just following the repeatedly used shift in convention. The New Testament convention shift likely is:

"αἰῶνα αἰῶνος" singular = "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" plural

So the conclusion is that the rare and odd phrase "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", *"ages ages"* in Revelation 14:11, would have stuck out to John's audience like a sore thumb as just not being the way people normally speak. It would have gotten their attention as a weird way to say something, and ultimately those among John's audience who knew the Psalms from the Septuagint, would have known exactly

what it was, a clever pointer to the Psalms and Susanna in the Septuagint.

We still might remain unconvinced that John and the Holy Spirit are directing us to these Psalms and the book of Susanna, but when we go and read their content we run into a large volume of evidence that supports the idea that we very very likely are being intentionally directed to required reading which explains the meaning of Revelation 14:11:

[Revelation 14:11 WEB] The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever ("αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages", "G165 G165"). They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

All six of the Psalms (including the one resulting from the textual variant^G in Psalm 45) and Susanna are related directly to judgment of the wicked, and three of them contain some of the same wording as Revelation 14:10-11. These strong connections clearly go far beyond any possible coincidence. If just one or a few of these Psalms and Susanna passages contained similar content to Revelation 14:10-11, then we might be more apt to think of them as coincidence. All of them strongly connect though seven times repeatedly, like getting dealt a dominantly winning hand seven times in a row while playing poker. I will go into

some of the content of the other passages later, but for now I would like to start out with just one of these Psalms that use the unique and rare word construction, "αἰῶνα αἰῶνος". I will start with just Psalm 22. Psalm 22 gives us yet another assertion that the wicked are to be a sacrifice, acting yet again in the same repeated style of Revelation 14:11 using the phrase, *"the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever"* to point to the wicked being a sacrifice in Isaiah 34: *"its smoke goes up for generations"*, *"it burns night and day"*, *"it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"*. Revelation 14:11 points to Psalm 22 with the unique phrase "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" and then Psalm 22, in an oddly roundabout way, describes the wicked as a sacrifice. One of the background concepts that we need to understand in order to know how Psalm 22 does this, is the fact that temple sacrifices and other activities were often accompanied by songs being sung by the Levite temple singers (See: 1 Chronicles 9:33, 1 Chronicles 23:27-31, Psalm 134:1-3). The introductory verse 1 title to Psalm 22, depending on which ancient translation of the Bible that you are looking in, goes something like this:

- Septuagint: LES2 - *"For the end, on behalf of the help of the early morning, a Psalm of David"*
- Latin Vulgate^G: Douay - *"Unto the end, for the morning enterprise, the Psalm of David"*

- Targum: *The Aramaic Bible* - "To the singer; concerning the help of the **continual offering** of the morning. A psalm of David" (Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 57)
- Masoretic text: WEB - "For the Chief Musician; set to "The Doe of the Morning." A Psalm by David."

In regard to the odd expression seen above in the Psalm 22 title from the Masoretic text, "*The Doe of the Morning*" the Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon says:

" 'Hind of the Dawn', probably was the morning sun itself shedding its first beams, which the Arabians call gazelle; comparing, according to the use of the language, the rays to horns." (Tregelles, 1857)

Scholar Sigmund Mowinckel in his 1962 book "*The Psalms in Israel's Worship*" pg. 214 states that this odd Hebrew expression in the Masoretic text, "*specifically alludes to an animal offered in sacrifice, and to an act of sacrifice at the early dawn*". He goes on to say that the expression would be related to a sin offering. Obviously, what I am trying to emphasize here is that Psalm 22 is probably a Psalm that was sung by the Levite singers while an early morning sin sacrifice or continual morning regular sacrifice was being offered to the Lord. Does this sound like the other pointers that we have seen in Revelation which point to passages which are potentially regarding the continual morning and

evening regular sacrifice or just a sacrifice? With its use of the odd and unique word construction, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages", for "forever and ever", Revelation 14:11 is doing just this. This is similar to what we have already seen, but also quite different.

"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"

So is it possible that John in Revelation 14:11 is using this line, *"And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night"* to point to continual morning and evening regular sacrifice symbolism shown in the phrases just above from Isaiah 34? Of course it's possible. From what I've just shown, one can see that he's already pointing to a morning sacrifice Psalm/song from within the very same line using the pointing phrase, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων". And as I mentioned before, we'll see that even the content of the morning sacrifice Psalm 22 which John points to describes the wicked as a sacrifice in a roundabout way.

As you may know, Psalm 22 is a prophecy about Jesus. Our Lord quoted from the first verse as He hung from the cross, *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* Verses 16 and 18 foretell of the way He would die and of the blasphemy of the Roman soldiers casting lots to see which

of them could loot His clothing, "They have pierced my hands and feet.", "They divide my garments among them. They cast lots for my clothing." Then in verses 28 and 29 we are told of Jesus' coming kingdom, "For the kingdom is Yahweh's. He is the ruler over the nations. All the rich ones of the earth shall eat and worship. All those **who go down to the dust shall bow before him**". This is just as we see Jesus in Philippians 2 below:

*[Philippians 2:9-10 WEB] 9 Therefore God also highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus **every knee should bow**, of those in heaven, those on earth, and those **under the earth**,*

In verse 2 of Psalm 22 we even have some language which is strikingly similar to Revelation 14:11:

*[Psalm 22:2, 29 NASB20] 2 My God, I **cry out** by **day**, but You do not answer; And by **night**, but I have **no rest**. ... 29 All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, All those who go down to the dust will kneel before Him, **Even he who cannot keep his soul alive**.*

*[Revelation 14:11 WEB] 11 The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have **no rest day** and **night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.*

By using the same language Jesus used while calling for His own salvation, to describe the fate of the wicked, John has portrayed the wicked as being fated for a tragic role reversal. Jesus suffers and dies as a sacrifice for sin while ceaselessly calling on God for salvation by day and by night. God comes and saves Him after His suffering is complete. He is resurrected. He is saved. Jesus enters His rest, taking His rightful place as King of kings and Lord of lords ruling from Jerusalem in the millennium, just as in the Septuagint version of Psalm 132 below:

*[Psalm 132:13-14 Vaticanus original translation] 13
"Because the Lord chose Zion, he desired it for his dwelling;
14 this is my **resting place** into **age age**; here I will dwell,
because I have desired it."*

This verse above is a translation of one of the other four Greek Septuagint Psalms that John is very likely pointing to with his use of "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages" in Revelation 14:11. It uses the same odd double back to back repetition of the lemma/headword^G αἰών as found in Revelation 14:11, "The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever ('ages ages'). They have no rest day and night". Here's an English translation of the Hebrew Masoretic text version of portions of Psalm 132 with even more restful sleepy talk, just the same as we find it Revelation 14:11:

*[Psalm 132:1-5, 8, 13-14 NASB20] 1 A Song of Ascents. Remember, LORD, in David's behalf, All his affliction; 2 How he swore to the LORD And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, 3 "I certainly will not enter my house, Nor lie on my **bed**; 4 I will not give **sleep** to my eyes Or **slumber** to my eyelids, 5 Until I find a place for the LORD, A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob." ... 8 Arise, LORD, to Your **resting** place, You and the ark of Your strength. ... 13 For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it as His dwelling place. 14 "This is My **resting** place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it.*

Is all this sleepy talk in Psalm 132 above just a coincidence? Or is John maybe pointing to this in Revelation 14:11 when he uses the odd word construction "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages" in his line, "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no **rest** day and night"? As opposed to Jesus above in Psalm 132, the wicked, on the other hand, have no rest, day and night, maybe even in the sense that they have no rest day and night calling on God to save them after it is too late. Jesus calls out to God day and night, suffers as a sacrifice for sin, and then is saved. Maybe the wicked call to God day and night in the events described in Revelation 14:11 when it is too late. They then become their own sacrifice paying for their own sins. They are not saved. They do not enter rest. Instead, as described in Psalm 22 below, they suffer the ultimate negative fate of no

rest and the death of their souls, as also seen in the several passages which follow:

*[Psalm 22:2, 29 NASB20] 2 My God, I **cry out** by **day**, but You do not answer; And by **night**, but I have **no rest**. ... 29 All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, All those who go down to the dust will kneel before Him, **Even he who cannot keep his soul alive**.*

*[Matthew 10:28 WEB] Don't be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to **kill the soul**. Rather, fear him who is able to **destroy both soul and body** in Gehenna.*

*[Matthew 11:28-29 WEB] 28 "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you **rest**. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you will find **rest for your souls**. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

*[Hebrews 4:1-2 WEB] 1 Let's fear therefore, lest perhaps anyone of you should seem to have come short of a promise of **entering into his rest**. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, even as they also did, but the word they heard didn't profit them, because it wasn't mixed with faith by those who heard.*

This theory of tragic role reversal that I have just described is further clearly supported by a verse which comes right

after Revelation 14:11. The righteous receive rest, but the wicked do not. See below:

[Revelation 14:13 NASB20] 13 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on!'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "so that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow with them."

You can see Revelation 14:13 above intentionally reverses the roles, just as John's pointing to Psalm 22 does. So John by putting the odd word construction "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages" on the description of the fate of the wicked in Revelation 14:11 is very likely pointing to a Psalm 22/song written to be sung over a morning sacrifice, which contains content about Jesus, The Ultimate Sacrifice. This is yet another of the many pointing references in Revelation which indicate that the wicked will be a sacrifice. With this in mind, is it so far fetched that the three uses of the phrases like "*The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night*" in Revelation 14:11; 19:3; and 20:10 are pasting the sacrifice symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice onto the final fate of God's enemies? There are even more instances of this in Revelation, but I've pointed out five now. So I think it's safe to say that the point has been sufficiently emphasized. In Revelation, the wicked are repeatedly a sacrifice, and so it's highly likely that the line, "*And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever;*

they have no rest day and night" in Revelation 14:11 is just following along in the same repeated style, pointing to continual morning and evening regular sacrifice symbolism in Isaiah 34.

So can you count now how many descriptions of God's judgment being poured out are contained in John's single line, *"And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night"*? I count three now, but as impossible as it seems John will rack up the count even higher. As the count continues to climb, we'll know with even greater confidence what John and the Holy Spirit are saying in Revelation 14:11.

Chapter 6

The Meaning of the Sacrifice Symbolism in Isaiah 34

Now with our being thoroughly convinced that Revelation describes the wicked as a sacrifice, we can begin to let go of our skepticism against the idea that John uses the phrases like *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night"* as pointers to the sacrificial symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. How are we to interpret this though? Do these connections John is making describe endless torment for the wicked and satan, or does the sacrifice symbolism mean something else? If we look in Isaiah 34, where John is directly pointing, we see that the land of Edom does not continue burning endlessly. In the last half of the chapter it clearly turns into a wild garden with an animal zoo in it. Have you ever seen an abundance of plants and animals living in flames, smoke, and burning pitch? If you've ever watched the animal show where they do some filming at the edge of a wildfire, you can see the animals running out of the burning area lickety split. They don't stick around and take up residence for generations in flames. And there's only one bush that has ever burned and not been consumed, see Exodus 3. Plants die in fire and smoke. The ancient audience of Isaiah 34 would have easily

picked up on this contradiction. Then they would have asked themselves how this contradictory juxtaposition could be harmonized with the obvious sacrifice symbolism seen throughout the chapter of Isaiah 34, as evidenced by the excerpts of the Dead Sea Scrolls Bible and NASB20 of Isaiah 34 again below:

[DSSB]

- *It will burn night and day and will never be extinguished.*
- *Its smoke will go up from generation to generation,*

[NASB20]

- *The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It drips with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams.*
- *For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Edom. - Wild oxen will also fall with them And young bulls with strong ones;*
- *So their land will be soaked with blood, And their dust become greasy with fat.*

The people of Edom, as they are depicted above from Isaiah 34, are not really animals are they? There won't literally be a gigantic divine sword swooping down over and over again and dripping with the fat and blood of lambs, goats, kidneys, and rams will there? Will the fire really be burning endlessly if animals and plants are going to come live in it? Of course the ancient audience of Isaiah 34 would have taken just a

little bit of time to realize that the *"burning night and day"*, *"smoke going up from generation to generation"*, and the fire *"never being extinguished"* are all nonliteral sacrificial symbolism being pasted onto the literal destruction of Edom in order to clearly and vividly communicate some special concepts. The ancient audience of Isaiah lived under the endless plume of smoke burning night and day from generation to generation ascending over the temple. It was essentially *"never extinguished"*. They would have seen all the sacrifice imagery in Isaiah 34 and made this connection very quickly. So the language of Isaiah 34 creates a hard termination point in a leafy animal zoo for the duration of the burning torment of the wicked at Jesus' second coming. It then obviously puts forth abundant nonliteral symbolism leading to deeper ponderance of its content. It does not point us towards endless torment. We will see that this is a pattern in Revelation happening numerous times. Revelation repeatedly provides an intentional hard stop for the duration of the torment, making it very clear that the phrases like, *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night."* contain the nonliteral sacrifice symbolism of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. As I mentioned previously, the destruction of Babylon in Revelation is another easy to recognize example of this:

[Revelation 18:21 WEB] A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with

violence will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down, and will be **found no more at all.**

*[Revelation 19:1-3 WEB] 1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, power, and glory belong to our God; 2 for his judgments are true and righteous. For **he has judged the great prostitute**, who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." 3 A second said, "Hallelujah! **Her smoke goes up forever and ever.**"*

Is the city of Babylon "*found no more*" or does it literally smoke for eternity? The contradiction again points us in the direction of the concept that "*Her smoke goes up forever and ever*" is nonliteral sacrifice symbolism taken directly from the nonliteral sacrifice symbolism of Isaiah 34 and the Old Testament sacrificial system.

I've already shown that the "*second death*" in Revelation may point to the Aramaic Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 where "*second death*" is clearly associated there in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 with sacrifice symbolism. So the "*second death*" being used in Revelation may constitute a pointer to sacrifice symbolism in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah in a similar way to how the phrase, "*the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever*" points to sacrifice symbolism in Isaiah 34. For that reason,

gaining an understanding of the "second death" as it is defined in the Targums may indirectly also give us an understanding of the sacrifice symbolism in Isaiah 34. A good first question to ask in order to gain an understanding of the meaning of the second death as it is found in the Targums is, "What Hebrew phrase did the Targum translator put the Aramaic phrase 'second death' onto in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51?" See the Jeremiah Targum and the corresponding Jeremiah Hebrew verses below to see what Hebrew phrase the Targum translator converted to "second death":

*[Jeremiah 51:39, 57 Targum Jonathan] 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and **they shall die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come**, says the Lord. ... 57 And I will make her princes and her wise men drunk, her governors and her tyrants and her mighty men; and **they shall die the second death and not live for the world to come**." says the King; the Lord of Hosts is his Name. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 187 to 189)*

*[Jeremiah 51:39,57 WEB Hebrew] 39 When they are heated, I will make their feast, and I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice, and **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up**," says Yahweh ... 57 I will make her princes, her wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men drunk. They*

*will **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up,**" says the King, whose name is Yahweh of Armies.*

And of course, some of John's ancient audience members of Revelation would have been reading the Septuagint. They would have seen the second death represented by this other similar phrasing in the Septuagint here:

*[Jeremiah 51:39 LES2 Septuagint] When they are hot, I will give them a drink, and I will make them drunk in order that they might **go into a deep sleep, and sleep an eternal sleep, and shall not be awakened,**" says the Lord.*

Have you ever observed that scene in Sunday school where the scripture is being read aloud and someone says, "Hey that's not what my translation says!"? Then they proceed to compare the translations and analyze the differences. John's audience may have done something similar. His Targum listeners from the synagogues might have been the first to catch onto the "second death" reference to Jeremiah 51, then after that his Hebrew Old Testament and Greek Septuagint users may have been wanting to know what their versions say in Jeremiah 51. Now we know what their versions say. As you can see from the Septuagint and Hebrew versions of Jeremiah 51 above, they both describe what can be very reasonably interpreted as a permanent, endless, cessation of life and consciousness. It's possible that John's use of the phrase "second death" to point to

Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 may have also been an indirect way of pointing to these two descriptions of cessation of life and consciousness found in the corresponding versions of Jeremiah 51 in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek Septuagint shown above. A total cessation of life and consciousness for the wicked is what we see elsewhere in the Bible too. So is it possible that John is pointing to the same concept from Revelation by using the phrase "second death"? I would say it is likely:

*[Isaiah 26:14, 19 NASB20] 14 The dead will not live, **the departed spirits will not rise**; Therefore **You have punished and destroyed them**, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them. ... 19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the **earth will give birth to the departed spirits**.*

Anytime John points to a specific ancient version using a peculiar phrase, it's very likely that something like the Sunday school scene I've just described would have always happened. John's pointing to it in one ancient version would very likely always reveal it to those who had access to the content of the other ancient versions. Now we have the benefit of this same knowledge today. We have the content of the Hebrew text, the content of the Septuagint, and the content of the Targums. All of them are helpful to understand what John was saying. These ancient versions of

the Bible are the context of the book of Revelation. These are the Bibles of John's audience. These are what they knew. Christians need to be dipping into these today or they will continue to interpret the Bible very erroneously according to what it sounds like in sometimes poorly translated English, instead of what the referenced content is intentionally intended to mean.

We would be neglectful if we stopped at just demonstrating that a Targum interpreter has equated "*sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up*" from the Hebrew to "*die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come*" by substituting one for the other in his Aramaic Jeremiah Targum. To have some more confidence that we know how the Targums are defining the second death, we should do some more thorough analysis of the six places where the second death appears in the Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos. First we should gain an understanding of what the "*world to come*" is, as it is used with the second death in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51, "*they shall die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come*". To help gain this understanding of the Targum phrase "*world to come*" we will consult an ancient commentary on the book of Deuteronomy. The commentary is a Rabbinic Jewish commentary which is commonly referred to as "Sifre Deuteronomy". The history of its development is similar to the Targums of Jonathan and Onkelos, in the sense that it is a blend of content which is dated to be very early, with

other content that is dated a century or two later. Sifre Deuteronomy is full of quotations of 1st and 2nd century AD rabbis who are actually named and given credit directly in Sifre Deuteronomy for their interpretations of various passages. Many interpretations in Sifre Deuteronomy are named in Sifre Deuteronomy as coming from a particular rabbi, and some are left anonymous, which may make their dating less certain. These details indicate that some Sifre Deuteronomy content originates very early from the 1st century AD and some may be from the later 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. The explanation for "*the world to come*" found in Sifre Deuteronomy does not name a particular rabbi as its source, but there is some specific dating evidence for the explanation. **Some scholars have high confidence that the content of Sifre Deuteronomy is highly characterized by the teachings of Rabbi Akiva who lived between 50 and 135 AD. The many rabbis named directly in Sifre Deuteronomy are all known to be associated with the school of Akiva. There are many other unique characteristics of the content of Sifre Deuteronomy which give it associations with the teachings of Rabbi Akiva. The Babylonian Talmud even directly states in Sanhedrin 86a that those scriptural interpretations found in Sifre Deuteronomy which are not attributed to a particular rabbi by name in Sifre Deuteronomy are the work of Rabbi Shimon whose teachings are all according to the views of Rabbi Akiva. (Grossfeld, 1990, Vol. 6, pg. 33 main text and note 22) Rabbi Shimon is also known as Rabbi Simeon, and**

he is a famous 2nd century AD rabbi who was a disciple of Rabbi Akiva. The quote from the Babylonian Talmud is here:

"and an unattributed baraita in the Sifrei is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon. And all of these are in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva, as all the Sages mentioned were his disciples. Therefore, it is unlikely that an unattributed baraita from the Sifrei would run counter to the opinion of Rabbi Shimon."

(KTB, 2017, Vol. 30, Sanhedrin 86a)

The word "*Baraita*" in the Babylonian Talmud quote above is used to refer to the individual scriptural interpretations found in the Sifre. Sifre Deuteronomy's explanation of "*the world to come*" is found distributed in several of the "*unattributed baraita*" which are mentioned in the Babylonian Talmud above as being according to the teachings of Rabbi Shimon whose teachings were in turn according to Rabbi Akiva who lived between 50 and 135 AD. So we have some significant evidence pointing to that idea that the explanation of the "*world to come*" found in Sifre Deuteronomy may be a very ancient concept which has high relevance for explaining the second death in the Targums and in the New Testament. Counterbalancing this significant evidence is the fact that there is scholarly support for the idea that **the completion of the writing and editing of Sifre Deuteronomy took place in the mid to late 3rd century AD (Fraade, 2011, pg. 173 note 8, pg. 420 |**

Hammer, 1986, pgs. 1 to 2). This might mean that there is some chance that some of its content is characteristic of 2nd or 3rd century scriptural interpretations which would have less relevance to understanding Targums Onkelos and Jonathan and the New Testament. Regardless, Sifre Deuteronomy is clearly a worthwhile place to look for information which may help us to understand the second death in the Targums and in the book of Revelation. In Piska 31 of Sifre Deuteronomy the ancient rabbi writes:

"Another interpretation: The Lord, our God, over us (the children of Israel); the Lord is one, over all the creatures of the world. the Lord, our God, in this world; the Lord is one, in the world to come, as it is said, The Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day shall the Lord be one and His name one (Zech. 14:9)." (Hammer, 1986, pg. 59)

As you can see in the Sifre quote above, the ancient rabbi defines *"the world to come"* as being the world which exists at the time of the fulfillment of the quoted Zechariah 14:9 prophecy in italicized print. The Zechariah 14:9 prophecy is describing the new world after God has made it new after the second coming of Jesus and/or after all the events of the book of Revelation have taken place. So the rabbi in the Sifre is defining the *"world to come"* as the new world which God creates when God fulfills end times prophecy. Just one of the reasons we know that Zechariah 14:9 is describing the new world of fulfilled end times prophecy is due to the fact

that Zechariah 14 describes a very special end times river which flows from Jerusalem after God comes to earth to rule his freshly renewed kingdom of peace and safety, praise the Lord God our Loving King! This end times river, or one like it, is seen in these places: at the end of the book of Revelation in the new heavens and the new earth, flowing from the new temple described in Ezekiel, and of course in Zechariah 14. See the passages below:

[Zechariah 14:8-12 WEB] 8 It will happen in that day, that living waters will go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the eastern sea, and half of them toward the western sea. It will be so in summer and in winter. 9 Yahweh will be King over all the earth. In that day Yahweh will be one, and his name one. 10 All the land will be made like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; and she will be lifted up, and will dwell in her place, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 Men will dwell therein, and there will be no more curse; but Jerusalem will dwell safely. 12 This will be the plague with which Yahweh will strike all the peoples who have fought against Jerusalem: their flesh will consume away while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will consume away in their sockets, and their tongue will consume away in their mouth.

[Revelation 22:1-3 WEB] 1 He showed me a river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and

of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruits, yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There will be no curse any more. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will serve him.

[Ezekiel 47:1, 7, 12 WEB] 1 He brought me back to the door of the house; and behold, waters flowed out from under the threshold of the house eastward, for the front of the house faced toward the east. The waters came down from underneath, from the right side of the house, on the south of the altar. ... 7 Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. ... 12 By the river on its bank, on this side and on that side, will grow every tree for food, whose leaf won't wither, neither will its fruit fail. It will produce new fruit every month, because its waters issue out of the sanctuary. Its fruit will be for food, and its leaf for healing."

From these passages above and from the fact that the rabbi narrator of the Sifre quotes Zechariah 14:9, we can be confident that the rabbi narrator is referring to God's new world of fulfilled end times prophecy when he says "world to come". This characteristically end times definition of the "world to come" makes us ready to go to another place in Sifre Deuteronomy which indirectly defines the "second death" as simply not living in the end times "world to come".

In Piska 347, the rabbi narrator of Sifre Deuteronomy is interpreting Deuteronomy 33:6 which is in the blessing Moses pronounces over Israel just before his death, right before the people of Israel enter the promised land. See the verse here:

[Deuteronomy 33:6 WEB] "Let Reuben live, and not die; Nor let his men be few."

The rabbi narrator of Sifre Deuteronomy says this below as his interpretation of the verse:

'May Reuben live and not die', but is he not dead already? So what does the teaching in the scriptural text 'and not die' intimate? For the World to Come!
(Houtman, 2008, pg. 414)

As you can see **our rabbi narrator assumes that by the time Moses pronounces his blessing over Israel, Reuben has long since died when Reuben entered Egypt under the rule of his brother Joseph. Following on from that, our rabbi narrator assumes that this means that Deuteronomy 33:6 must instead be calling for Reuben to reap the blessing of not dying a second time in the end times "World to Come". (Houtman, 2008, pg. 413 to 414)** Notice that the type of death our rabbi narrator is assuming is just death in the usual sense, just not being alive. There is no endless torment assumed in the way he is understanding what it

means to "die". He recognizes Reuben as already being "dead" in the usual sense of not being alive, and then goes on to apply this same usual sense of "die" without further alteration or explanation to Reuben not dying a second time in the World to Come. Ahhh, but you will say that I am inserting the wording "second" death into our rabbi's comments where it really does not appear. To that I will say the insertion may have already been done for us without me cheating on any rules of fairness. Look at Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy 33:6 again below compared with the actual verse from the Hebrew Old Testament:

[Deuteronomy 33:6 Targum Onkelos] May Reuben live an everlasting life and not die a second death, and may his descendants receive their inherited possession according to their number. (Grossfeld, 1988, Vol. 9, pg. 104)

[Deuteronomy 33:6 WEB] "Let Reuben live, and not die; Nor let his men be few."

As you can see by the verse comparison above, the Targum translator of Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy seems to have the same understanding of Deuteronomy 33:6 as the rabbi narrator of Sifre Deuteronomy. The rabbi narrator of the Sifre and the Targum translator both seem to interpret Deuteronomy 33:6 as just a simple call for Reuben to receive the blessing of not dying a second time in the usual sense of just plain old death in the end times world to come. The

Targum translator calls for Reuben to have "*everlasting life*" which he clearly describes as being the opposite of a "*second death*". No endless torment is in his translation or interpretive additions. The rabbi narrator of the Sifre does the same thing, just clearly assuming by the wording of his interpretation, that he believes Deuteronomy 33:6 is just a blessed call for Reuben to not die another death which is just the same as Reuben's plain old simple first death. He makes absolutely zero distinction between Reuben's plain old simple first death and the death in the world to come which he believes the Deuteronomy 33:6 blessing is calling for Reuben to not experience. His interpretation describes no endless torment. You might say though that the "*second death*" described by the Targum Deuteronomy translator and not dying in the "*world to come*" described by the rabbi narrator of Sifre Deuteronomy don't appear related enough to confidently exhibit a unified meaning of the second death which can be understood to appear in both the Sifre and the Targum. This is where circling back to look again at Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51:39, 57 can give us some additional confidence that the rabbi narrator of Sifre Deuteronomy 33:6 and the Targum translator of Targum Jonathan of Deuteronomy 33:6 are describing the same concept of the second death. The Targum translator of Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51:39, 57 unifies the phrases "*world to come*" seen in Sifre Deuteronomy and "*second death*" seen in Targum Deuteronomy into one single description with one single meaning. This helps to demonstrate further that Sifre

Deuteronomy and Targum Deuteronomy are both defining the second death in the same way. This single meaning, as you can see directly in the wording of Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51:39, 57 below, has the same face value, easy to understand meaning as we just saw in Sifre Deuteronomy and Targum Deuteronomy:

*[Jeremiah 51:39, 57 Targum Jonathan] 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and **they shall die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come**, says the Lord. ... 57 And I will make her princes and her wise men drunk, her governors and her tyrants and her mighty men; and **they shall die the second death and not live for the world to come**." says the King; the Lord of Hosts is his Name. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 187 to 189)*

As you can see, the "second death" is simply not being alive in ancient Jewish theology. No endless torment is described. Circling back again to see a reminder of what it is that the Jeremiah Targum translator above may be translating from the Hebrew drives the point home even further:

*[Jeremiah 51:39, 57 WEB Hebrew] 39 When they are heated, I will make their feast, and I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice, and **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up**," says Yahweh. ... 57 I will make her princes, her wise men, her*

*governors, her deputies, and her mighty men drunk. They will **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up,**" says the King, whose name is Yahweh of Armies.*

So the Jeremiah Targum translator above is using phrases to describe not living in the world to come, which are elsewhere used to also describe not living in the world to come, to translate a Hebrew scripture which describes never having consciousness again. Does that in any sense add up to endless torment? On the contrary, it demonstrates that several very old Jewish theological works which contain content that dates as far back as the 1st century AD or maybe even before, all agree together that the concept of the "*second death*" is just that: death, not being alive, not being conscious ever again, an endless irrecoverable dirt nap. Is this the concept of the "*second death*" that John was using in the book of Revelation? As you may recall from some of our previous discussion, Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy, Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah, and Sifre Deuteronomy all were produced with a prolonged development which has instilled them with some content which very likely originates from before the writing of Revelation and some content which came later. So the question still stands to be researched and answered in more detail using more in depth literary dating analysis, "*Do they contain the same concept of the second death used by John in the book of Revelation, or do they define the second death in an altered way that dates to some time long after the*

writing of the book of Revelation?" Does the concept of the second death that they contain match other biblical passages? See again below:

[Matthew 10:28 WEB] Don't be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

[Isaiah 26:14, 19 NASB20] 14 The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise; Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them. ... 19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

As we can see there is a consistency for the meaning of the second death across all the ancient documents, Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy, and Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah. In all of Targums Onkelos and Jonathan, the second death only appears three more times in addition to the three instances we've already just analyzed for interpretation. One of these three additional appearances of the second death is somewhat ambiguous, but still does nothing to contradict the definition of the second death that we've seen already in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy, and Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah. The other two appearances of the second death

are a strong additional support to the definition of the second death that we've already seen in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy, and Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah. One of the three additional appearances of the second death occurs in Isaiah 22 where we see a tragic account of rebellious Israelites who are trapped in Jerusalem under siege by a foreign army as a judgment by God for their sinfulness. In spite of this, they still refuse to repent of their sin, and instead they decide to party like it's 1999 inside Jerusalem until they are killed by their enemies. See below their idiotic response to God's call for repentance:

[Isaiah 22:12-14 WEB] 12 In that day, the Lord, Yahweh of Armies, called to weeping, to mourning, to baldness, and to dressing in sackcloth; 13 and behold, joy and gladness, killing cattle and killing sheep, eating meat and drinking wine: "Let's eat and drink, for tomorrow we will die." 14 Yahweh of Armies revealed himself in my ears, "Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die," says the Lord, Yahweh of Armies.

The Targum Jonathan translator of Isaiah 22 seems to fashion his altered interpretive version of this passage above in such a way as if to say, *"Sure you can die your first death and you'll escape your current terrible situation in relative ease, but you won't get off so light. You won't be squared away with God until you die a second time."* Take a look at

the Targum Jonathan version of the pronouncement against the rebels:

[Isaiah 22:12-14 Targum Jonathan] 12 And the prophet of the Lord God of hosts called on that day for weeping and mourning, and for shearing of head and girding with sackcloths; 13 and behold, joy and gladness; they say, "Let us slay oxen and slaughter sheep, eat flesh and drink wine. Let us eat and drink, since we will die and not live." 14 The prophet said, With my ears I was hearing when this was decreed before the LORD God of hosts: "Surely this sin will not be forgiven you until you die the second death," says the LORD God of hosts. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pgs. 43 to 44)

If analyzed in total isolation, there is of course nothing in the Targum passage above which would very forcibly prevent someone from assuming that the meaning of the second death seen in it is altogether different from the meaning of the second death as I have already shown it in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah, and Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy. The passage is not so incredibly descriptive that it communicates a full and detailed definition of the second death on its own. In spite of that, the point that I would like to make here is that the definition of the second death that I have previously shown being used in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah, and Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy fits perfectly into Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 22:12-14 above without contradicting

anything in it. The definition of the second death as it is found in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah, and Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy also generally fits perfectly into the broader context of the whole of Isaiah 22 without creating any contradictions. If the argument of the rebellious Israelites who were under siege in Isaiah 22 was, *"We're going to get off light for our rebellion. We're just going to easily die in the usual sense after a big party and take the easy way out."*, would it have made sense for the Targum translator just to fashion his interpretive version in a way that just goes right along with their easy escape plan: *"Ok your sin is such a reprehensible affront to God that he'll require you to pay for what you're doing by taking the easy way out. You'll at least have to take the easy way out with a big party and physically die the first time in the usual easy sense in order to pay the heavy price which is a fitting punishment for your terrible offense to God."* No, it makes more sense that the Targum translator would recognize and install an interpretation into his Targum which would demolish their flimsy argument by showing that they would only find a way out of this mess which would be very hard for them. They would not escape God's judgment just by going through a big easy party and then an easy and simple first death in the usual physical sense. They would easily die the first time during the siege in the usual physical sense and then also have to later experience the terrible fate of God's final judgment of the second death which would ultimately cause them to never live again physically or in

soul form. Even the words which the Targum translator has chosen not to insert into the passage may support the understanding that I have just described. In the passage it very much appears that he recognizes the simple first physical death/deprivation of life in the passage that is desired by the rebels in the siege, and then very conspicuously, without any insertion of any redefinition or alterations, assumptively inserts another death almost just like it further on in the timeline as occurring a second time to the rebels. The second death though, will permanently deprive them of life in the world to come. He very conspicuously doesn't insert any additional description of endless torment. His choice to not offer any additional description of the second death which would redefine it as not being a simple deprivation of life seems like a clear message to his audience to assume that the second death is also a simple deprivation of life just as the first death of the rebels is in the passage. If the second death meant endless torment in the mind of the Targum translator, wouldn't the Targum translator have altered the passage to be something more like, *"Hey you guys aren't gonna get off light by dying in the siege. You are gonna be burned alive for trillions of years!"* If the Targum translator believed that the second death meant that something like this would be coming for the rebels in the siege, wouldn't he have added something more into the passage to that effect instead of just using the word *"death"* to describe their second future fate? If the Targum translator believed that the second death meant

that trillions of years of torment would also be coming for his readers who rebel against God in the future, wouldn't he have said something instead of just using the word "*death*" to describe their future fate? Why would the Targum translator use a word, "*death*", which he knew his audience all understood as just not being alive to warn them of trillions of years of consciously burning alive? It seems he would definitely have wanted to add an extra word or two, especially considering that the concept of death in the Isaiah 22 passage is already, with 100% confidence, being used as just simple deprivation of life, only a few words before the place in the passage where the Targum translator has inserted "*second death*". The death of the rebels in the siege is, with 100% confidence, just simple deprivation of life. So would the Targum translator expect his readers to see the concept of "*death*" in the siege being used as just the simple deprivation of life, and then without any further reason or explanation from their narrator just change their understanding of "*death*" to be trillions of years of torment just a few words further in the narrative? It seems very unlikely.

So assuming that the Targum translator in Isaiah 22:14 is using the definition of the second death that we saw back in Sifre Deuteronomy, Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah, and Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy fits the passage well. It even seems likely that in his reading of the Hebrew of Isaiah 22:14, the Targum translator recognized the same mismatch

of an easy punishment for a terrible offense that I have described. In other words, he saw something like this in the Hebrew of Isaiah 22:14, *"Surely this iniquity will not be forgiven you until you die"*, and he genuinely concluded, *"This simply cannot be referring to just the first death in the usual sense. That would just be the easy way out that the rebels wanted. This must be referring to a future more fitting punishment, to die the second death and not live in the world to come."* If this was the thought process that the Targum translator used to conclude that he needed to put the *"second death"* into his version, was his interpretation of the verse correct? It seems to match the overall theology of the Bible quite well. Sinners who reject God aren't squared away with him until they pay the final price of the second death in Gehenna/hell. The first death does nothing to clear the debt. Without the blood of the Precious Lamb they must be their own sacrifice and be punished, then die a second time in Gehenna/hell before their account with our Holy God is settled. In the Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 group of verses quoted below we may even see some parts of this reflected in the remaining two instances of the second death that we have not yet interpreted. As you can see, the second death involves judgment on people's bodies. It is Gehenna/hell, and while it may last for some time, *"all the day"*, *"while they live"*, it ultimately results in being slain, not endlessly tormented:

*[Isaiah 65:3-6, 14-17 Targum Jonathan] 3 a people who incite to anger against my Memra before me continually, sacrificing in your gardens of the idols and offering up spices upon bricks; 4 who sit in the houses they build from the dust of tombs, and reside with the corpses of the sons of men; who eat swine's flesh, and abominable broth is in their vessels; 5 who say, "Get behind, do not come near me, for I am more clean than you." These, their anger is as **smoke before me**, their retribution is in **Gehenna** where the fire burns **all the day**. 6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will **not give them respite while they live**, but theirs is the retribution of their sins; I will hand over their **bodies** to the **second death**. ... 14 behold, my servants, the righteous, shall sing from goodness of heart, but you shall cry from pain of heart, and shall wail from breaking of spirit. 15 You shall leave your name to my chosen for an oath, and the LORD God will **slay you** with the **second death**; but his servants, the righteous, he will call by a **different name**. 16 He who blesses in the land shall bless by the living God, and he who takes an oath in the land shall swear by the living God; because the former troubles shall be forgotten and hid from before me. 17 For behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**; and the former thing shall not be remembered or be brought into mind. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pgs. 123 to 124)*

Look below at the content from the Hebrew Bible that has been labeled the "second death" in the Targum above:

*[Isaiah 65:14-17 WEB] 14 Behold, my servants will sing for joy of heart, but you will cry for sorrow of heart, and will wail for anguish of spirit. 15 You will leave your name for a curse to my chosen; and **the Lord Yahweh will kill you**. He will call his servants by another name, 16 so that he who blesses himself in the earth will bless himself in the God of truth; and he who swears in the earth will swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hidden from my eyes. 17 "For, behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**; and the former things will not be remembered, nor come into mind.*

Does the Hebrew Bible content of Isaiah 65 above look anything like the "world to come" which Targum theology says that the "second death" will deny access to, "not live in the world to come"? It seems that even in the Hebrew Bible version of Isaiah 65 above, we have a slaying that looks as if it is excluding people from the world to come, or also known as, "the new heavens and the new earth". When we take in a little more of the context from the Hebrew Bible above describing what it was that the Targum translator was translating from the Hebrew, it's clear why the Targum translator inserted the second death into Isaiah 65. In the Hebrew of Isaiah 65 above it very much looks to be describing the new world to come and a slaying from God that will exclude the wicked from it. This is precisely what the Targum translator would have recognized as the second death in the framework of the Targum theology of the

second death that we have already looked at. Whether we read Isaiah 65 in the Targum or in the Hebrew Bible, we can see the underlying concept of the wicked not living in the world to come, especially if we recognize that the second death is not living in the world to come in Targum theology. The scribes of the Dead Sea scrolls also seem to witness to the same concept. According to the version of Isaiah they had, back well before the time of Christ, the wicked will, "*die permanently*". Take a look at how the slaying is described in Isaiah 65 in the Great Isaiah Scroll below from the Dead Sea scrolls:

*[Isaiah 65:14-17 DSSB Dead Sea scrolls] 14 my servants will sing in gladness of heart, but you will lament from anguish of heart, and will wail from brokenness of spirit. 15 You will leave your name for my chosen ones to use as a curse, and the **Lord God will put you to death permanently**. 16 Then whoever takes an oath by the God of faithfulness, and whoever takes an oath in the land, will swear by the God of faithfulness; for the former troubles are forgotten and are hidden from my eyes. 17 For see, I am about to create **new heavens and a new earth**; the **former things will not be remembered**, nor will they come to mind.*

Does that sound familiar? Here it is again:

*[Isaiah 26:14 NASB20] The dead will not live, **the departed spirits will not rise**; Therefore You have punished and*

destroyed them, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them.

Once we see the context of Isaiah 65:14-17 from the Dead Sea scrolls far above compared with the Isaiah 26:14 verse above, should we think that both passages are talking about the same thing? There's a lot of not remembering and a lot of what looks to be permanent irreversible dirt napping in both passages huh? Could this mean that they are both describing a total and complete death of both the body and soul? It may also be useful to note here that Isaiah 26:14 above is very likely a narration which is describing the state of things which exists only after the final resurrection and judgment of the wicked in hell at the end of the millennium as described in Revelation 20.

So now you have seen that in all of the total of six times that the "*second death*" is mentioned in some of the oldest Targums we have (Jonathan and Onkelos), it can very soundly be interpreted as just a final death which results in just not being alive in the future blessed world which God has in store for us. Targums Jonathan and Onkelos contain many concepts and phrases from the 1st century AD or even before, right around the time of the writing of Revelation. Their definition of the second death is consistent throughout. Is this consistent definition a product of the later second phase of Amoraic editing of these Targums and Sifre Deuteronomy in Babylonia well after the writing of the

book of Revelation, or is it the pre-Christian Targum definition that John was assuming his audience knew from before Revelation was written? As I mentioned before, I will punt and invite others to unscramble this scrambled egg of a question, but I will point out that the Bible is overflowing with the same concept of the second death that we see in these Targums Onkelos and Jonathan. Not being saved results in just death, not eternal, immortal life and never-ending torment in a non-preferred location called hell:

*[John 3:16 WEB] For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not **perish**, but have eternal life.*

[2 Timothy 1: 10 WEB] but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Good News.

Considering verses like the two above and the many others like them throughout the Bible, is it likely that John in Revelation is pointing to the concept of the second death, "not living in the world to come", that we see presently installed in the Targums?

We have just looked at a Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 group of verses. Reread the Targum Jonathan Isaiah 65

group of verses, shown again below. Do you notice any familiar grouping of concepts or words regarding hell that we have already discussed? Look at the underlined boldened words in the Isaiah Targum verse group and compare them with Revelation 14:10-11 shown further below it:

*[Isaiah 65:3-6, 14-15 Targum Jonathan] 3 a people who incite to anger against my Memra before me continually, sacrificing in your gardens of the idols and offering up spices upon bricks; 4 who sit in the houses they build from the dust of tombs, and reside with the corpses of the sons of men; who eat swine's flesh, and abominable broth is in their vessels; 5 who say, "Get behind, do not come near me, for I am more clean than you." These, their anger is as **smoke before me**, their retribution is in **Gehenna** where the **fire burns all the day**. 6 Behold, it is written before me: "I will **not give them respite** while they live, but theirs is the retribution of their sins; I will hand over their **bodies** to the **second death**. ... 14 behold, my servants, the righteous, shall sing from goodness of heart, but you shall cry from pain of heart, and shall wail from breaking of spirit. 15 You shall leave your name to my chosen for an oath, and the LORD God will **slay you** with the **second death**; but his servants, the righteous, he will call by a **different name**.
(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pgs. 123 to 124)*

*[Revelation 14:10-11 NASB20] 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with **fire and brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And the **smoke** of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have **no rest day and night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of **his name**."*

As you can see, the smoke, prolonged fire, naming, and deprivation of rest or respite from those being judged create what may be a strong connection directly between Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 and Revelation 14:10-11. Of course we can also generally see additional indirect connections between Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 and Revelation 14:10-11 by recalling the numerous connections that Revelation 14:10-11 otherwise has throughout the Bible with Gehenna, the lake of fire, dead bodies in Gehenna, the second death, and the slaying of the wicked. As I showed at the beginning of chapter 2, starting on page 10, Revelation 14:10-11 with its fire and brimstone is the "*lake of fire*" which is mentioned in Revelation 20. I also showed near the middle of chapter 4, starting on page 78, that Gehenna is the "*lake of fire*". Revelation 20 names the "*lake of fire*" as being the "*second death*". Jesus says the wicked will be destroyed body and soul in Gehenna in Matthew 10:28. Jesus himself describes Gehenna in Mark 9:47-48 as being full of dead bodies by pointing to its description to that

effect at the end of Isaiah 66 when he uses the phrase, "*where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*", which is also found in Isaiah 66. With all of these things called back to mind, it's possible to recognize that Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 far above is full of the biblical language of hell (Gehenna, smoke, no respite, second death, fire, bodies, slaying) found directly in Revelation 14:10-11 and in its closely associated passages found elsewhere in the Bible.

Look again at Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 shown far above and pay close attention to how the theme of not giving the wicked "*respite*" is being used. They are not given "*respite*", "*while they live*", but then in verse 15 they are slain. We could very reasonably understand this to mean that their deprivation of rest/"*respite*" only lasts until they are slain in verse 15, and in no way shape or form means that their deprivation of rest is endless for eternity. This understanding may be a more detailed explanation of the deprivation of rest found in Revelation 14:11 that John intended for his audience to call to mind from the Targums. This may describe a punishment of finite length which is then followed by just a second death, which is a simple deprivation of life, body and soul. So with this in view, the traditionalist interpretation of Revelation 14:11 which understands that the wicked are there writhing in torment for trillions of years with no rest, altogether may not match the background that John may have been directly referencing in the Targums.

Let's ignore the Targums for just a minute and use only Revelation and the Hebrew Bible version of Isaiah 65 to test this theory that John is pointing to Isaiah 65 in Revelation in order to describe just simple death, deprivation of life, not never ending torment. First, take a look at Revelation 2:17 below:

*[Revelation 2:17 WEB] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a **new name** written, which no one knows but he who receives it.*

Where is John pointing to with this phrase "new name" in Revelation 2:17 above? You probably guessed right. This is very likely also a pointer to the Masoretic Hebrew version of Isaiah 65 which also describes the giving of a new name. The new name in the Hebrew of Isaiah 65 is a very clear antonym to just being simply plain old killed and deprived of life in the new world to come. See here:

*[Isaiah 65:15-17 WEB] 15 You will leave your name for a curse to my chosen; and the Lord **Yahweh will kill you**. He will call his servants by **another name**, 16 so that he who blesses himself in the earth will bless himself in the God of truth; and he who swears in the earth will swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and*

*because they are hidden from my eyes. 17 "For, behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**; and the former things will not be remembered, nor come into mind.*

Is Revelation 2:17 really pointing to the simple deprivation of life found in this Hebrew version of Isaiah 65 above though? The only thing connecting Revelation 2:17 and this Isaiah 65 passage above is just a brief little concept of receiving a new name. What if we could find another reference directly in Revelation 2:17 which points to a simple concept of death as just deprivation of life? Would this make it more likely that the new name in Revelation 2:17 is pointing to just simple death? Of course it would, and that is exactly what we can find again in the passage. All we need to do is think back to Sunday school and recall what role manna played when the Israelites were wandering in the desert. Manna just kept the Israelites from being dead in the usual sense, not tormented for eternity. And yet here we see the concept being called upon in Revelation 2:17:

*[Revelation 2:17 WEB] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden **manna**, and I will give him a **white stone, and on the stone a new name written**, which no one knows but he who receives it.*

I know you might think that this pointer to manna in Revelation 2:17 above might be a little too vague to conclude that Revelation 2:17 is describing just simple death by using "*manna*", but look at how John combines the "*white stone*" and the "*new name*" together. What is this "*white stone*"? We have at least one likely answer if we look at how manna is described in the Septuagint, which many in John's ancient audience of Revelation would very likely have been familiar with:

[Numbers 11:7 NETS Septuagint] Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance was the appearance of rock-crystal.

For a little more confidence in the translation we can see that the *Lexham English Septuagint* below has the same translation as the *New English Translation of the Septuagint* above:

[Numbers 11:7 LES2 Septuagint] Now the manna is like coriander seed, and its appearance is the appearance of rock crystal.

Further, we can see in the Hebrew Bible version of Exodus that manna was white:

*[Exodus 16:31 WEB] The house of Israel called its name "Manna", and it was like coriander seed, **white**; and its taste was like wafers with honey.*

The Babylonian Talmud, in Yoma 75a, describes manna as being white just as Exodus 16 above does:

"Rabbi Asi said: The manna was round like coriander seed but white like a pearl." (KTB, 2013, Vol. 9, Yoma 75a)

Famous Greek scholar G.K. Beale in the 1999 Revelation volume of *The New International Greek Testament Commentary* on page 253 affirms the connection between the "white stone" in Revelation 2:17 and the manna in the Septuagint that I have just described. We even see that in the Septuagint of Isaiah 65, the same Greek words for "new name", "ὄνομα καινὸν" are used as in Revelation 2:17 for the "new name" written on the white manna stone. Of course, this creates an even stronger connection between Revelation 2:17 and Isaiah 65:15. See the Septuagint passage here below in two different translations to show some of the additional nuances of meaning:

*[Isaiah 65:15 LES1 Septuagint] For you will leave your name behind as satisfaction for my elect, but the Lord will **destroy you**. And a **new name** will be proclaimed over those who serve me,*

*[Isaiah 65:15 NETS Septuagint] For you shall leave your name for fullness to my chosen ones, but the Lord will **do away with you**. But to those who are subject to him, a **new name** shall be called,*

Bear in mind that the Septuagint verse above is very likely using "destroy you" or "do away with you" to translate something like, "put you to death permanently" from the Dead Sea scrolls version of Isaiah 65:15, or possibly something like, "will kill you" from the Hebrew Masoretic text of Isaiah 65:15. So "destroy you" or "do away with you" in the Septuagint translations of Isaiah 65:15 above can be very reasonably seen as also describing just simple death, the deprivation of life; which not so coincidentally is what would also happen to an Israelite wandering 40 years in the desert if they did not eat the white stone manna provided by God. The Greek word being translated as "destroy you" or "do away with you" in the two Septuagint translations of Isaiah 65:15 above is translated by the 1995 edition of the *New American Standard Bible* in 20 of its total of 23 occurrences in the New Testament with several different words which all mean killing. The 1995 edition of the *New American Standard Bible* translates it these 20 of 23 times as: "executed, kill, killed, put to death, slain, slay, slaying, and slew". The *King James Version* takes the same approach, translating the word in 20 of its total of 23 occurrences in the New Testament with words which denote killing. The *King James Version* uses "kill, slay, or put

to death" to translate it. So we can very reasonably recognize that "destroy you" or "do away with you" in the two Septuagint translations of Isaiah 65:15 that I show above very likely should have just been translated as something like, "kill you", just as it is in the translations of the Targum and the Hebrew Bible that I previously showed. Recall that in the Targum translation of Isaiah 65:15 it is translated as, "slay you" and in the translation of the Hebrew of Isaiah 65:15 it is translated as, "kill you".

So it could be that John is combining the image of the manna as a white stone with the theme of the new name to create a description which is twice pronouncing itself to be the opposite of just simple death, deprivation of life, not endless torment. Your new name, which means just not dying, is written on your white piece of manna stone, which is also equivalent to just not dying from starvation as you wander in the desert, and then this double antonym to simple deprivation of life is associated with the phrase, "To him who overcomes" in Revelation 2:17 which points us back to Revelation 2:11 where we see the overcomers mentioned again as being spared from the second death. See the overcomer connection between Revelation 2:17 and Revelation 2:11 below:

*[Revelation 2:17 WEB] **He who has an ear, let him hear** what the Spirit says to the assemblies. To him who **overcomes**, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and I will*

give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows but he who receives it.

*[Revelation 2:11 WEB] He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who **overcomes** won't be harmed by the **second death**.*

Of course, the second death in Revelation 2:11 above may be referring to Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65 where, as we've already seen, the second death is defined as a simple deprivation of life, being slain, after a period of no rest/respice, "*all the day*", "*while they live*". When we are deciding whether or not we believe that Revelation 2:11 & 17 above are pointing to the simple deprivation of life described by the second death in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 65, it's important to remember that the ears to hear that are mentioned in Revelation 2:11 & 17 above are also a Targum theme found in the same Targum book of Isaiah. See here again:

*[Isaiah 22:14 Targum Jonathan] The prophet said, With my **ears** I was **hearing** when this was decreed before the LORD God of hosts: "Surely this sin will not be forgiven you until you die the **second death**," says the LORD God of hosts. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 44)*

So Revelation 2:17 may be directly and indirectly referencing descriptions of a simple deprivation of life a

total of three times. This is typical of John though. Why say something once when you can say it over and over and over again, so that your users of the Hebrew Bible get it, your listeners of the Aramaic Targums get it, and your users of the Septuagint get it? As you may have noticed, I've just now given enough evidence to show that John may be describing a simple deprivation of life in Revelation 2:11 & 17 by pointing to content from all three of these ancient versions of the Old Testament. The manna and the new name point to a simple deprivation of life in the Hebrew Bible, the white stone manna with a new name on it points to a simple deprivation of life in the Septuagint, and the second death with the ears that hear may point to a simple deprivation of life, a slaying, in the Targums. I think it's safe to assume that it was clear to John's ancient audience what John was laying down: overcomers live, the wicked just die and are simply deprived of life. They aren't tormented endlessly. They are as follows: put to death permanently, killed by Yahweh, do not live in the world to come, die the second death, slain.

For one more very likely pointing reference made by John with the odd and extremely rare word construction "*αἰῶνας αἰώνων*", "*ages ages*" in Revelation 14:11, we should look at some verses from Psalm 37 below. This pointing reference provides yet another hard stop for the duration of punishment in Revelation. Psalm 37 in the Septuagint has two instances of the rare word construction

found in Revelation 14:11. As I described before, this reveals to us that John is very likely also pointing to Psalm 37. Do the verses shown below from Psalm 37 look as if they are compatible with a literal interpretation of Revelation 14:11, "*The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night*"? As you can see there's quite a bit of resting and smoke in Psalm 37 below, the same as Revelation 14:11. Is this just a coincidence? In Psalm 37 below, the wicked are "*no more*". Does that sound like the fate of Babylon being "*no more*" in Revelation 18 & 19 of which it is also said "*smoke goes up forever and ever*"?

*[Psalm 37:7, 9-10, 20, 22, 27-29, 34-36, 38 NASB20] 7 **Rest in the LORD** and wait patiently for Him; Do not get upset because of one who is successful in his way, Because of the person who carries out wicked schemes. ... 9 For **evildoers will be eliminated**, But those who wait for the LORD, they will inherit the land. 10 Yet a little while and the **wicked person will be no more**; And you will look carefully for his place and he will not be there. ... 20 But the **wicked will perish**; And the enemies of the LORD will be like the glory of the pastures, **They vanish--like smoke they vanish away**. ... 22 For those blessed by Him will inherit the land, But **those cursed by Him will be eliminated**. ... 27 Turn from evil and do good, So that you will dwell forever. 28 For the LORD loves justice And does not abandon His godly ones; They are protected forever, But the **descendants of the wicked will be***

eliminated. 29 The righteous will inherit the land And dwell in it forever. ... 34 Wait for the LORD and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the **wicked are eliminated**, you will see it. 35 I have seen a wicked, violent person Spreading himself like a luxuriant tree in its native soil. 36 Then he passed away, and behold, **he was no more**; I searched for him, but **he could not be found**. ... 38 But **wrongdoers will altogether be destroyed**; The **future of the wicked will be eliminated**.

Considering the content of Psalm 37 above, I would say it is much more likely that Revelation 14:11 and its smoke going up "forever and ever" is simply using nonliteral sacrifice symbolism to communicate concepts, just as in Isaiah 34 for Edom and in Revelation 18 & 19 concerning Babylon. Does the smoke literally go up forever and ever from the destruction of Babylon and Edom in Isaiah 34 and Revelation 18 & 19? No it doesn't. Animals don't live in flames, and just as in Isaiah 34 for Edom, the animals ultimately take up residence in a place that is not burning where Babylon used to be but is "no more". See the critters moving into the place where Babylon was after it literally has stopped smoking, here again below:

[Revelation 18:21 WEB] A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down, and will be found **no more** at all.

[Jeremiah 51:37 NASB20] 37 "Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, An object of horror and hissing, without inhabitants.

[Revelation 18:2 NASB20] 2 And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

[Isaiah 13:19-22 NASB20] 19 And Babylon, the beauty of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldeans' pride, Will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. 20 It will never be inhabited or lived in from generation to generation; Nor will the Arab pitch his tent there, Nor will shepherds allow their flocks to lie down there. 21 But desert creatures will lie down there, And their houses will be full of owls; Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there. 22 Hyenas will howl in their fortified towers And jackals in their luxurious palaces. Her fateful time also will soon come, And her days will not be prolonged.

Recall from our previous extensive discussion in chapter 5, pages 100 to 104, that Jeremiah 51 above is a parallel prophecy which is repeatedly connected by shared phraseology to the destruction of Babylon in Revelation, so its description of animals taking over the former site of

Babylon is just as applicable to the final end of Babylon as Revelation 18 is. Additionally, we can see by reading all of Isaiah 13 and 14 that the few verses I show from Isaiah 13 above are sandwiched in between end times verses coming just before them and then more end times verses coming just after them in the highly related Isaiah chapter 14. So the Isaiah 13 passage above and its animal zoo remnants of Babylon is highly related to the destruction of Babylon in both Revelation 18-19 and Jeremiah 51. We might be tempted to think that the Isaiah 13 passage above is only about the historical attack on Babylon by the Medes as Isaiah 13:17-18 might persuade us. In contradiction to this, history shows that when king Darius the Mede conquered the city of Babylon as the Bible describes, ultimately bringing the Babylonian kingdom to its past historical end, he did not destroy it. He left the city standing, and it stood for long after that. This gives us more motivation to see Isaiah 13 and 14 as pertaining to an end times destruction of Babylon, and not only just an attack from a historical enemy. Jeremiah 51 also mentions the Medes just like Isaiah 13, and yet this does not prevent Revelation from pointing to Jeremiah 51 repeatedly as end times prophecy. This demonstrates that Isaiah 13 can operate in the same style as Jeremiah 51, having what could be a mix of future prophetic and historically fulfilled content.

So Revelation 14:11, using the rare word construction "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "*ages ages*" to point to Psalm 37 seems

to provide yet another intentional hard stop for the duration of the torment of the wicked in Revelation. This provides us with even more motivation to understand the phrases like *"The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night"* in Revelation 14:11; 19:3; and 20:10 as nonliteral symbolism or having some other conditionalist interpretation.

Chapter 7

Additional Hard Stops for the Duration of Punishment

So far we have left satan and the antichrist out of this discussion, even though Revelation 20:10 obviously pertains to them. There are additional biblical hard stops to the duration of their torment also. For these we must go outside of Revelation. These hard stops for the duration of the punishment of antichrist and satan urge us to also view Revelation 20:10 as containing nonliteral sacrifice symbolism or some other conditionalist interpretation. Bear in mind that these hard stops for the duration of the punishment of antichrist and satan, in some way may also provide additional hard stops for the duration of the punishment of wicked people. As previously mentioned, this is due to the fact that the scripture tells us that in some way the punishment for satan, antichrist, and satan's evil angel followers is a similar punishment for wicked people. As I showed previously, it's Matthew 25:41 here below that I'm thinking of:

[Matthew 25:41 WNT] "Then will He say to those at His left, "Begone from me, with the curse resting upon you, into the Fire of the Ages, which has been prepared for the Devil and his angels.

And here below are the passages providing the hard stops for the duration of the punishment of satan, his wicked angel followers, and the antichrist:

*[Genesis 3:14-15 TLV] 14 Adonai Elohim said to the serpent, "Because you did this, Cursed are you above all the livestock and above every animal of the field. On your belly will you go, and dust will you eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put animosity between you and the woman— between your seed and her seed. He will **crush your head, and you will crush his heel.***

Notice here in Matthew 4 below how satan may be displaying his knowledge of both Genesis 3 above and Psalm 91 below.....

*[Matthew 4:5-6 WEB] 5 Then the devil took him into the holy city. He set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and, **'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you don't dash your foot against a stone.'**"*

*[Psalm 91:11-13 WEB] 11 For he will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways. 12 **They will bear you up in their hands, so that you won't dash your foot against***

a stone. 13 You will tread on the lion and cobra. **You will trample the young lion and the serpent underfoot.**

[Romans 16:19-20 WEB] 19 For your obedience has become known to all. I rejoice therefore over you. But I desire to have you wise in that which is good, but innocent in that which is evil. 20 And the God of peace will quickly **crush Satan under your feet.**

[Habakkuk 3:12-13 NASB20] 12 In indignation You marched through the earth; In anger You trampled the nations. 13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For the salvation of Your anointed. **You smashed the head of the house of evil** To uncover him from foot to neck. Selah

[Ezekiel 28:11-19 WEB] 11 Moreover Yahweh's word came to me, saying, 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and tell him, 'The Lord Yahweh says: "You were the seal of full measure, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl. Gold work of tambourines and of pipes was in you. They were prepared in the day that you were created. 14 You were the anointed cherub who covers. Then I set you up on the holy mountain of God. You have walked up and down in the middle of the stones of fire. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until unrighteousness was found in

you. 16 By the abundance of your commerce, your insides were filled with violence, and you have sinned. Therefore I have cast you as profane out of God's mountain. I have destroyed you, covering cherub, from the middle of the stones of fire. 17 Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty. You have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I have cast you to the ground. I have laid you before kings, that they may see you. 18 By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your commerce, you have profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought out a fire from the middle of you. It has devoured you. **I have turned you to ashes on the earth** in the sight of all those who see you. 19 All those who know you among the peoples will be astonished at you. You have become a terror, and **you will exist no more.**""

[Isaiah 27:1 WEB] In that day, Yahweh with his hard and great and strong sword will punish leviathan, the **fleeing serpent**, and leviathan the twisted serpent; and he will **kill the dragon** that is in the sea.

[Job 26:12-13 NASB20] 12 "With His power He quieted the sea, And by His understanding He shattered Rahab. 13 "By His breath the heavens are cleared; His hand has pierced the **fleeing serpent**.

The NASB20 passage above, translated from the Hebrew Masoretic text of Job, reads like this below, translated instead from the Greek of the Septuagint:

*[Job 26:12-13 NETS Septuagint] 12 By force he calmed the sea, and by knowledge he struck down the sea-monster, 13 and heaven's bars fear him, and by decree he put to death the rebellious **dragon**.*

The Greek word which has been translated as "dragon" in the Septuagint passage of Job 26 above is the same Greek word used in the book of Revelation to describe satan:

*[Revelation 12:9 NASB20] 9 And the great **dragon** was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

The Greek word which has been translated as "dragon" in the Septuagint passage of Job 26 far above is also the same Greek word used in the Septuagint of Isaiah 27 below to describe satan getting killed there too:

*[Isaiah 27:1 LES2 Septuagint] On that day God will bring the holy and great and mighty sword against the **dragon**, a fleeing serpent, against the **dragon**, a twisted serpent; he will slay the **dragon**.*

*[Hebrews 2:14 ESV] Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might **destroy the one who has the power of death**, that is, the **devil**,*

The antichrist is destroyed also:

[2 Thessalonians 2:8 WEB] Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will kill with the breath of his mouth, and destroy by the manifestation of his coming;

[Daniel 7:11 MLV] I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke. I beheld even till the beast was slain and its body destroyed and it was given to be burned with fire.

Destruction and killing of evil angels start below here:

[Jeremiah 10:11 WEB] "You shall say this to them: 'The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth will perish from the earth, and from under the heavens.'"

[2 Peter 2:11-12 ESV] 11 whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. 12 But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction,

[Psalm 82:6-7 ESV] 6 I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; 7 nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince."

We are still not done though talking about hard biblical stops for the duration of punishment. If we peruse around the Bible a little bit more, we continue seeing the frequent pattern:

*[Hebrews 10:26-27, 39 ESV] 26 For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. ... 39 But we are not of those who shrink back and are **destroyed**, but of those who have faith and **preserve their souls**.*

In Hebrews 10 above, I have underlined some non-bold words where the author of Hebrews is quoting from the Old Testament. The quoted Old Testament passage is here below from the Dead Sea Scrolls, Great Isaiah Scroll:

[Isaiah 26:11 DSSB] Oh Lord, your hand is lifted up, but they do not see it. And let them see your zeal for your people and be put to shame; yes, let the fire reserved for your adversaries consume them.

Recall that Isaiah 26 above, which the author of Hebrews is quoting from far above in Hebrews 10:27, is the same Isaiah 26 chapter in which the departed spirits of the wicked are punished and destroyed, never to be resurrected again. See here again below:

*[Isaiah 26:14, 19 NASB20] 14 The dead will not live, **the departed spirits will not rise**; Therefore **You have punished and destroyed them**, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them. ... 19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the **earth will give birth to the departed spirits.***

With these connections in mind, what is the author of Hebrews talking about in Hebrews 10:39 far above when he says "preserve their souls"? In Hebrews 10:27, the author of Hebrews is quoting from Isaiah 26 where the spirits of the wicked are punished and destroyed, so what is he referring to when he mentions destruction and souls in Hebrews 10:39 far above? With all that taken into consideration, if Paul was the author of Hebrews as some in the early church believed, what does Paul mean here in 1 Thessalonians 5 below when he expresses his desire that the spirits, souls, and bodies of the Thessalonians be preserved complete when Jesus returns?

*[1 Thessalonians 5:23 LSB] 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be **preserved complete**, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I've already shown the antichrist getting killed and destroyed. Here below is his army getting a dose of it on both their bodies and souls:

*[Isaiah 10:16-21 ESV] 16 Therefore the Lord GOD of hosts will send wasting sickness among his stout warriors, and under his glory a burning will be kindled, like the burning of fire. 17 The light of Israel will become a fire, and his Holy One a flame, and it will burn and devour his thorns and briers in one day. 18 The glory of his forest and of his fruitful land the LORD will destroy, **both soul and body**, and it will be as when a sick man wastes away. 19 The remnant of the trees of his forest will be so few that a child can write them down. 20 In that day the remnant of Israel and the survivors of the house of Jacob will no more lean on him who struck them, but will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. 21 A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.*

And in Matthew 10 and Mark 9, which follow, we have Jesus stating just the opposite of what most of his Aramaic speaking Israelite audience may have been hearing read

aloud in the synagogues from the Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 66 in regard to Gehenna, hell:

[Matthew 10:28 WEB] Don't be afraid of those who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Rather, fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.

And here below is the Aramaic Targum Jonathan version of Isaiah 66:23-24 below, which Jesus may have been correcting for his audience:

*[Isaiah 66:23-24 Targum Jonathan] 23 From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all the sons of flesh shall come to worship before me, says the LORD. 24 And they shall go forth and look on the bodies of the sinful men who have rebelled against my Memra; for their **breaths** will not die and their fire shall not be quenched, and the wicked shall be judged in Gehenna until the righteous will say concerning them, We have seen enough."*
(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 128)

And here in Mark 9 below we can see Jesus confirming that Isaiah 66 above is talking about Gehenna by His identifying Gehenna as, "where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched".

[Mark 9:47-48 WEB] 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into God's Kingdom

with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, 48 'where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched.'

As you can see in the Aramaic Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 66 far above, the translator from antiquity has changed the worms to "*breaths*", which is another way to express the concept of souls or spirits. Jesus says just the opposite in Matthew 10:28 far above, that the souls will die and not be kept alive. Could Jesus have been intentionally correcting the dishonest alteration done by the Targum translator? Was this Jesus opposing false doctrine? Jesus may have known this content of the Targum and that his audience was hearing it in the synagogues read aloud in Aramaic. Could this be Jesus' answer to the church today and its embracing of a long and protracted punishment for sin?

Hint, hint.....the Old Testament word for "*quench*" or "*extinguish*" in the corresponding Hebrew version of Isaiah 66 (shown above in the Aramaic Targum version) is used several times in other Hebrew Old Testament passages in which the contexts very clearly demonstrate that it can mean intentionally putting out a fire like the fire department does. If a fire is "*not quenched*" in Hebrew, it doesn't have to describe an endlessly burning fire. For example, in the book of Jeremiah it says that the past historical fire that would be used by the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem will, "*not be quenched*". In spite of this, Jerusalem is not still

burning. The fire went out long ago in the 6th century BC, but nobody came and intentionally quenched it in a way that saved the city. Jerusalem was destroyed. Even still today, there is a buried burnt layer of ground, ruins, and artifacts, dating to the 6th century BC, which can easily be detected by modern archeology in Jerusalem. These witness to the massive historical fire which was never "*quenched*" by human hands, but which has long since stopped burning on its own. Here are the Jeremiah passages:

[Jeremiah 7:19-20 ESV] 19 Is it I whom they provoke? declares the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own shame? 20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched."

[Jeremiah 17:27 ESV] But if you do not listen to me, to keep the Sabbath day holy, and not to bear a burden and enter by the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched."

In that sense, if a fire is "*not quenched*" in Hebrew, it can just mean that it burns until it completely consumes and then goes out on its own. And also, what happens to a maggot worm if it is feeding on rotting flesh and it doesn't

die as we see in Jesus' Mark 9 reference to Isaiah 66, "*where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*"? You got it. It turns into a fly and flies away. It doesn't go on endlessly living as a maggot worm. Alternatively, we could just understand this language about the worms to be intentionally exaggerated to express the idea that these worms are living and eating for a long time without interruption. In other words, the bodies are not given an honorable burial. They are consumed by the fire and/or the worms.

You are almost halfway done reading this book! Congratulations! Thank you for reading. If you believe that God is using this book to minister to you, I want to invite you to pray for this ministry and to offer a small bit of your assistance. The traditional view of hell is preventing many people, all over the world, from understanding the kindness and mercy of God. The kindness and mercy of God are part of what leads us to repentance, salvation, and a close loving relationship with Him. There are many people who become Christians only after learning that the traditional view of hell is false. There are many Christians whose closeness and fellowship with the Lord is ruined for many years because they believe God is going to torture their unsaved friends and loved ones for eternity. The goal of this book is to help overthrow the traditional view of hell all over the world and to set these people free from the bondage of having a false understanding of God's character. If you read this book and

find it helpful in your own efforts to discover God's true character, please consider posting a review for it on the amazon website that you shop on. This will help immensely to send the message of this book out to more people who need it. Buying this book on amazon before posting your review there will cause your review to show up on all of the dozens of amazon websites worldwide instead of just the one that you shop on. Thank you, and God bless you for your help.

Chapter 8

The End of the Wicked is Ashes Outside the City Not Endless Torment

I keep asserting that Revelation 14:11; 19:3; and 20:10 draw on sacrifice symbolism, but don't there have to be some literal events or phenomena that follow the meaning of the symbolism? Without this, what would the purpose of the symbolism be? Of course the answer is yes, and we'll see that the book of Revelation points us directly to the literal meaning which quite precisely mirrors the symbolism of sacrifice. The sacrificial system that began at the tabernacle inauguration had, as the final result of many of its rituals and sacrifices, a heap of ashes which was located outside the camp or outside the city of Jerusalem. In the Old Testament tabernacle inauguration and its ensuing sacrificial system, the priests were consecrated and fitted with new robes, sacrifices were made, God's presence comes, fire falls from God to consume the sacrifices, ashes are the result of the fire, and then the smoke begins to go up from generation to generation signaling the beginning of an enduring but not yet endless covenant. In the Book of Revelation and generally at the biblical second coming, the same pattern is followed. The Christian priests are consecrated with the blood of Jesus and new white robes in heaven, the wicked are the sacrifices, Jesus comes as God's

presence, the fire of Jesus falls to consume the sacrifices, the sacrifices who are the wicked are turned into ashes on the earth, and then the smoke, in a symbolic sense, begins to go up forever and ever signaling the beginning of an endless covenant. Will the only remains of the wicked literally be ashes though? We will see there is very strong support for this literal final end.

As I've already shown, the unique word construction in Revelation 14:11, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages", points to Psalm 22, the highly prophetic Psalm about Jesus and how he would be a sacrifice for sin. In the Old Testament sacrificial system, very little of the sin offerings were used in the tabernacle and on the altar. Most of the slain animal was taken outside the camp/city and burned to ashes. As you probably know, the theme of being outside the camp in the Old Testament signified, uncleanness, separation from God and His people, and generally rejection by God. We know that Jesus suffered, "outside the camp", in the words of the apostle Paul, mirroring precisely the procedures of the Old Testament sin offering which Jesus was:

*[Hebrews 13:11-14 ESV] 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a **sacrifice for sin** are burned **outside the camp**. 12 So Jesus also suffered **outside the gate** in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. 13 Therefore let us go to him **outside the camp** and bear the reproach he endured. 14*

For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come.

We know that Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, the lake of fire, is a place which is literally outside the gate, outside the city, outside the camp. You can go walk through it today on the south and southwest sides of Jerusalem, just as Jeremiah describes it below in antiquity:

[Jeremiah 19:1-7 ESV] 1 Thus says the LORD, "Go, buy a potter's earthenware flask, and take some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests, 2 and go out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom at the entry of the Potsherd Gate, and proclaim there the words that I tell you. 3 You shall say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing such disaster upon this place that the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle. 4 Because the people have forsaken me and have profaned this place by making offerings in it to other gods whom neither they nor their fathers nor the kings of Judah have known; and because they have filled this place with the blood of innocents, 5 and have built the high places of Baal to burn their sons in the fire as burnt offerings to Baal, which I did not command or decree, nor did it come into my mind-- 6 therefore, behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when this place shall no more be called Topheth, or the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, but the Valley of Slaughter. 7

*And in this place I will make void the plans of Judah and Jerusalem, and will cause their people to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hand of those who seek their life. I will give their **dead bodies for food to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the earth.***

Does this prophecy above about Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, sound anything like what we have seen in end times prophecies for Gehenna? We know it does. See here again below:

*[Isaiah 66:22-24 ESV] 22 "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the LORD, so shall your offspring and your name remain. 23 From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the LORD. 24 "And they shall go out and look on the **dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against me. For their worm shall not die, their fire shall not be quenched, and they shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.**"*

*[Mark 9:47-48 WEB] 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into God's Kingdom with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the **Gehenna of fire, 48 'where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched.'***

As we've seen in the Book of Revelation, the wicked are to be a sacrifice, but they are also to be outside the city, outside the camp. Here John shows us that he recognizes that "*the city*" and "*the camp*" are one and the same, just as they are in the Old Testament sacrificial system as the temple practices transition from the mobile tent tabernacle over to the temple of Solomon:

*[Revelation 20:9 ESV] 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the **camp** of the saints and the beloved **city**, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,*

And then when the events of Revelation have concluded, after God has come, the fire has fallen, and the sacrifices are consumed to nothing but ashes, the wicked are "*outside the city*" reduced to nothing but ashes:

*[Revelation 22:14-15 ESV] 14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may **enter the city by the gates**. 15 **Outside** are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

Where did I get the ashes from in Revelation 22:14-15 above? It's clear in John's entire narrative in Revelation that the wicked are a sacrifice. If we follow along in the theme of

the tabernacle inauguration and sacrificial system, as I have shown Revelation does throughout, the only way a sacrifice exists outside the city is in a state of having been reduced completely to nothing but ashes. This is exactly what John in Revelation tells us is going to happen to the wicked. Of course he does this in his usual style by pointing to another passage where we find the more explicit description of the wicked becoming ashes. Before we discuss John's pointing reference to the other passage, we need to be keeping in mind that Revelation 21, 22, and to some degree 20, are thematically unified. They are part of a long description of the "eternal state" and its initial emergence. The "eternal state" is the final, perfected, redeemed, unified state of heaven and earth with God and man both dwelling in it together. So things that we see in Revelation chapters 20, 21, and 22 should be recognized as being closely related. With that, here in six numbered groupings of passages which follow are the numerous pointing references displaying the connections between the Revelation description of the "eternal state" and the description of the wicked being ashes in Malachi 3 and 4. All the passages pointing to each other are grouped together, and the pointing phrases found in each group of passages are underlined as needed to help display the connections. Keep in mind as you read these that Malachi 3 and 4 also make up a singular related description, as can be seen by the flow of thought across the chapter break from chapter 3 to chapter 4:

1.

• [Revelation 20:12-13 ESV] 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another **book** was opened, which is the **book of life**. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and **they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.**

• [Revelation 21:27 ESV] 27 But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but **only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.**

• [Malachi 3:16-17 ESV] 16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke with one another. The LORD paid attention and heard them, and a **book of remembrance** was written before him of **those who feared the LORD and esteemed his name.** 17 "They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.

2.

• [Revelation 21:7 ESV] 7 The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and **he will be my son.**

• [Malachi 3:17 ESV] 17 "They shall be mine, says the LORD of hosts, in the day when I make up my treasured possession, and I will spare them **as a man spares his son** who serves him.

3.

• [Revelation 21:8 ESV] 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death."

• [Malachi 3:5 ESV] 5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

4.

Jesus, the Lamb, the descendant of David, whose way is prepared by John the Baptist in Luke 1:76-78, is the "Sun", the "Light".....

• [Psalm 89:35-36 ESV] 35 Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. 36 His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me.

• [Revelation 21:23 ESV] 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb.

• [Malachi 4:2 ESV] 2 But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

• [Luke 1:76-78 ESV] 76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will **go before the Lord to prepare his ways**, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, 78 because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby **the sunrise shall visit us from on high**

• [Malachi 3:1 ESV] 1 "Behold, I send my messenger, and **he will prepare the way before me**. And **the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple**; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

5.

And here we see who the "Swift Witness" in Malachi is if we take into consideration what specific Greek words are being used in the Septuagint version of Malachi 3.....

• [Revelation 22:7,12,16,18,20 LSB] 7 "And behold, I am coming quickly (**swiftly, ταχύ, G5035**). Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." ... 12 "Behold, I am coming quickly (**swiftly, ταχύ, G5035**), and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to his work. ... 16 "I, Jesus, sent My angel to bear witness (**witness, μαρτυρέω, G3140**) to you of these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star." ... 18 I bear witness (**witness, μαρτυρέω, G3140**) to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add to him the

plagues which are written in this book. ... 20 He who bears witness (**witness, μαρτυρέω, G3140**) to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly (**swiftly, ταχύ, G5035**)." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

• [Malachi 3:5 LES2 Septuagint] 5 And I will approach you with justice, and I will become a **swift witness (swift, ταχύς, G5036)**, (**witness, μάρτυς, G3144**) against the sorcerers and against the adulteresses and against the ones who swear oaths in my name, against liars and against those who defraud the wages of workers and who oppress the widow and who maltreat orphans and who pervert justice of the resident alien and who do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.

As you may already realize (**swiftly, ταχύ, G5035**) above from Revelation is the adverbial counterpart of the adjective word (**swift, ταχύς, G5036**) from the Septuagint of Malachi. Correspondingly (**witness, μαρτυρέω, G3140**) from Revelation is the verb counterpart of the noun word (**witness, μάρτυς, G3144**) from the Septuagint of Malachi. So with all these numerous connections between Malachi 3-4 and Revelation 20-22 we can see with confidence that Jesus is the "Swift Witness" from Malachi 3-4 who turns the wicked into ashes "outside" the "city" at the time of the eternal state in Revelation 20-22. See below the last of the six groups of passages which show the connections between the eternal state in Revelation and the wicked finally being ashes in Malachi. As you read,

notice that the Leviticus verses are out of the Greek Septuagint and they share the same Greek word for "outside" which is also used in the Revelation and Hebrews verses:

6.

- [Malachi 4:1-3 NASB20] 1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of armies, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branches. 2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and frolic like calves from the stall. 3 "And you will crush the wicked underfoot, for **they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I am preparing,**" says the LORD of armies.

- [Leviticus 4:12, 21 CAB Septuagint] 12 and they shall carry out the whole calf **out of the camp (ἔξω, outside, G1854, preposition)** into a clean place, where they pour out the **ashes**, and they shall **consume** it there on wood with fire: it shall be burned on the **ashes** poured out. ... 21 And they shall carry forth the calf whole **outside the camp, (ἔξω, outside, G1854, preposition)** and they shall burn the calf as they burned the former calf: it is the **sin-offering** of the congregation.

- [Revelation 14:20 NASB20] 20 And the wine press was trampled **outside the city, (ἔξωθεν, outside, G1855,**

preposition) and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of 1,600 stadia.

• [Revelation 20:9 ESV] 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the **camp of the saints** and the **beloved city**, but fire came down from heaven and **consumed** them,

• [Revelation 22:14-15 ESV] 14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may **enter the city by the gates**. 15 **Outside** (**ἔξω, outside, G1854, adverb**) are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

• [Hebrews 13:11-14 ESV] 11 For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside (**ἔξω, outside, G1854, preposition**) the camp. 12 So Jesus also suffered **outside** (**ἔξω, outside, G1854, preposition**) the **gate** in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. 13 Therefore let us go to him **outside the camp** (**ἔξω, outside, G1854, preposition**) and bear the reproach he endured. 14 For here **we have no lasting city**, but we seek **the city that is to come**.

Take notice of how the ash producing burning of the sin sacrifice "outside" the camp in Hebrews 13 above is directly associated in Hebrews 13 with the city, the camp, and "the city that is to come". What is this "city that is to come"? Of course it is the Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem, heaven on

earth, the same city being described in Revelation 22:15 relative to which the wicked..... "*outside*". So what is this place "*outside*" in Revelation 22:15 above that is very likely full of ashes in the end? It is the lake of fire, the second death. Compare these Revelation verses here again below:

- *[Revelation 21:8 ESV] 8 But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the **lake that burns with fire** and sulfur, which is the **second death**."*

- *[Revelation 22:15 ESV] 15 **Outside** are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.*

Remember that the "*second death*", according to the Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 to which John may be pointing by his very use of the phrase "*second death*", is "*to not live in the world to come*" or the Hebrew Masoretic version, "*sleep a perpetual sleep and never wake up*". That's pretty outrageous, me trying to say that the description of the eternal state in Revelation 20-22 describes the wicked and their final fate, the lake of fire, Gehenna, "*outside*" as finally being ashes. Revelation 22 and its pointing directly to the "*Swift Witness*" who turns the wicked into ashes in Malachi make this connection very clear as I showed above, but here it is straight from Jesus' lips again below in Matthew 13 and Luke 13, if you are still not convinced.

Jesus' comments on hell in Matthew 13 and Luke 13 below are pointing straight to Malachi, the Swift Witness, and the final end of the wicked being ashes and being cast "out". This is just the same Greek word for "outside" or "out" used to describe the wicked in Revelation 22, "outside" the "city". Take a read:

- *[Luke 13:28 ESV] 28 In that place there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast **out** (**ἔξω, outside, G1854**).*
- *[Matthew 13:37-43, 49-50 NASB20] 37 And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the weeds are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 40 "So just **as the weeds are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.** 41 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 42 and they will throw them into the **furnace of fire**; in that place there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**. 43 "Then **THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH LIKE THE SUN** in the kingdom of **their Father**. **The one who has ears, let him hear.** ... 49 "So it will be at the end of the age: the angels will come forth and remove the wicked from among the righteous, 50 and they will throw them into the*

furnace of fire; in that place there will be **weeping and gnashing of teeth**.

Notice the "furnace", the "righteous" "sun", and the totally burned up plants in the place of "weeping and gnashing of teeth" which is described as "out" in the combination of Luke 13 and Matthew 13 above. The same things all appear again in Malachi 4 below, which we've already seen is tightly connected to Revelation 22 in which the wicked are described as "outside":

*[Malachi 4:1-3 NASB20] 1 "For behold, the day is coming, **burning like a furnace**; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be **chaff**; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of armies, "so that it will leave them **neither root nor branches**. 2 "But for you who fear My name, the **sun of righteousness will rise** with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and frolic like calves from the stall. 3 "And you will crush the wicked underfoot, for **they will be ashes under the soles of your feet** on the day that I am preparing," says the LORD of armies.*

Also, call to mind that both righteous Jesus and his righteous people have God as "their Father", so the "Sun" in Matthew 13 far above and in Malachi 4 above can both be referring to Jesus. This strengthens the pointing connection between Matthew 13 and Malachi 4. From all this, we can see that Jesus is very clearly and intentionally connecting his

statements about hell in Matthew 13 and Luke 13 far above to the wicked being ashes in Malachi 4 above. So *"outside"* the *"city"* in Revelation 22 is being ashes in Malachi, just as *"out"* in hell, the place of *"weeping and gnashing of teeth"* in Matthew 13 and Luke 13 far above, is also being ashes in Malachi. Ergo the triangle of connections is completed and the place *"outside"* the *"city"* in Revelation 22 is the same place described by Jesus in Matthew 13 and Luke 13. Both places are hell, the place of ashes in Malachi 4. Recall that in the Bible, hell is Gehenna, the literal valley of Hinnom, and it is located just outside the city of Jerusalem. So would it make sense for Revelation to describe the final resting place of the ashes of the wicked as being literally *"outside"* the *"city"*?

Did Jesus' comment about *"ears"* far above in Matthew 13:43 in his extensive discussion about hell ring any bells for you? Recall that the *"ears"* that *"hear"* and the *"second death"* in Revelation may point us to Jeremiah 51 of the Aramaic Targums, where the second death is, *"to not live in the world to come"*. And then, as you may recall, the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek Septuagint versions of Jeremiah 51, have the phrases, *"sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up"* and *"go into a deep sleep, and sleep an eternal sleep, and shall not be awakened"* instead of having the phrase, *"die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come"* as seen in the Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah. Here are the connecting passages again:

*[Matthew 13:43 NASB20] 43 "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH LIKE THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. **The one who has ears, let him hear.***

*[Revelation 2:11 WEB] He who has an **ear**, let him **hear** what the Spirit says to the assemblies. He who overcomes won't be harmed by the **second death**.*

The Targum.....

*[Isaiah 22:14 Targum Jonathan] The prophet said, With my **ears** I was **hearing** when this was decreed before the LORD God of hosts: "Surely this sin will not be forgiven you until you die the **second death**," says the LORD God of hosts. (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 44)*

The Targum.....

*[Jeremiah 51:39-40 Targum Jonathan] 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and they shall die the **second death**, and shall **not live for the world to come**, says the Lord. 40 I will hand them over like bulls to the slaughter, like rams, with goats. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 187)*

The Hebrew.....

*[Jeremiah 51:39,57 WEB] 39 When they are heated, I will make their feast, and I will make them drunk, that they may rejoice, and **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up,**" says Yahweh ... 57 I will make her princes, her wise men, her governors, her deputies, and her mighty men drunk. They will **sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up,**" says the King, whose name is Yahweh of Armies.*

The Septuagint.....

*[Jeremiah 51:39 LES2 Septuagint] When they are hot, I will give them a drink, and I will make them drunk in order that they might **go into a deep sleep, and sleep an eternal sleep, and shall not be awakened,**" says the Lord.*

So if we gather the meaning of all the total of all the wording and imagery reference pointers in Jesus' statements regarding the place "outside" the "city" in Revelation 22, what do we get? What we get is that the place "outside" the "city" in Revelation 22 is the place of "weeping and gnashing of teeth", it is "out", it is the "furnace of fire", it is the place of the "ashes", possibly the place of those who will "sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake up", the place of the final ashy remnants of the no longer existent wicked. This, of course, precisely mirrors the ashes of the Old Testament sin sacrifices being outside the city after they are slain and burnt to nonexistence. This

follows along with the consistent pattern that we keep seeing of Revelation mirroring and fulfilling the prophetic nature of the Old Testament sacrificial system right? From this we have very strong evidence that Jesus is saying that the wicked will finally be dead ashes outside the city just like the sacrifices, not writhing in torment for eternity. They weep and gnash their teeth until they die, crumbling into a pile of ashes. Romans 6:23a: *"For the wages of sin is death"*, not eternal, immortal life in flames.

While we are on the topic of the furnace of fire, it's relevant to discuss one more of those six Psalms that the odd word construction in Revelation 14:11 points to. Just like Revelation 14:11 with its *"αἰῶνας αἰώνων"*, *"ages ages"*, Psalm 21 in the Septuagint has two occurrences of the odd word construction, *"αἰῶνα αἰῶνος"*, *"age age"*, in verses 4 and 6. If we look at the content of a translation of the Hebrew Masoretic text of Psalm 21 below, we see the same *"fiery furnace"* concept popping up yet again. Does this look familiar?:

*[Psalm 21:7-10 WEB] 7 For the king trusts in Yahweh. Through the loving kindness of the Most High, he shall not be moved. 8 Your hand will find out all of your enemies. Your right hand will find out those who hate you. 9 You will make them as a **fiery furnace** in the time of your anger. Yahweh will swallow them up in his wrath. The fire shall devour them. 10 You will destroy their descendants*

from the earth, their posterity from among the children of men.

And then here below is an English translation of the Septuagint of Psalm 21 with essentially the same message. Bear in mind that the Greek word for "oven" in Psalm 21 below is the same Greek word in the Septuagint version of Malachi where the "oven" turns the wicked to ashes:

*[Psalm 21:7-10 LES2 Septuagint] 7 For the king hopes upon the Lord, and in the mercy of the Most High he will not be shaken. 8 May your hand be found against all your enemies. May your right hand find all those who are hating you. 9 You will set them as an **oven of fire** for the time of your face, O Lord. With your wrath you will confound them, and **fire will devour them**. 10 You will destroy their fruit from the earth, and their seed from the sons of humans,*

As you can see, the content of both Psalm 21 in the Masoretic text and in the Septuagint above are just restating the same thing that we see in Malachi 3 and 4, with the fiery furnace/oven eliminating those who are not in the book of life. In Malachi 3 and 4, they are ashes. In Psalm 21 they are "devoured" by the fire, which makes them what?Ashes. John and the Holy Spirit are pointing to this content so many times and in so many ways our heads are left spinning. The wicked are outside the city in a heap of ashes.

You may still not be convinced though. It's such a forceful statement that the wicked "**are** outside" the "city" in Revelation 22:15. It sounds just like what our pastors may have told us. They "**are** outside" the city writhing in torment for all of eternity. There's another very obvious major problem with this though. The wicked "**are**" **not** necessarily physically located outside according to the Greek language of this verse. We'll see this is just another case of a non-existent, assumed, elided verb that has no explicitly expressed verb tense. According to the proper use of the Greek language, its past or present tense cannot be determined from translation only, but it has to be interpreted from the context surrounding it. Recall that the context of Revelation chapter 22 is Revelation chapter 21. Both chapters are part of an extended description of the new heavens and the new earth and heaven on earth, the holy city, the New Jerusalem. If the wicked are outside the gates of the city writhing and screaming in pain for all future time, as the traditional view of hell might tell us, then how do the characteristics of the new heaven and the new earth and the holy city abide by the description we see in Revelation 21 below which is the context for our elided verb? How will God's people pass in and out of the gates of the city as we see them doing below in Revelation 21 without being exposed to the abject horror that the

traditional view of hell might read into Revelation 22:14-15 and its description of the wicked who are "outside"?

*[Revelation 21:1-2, 4-5, 24-26 ESV] 1 Then I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ... 4 He will **wipe away every tear from their eyes**, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the **former things have passed away**." 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." ... 24 By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates will never be shut by day--and there will be no night there. 26 They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.*

As I approach the gates of heaven, will the tears be wiped from my eyes as I see my unsaved friends from my past life writhing in torment for eternity? Will my unsaved friends be writhing in torment in this new heavens and new earth, a place where there is no mourning, crying, or pain, and the "former things" have passed away? What are the "former things" that have passed away which John is referring to in verse 4 above in regard to the new heavens and the new earth? These are very likely some of the things that he is

referring to below in Isaiah 26 & 65 in regard to the new heavens and the new earth:

*[Isaiah 65:17 NASB20] 17 "For behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**; And the **former things** will **not be remembered** or come to mind.*

What is it that will not be remembered? Here's the answer:

*[Isaiah 26:14 NASB20] 14 The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise; Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And **You have eliminated all remembrance of them.***

So will God continually and endlessly and intentionally remind me of my unsaved friends by keeping them in an endless state of torment in a place "outside" the walls of heaven where I will pass by over and over again for eternity? Here's the answer again:

*[Isaiah 66:23-24 NASB20] 23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from Sabbath to Sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD. 24 "Then they will go out and look At the **corpses** of the people Who have rebelled against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be extinguished; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."*

Do burning corpses writhe and scream in pain endlessly, or do they maybe end up as ashes like the scripture tells us repeatedly? Recall that in Hebrew, the wording in Isaiah 66 above, "*not be extinguished*", or otherwise translated as "*not be quenched*", can mean that the fire will never be intentionally extinguished. As shown before, this type of meaning for the Hebrew word for "*quenched*" is seen demonstrated in the Jeremiah prophecies about the destruction of Jerusalem by fire in the 6th century BC:

[Jeremiah 7:19-20 ESV] 19 Is it I whom they provoke? declares the LORD. Is it not themselves, to their own shame? 20 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched."

[Jeremiah 17:27 ESV] 27 But if you do not listen to me, to keep the Sabbath day holy, and not to bear a burden and enter by the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem and shall not be quenched."

Jerusalem is not still burning, even though the fire was "*not quenched*". If this type of meaning for the Hebrew word "*quenched*" is applied to Isaiah 66 far above, in regard to the burning corpses which it describes, what would happen to these corpses?.....maybe ashes? And, as mentioned

previously, maggot worms which don't die eventually turn into flies. They fly away. They don't live endlessly as maggots. So we can see clearly that part of the broader biblical context of this "outside", describing the final state of the wicked in Revelation 22 is contained in the six passages I just showed. "Outside" clearly does not describe a state of ongoing conscious existence in a geographic location just outside of heaven on earth, the New Jerusalem. The elided being verb, "are" has no context on which to base the verb tense "are" outside the city, unless the meaning of "outside" is something other than what we would typically expect. The fact that the being verb commonly inserted into the text is a non-existent elided verb is made clear by the fact that some highly literal translations^G don't even put the verb there. They just leave it as an awkward English word construction, translating it with something like, "***And without, dogs, and charmers and fornicators, and murderers, and idolaters, and every one loving and doing a lie.***", such as in the highly literal "*Julia Smith Translation*", which is also just known as "*Smith's Literal Translation*" (Smith, 1876, pg. 276). Various other translations utilize the uncertainty of the elided verb to translate it as something like "will be" instead of "are". In the 2006 revised edition of "*Revelation, Expositor's Bible Commentary*", pg. 537, scholar Alan F. Johnson states: "*There is no verb in the Greek text of the verse, so the time of the action is determined by the context.*" The context which has to be used to translate this elided verb is the broader meaning of being outside the

camp, outside the city, or just "*outside*" throughout the Bible. At times being outside the camp was a temporary condition for an Israelite until their state of uncleanness had passed. Many times though, outside the camp/city was a place for a person to be killed as a result of a death sentence as in these passages:

[Leviticus 24:14-15 NASB20] 14 "Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and have all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then have all the congregation stone him. 15 "You shall also speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear the responsibility for his sin.

Additional references to "death sentence outside the camp": Numbers 15:32-36; 1 Kings 21:11-13; Acts 7:57-59

In the Greek Septuagint and in the New Testament, the same Greek word for "*outside*" the city that John uses in Revelation 22:15 is seen to mean just exclusion without any connotations of geographic location:

*[Deuteronomy 25:5 LES2 Septuagint] But if brothers dwell together and one of them dies but he does not have seed, the wife of the one deceased shall not be **outside**, lest a man come near. The brother of her husband shall go into her, and he shall take her for himself as a wife, and he shall live with her.*

[1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 MLV] 10 for you are also practicing it toward all the brethren who are in the whole of Macedonia. But brethren, we encourage you, that you abound even more, 11 and that you make it your aim to be living quiet lives and to do your own things, and to work with your own hands (just-as we commanded you), 12 in order that you may walk decently toward those who are outside, and may have need of nothing.

[1 John 4:18 NASB20] 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

Additional "outside can just be exclusion" references:
John 9:34; Mark 4:11

As I've already extensively described, Revelation uses numerous pointing references to other passages to drop hints to us that the wicked are a sacrifice and that their final end is ashes. With all this in mind, how would the ancient reader of Revelation have interpreted the elided verb? What tense would they have assumed? What meaning? Would they have understood it as exclusion or ongoing conscious existence? Assuming that they were catching all the hints that John lays down, I think the answer is very clear. They would have understood the wicked to be outside the city as "*ashes*", as in Malachi 3-4, to possibly

"not live in the world to come", as in Targum Jeremiah 51, to possibly *"sleep a Perpetual sleep and never wake up"*, as in the Hebrew Masoretic text of Jeremiah 51, to *"not be able to keep their soul alive"* as in Psalm 22, to *"be no more"* as in Psalm 37, and to be *"devoured by fire"* as in Psalm 21. These are all passages that we have evidence John is pointing to throughout Revelation. So it's clear that John's audience would have seen the wicked as *"outside"* of the city in whatever sense and for whatever duration that ashes would be literally physically outside the city under the soles of the feet of those passing by as in Malachi. They would have possibly also understood the wicked to be outside the city in the sense of exclusion, for a permanent duration. That would be exclusion without ongoing conscious existence. I say literally physically ashes, because there is no part of the highly symbolic Old Testament sacrificial system in which the Israelites were instructed to walk through the ashes of the sacrifices. Yet in Malachi 4, there they are walking through the ashes of the wicked *"under the soles of their feet"* in a way that has no parallel in the Old Testament sacrificial system. This is a very clear hint that God's people will literally walk through the ashes of the wicked. This would likely be the way that the ancient audience of Revelation would have elided the verb to mean either past, present, or future. In that sense, John's not putting an actual verb there, allows the meaning of the verse to fully encompass all that I have just described, without eliminating the possibility of any of it. In that sense, John's word

construction may have been a clever use of words, allowing him to say everything by saying nothing: *"They are excluded outside the city because they no longer exist. They were outside the city when they were being burned to an ashy non-existence. They always will be excluded outside the city for eternity because they no longer exist."* The Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34, in an indirect way, may also describe the same final ashy corpse cremation of the lifeless, non-existent, defeated wicked. Look below at how Revelation 14:10-11 connects with Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:

*[Revelation 14:10-11 NASB20] 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with **fire** and **brimstone** in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And the **smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever**; they have no rest **day and night**, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

*[Isaiah 34:3, 9-10 Targum Jonathan] 3 Their slain will be cast out, and the **smoke of their corpses shall rise**; the mountains shall flow with their blood. ... 9 And the streams of Rome shall be turned into pitch, and her soil into **brimstone**; her land shall become **burning** pitch. 10 **Night and day** it shall not be quenched; **its smoke shall go up for ever**.*
(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 68)

Notice how Revelation 14:11 above may be pointing to dead smoking bodies in the Targum of Isaiah 34! Have we seen this before? Is this the same type of pointing that Jesus does when he describes hell in Mark 9:47-48 by pointing to dead bodies in Isaiah 66? See again, Jesus pointing from Mark to Isaiah below:

[Mark 9:47-48 WEB] 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into God's Kingdom with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, 48 'where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched.'

*[Isaiah 66:24 WEB] "They will go out, and look at the **dead bodies** of the men who have transgressed against me; for their worm will not die, nor will their fire be quenched, and they will be loathsome to all mankind."*

Notice in the Isaiah 34 Targum Jonathan group of verses far above that the word "smoke" is not the same in the Hebrew version of the verse as you see here below:

*[Isaiah 34:3 REB Hebrew] And, their slain, shall be cast out, And, their carcasses, the **stench** of them, shall ascend,—And, the mountains, shall melt away, with their blood.*

This alteration of the Hebrew word for "*stench*" to the Aramaic word for "*smoke*" may be an intentional interpretive change done by the Targum translator to illustrate a concept. Is it possible that the Targum translator was trying to illustrate that the corpses in Isaiah 34:3 are somehow like the burning corpses in a verse like Isaiah 66:24 far above? I would say it's very possible, as interpretive alterations are done all throughout the Targums as we have previously discussed. You may have even noticed that in the Targum translation of Isaiah 34:9 far above, "*Rome*" has been inserted into the passage to give the name of the empire which will be destroyed. This is in spite of the fact that in other verses, Isaiah 34 names "*Edom*" as the target for destruction. This is just another example of an interpretive alteration, even right here from within the Targum passage we are discussing. The specific name, "*Edom*" in Isaiah 34 may have been viewed by the Targum translator as just a representation of any oppressive empire ruling over Israel, including Rome. So was John pointing his Aramaic speaking audience to smoking corpses in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:3 when he wrote in Revelation 14:10-11, "*the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever*"? Was John in effect saying to the Aramaic speaking members of his ancient audience that the smoking wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 will be somehow the same or similar to the dead smoking wicked in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:3? Would those in John's audience of Revelation who were frequently listening to Aramaic Targum readings

in the synagogues have instantly recognized Revelation 14:10-11 as a reference to the smoking dead bodies in the Targum of Isaiah 34? From our previous discussion about the dating and multi-phase development of Targum Jonathan of Isaiah we know that it's possible, but not 100% assured. Much of the content of Targum Jonathan of Isaiah was produced before the book of Revelation was written, and some of its content may have arisen from alterations done to it after the book of Revelation was written.

It needs to be mentioned here that various Aramaic lexicons and at least two older English translations of Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34 can be used to deny that the ancient Targum translator in Isaiah 34 far above has interpretively changed the Hebrew word for the "*stench*" of the bodies into the Aramaic word for the "*smoke*" of the bodies. These English translations in question, just show that the dead bodies in Targum Isaiah 34:3 are stinking, just like they are described in the Hebrew of Isaiah 34:3. The seven Aramaic lexicons reviewed by this author list numerous ancient Aramaic word usage examples from many different ancient Aramaic documents to demonstrate that the Aramaic word in Targum Jonathan Isaiah 34:3 means "*smoke*". These are word usage examples which generally contain contexts which, to some small or large degree, force the word to mean smoke and not stench. Targum Onkelos of Genesis 19:28 here below is an example of one of the

forcing contexts given by the lexicons which force the word to mean "*smoke*" and not "*stench*":

[Genesis 19:28 Targum Onkelos] And when he looked upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon all the land of the Plain, he saw and here the smoke of the land was rising like the smoke of a furnace (Grossfeld, 1990, Vol. 6)

It's not possible to see an odor or stench, so the word in Targum Onkelos of Genesis above must mean "*smoke*" and cannot mean "*stench*". In sharp contrast to the numerous word usage examples in the seven lexicons supporting the primary definition of "*smoke*", only three of the lexicons list a secondary definition of something like "*stench*". Of those three lexicons, they all show only a single word usage example to support the secondary definition of "*stench*" (or some other synonymously worded definition describing an odor). The only ancient word usage example used by these three lexicons to support their secondary definition of "*stench*" is the Aramaic Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:3 verse that we are discussing here. They cite Targum Jonathan Isaiah 34:3 and point out that the Targum translator has used this Aramaic word for "*smoke*" in place of the Hebrew word for "*stench*". They are basically arguing that the Aramaic word for "*smoke*" can have a secondary definition of "*stench*" because the ancient Targum translator used it in his Aramaic version where the Hebrew word for stench appears in the Hebrew version. This argument fails

to recognize that the very character and nature of the Aramaic Targums is to interpretively and intentionally deviate from the meaning of the Hebrew Bible for the sake of illustration and teaching. With that taken into consideration we can recognize what these three lexicons may have failed to recognize. We can recognize that just because a Targum translator picks a certain word to put into his Aramaic version, it does not necessarily mean that he believes the Aramaic word means the same thing as the Hebrew word it replaces. With such thin and questionable evidence being supplied by these three lexicons to support the secondary definition of "stench", it seems reasonable to remain open to the idea that the Targum translator intentionally changed stinking corpses to smoking corpses in Isaiah 34:3 to illustrate a concept. Of course, the recent English translation of Targum Jonathan of Isaiah done by modern scholar Bruce Chilton, which we have already shown above, supports this. Chilton translated the Aramaic word as "smoke" coming from the corpses in his Targum Jonathan of Isaiah translation shown again below:

*[Isaiah 34:3, 9-10 Targum Jonathan] 3 Their slain will be cast out, and the **smoke of their corpses shall rise**; the mountains shall flow with their blood. ... 9 And the streams of Rome shall be turned into pitch, and her soil into **brimstone**; her land shall become **burning** pitch. 10 **Night and day** it shall not be quenched; **its smoke shall go up for ever**.*
(Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, pg. 68)

Chilton also italicizes the word "*smoke*" in his English translation to denote that he believes it represents an intentional alteration in meaning done by the ancient Targum translator. **Chilton uses italicization in his English translation anywhere he believes such an intentional deviation from the meaning of the Hebrew has been done by the Targum translator (Chilton, 1990, Vol. 11, Intro pg. xxxiii).**

It may be possible to find more than the highly questionable evidence that the three lexicons show to support the secondary meaning of "*stench*" for the Aramaic word which primarily means "*smoke*". If this could be done, it would obviously call into question the connection that I have showed between the smoking wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 and the smoking corpses of the dead wicked in the Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:3. For that reason, I would encourage the reader to take this connection I have showed for what it's worth. The argument I'm making for this connection may be defeatable. I would also like to invite others who have extensive expertise in Aramaic to do an exhaustive search through all ancient Aramaic documents to determine with complete confidence if there is any additional support for a secondary definition of "*stench*". For those interested, the seven Aramaic lexicons referenced throughout this discussion are as follows:

- a. Stephen A. Kaufman, et al., October 2024, *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon* (<https://cal.huc.edu>)
- b. Michael Sokoloff, 2002, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*
- c. Michael Sokoloff, 2002, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic*
- d. Marcus Jastrow; 1903; *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*
- e. J. Levy, 1870, *Chaldaisches Worterbuch uber die Targumim und einen Grossen Thiel des Rabbinischen Schriftthums*, Volume 2
- f. Edward M. Cook, 2015, *Dictionary of Qumran Aramaic*
- g. Edward M. Cook, 2008, *A Glossary of Targum Onkelos*

The three lexicons in the list above which show the poorly supported secondary definition of something like, "stench" are those with list order letters a, d, and e.

As I've pointed out, there are some significant uncertainties in establishing the connection between the smoking wicked in Revelation 14:10-11 and the smoking corpses of the wicked in Targum Jonathan of Isaiah 34:3. Regardless of that, the similarities between the two passages are striking and definitely worth our having given them some attention. The similarities may intentionally be

pointing out yet another stark contradiction to the traditional view of hell. Dead bodies are dead. They turn to ashes and God's people walk right over them. They don't continue on in torment for the rest of eternity:

[John 8:24 NASB20] 24 "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins."

Chapter 9

The Wicked of the Sea are No More

For those who remain unpersuaded by all the pointing references that I've shown in Revelation leading to statements that sound a lot like total annihilation⁶ of the wicked, body and soul, let's dig deeper to uncover just a few more. In the biblical way of speaking, water, or the sea, or the ocean, are very frequently used symbolically to represent the aggressive and violent mass of the wicked who come against God and His people. Sea for reference:

[Isaiah 57:20-21 NASB20] 20 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud. 21 "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

[Jude 1:12-13 NASB20] 12 These are the ones who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, like shepherds caring only for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; 13 wild waves of the sea, churning up their own shameful deeds like dirty foam; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness has been reserved forever.

It's important to notice in the next three passages how the "sea" and the "many waters" are made equivalent. This will be useful to us later.....

[Isaiah 17:12-13 NASB20] 12 Oh, the uproar of many peoples Who roar like the roaring of the seas, And the rumbling of nations Who rush on like the rumbling of mighty waters! 13 The nations rumble on like the rumbling of many waters, But He will rebuke them, and they will flee far away, And be chased like chaff on the mountains before the wind, Or like whirling dust before a gale.

[Psalm 93:3-4 NASB20] 3 The floods have lifted up, LORD, The floods have lifted up their voice, The floods lift up their pounding waves. 4 More than the sounds of many waters, Than the mighty breakers of the sea, The LORD on high is mighty.

[Habakkuk 3:12-15 NASB20] 12 In indignation You marched through the earth; In anger You trampled the nations. 13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For the salvation of Your anointed. You smashed the head of the house of evil To uncover him from foot to neck. Selah 14 You pierced with his own arrows The head of his leaders. They stormed in to scatter us; Their arrogance was like those Who devour the oppressed in secret. 15 You trampled on the sea with Your horses, On the foam of many waters.

[Isaiah 5:26-30 NASB20] 26 He will also lift up a flag to the distant nation, And whistle for it from the ends of the earth; And behold, it will come with speed swiftly. 27 No one in it is tired or stumbles, No one slumbers or sleeps; Nor is the undergarment at his waist loosened, Nor his sandal strap broken. 28 Its arrows are sharp and all its bows are bent; The hoofs of its horses seem like flint, and its chariot wheels like a storm wind. 29 Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; It growls as it seizes the prey And carries it off with no one to save it. 30 And it will roar against it on that day like the roaring of the sea. If one looks across to the land, behold, there is darkness and distress; Even the light is darkened by its clouds.

Additional "sea are the wicked" references: Psalm 107:23-30; Isaiah 8:6-8; Jeremiah 51:13, 34, 36, 41-42, 55; Ezekiel 26:3; Psalm 65:5-7; Psalm 144:6-8; Psalm 77:15-16; Psalm 124:2-5

The symbolism of the wicked being the violent sea or the waters is utilized extensively in Revelation. When we get to the description of the eternal state in Revelation 20-22 we see a description of the wicked, including satan, being thrown into the lake of fire, the second death in Revelation 20:13-15. Then, maybe not so coincidentally, right after that in the very first verse of Revelation 21 we see an odd little statement that *"there is no longer any sea"*, hinting to us that maybe the *"sea"* is the wicked who have just been thrown into the lake of fire and because of that, *"are no*

more". (It's important to know that the chapter divisions in scripture did not come from the original ancient authors of scripture. They were added in hundreds of years later, and are often very erroneously positioned in ways which obscure the obvious and very important intended relatedness of content which appears just before and just after a chapter division.) This seems like an odd and somewhat unbelievable thing that God would literally just terminate all the beauty and creativity that he has given to the ocean. What would it be like to live in a world without it? If you thought these thoughts, then you would probably be right. What we will see is that the "*second death*" and numerous other pointers in Revelation intentionally direct us right to Jeremiah 51 where the "*sea*" is eliminated. Of course the "*sea*" in Jeremiah 51 is just as it is frequently throughout the Bible. It is a symbolic representation of the violent wicked who oppose God and his people. I've already established that the "*second death*" in Revelation may point to the "*second death*" in Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah 51 and by association also to the Hebrew Masoretic version of Jeremiah 51. I also showed extensively in chapter 5 on pages 100 to 104 how the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 17-19 and in Jeremiah 51 share all these themes: "*come out of her*" my people, she will sink like a "*stone*", she is associated with "*many waters*", "*rejoice*" or have "*joy*" over her destruction, details of her destruction are written in a "*book*" or a "*scroll*", and the nations have drunk of her "*wine*". So the connections between the destruction of

Babylon in both Revelation 17-19 and Jeremiah 51 are clear. Further, we can see that the wicked people, the "sea" or "many waters" which are Babylon, is attacked by the wicked people, the "sea" or "many waters" that are not Babylon, in both Revelation 17-19 and Jeremiah 51. The wicked turn on the wicked. The "sea" turns against its own people, the "sea", and destroys Babylon, the "sea". See the verse comparisons between Jeremiah 51 and Revelation which follow:

Babylon in Jeremiah is attacked by the wicked people who are the "sea" and are the "many waters", and is destroyed by them. Notice in the verses below how the "sea" and the "many waters" are again made equivalent by the fact that they both have roaring waves.....

[Jeremiah 51:1-2, 11, 14, 27-28, 41-43, 46, 48, 54-56, 63-64 NASB20] 1 This is what the LORD says: "Behold, I am going to stir up The spirit of a destroyer against Babylon And against the inhabitants of Leb-kamai. 2 "I will send foreigners to Babylon so that they may winnow her And devastate her land; For they will be opposed to her on every side On the day of her disaster. ... 11 Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers! The LORD has stirred up the spirit of the kings of the Medes, Because His plan is against Babylon to destroy it; For it is the vengeance of the LORD, vengeance for His temple. ... 14 The LORD of armies has sworn by Himself: "I will certainly fill you with a population like locusts, And they

will cry out with shouts of victory over you." ... 27 Lift up a signal flag in the land, Blow a trumpet among the nations! Consecrate the nations against her, Summon against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz; Appoint an officer against her, Bring up the horses like bristly locusts. 28 Consecrate the nations against her, The kings of the Medes, Their governors and all their officials, And every land under their control. ... 41 "How Sheshak has been captured, And the praise of the whole earth has been seized! How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations! 42 **The sea has come up over Babylon; She has been engulfed by its roaring waves.** 43 "Her cities have become an object of horror, **A dry land and a desert**, A land in which no one lives And through which no one of mankind passes. ... 46 "Now, so that your heart does not grow faint, And you are not afraid at the report that will be heard in the land-- For the report will come in one year, And after that another report in another year, And violence will be in the land With **ruler against ruler**-- ... 48 "Then heaven and earth and everything that is in them Will shout for joy over Babylon, Because the destroyers will come to her from the north," Declares the LORD. ... 54 The sound of an outcry from Babylon, And of great destruction from the land of the Chaldeans! 55 For the LORD is going to destroy Babylon, And He will make her loud noise vanish from her. And **their waves will roar like many waters**; The clamor of their voices sounds forth. 56 For the destroyer is coming against her, against Babylon, And her warriors will be captured, Their bows shattered; For the

*LORD is a God of retribution, He will fully repay. ... 63 "And as soon as you finish reading this scroll, you shall tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates, 64 and say, 'Just so shall **Babylon sink down and not rise again**, because of the disaster that I am going to bring upon her; and they will become exhausted.'" To this point are the words of Jeremiah.*

Notice the apparent contradiction in verses 42-43 and 63-64 above in which Babylon is destroyed by the sea, the roaring waves, and sinks down in the water of the Euphrates. In spite of this, in verse 43, Babylon is very likely still literally turned into a dry desert. This apparent contradiction makes it clear that the water and sea are not literal, but typical Old Testament symbolic representations of the mass of the wicked coming against Babylon. Wicked people, the "sea", attacking Babylon is worded even more explicitly in the Targum of Jeremiah 51 here below as opposed to its wording in the translation of the Masoretic Hebrew text above. John's ancient audience of Revelation may have been familiar with this Targum wording:

[Jeremiah 51:42-43 Targum Jonathan] 42 A king with his troops who are as many as the waters of the sea has come up against Babylon; he covers them with the roaring of his waves. 43 Her cities have become a desolation, a desolate and dry land; a land in which no man at all dwells, and no man crosses over it. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pgs. 187 to 188)

Babylon, in Revelation 13 & 17 below, is attacked by the wicked people who are the "sea" and are the "many waters", and is destroyed by them. To recognize this though, we must notice in Revelation 17:1 and 17:3 below how the woman, Babylon, "sits" on the "many waters" and also "sits" on the seven-headed ten horned beast, making the "many waters" and the "beast" equal. So when the beast attacks Babylon, the prostitute, in Revelation 17:16 below it is the "many waters" (which is frequently the "sea" throughout the Bible) which is attacking Babylon.....

- *[Revelation 13:1 NASB20] 1 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a **beast coming up out of the sea**, having **ten horns and seven heads**, and on his horns were **ten crowns**, and on his heads were blasphemous names.*

- *[Revelation 17:1, 3, 5, 7, 9-10, 12, 15-16 NASB20] 1 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who **sits on many waters**, ... 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman **sitting on a scarlet beast**, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns. 5 and on her forehead a name was written, a mystery: "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." ... 7 And the angel*

said to me, "Why do you wonder? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the **beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns.** ... 9 "Here is the mind which has wisdom. The **seven heads are seven mountains** upon which the woman sits, 10 and they are **seven kings**; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must remain a little while. ... 12 "The **ten horns which you saw are ten kings** who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour. ... 15 And he said to me, "The **waters which you saw where the prostitute sits are peoples and multitudes, and nations and languages.** 16 "And **the ten horns which you saw, and the beast, these will hate the prostitute and will make her desolate and naked, and will eat her flesh and will burn her up with fire.**

In Jeremiah 51, Babylon is the "sea" and is the "waters" and is destroyed. Her sea is "dried up" just as in Revelation 21:1, "there is no longer any sea".....

[Jeremiah 51:13, 34-37, 39, 41-43 NASB20] 13 **You who live by many waters,** Abundant in treasures, Your end has come, The measure of your end. ... 34 "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, He has set me down like an empty vessel; He has swallowed me like a monster, He has filled his stomach with my delicacies; **He has washed me away.** 35 "May the violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon," The inhabitant of Zion will

say; And, "May my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea," Jerusalem will say. 36 Therefore this is what the LORD says: "Behold, I am going to plead your case And take vengeance for you; And **I will dry up her sea** And make her fountain dry. 37 "Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a haunt of jackals, An object of horror and hissing, without inhabitants. ... 39 "When they become heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may **sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up,**" declares the LORD. ... 41 "How Sheshak has been captured, And the praise of the whole earth has been seized! How Babylon has become an object of horror among the nations! 42 "The **sea has come up over Babylon;** She has been **engulfed by its roaring waves.** 43 "Her cities have become an object of horror, **A dry land and a desert,** A land in which no one lives And through which no one of mankind passes.

Notice again in Jeremiah 51 above how there is a seemingly contradictory contrast between the literal language of dry desert desolation and the wet symbolic language of the "sea". This gives us even more confidence that the "sea" is symbolic. From all this we can see that John and the Holy Spirit very likely just could not resist stuffing one more reference into the description of the eternal state pointing to what could be a total non-existence of the wicked with no bodies or souls. "There is no longer any sea." They "sleep a perpetual sleep and do not wake up".

Those of my readers who are familiar with the history of the ancient city of Babylon will know that the Persian king Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 BC by diverting the Euphrates river which passed under the wall of the city as its intentionally engineered water source. Cyrus's soldiers then entered the city by passing under the wall where the river had been flowing. Some will say that Jeremiah 51 above is only an already fulfilled prophecy about this diversion of the Euphrates river and conquering of Babylon by king Cyrus. They will say that the Euphrates river is being referred to as the "sea" in Jeremiah 51 that was diverted by Cyrus, "I will dry up her sea". They will cite Jeremiah 51 verses 28 and 32 below in support of this because Cyrus's kingdom and his lineage were known to be a mix of Medes and Persians:

[Jeremiah 51:28, 32 NASB20] 28 Consecrate the nations against her, The kings of the Medes, Their governors and all their officials, And every land under their control. ... 32 The river crossing places have been seized, And they have burned the marshes with fire, And the men of war are terrified.

They will further use that conclusion to proceed to the secondary conclusion that the waters and sea in Jeremiah 51 are not symbolic for wicked people. To those who would make this argument I would ask the following questions. If the sea and waters in Jeremiah 51 are only strictly literal descriptions of the historical diversion of the Euphrates

river, then where in history did we literally see this as Jeremiah 51:42 far above describes, *"The sea has come up over Babylon; She has been engulfed by its roaring waves"*. Also, did king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon literally *"wash"* the inhabitants of Jerusalem away in Jeremiah 51:34, shown far above, or is this symbolic language to express that Nebuchadnezzar had sent a flood of his troops to conquer and *"wash"* away the inhabitants of Jerusalem into captivity? Also, if Jeremiah 51 is only past historically fulfilled prophecy with no water or sea symbolizing wicked people, then why is the entirety of Jeremiah 51 full of numerous phrases and concepts which so precisely mirror the very characteristically future end times content of Revelation 17-19? I'm just referring to all the numerous mirrored phrases and concepts described in this chapter and also those in chapter 5 pages 100 to 104. To explain the fact that Jeremiah 51 bears a striking resemblance to both the past and the future, I propose that Jeremiah 51 records real past events that are a prophetic pre-enactment of yet future Revelation 17-19 events, just as the literal virgin birth of a literal baby named Immanuel in the book of Isaiah pre-enacted the time when Immanuel, Jesus our Savior, would come to be with us through a virgin birth. The name Immanuel means "God with us":

[Isaiah 7:13-14 NASB20] 13 Then he said, "Listen now, house of David! Is it too trivial a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well? 14

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and she will name Him Immanuel.

Similar to the baby Immanuel in the Isaiah passage above, the Babylon of past history in Jeremiah 51 which attacked Israel and sent her into exile is not literally the future kingdom of Babylon described in Revelation. Instead, the Babylon of past history in Jeremiah 51 has characteristics and actions which will be seen being played out again by the future Babylon in Revelation. Understanding that biblical passages can be a mix of past historical events and future prophecy is an important key to understanding all of the Bible. Many passages which undeniably contain future prophecies also contain symbolism and wording which intentionally reference and tie in passages which undeniably contain past events and/or already fulfilled prophecy. This should not keep us from looking to those intentionally referenced passages to recognize more prophecies which will be fulfilled in the future. Much of the book of Revelation does this type of intentional referencing of passages which contain past events and already fulfilled prophecy. We should not conclude that those intentionally referenced passages have nothing to say about the future. They further inform us about the future events which the book of Revelation describes. Failing to recognize this type of key interrelation between biblical passages would for example cause us to miss the fact that the past life and

deeds of king David were a moving, living, literal prophecy, foretelling of the life of Jesus. For example, both David and Jesus are shepherds who were born in Bethlehem. They both tend to their Father's sheep, preserving the lives of the sheep:

[1 Samuel 17:12, 15, 34-35 NASB20] 12 Now David was the son of the Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, the man whose name was Jesse, and he had eight sons. And Jesse was old in the days of Saul, advanced in years among men. ... 15 but David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father's flock at Bethlehem. ... 34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant was tending his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a sheep from the flock, 35 I went out after it and attacked it, and rescued the sheep from its mouth; and when it rose up against me, I grabbed it by its mane and struck it and killed it.

[John 10:10-11 NASB20] 10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came so that they would have life, and have it abundantly. 11 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

Both Jesus and David confront the leader of the house of evil and slay him dead. David kills Goliath. Jesus slays the antichrist at His second coming:

[2 Thessalonians 2:8 WEB] Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will kill with the breath of his mouth, and destroy by the manifestation of his coming;

[Daniel 7:11 MLV] I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke. I beheld even till the beast was slain and its body destroyed and it was given to be burned with fire.

Both antichrist and Goliath, which Jesus and David kill, are likened to a beast:

*[1 Samuel 17:36 NASB20] "Your servant has killed both the **lion and the bear**; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be **like one of them**, since he has defied the armies of the living God."*

*[Revelation 19:19 NASB20] And I saw the **beast** and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army.*

When Jesus and David kill antichrist and Goliath, the dead evil armies of antichrist and Goliath are both left laying out for the critters to snack on:

[Revelation 19:17-19 NASB20] 17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in midheaven, "Come,

assemble for the great feast of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, both free and slaves, and small and great." 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse, and against His army.

*[1 Samuel 17:46 NASB20] "This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I will strike you and remove your head from you. Then I will give the dead bodies of the army of the Philistines this day to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the earth, so that **all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel,***

When Jesus and David defeat the armies of antichrist and Goliath, it makes God's name known throughout the earth, as in the 1 Samuel 17 passage above and the Ezekiel 38 passage below:

*[Ezekiel 38:22-23 NASB20] 22 "With plague and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, hailstones, fire, and brimstone. 23 "So I will prove Myself great, show Myself holy, and **make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.**"*

Both Jesus and David use a sword at the defeat of antichrist and Goliath:

[Revelation 19:21 NASB20] 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

[1 Samuel 17:51 NASB20] 51 Then David ran and stood over the Philistine, and took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and finished him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.

The armies of both Jesus and David plunder the defeated armies of antichrist and Goliath:

[Ezekiel 39:9-10 NASB20] 9 "Then those who inhabit the cities of Israel will go out and make fires with the weapons and burn them, both bucklers and shields, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears, and for seven years they will make fires of them. 10 "They will not take wood from the field or gather firewood from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons; and they will take the spoils of those who plundered them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them," declares the Lord GOD.

[1 Samuel 17:53 NASB20] 53 Then the sons of Israel returned from their close pursuit of the Philistines, and plundered their camps.

The people of antichrist and Goliath defeated by both Jesus and David become servants of the people of Israel:

[1 Samuel 17:8-9 NASB20] 8 He stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel and said to them, "Why do you come out to draw up in battle formation? Am I not the Philistine, and you the servants of Saul? Choose a man as your representative and have him come down to me. 9 "If he is able to fight me and kill me, then we will become your servants; but if I prevail against him and kill him, then you shall become our servants and serve us."

[Isaiah 14:1-7 NASB20] 1 When the LORD has compassion on Jacob and again chooses Israel, and settles them on their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob. 2 The peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will make them their own possession in the land of the LORD as male and female servants; and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors. 3 And it will be on the day when the LORD gives you rest from your hardship, your turmoil, and from the harsh service in which you have been enslaved, 4 that you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon, and say, "How the oppressor has ceased, And how the onslaught has ceased! 5 "The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, The scepter of rulers, 6 Which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing

strokes, Which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution. 7 "The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; They break forth into shouts of joy.

The type of prophetic interrelation that we see between Jesus and David, can also be seen between Jesus and God the Father. A very prominent example of this can repeatedly be detected in this book if the reader looks close. The prominent example is the pre-millennial second coming of Jesus being a similar prophetic pre-enactment and mirror of the post-millennial coming of God the Father in Revelation 20-22. Recognizing these prophetic interrelations between the actions and characteristics of David, Jesus, and God the Father can help us to remain open to the idea that the pre-millennial second coming judgment of Christ can have characteristics which tell us something of the nature and character of the further future post-millennial judgment in Gehenna/hell by God the Father. I propose that this is precisely what John is doing in Revelation 14:11 when he puts the pre-millennial language of the second coming from Isaiah 34:10, *"Its smoke will go up forever"*, into a description of the hell/Gehenna judgment which occurs at the end of the millennium:

[Revelation 14:11 NASB20] 11 "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

He is saying that the final post-millennial judgment of the wicked in Gehenna is an appeasing, smoking, fragrant sacrifice to God, similar to how the smoking sacrifice of the followers of antichrist at the second coming appeases God. God's appeasement by both goes on and on, through the age of the millennium, and then into eternity. Their smoke goes up forever. See Leviticus 3 below for an example of God being appeased by the smoke of a sacrifice:

[Leviticus 3:5 LEB] Aaron's sons shall turn it to smoke on the altar in addition to the burnt offering that is on the wood, which is on the fire; it is an offering made by fire as an appeasing fragrance for Yahweh.

So if we are studying Bible passages which everyone agrees are talking about the future punishment of hell, and within those passages we see clear pointing references to older passages which contain fulfilled prophecy and past historical events, we should not immediately conclude that these older passages have nothing to say about the future. If someone living shortly before the time of Jesus would have taken this approach with the Psalms of David, they would have missed many of the prophecies of Jesus which appear in David's Psalms. For example, this Psalm 16 passage below, to them would have just been a description of David's past historical dependence on God:

[Psalm 16:8-11 NASB20] 8 I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely. 10 For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; You will not allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. 11 You will make known to me the way of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

Of course we know that this passage above is a prophecy about the resurrection of Jesus, after his body had not been in the grave long enough to undergo decay. About this passage above, Luke the author of Acts, says the following, recognizing it as prophecy about Jesus:

[Acts 2:29-32 NASB20] 29 "Brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 "So because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. 32 "It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses.

So we should continue to look in passages containing past historical events and fulfilled prophecy in order to recognize more prophecies which pertain to the future. The past

proclaims prophecies about the future. With God, history foretells of what is still to come. Jesus' second coming and His setting up of His earthly kingdom in the millennium will be a preview and a mirror of the character and nature of the post-millennial coming of God the Father to set up His kingdom among his people.

To further support the idea that Revelation 21:1 is saying that wicked people, the *"sea"*, will be no more, and that Revelation is pointing to the same thing in Jeremiah 51, we can even recognize that the *"sea"* in both Jeremiah 51 and Revelation have satan, the sea dragon, sitting very conspicuously right in the middle of both of them. Basically, satan the sea dragon appears in Revelation in which we see, *"the sea is no more"*, and satan the same sea dragon also appears in Jeremiah 51 where it is said, *"I will dry up her sea"*, *"they will sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up"*. So the argument goes, both describe wicked people who are the sea, ending in non-existence, because they both have the sea dragon too. Same is like same is like same. The theme in both Jeremiah 51 and Revelation are highly parallel, so they continue to be parallel in describing the non-existence of the wicked too. The details of this are as follows. In the Septuagint of Jeremiah 51 below, the same Greek words for *"dragon"* and *"sea"* are used as in Revelation 12 and 13, also shown further below. Notice in the Revelation verses below, that satan the dragon has the same seven heads and ten horns that the beast who comes

out of the sea does. So in some sense, the beast is the dragon and the dragon is the beast and satan the dragon comes out of the sea where he lives:

*[Jeremiah 51:34-36 LES2 Septuagint] 34 “Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, has devoured me; he has divided me; a gentle darkness has seized me. He has swallowed me like a **dragon**; his belly was filled by my delicacy. 35 “My hardships and my miseries have thrust me out into Babylon!” she who dwells in Zion will say. And “My blood be upon the Chaldeans dwelling there!” Jerusalem will say. 36 Therefore thus says the Lord: “Look! I will judge your adversary, and I will avenge your vengeance, and I will desolate her **sea**, and I will dry up her spring.*

*[Revelation 12:3, 9 NASB20] 3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red **dragon** having **seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven crowns**. ... 9 And the great **dragon** was thrown down, the **serpent** of old who is called the **devil** and **satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

*[Revelation 13:1 NASB20] And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the **sea**, having **ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns were ten crowns**, and on his heads were blasphemous names.*

In Revelation 12 above, John is just piling up names for satan so we can be 110% sure he is making just another reference to the dragon who lives in the sea in Isaiah 27:1 here:

*[Isaiah 27:1 NASB20 Hebrew] On that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the **dragon who lives in the sea.***

John doesn't leave out those in his ancient audience of Revelation who know the Hebrew Bible either. For his Hebrew Old Testament users, he identifies the sea dragon, satan, the serpent in the Hebrew of Jeremiah 51 as being the same as satan the sea dragon, the serpent in Revelation. He does this in Revelation 12 below by describing how satan, the dragon, the serpent will attempt to sweep away the woman, Israel, with a flood, just like the serpent is seen doing in the Hebrew of Jeremiah 51 below:

*[Revelation 12:15-16 NASB20] 15 And the **serpent** hurled water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the **dragon** had hurled out of his mouth.*

*[Jeremiah 51:34-36 NASB20 Hebrew] 34 "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, He has set me down like an empty vessel; He has swallowed me like a monster (**dragon**, the same Hebrew word is used here as in Isaiah 27:1 far above), He has filled his stomach with my delicacies; **He has washed me away.** 35 "May the violence done to me and to my flesh be upon Babylon," The inhabitant of Zion will say; And, "May my blood be upon the inhabitants of Chaldea," Jerusalem will say. 36 Therefore this is what the LORD says: "Behold, I am going to plead your case And take vengeance for you; And I will dry up her sea And make her fountain dry.*

The woman that satan tries to wash away in Revelation 12 above is the nation of Israel, just as it is Israel, Jerusalem, Zion being washed away in Jeremiah 51 above. We know this because John associates her with 12 stars, the moon, and the sun in Revelation 12:1 below:

[Revelation 12:1 NASB20] A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;

We know that all these celestial bodies in Revelation 12:1 above are a veiled reference to the nation of Israel because these are all the celestial bodies representing the people and the 12 patriarchs of Israel in Joseph's Old Testament

dream about himself, his parents, and his 11 brothers, below in Genesis:

[Genesis 37:9-10 NASB20] 9 Then he had yet another dream, and informed his brothers of it, and said, "Behold, I have had yet another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me." 10 He also told it to his father as well as to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Am I and your mother and your brothers actually going to come to bow down to the ground before you?"

Of course, John in Revelation has counted Joseph as one of the 12 patriarchal stars, even though he is not referred to as such in Genesis above. Joseph is one of the 12 patriarchs, the patriarch of the tribe which is made of his two sons in the half tribe of Manasseh and the half tribe of Ephraim.

I know you might be calling a foul on me here in this discussion above for looking as though I am saying that Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah 51 is satan the sea dragon who "washes away" Zion, Jerusalem. I protest your foul call though as John is in some sense saying the same thing in the book of Revelation. John constructs a seven-headed 10 horned beast which represents the kingdoms which have or will rule over Israel. John equates this seven-headed ten horned beast with the sea dragon, satan. And then John gives the sea-dragon-beast-satan some characteristics in

Revelation which represent Babylon. So John in Revelation is in some sense, partly equating satan with Babylon, just as Jeremiah 51:34-36 far above does when it describes king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon acting like a "*dragon*" who has a "*sea*". John is saying, satan is the seven headed beast, the seven headed beast is partly Babylon, ergo Babylon is in some sense satan. This hints to us that satan works in and through Babylon and king Nebuchadnezzar as if they are his agents, or his earthly hands and feet, or his physical presence and activity on the earth. The bigger picture John is painting is that all the kings and kingdoms of the earth represented by the crowns, heads, and horns of his seven-headed 10 horned beast are the acting hands and feet of satan on the earth. In some sense satan is working through them, but in another sense satan is them. John is giving us some permission here to speculate that satan's influence over these kings and kingdoms is specifically accomplished with anything from full-on demonic type possession of individuals on down to just subtle intellectual and/or emotional influence through various means. Can you see satan's influence on the kingdoms and nations of the world today? So Jeremiah's application of the characteristics of the sea dragon, satan, onto king Nebuchadnezzar and Babylon in Jeremiah 51 far above is a description of satan doing his work through Nebuchadnezzar/Babylon. So in some sense, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the sea dragon, was satan or his acting agent. Nebuchadnezzar/satan "*washed away*" the

inhabitants of Jerusalem in Jeremiah 51 far above, just as satan, the sea dragon, is seen again attempting to "sweep away" Israel with a "flood" in Revelation 12:15-16 far above. It's interesting that satan's complete failure to wash away Israel with a flood in Revelation appears to be an antonym of satan having succeeded in washing away Israel in Jeremiah 51. In Revelation, the earth helps the woman Israel, swallowing up the flood that satan the dragon sends against her. The earth "swallows" the flood sent against Israel in Revelation, using the same Greek word "swallow" that the Septuagint uses in Jeremiah 51 to describe how the "dragon" "swallowed" Israel. See again the swallowing and washing away going on in Jeremiah 51 of the Septuagint, Jeremiah 51 of the Hebrew, and Revelation 12 below:

[Revelation 12:15-16 ESV] 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.

[Jeremiah 51:34-35 LES2 Septuagint] 34 "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, has devoured me; he has divided me; a gentle darkness has seized me. He has swallowed me like a dragon; his belly was filled by my delicacy. 35 "My hardships and my miseries have thrust me out into Babylon!" she who dwells in Zion will say. And "My blood be upon the Chaldeans dwelling there!" Jerusalem will say.

*[Jeremiah 51:34 NASB20 Hebrew] "Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, He has set me down like an empty vessel; He has swallowed me like a monster (**dragon or serpent**), He has filled his stomach with my delicacies; He has washed me away.*

So the roles are completely reversed. Satan the dragon sends the Babylonian evil army against Israel to "wash her away" in Jeremiah 51, and satan swallows her, sending her into the historical 70 years of captivity inside Babylon, the belly of the dragon. In Revelation, satan again sends a "flood" against Israel to wash her away, but this time his flood is itself "swallowed". The similarities are clear, but the antonym is also clear. Israel's fortunes have changed. Her King saves her this time. So we have many reasons to be confident that satan the sea dragon does clearly make an appearance in both Jeremiah 51 and in Revelation. This can give us further confidence that the wicked, the "sea" of the dragon, are no more in both Jeremiah 51 and Revelation. "They will sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up", as in Jeremiah 51:39, 57 below:

[Jeremiah 51:39, 57 NASB20] 39 "When they become heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up," declares the LORD. ... 57 "I will make her leaders and her wise men drunk, Her governors,

her officials, and her warriors, So that they will sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake up," Declares the King, whose name is the LORD of armies.

The more detailed supporting evidence for the equating of satan with Babylon in the previous paragraph goes something like this. As I already mentioned, John in Revelation 12 & 13 puts the same seven heads and 10 horns on satan, the sea dragon as he puts on the beast, making a bold statement that the two are in some way equivalent. Then John constructs his seven-headed ten horned beast/dragon to be a combination of all four of the beasts in Daniel 7 which represent the various world kingdoms which rule over the nation of Israel. In Daniel 7, the four beasts are: one like a lion; one like a bear; one like a leopard; and one is nondescript, terrifying, and endowed with 10 horns. John's beast/dragon in Revelation is a combination of all three of the animal-like beasts from Daniel 7, and of course it has the 10 horns of the terrifying fourth nondescript beast from Daniel 7 also:

[Revelation 13:2 NASB20] 2 And the beast that I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne, and great authority.

In Daniel 7, each beast which is identified with an animal represents a specific kingdom from the past. The beast

which is like a lion and has the wings of an eagle is the kingdom of Babylon according to the biblical symbolism in the Jeremiah verses shown below. The prophecy in Jeremiah 4 below is a historically fulfilled prophecy about the conquering of the southern kingdom of the nation of Israel which was about to happen in the days of the prophet Jeremiah. The lion, Babylon conquered the southern kingdom of the nation of Israel and carried its people away into exile in Babylon for 70 years:

*[Jeremiah 4:6-7, 13, 16 NASB20] 6 "Raise a flag toward Zion! Take refuge, do not stand still, For I am bringing evil from the north, And great destruction. 7 "A **lion** has gone up from his thicket, And a destroyer of nations has set out; He has gone out from his place To make your land a waste. Your cities will be ruins, Without an inhabitant. ... 13 "Behold, he goes up like clouds, And his chariots like the whirlwind; His horses are **swifter than eagles**. Woe to us, for we are ruined!" ... 16 "Report it to the nations, now! Proclaim to Jerusalem, 'Enemies are coming from a remote country, And they raise their voices against the cities of Judah.*

The Septuagint of Daniel 4 also gives us a confirmation that the lion beast in Daniel 7 is Babylon. It describes Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, as being like a lion and like having the wings of an eagle. This is just how Daniel describes the lion beast in Daniel 7 further below:

[Daniel 4:30b LES2 Septuagint] And my hair became like the wings of an eagle, my nails like a lion. My flesh and my heart were changed. I walked around naked with the beasts of the earth. I saw a dream and suspicions of me took hold and in time sleep took hold of me, and a great drowsiness fell upon me.

[Daniel 7:3-4 LES2 Septuagint] 3 And, indeed, four wild beasts arose out of the sea, each one differing from the other. 4 The first one was like a lioness, but it had feathers just like an eagle. I continued watching until its feathers were plucked and it was lifted up from the earth, and upon human feet it was made to stand, and a human heart was given to it.

The bear beast in Daniel 7, which is raised up on one side, is Medo-Persia which was a kingdom with two peoples combined, one of which was raised up or stronger than the other. Persia was the stronger of the two. The bear beast in Daniel 7 is also depicted with three ribs in its mouth, and is exhorted by Daniel's narration to, "*devour much meat*". This language may be a prophecy recognizing that the three major conquests of the kingdom of Medo-Persia would be Lydia in 546 BC, Babylon in 539 BC, and Egypt in 525 BC. The leopard beast with four heads in Daniel 7 is the kingdom of Greece, which split into four when Alexander the great died young and his kingdom was split up between his four military generals. And of course, the terrifying nondescript

ten-horned beast in Daniel 7 is the kingdom of antichrist. The details just given which allow for the identification of each kingdom corresponding to each of the four beasts are from the marginal notes in the 1995 edition of the *Ryrie Study Bible Expanded Edition* by Charles Caldwell Ryrie. The way that the known histories of the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece have so strikingly followed right along in the same order as their order of appearance in Daniel 7 gives us even further reason to be confident that it is the kingdom of Babylon being represented as the lion of the first beast in Daniel 7. When we can confidently recognize Babylon the lion beast in Daniel 7, this allows us to also recognize that John's satan the sea dragon beast with the *"mouth like the mouth of a lion"* in Revelation is also partly Babylon in some sense. Ergo Revelation is in some sense saying that Babylon is satan, just as we see Jeremiah doing in Jeremiah 51:34 by comparing Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon with a dragon: *"Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon has devoured me, he has crushed me, He has set me down like an empty vessel; He has swallowed me like a dragon."* So of course the sea in Jeremiah 51 is wicked people just like it is in Revelation. The sea in Jeremiah 51 has satan the Babylonian lion *"dragon"* in it just as the sea in Revelation does. Same is like same. So the sea that ceases to exist in Jeremiah 51:36 is the same sea that ceases to exist in Revelation 21:1. I know it's hard to believe that John and Jeremiah are both in some way equating satan the sea dragon with Babylon. Just so we

don't remain doubtful, we can also refer to Isaiah 14 below where the king of Babylon is again equated to satan. Notice how satan in Isaiah 14 below is cast out of heaven, he is then confined to Sheol, and he tries to take the place of God. These are all characteristics of satan found throughout the Bible. For these characteristics of satan, see the passages which follow the Isaiah 14 passage below:

*[Isaiah 14:3-14 NASB20] 3 And it will be on the day when the LORD gives you rest from your hardship, your turmoil, and from the harsh service in which you have been enslaved, 4 that you will take up this taunt against the **king of Babylon**, and say, "How the oppressor has ceased, And how the onslaught has ceased! 5 "The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, The scepter of rulers, 6 Which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing strokes, Which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution. 7 "The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; They break forth into shouts of joy. 8 "Even the juniper trees rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, 'Since you have been laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.' 9 "**Sheol below is excited about you**, to meet you when you come; It stirs the spirits of the dead for you, all the leaders of the earth; It raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones. 10 "They will all respond and say to you, 'Even you have become weak as we, You have become like us. 11 'Your pride and the music of your harps Have been brought down to Sheol; Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you And*

worms are your covering.' 12 "How you have fallen from heaven, You star of the morning, son of the dawn! **You have been cut down to the earth**, You who defeated the nations! 13 "But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will make myself like the Most High.**'

[Revelation 12:7-9 NASB20] 7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they did not prevail, and there was **no longer a place found for them in heaven.** 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; **he was thrown down to the earth**, and his angels were thrown down with him.

[Revelation 20:2-3 NASB20] 2 And he took hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and **bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him**, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

To see yet another example of satan being equated to an evil king, we can refer to Ezekiel 28 below. Notice how

Ezekiel portrays the king of Tyre as a cherub type angel who was in the Garden of Eden, just as satan was when he deceived Eve to eat the forbidden fruit in Genesis. Ezekiel also shows satan being cast out of God's presence, just as we know satan has been. And then Ezekiel shows the king of Tyre being killed, just as satan is also killed in Isaiah 27:1, as we have already seen. Isaiah 27:1 is shown again further below:

*[Ezekiel 28:12-19 NASB20] 12 "Son of man, take up a song of mourning over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 "**You were in Eden, the garden of God**; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. 14 "**You were the anointed cherub** who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 "You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created Until unrighteousness was found in you. 16 "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore **I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God**. And I have destroyed you, you covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. 17 "Your heart was haughty because of your beauty;*

*You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. **I threw you to the ground**; I put you before kings, That they may see you. 18 "By the multitude of your wrongdoings, In the unrighteousness of your trade You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And **I have turned you to ashes on the earth** In the eyes of all who see you. 19 "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified And **you will cease to be forever.**"*

*[Isaiah 27:1 NASB20 Hebrew] On that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will **kill the dragon who lives in the sea.***

So we should not be doubtful that John and Jeremiah equate satan the dragon of the sea to an evil king or kingdom. Both Isaiah and Ezekiel do the same thing. When John constructs his seven-headed ten-horned sea dragon, satan the beast in Revelation, he is just following along with an existing biblical convention. John is in some sense equating the evil kings and kingdoms of the world with satan as satan's acting agents and his hands and feet in the world. Satan controls these kingdoms, and in some sense satan is these kingdoms. We see another clear demonstration of this in Matthew 4 below, where satan offers dominion of his evil kingdoms to Jesus in exchange for Jesus allowing satan to take the place of God:

[Matthew 4:1, 8-9 NASB20] 1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ... 8 Again, the devil took Him along to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; 9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

So Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian satanic dragon of the sea in Jeremiah 51 is in the typical biblical style. Satan, the dragon of the sea, is his evil kingdoms, and his wicked followers are the sea in which he lives, the sea which will be no more in both Jeremiah 51 and in Revelation.

Does the language of Jeremiah 51 really describe the final nonexistence of the wicked of the sea though? Verse 39, shown again below, sounds very much like a description of total non-existence, consistent with the total destruction which happens as the result of a sacrifice:

[Jeremiah 51:39-40 NASB20] 39 "When they become heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up," declares the LORD. 40 "I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, Like rams together with male goats.

And then, as I showed before, the Targum Jonathan of Jeremiah translator applies interpretive alterations in Targum Jeremiah 51:39 below which reveal that he does in fact recognize the language of the Hebrew of Jeremiah 51 above as describing just not living:

*[Jeremiah 51:39-40 Targum Jonathan] 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and they shall die the **second death**, and shall **not live for the world to come**, says the Lord. 40 I will hand them over like bulls to the slaughter, like rams, with goats. (Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 187)*

The interpretation that the Targum translator applies above even has other very convincing support from inside of Jeremiah 51. As you see below, Jeremiah 51:36 mentions a "fountain":

*[Jeremiah 51:36 NASB20] Therefore this is what the LORD says: "Behold, I am going to plead your case And take vengeance for you; And I will dry up her sea And make her **fountain** dry."*

In the Septuagint of Jeremiah 51:36 below, the Greek word for "fountain" is the same Greek word as in Revelation 21:6, also shown below:

*[Jeremiah 51:36 CAB Septuagint] Therefore thus says the Lord: Behold, I will judge your adversary, and I will execute vengeance for you; and I will waste her sea, and dry up her **fountain**.*

*[Revelation 21:5-6 ASV] 5 And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he saith, Write: for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, They are come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the **fountain** of the water of life freely.*

This "fountain" in Revelation above is the fountain of eternal life given by Jesus to his people. This "fountain" is the same fountain in Zechariah below which is the remedy for sin and defilement, just as Jesus is:

[Zechariah 13:1 NASB20] "On that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for defilement.

This "fountain" of eternal life is the same fountain offered by Jesus to the woman at the well. John's gospel in the passage below, Revelation 21 far above, and the Septuagint of Jeremiah 51:36 far above, all use the same Greek word for "fountain" which appears in Jesus' offer of eternal life to the woman at the well:

*[John 4:7, 10-14 NASB20] 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." ... 10 Jesus replied to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who is saying to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." 11 She said to Him, "Sir, You have no bucket and the well is deep; where then do You get this living water? 12 "You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well and drank of it himself, and his sons and his cattle?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again; 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never be thirsty; but the water that I will give him will become in him a **fountain of water springing up to eternal life.**"*

Not only does God give this fountain of eternal life to his people, He is the Fountain! The verse below from the Septuagint of Jeremiah uses the same Greek word for "fountain". This verse demonstrates that even within the book of Jeremiah, before chapter 51 in which Babylon's "fountain" is dried up, the word "fountain" symbolizes life:

*[Jeremiah 17:13 CAB Septuagint] O Lord, the hope of Israel, let all that have left You be ashamed, let them that have revolted be written on the earth, because they have forsaken the **fountain** of life, the Lord.*

In Revelation, Jesus the Lamb is the one who leads us to the fountains of the waters of eternal life and salvation as we see here:

*[Revelation 7:17 ASV] for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto **fountains of waters of life**: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

These fountains of the waters of eternal life and salvation from the verse above well up into a full river coming from the throne of Jesus our God in the verse below:

*[Revelation 22:1 ASV] And he showed me a river of **water of life**, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,*

So we are beginning to see that God's words in Jeremiah 51:36, "I will dry up her sea and make her fountain dry", may be an intentional symbolic antonym to having the eternal life that Jesus offers. More specifically though, it may be an antonym to the fountain of life which leads to the resurrection, resulting in eternal life. In the Septuagint of Psalms 36 below, we see that the fountain of life is what allows God's people to "see light". "Seeing light" is a frequent biblical symbolism for being alive or resurrection. So the Psalms 36 Septuagint verse below is saying that the fountain of life gives us the resurrection to eternal life. Of

course, the Septuagint verse below uses the same Greek word for fountain that we have been discussing:

[Psalms 36:9 CAB Septuagint] For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we shall see light.

The symbolism of "seeing light", meaning to live or be resurrected, can be seen in the following passages:

[Job 3:2-4, 16, 20 NASB20] 2 And Job said, 3 "May the day on which I was to be born perish, As well as the night which said, 'A boy is conceived.' 4 "May that day be darkness; May God above not care for it, Nor light shine on it. ... 16 "Or like a miscarriage which is hidden, I would not exist, As infants that never saw light. ... 20 "Why is light given to one burdened with grief, And life to the bitter of soul,

[Job 33:28-30 NASB20] 28 'He has redeemed my soul from going to the pit, And my life will see the light.' 29 "Behold, God does all these things for a man two or three times, 30 To bring back his soul from the pit, So that he may be enlightened with the light of life.

Notice in this Psalm below how a contrast is made between the righteous one whose soul God will redeem from Sheol, versus the wicked who will never again be resurrected to "see the light"

*[Psalm 49:13-20 NASB20] 13 This is the way of those who are foolish, And of those after them who approve their words. Selah 14 Like sheep they sink down to Sheol; Death will be their shepherd; And the upright will rule over them in the morning, And their form shall be for Sheol to consume So that they have no lofty home. 15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, For He will receive me. Selah 16 Do not be afraid when a person becomes rich, When the splendor of his house is increased; 17 For when he dies, he will take nothing with him; His wealth will not descend after him. 18 Though while he lives he congratulates himself-- And though people praise you when you do well for yourself-- 19 He will go to the generation of his fathers; **They will never see the light.** 20 Mankind in its splendor, yet without understanding, Is **like the animals that perish.***

And then in the Great Isaiah Scroll, from the Dead Sea scrolls, a scroll dated to have been produced over 150 years before Jesus rose from the dead, we see a prophecy of how Jesus will be resurrected. After Jesus dies, "He will see light"

[Isaiah 53:8-12 DSSB Dead Sea scrolls] 8 From detention and judgment he was taken away and who can even think about his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living, he was stricken for the transgression of my people. 9 Then they made his grave with the wicked, and with rich people his tomb although he had done no violence, nor was

*any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet the Lord was willing to crush him, and he made him suffer. Although you make his soul an offering for sin, and he will see his offspring, and he will prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will triumph in his hand. 11 Out of the suffering of his soul **he will see light**, and find satisfaction. And through his knowledge his servant, the righteous one, will make many righteous, and he will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I allot him a portion with the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong; because he poured out his life to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for their transgressions.*

The Septuagint of Isaiah 53 also shows the prophecy of the resurrection of Jesus.....

*[Isaiah 53:10-11 LES2 Septuagint] 10 The Lord is willing to cleanse him of the injury. If you give concerning sin, our soul will see long-lived seed, and the Lord wishes to remove him from the difficulty of his soul, 11 to **show him the light**, and to form him with understanding, to justify the righteous who serves many well; and he himself will bear their sins.*

Additional "seeing the light is resurrection" passages are:
Job 18:17-19; Job 17:11-16

So with this understanding that, "seeing the light" is resurrection, we can understand that Psalm 36:9, shown

again below, is saying that in order for us to have eternal life it must be supplied by God the "*Fountain*". It is only by the water of the Fountain that we can "*see the light*" and be resurrected to eternal life:

[Psalms 36:9 CAB Septuagint] For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we shall see light.

As I mentioned previously, the symbolism of the fate of the wicked people of the dried up sea and dried up fountain in Jeremiah 51 may be an intentional antonym to the symbolism of the watery Fountain of life, light, and resurrection described above. In Jeremiah 51, their fountain is dried up, and in the end, they never again see the light, they sleep perpetually, never waking up to a resurrection of eternal life. Here are the verses again, translated from the Hebrew:

*[Jeremiah 51:36, 39-40 NASB20 Masoretic Hebrew] 36 Therefore this is what the LORD says: "Behold, I am going to plead your case And take vengeance for you; And I will **dry up her sea And make her fountain dry.** ... 39 "When they become heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may **sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up,**" declares the LORD. 40 "I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, Like rams together with male goats.*

As I've already shown you previously, the interpretation of the Hebrew passage above that I've just described is precisely how the Targum translator understood it too. See his interpretive alterations again here:

[Jeremiah 51:36, 39-40 Targum Jonathan] 36 Therefore thus says the Lord: "Behold, I am judging your case and am taking vengeance for you; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. ... 39 Bring distress upon them, and they shall be like drunken men, so that they shall not be strong; and they shall die the second death, and shall not live for the world to come, says the Lord. 40 I will hand them over like bulls to the slaughter, like rams, with goats.
(Hayward, 1987, Vol. 12, pg. 187)

Notice how the Targum translator above leaves the language of the "sea" and the "springs" or fountains in verse 36 intact without alterations. Maybe he did this because he knew his interpretive alterations in verse 39, which clearly describe not being resurrected, are at least in part an interpretation of the dried up "sea" and dried up "springs"/fountains. This may have been his way to preserve the supporting evidence in verse 36 for his interpretive alterations in verse 39. Of course we can understand that all of the lack of resurrection for the wicked in this resurrection discussion is a lack which only occurs after they are resurrected to face the judgement in Gehenna at the end of the millennium in Revelation 20. In the

Targum way of speaking, they are resurrected to judgment so that they can die the "second death" and "not live for the world to come". Their fountain dries up because they refused to drink from the true Fountain. In Gehenna, their punishment consists of both torment and being completely destroyed to non-existence, never to be resurrected to see the Light of Life again:

*[Proverbs 10:11 CAB Septuagint] There is a **fountain of life** in the hand of a righteous man, but **destruction** shall cover the mouth of the ungodly.*

*[Psalms 36:9 CAB Septuagint] For with You is the **fountain of life**; in **Your light we shall see light**.*

*[John 8:12 NASB20] 12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "**I am the Light** of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the **Light of life**."*

*[Isaiah 26:14, 19 NASB20] 14 The **dead will not live**, the **departed spirits will not rise**; Therefore You have punished and **destroyed them**, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them. ... 19 Your **dead will live**; Their **corpses will rise**. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the **earth will give birth to the departed spirits**.*

The morning has come! Awake! Awake! Shout for joy! It is time to see the Light of Life who comes at the dawn!!

Is the "*destruction*" in the passages above that happens to you if you do not have the resurrection given by the "*fountain of life*", just death in the usual sense, or is it endless torment? Jesus tells us what happens to us if we don't receive the resurrection to eternal life. In the passage below it very much appears that Jesus assumes you'll just "*die*" in the end. John even records Jesus' words using the same Greek word for "*die*" both times in the passage. The passage is of course a conversation between Jesus and Martha about her brother Lazarus who would soon see the Light after Jesus resurrects him from the dead:

*[John 11:23-26 NASB20] 23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise from the dead." 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he **dies**, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never **die**. Do you believe this?"*

If we live and do not believe in Him our final end is that we will just die. If death and dying must mean what the traditional view of hell says it does, a consistently interpreted version of the passage above would mean something very confusing and contradictory like this:

[John 11:23-26 NASB20 Altered to traditional hell doctrine]
23 Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise from **his endless torment.**" 24 Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." 25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he **is endlessly tormented,** 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never **be endlessly tormented.** Do you believe this?"

In order for this passage above to make any sense, even within the framework of the traditional view of hell, Jesus must be understood to be using the word "die" in two different ways in the same statement without any explanation to counteract the confusing effect that this may have had on his audience. Maybe Jesus' second use of the word "die" in the passage is just describing being completely dead, body and soul, totally non-existent?

In light of the oceanic content of this chapter, is it possible that this Nahum passage below and "there is no longer any sea" in Revelation 21:1 are not just describing some massive coastal restoration project?

[Nahum 1:2-5 NASB20] 2 A jealous and avenging God is the LORD; The LORD is avenging and wrathful. The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries, And He reserves wrath for His enemies. 3 The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, And **the LORD will by no means leave the guilty**

unpunished. *In the gale and the storm is His way, And clouds are the dust beneath His feet. 4 **He rebukes the sea and dries it up;** He dries up all the rivers. Bashan and Carmel wither, The blossoms of Lebanon wither. 5 Mountains quake because of Him, And the hills come apart; Indeed the earth is upheaved by His presence, The world and all the inhabitants in it.*

In conclusion, we have yet another pointing reference in the Revelation 20-22 description of the perfected eternal state which urges us to understand that being "outside" the "city" in Revelation 22:14-15 is a condition of being excluded and being a heap of ashes, but not being in an ongoing state of conscious existence. "There is no longer any sea." The sea has been "rebuked" and "dried up". Her "fountain" is "dried up" so she never "sees the light" of resurrection again. She sleeps a perpetual sleep and never wakes up. She dies the second death and does not live in the world to come. The sea is not there living an immortal endless life, hanging out being consciously tormented outside of the city for all future time. After all, immortality and endless consciousness is not granted to the wicked. Only God's people will receive it:

[2 Timothy 1:8-10 NASB20] 8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not

*according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was granted to us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought **life and immortality to light through the gospel,***

Chapter 10

More "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" Pointers to Ashes, Dead Souls, and Second Coming Judgment

I've been discussing, one here and one there, those special Psalms and Susanna passages which contain the same odd and unique word construction, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages", for "forever and ever" found in Revelation 14:11 where, "the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night". Recall that all of these passages must contain the wording of Revelation 14:11 or pertain directly to the judgment of the wicked in Revelation 14 in order for us to be convinced that the use of "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "ages ages" in Revelation 14:11 is an intentional and exclusive pointer to the six Psalms and Susanna. Otherwise we would just have a mildly coincidental similarity. I've already demonstrated that four of these Psalms and Susanna passages meet the criteria for a convincing connection to Revelation 14:11, and now I would like to demonstrate that the last three also convincingly connect. Psalm 19 will be next in line. This just looks like a Psalm praising God and the beauty of his creation, but as we'll see this is Jesus at His second coming, bringing judgment on the wicked, and maybe even resurrection to the righteous:

Who is the Sun in Psalm 19 below? Who is the groom who returns at the second coming?.....

*[Psalm 19:4-5 NASB20] 4 Their line has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, 5 Which is like a groom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices like a **strong person** to run his course.*

- The "Sun" is Jesus - Malachi 4:1-3; Habakkuk 3; Luke 1:76-79; Isaiah 60:1-17; 2 Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16
- The Sun "Groom" is Jesus coming out of His wedding chamber to marry His people the "bride" - Revelation 19:7-8

Who is this below in Psalm 19 who makes himself known from one end of the heavens to the other?.....

- *[Psalm 19:6 NASB20] 6 Its rising is from one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.*
- *[Matthew 24:27 ASV] 27 For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of man.*

Who is this in Psalm 19 below with the true and righteous judgments? From what passage in Psalms is Revelation 19 far below quoting from in capital letters in regard to the King, the Lamb, Jesus? You got it. Revelation is quoting from and pointing to Psalm 19 numerous times with words

and phrases like "judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous". Take a look.....

- [Psalm 19:9 NASB20] 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The **judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous** altogether.
- [Revelation 15:3-4 ASV] 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the **song of the Lamb**, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; **righteous and true** are thy ways, thou **King of the ages**. 4 Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for **all the nations shall come and worship before thee**; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.
- [Revelation 16:7 NASB20] 7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, **true and righteous are Your judgments**."
- [Revelation 19:1-3 NASB20] 1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, 2 BECAUSE **HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS**; for He has judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the earth with her sexual immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! **HER SMOKE RISES FOREVER AND EVER**."

Who is this putting out the "heat" below in Psalm 19?.....

• [Psalm 19:4-6 NASB20] 4 Their line has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, 5 Which is like a groom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices like a strong person to run his course. 6 Its rising is from one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat.

• [Revelation 16:7-9 NASB20] 7 And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments." 8 And the fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given power to scorch people with fire. 9 And the people were scorched with fierce heat; and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory.

• [Malachi 4:1-3 NASB20] 1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of armies, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branches. 2 "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and frolic like calves from the stall. 3 "And you will crush the wicked underfoot, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I am preparing," says the LORD of armies.

Could this be the resurrection of the righteous in Psalm 19 below at the rapture, just before Jesus' second coming?.....

- [Psalm 19:7 NASB20] 7 *The Law of the LORD is perfect, **restoring the soul**; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*

Who is it that we are to fear below in Psalm 19?.....

- [Psalm 19:9 NASB20] 9 The **fear of the LORD** is clean, enduring forever; The **judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous** altogether.

- [Revelation 14:7 NASB20] 7 and he said with a loud voice, "**Fear God** and give Him glory, because the hour of **His judgment** has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth, and sea and springs of waters."

- [Revelation 15:3-4 NASB20] 3 And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God, the Almighty; **Righteous and true** are Your ways, **King of the nations!** 4 "Who will not **fear You, Lord**, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, For Your righteous acts have been revealed."

- [Revelation 19:5 NASB20] 5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who **fear Him**, the small and the great."

Who is the Rock below in Psalm 19 that gives the Living Water that eternally saves the lives of his people?.....

• *[Psalm 19:14 NASB20] 14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, **LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.***

• *[1 Corinthians 10:4 NASB20] 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and **the rock was Christ.***

This Revelation 16 passage below blends the language of the sacrificial system and the "altar" with the language of Psalm 19. It does this from amidst its own descriptions of the nasty bowl **judgments**, doled out onto the wicked which take up all of the chapter of Revelation 16. So Revelation 16 gives us yet another indication that the wicked are a sacrifice on the "altar". The Greek word for "bowl" used in Revelation 16 is the same Greek word in the Septuagint for the bowls which were used to pour out the blood of the sacrifices onto the altar in the Old Testament sacrificial system (Zechariah 14:20; Numbers 4:14; Exodus 27:3; Exodus 38:3). If you read the full description of the bowl judgments in Revelation 16, did you see any blood getting poured out like the Old Testament sacrificial system?.....

• *[Revelation 16:7 NASB20] 7 And I heard the **altar** saying, "Yes, Lord God, the Almighty, **true and righteous are Your judgments.**"*

- [Psalm 19:9 NASB20] 9 *The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The **judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous** altogether.*

As you can see, the themes in Psalm 19 create a very clear connection to abundant second coming judgment content which is also, in part, the focus of Revelation 14. Of course, Revelation 14 is where we find the verse that is the centerpiece of our discussion here, namely Revelation 14:10-11. This creates a clear but indirect connection from Psalm 19 to Revelation 14:10-11. And, as you may have noticed, we were directed by the "Sun" in Psalm 19 yet again to make our way back to "*the Sun of Righteousness*" in Malachi 4 where the fate of the wicked is to be ashes. This keeps coming up doesn't it? Maybe we should take a hint that's not really a hint, but really might be more like a flashing neon sign from the Holy Spirit speaking through the Psalms, John, Ezekiel, Jesus, Peter, and Jude above, and then here again below multiple times regarding the fate of satan and the ungodly:

*[2 Peter 2:6 ESV] 6 if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to **ashes** he condemned them to extinction, making them **an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;***

*[Jude 1:7 ESV] 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as **an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.***

*[Matthew 25:41 ESV] 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into **the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.***

And here in Ezekiel 28 below we see what the eternal fire mentioned above in Matthew 25 does to satan:

*[Ezekiel 28:13-14, 18-19 ESV] 13 You **were in Eden**, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. 14 **You were an anointed guardian cherub.** I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. ... 18 By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and **I turned you to ashes on the earth** in the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; **you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.**"*

If the "eternal fire" in the passages above creates ashes, but not endless torment, could we understand the "eternal" in "eternal fire" of Jude 1:7 above to be referring to the eternal nature of God who completely destroys and consumes sinners? Maybe these passages here tell us just that:

*[Deuteronomy 4:24 NASB20] 24 "For the LORD your **God is a consuming fire**, a jealous God.*

*[Deuteronomy 9:3 NASB20] 3 "So be aware today that it is the LORD your God who is crossing over ahead of you as a **consuming fire**. He will destroy them and He will subdue them before you, so that you may drive them out and eliminate them quickly, just as the LORD has spoken to you.*

*[Isaiah 33:10-15 TLV] 10 "Now I will arise," says Adonai. "Now I will be exalted. Now I will lift Myself up. 11 You conceive chaff, you will give birth to stubble. My breath is a fire that will **consume you**. 12 Then peoples will be **burned as lime, like thorns cut down, burned in the fire**. 13 Hear, you who are afar off, what I have done, and you who are near, acknowledge My might." 14 Sinners in Zion are afraid. Trembling has seized the godless: "**Who among us can live with the consuming fire?**" "Who among us can live with **everlasting burnings**?" 15 One who walks righteously, and speaks uprightly, who refuses unjust gain by extortion, who shakes his hands free of bribes, who stops his ears from*

hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from looking on evil.

Alternatively, we could understand the "*eternal*" in "*eternal fire*" to just be describing the endlessness of the results of the fire, and not necessarily the endlessness of the process or action of the burning. This would be just like the word eternal, Strong's word G166, αἰώνιος is elsewhere used in the Bible to describe:

eternal sin

eternal salvation

eternal judgment

eternal redemption

The processes or actions of accomplishing these four biblical phrases above aren't endless are they? Of course they aren't, the results are. So could the results of the "*eternal fire*" be endless and not the action of the burning?

Back in the discussion we just completed regarding Psalm 19, in which Jesus, the Sun Groom, is coming out of his chamber to dispense vengeance and to marry his bride at the second coming, did you notice any special convergence of several concepts which could add together to mean something significant? If you were thinking from a very high level perspective you may have seen the convergence. There are two instances of the smoke going

up forever and ever in Revelation 14:11 and 19:3 which I have been arguing extensively are a reference to the virtually endless smoke starting at the commencement of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice at the coming of the Lord to the Old Testament tabernacle inauguration. In the vicinity of each of these two instances in Revelation of the endless smoke, there are three concepts which are pointed to with John's borrowing of material from Old Testament passages. Those three concepts are:

1. Jesus the Sun Groom coming out of his chamber in the morning at sunrise to marry his bride. (Of course this is consistent with all the other passages I've already shown you about Jesus' second coming being described as the sunrise, the dawn, the morning, the sunlight back in chapter 4, starting on page 72.)
2. Smoke goes up forever, just as in Isaiah 34 where the wicked are extensively described as a sacrifice.
3. A Psalm or song that is sung over a morning sacrifice.

As you can see, the convergence of the three concepts above is a sacrifice which is given to the Lord in the morning at dawn at the coming of the Lord while a morning Psalm is being sung. Could the convergence of these three concepts in both places in Revelation where the endless smoke occurs convince us that the endless smoke in Revelation is

symbolism from the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice? In what follows, I am showing just a brief description of how the endless smoke in each of Revelation 14 and Revelation 19 is connected by borrowed material to the three numbered concept list I just showed above. The boldened underlined words in each of the Revelation 14 and Revelation 19 passages, which follow, are where the borrowed material occurs. Then, I identify the borrowed Old Testament material after each of Revelation 14 and Revelation 19:

*[Revelation 14:6-11 WEB] 6 I saw an angel flying in mid heaven, having an eternal Good News to proclaim to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation, tribe, language, and people. 7 He said with a loud voice, "**Fear the Lord**, and give him glory; for the hour of **his judgment** has come. Worship him who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and the springs of waters!" 8 Another, a second angel, followed, saying, "Babylon the great has fallen, which has made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her sexual immorality." 9 Another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead, or on his hand, 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger. He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 The **smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever**. They have **no rest***

day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

- "Fear the Lord" and "his judgment" in Revelation 14 above connect to Jesus coming as the morning Sunrise in Psalm 19:

*[Psalm 19:9 LSB] 9 The **fear of Yahweh** is clean, enduring forever; The **judgments of Yahweh** are true; they are righteous altogether.*

- "Forever and ever" in Revelation 14 above is the unique and odd doubled up Greek phrase "ages ages", "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" which also connects to Jesus coming at the morning Sunrise in Psalm 19 of the Septuagint:

*[Psalm 19:9 LES1 Septuagint] The fear of the Lord is pure, remaining **forever and ever** (αἰῶνα αἰῶνος). The judgments of the Lord are true, having been vindicated altogether.*

- "Smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever" in Revelation 14 above connects to the endlessly rising smoke of the sacrifice of the wicked in Isaiah 34 where the wicked likely are the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice.

- "Forever and ever" and "night and day" in Revelation 14 above connect to Psalm 22 about the sacrifice of Jesus, which is to be sung over the morning sacrifice. "Forever and ever" in Revelation 14 above is the unique and odd doubled up Greek phrase "ages ages", "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" which is quoted from Psalm 22 of the Septuagint:

*[Psalm 22:1a, 2, 26 LES1 Septuagint] 1a For the end, on behalf of the **help of the early morning**, a psalm of David. ... 2 O my God, I will cry aloud for **days** to you, and you will not hear; and during the **night**, there is nothing for my folly. ... 26 The poor will eat and be satisfied. The ones who seek him will praise the Lord. Their hearts will live **forever and ever** (αἰῶνα αἰῶνος).*

- "No rest night and day" in Revelation 14 above is also quoting from the morning sacrifice, Psalm 22, from the Hebrew Masoretic text. Recall from chapter 5, page 143, that the horns of the "Doe of the Dawn" are representing the rays of the morning sun:

*[Psalm 22:1-2 ESV] 1 To the choirmaster: according to The **Doe of the Dawn**. A Psalm of David. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning? 2 O my God, I cry **by day**, but you do not answer, and **by night**, but I find **no rest**.*

*[Revelation 19:1-7 WEB] 1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of **a great multitude in heaven**, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, power, and glory belong to our God; 2 for **his judgments are true and righteous**. For he has judged the great prostitute, who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." 3 A second said, "Hallelujah! **Her smoke goes up forever and ever**." 4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen! Hallelujah!" 5 A voice came from the throne, saying, "**Give praise to our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, the small and the great!**" 6 I heard something like the voice of **a great multitude**, and like the **voice of many waters**, and like the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns! 7 Let's rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let's give the glory to him. For **the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready**."*

- "Fear Him", "his judgments are true and righteous", and "the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his wife has made herself ready" in Revelation 19 above connect to Jesus coming as the morning Sunrise in Psalm 19 to get married to us, His Bride:

*[Psalm 19:5, 9 LSB] 5 Which is as a **bridegroom** coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course. ... 9 The **fear of Yahweh** is clean, enduring forever; The **judgments of Yahweh are true; they are righteous** altogether.*

- "Her smoke goes up forever and ever" in Revelation 19 above very likely connects to the endlessly rising smoke of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice described in Isaiah 34, where the wicked are the sacrifice.
- A great "multitude" who "fears" God and gives him "praise" in Revelation 19 above connects to the same God fearing and praising assembly in the Septuagint of Psalm 22 below, which is a Psalm intended to be sung over the morning sacrifice, about The Ultimate Sacrifice, Jesus:

*[Psalm 22:1-3, 16, 22-23, 25-26 LES2 Septuagint] 1 For the end, **on behalf of the help of the early morning**, a psalm of David. O God, my God, pay attend to me. For what purpose did you abandon me? Far away from my salvation are the words of my transgressions. 2 O my God, I will cry aloud for days to you, and you will not hear; and during the night, there is nothing for my folly. 3 But you, **the praise of Israel**, dwell in the holy place. ... 16 For many dogs have encircled me. A gathering of*

those doing evil surrounded me. **They pierced my hands and feet.** ... 22 I will set out in detail your name to my brothers. **In the middle of the assembly** I will **sing** of you. 23 Those **who fear the Lord, praise him** all together. Seed of Jacob, glorify him. Let the seed of Israel **fear him** all together. ... 25 From you is **my praise in the great assembly.** I will render my prayers before those **who fear him.** 26 The poor will eat and be satisfied. The ones who seek him will **praise the Lord.** Their hearts will live for eternity of eternity.

The morning sacrifice song, Psalm 22 above, is even further connected to Revelation 19 far above, because Jesus in Psalm 22 says that he will praise and sing to God in the assembly. This is just as we see Jesus with the "voice of many waters" in Revelation 19 praising God among the multitude. Jesus is the one with the "voice of many waters" praising God in the multitude in Revelation 19. Jesus is the one with the pierced hands and feet in Psalm 22 declaring that he will praise God in the assembly. Revelation 19 declares the fulfillment of Psalm 22. In that limited sense, Revelation 19 is the singing of Psalm 22, the morning sacrifice Psalm, over the sacrifice which is wicked Babylon. Jesus is the one with the "voice of many waters":

[Revelation 1:12-18 WEB] 12 I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. Having turned, I saw seven golden

*lamp stands. 13 And among the lamp stands was one like a **son of man**, clothed with a robe reaching down to his feet, and with a golden sash around his chest. 14 His head and his hair were white as white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. 15 His feet were like burnished brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace. His voice was like the **voice of many waters**. 16 He had seven stars in his right hand. **Out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword**. His face was like the **sun shining** at its brightest. 17 When I saw him, I fell at his feet like a dead man. 18 He laid his right hand on me, saying, "Don't be afraid. I am the first and the last, 18 and the Living one. **I was dead, and behold, I am alive forever and ever**. Amen. I have the keys of Death and of Hades.*

So we can see by all the connections shown above for Revelation 14 and 19 that at each instance of the smoke going up forever and ever in Revelation 14 and 19 we have numerous pointers to: Jesus coming as the morning sunrise, a morning sacrifice Psalm being sung, and what is very likely the endless smoke of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice described in Isaiah 34. So could this wording from Isaiah 34 below which is pointed to by the smoke going up forever in Revelation 14:11 and 19:3 be describing the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice?

"its smoke goes up for generations", "it burns night and day", "it will not be extinguished forever/eternally/for an age"

Now the only remaining of the seven passages being pointed to by the odd and unique word construction, *"αἰῶνας αἰώνων"*, *"ages ages"*, for *"forever and ever"* in Revelation 14:11 are the apocryphal short story of Susanna and Psalm 45. It is generally recognized that Susanna was written sometime in the third to first centuries BC as part of the Septuagint, well before John wrote Revelation. So it is very possible that Susanna was content that John's ancient audience of Revelation would have been familiar with. I am not trying to assert here definitively that Susanna was considered by John's ancient audience to be a part of inspired scripture. I am only saying that it is possible that it would have been something that they knew of and read. So does Susanna connect well to the content and or wording of Revelation 14:11? It definitely does. The story is about two false witnesses who attempt to bring the death sentence on an innocent woman. Their plot is foiled by the wisdom of the young prophet Daniel, who strategically questions the false witnesses and exposes them. The punishment from God on these two false witnesses is described here from the Septuagint text that John's ancient audience of Revelation may have been familiar with:

*[Susanna 55, 59, 60-61 LES2] 55 And the young man said, "Right, you have lied to your own soul; for the angel of the Lord will **tear apart your soul today.**" ... 59 Then Daniel said, "O sinful man, now the angel of the Lord has set it up, having a sword among the people. And he will **utterly destroy you,** in order that it may saw you asunder." ... 60-61 Then all the assembly cheered aloud for the young man, that out of each one's mouth, with agreement between them, they established both of them as false witnesses. And as the law states clearly, so they did to them. Just as they had acted wickedly toward a kinswoman, so they gagged them and, after leading them away, they **threw them into a ravine.** Then the **angel of the Lord threw fire into the middle of them.** And thus, innocent blood was saved on that day.*

As you can see, the themes of the Susanna passage above have numerous similarities to the judgment content of Revelation 14:11 and its connections with the lake of fire found directly in Revelation. Could the two false witnesses in Susanna be a slight parallel to the false prophet and the antichrist in Revelation? If you read the entire story of Susanna, you will find that this woman Susanna, who the two false witnesses are attempting to put a death sentence on, is the faithful wife of her husband. Does this sound a little bit like antichrist and the false prophet fecklessly attempting to kill Jesus' faithful bride by martyring God's people in the fifth seal during the tribulation in

Revelation 6? Or could it have some similarity to satan and the beast, antichrist trying to wipe out the woman Israel wearing the 12 star crown in Revelation 12:1-6? In Revelation 19:20 antichrist and the false prophet are thrown into a ravine/Gehenna/lake of fire and fire overtakes them. Jesus said, "*fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna*" specifically referring to the valley of Hinnom with its Greek name "*Gehenna*". As I showed previously, Gehenna is the lake of fire. Susanna above describes a ravine into which fire is thrown. And of course, the phrase in Susanna above "*tear apart your soul*" also bears similarities to Jesus' words in Matthew 10:28 regarding the destruction of souls. And of course, the fire of the Angel of the Lord would have reduced these two false witnesses in Susanna to what in the end?.....Ashes. So is this reference to Susanna yet another hard stop, given by John and the Holy Spirit, explicitly limiting the duration of the punishment of the wicked? You be the judge. These references are popping out of every corner of the book of Revelation.

Last but not least, we need to give an honorable mention to Psalm 45 and its use of the odd and rare word construction "*αἰῶνα αἰῶνος*", "*age age*", which is pointed to by Revelation 14:11. As I mentioned previously, Psalm 45 only contains "*αἰῶνα αἰῶνος*" in Codex Vaticanus and no other of the ancient manuscripts considered to be important by Swete in his critical edition of the Septuagint.

In spite of this, we still see abundant content in Psalm 45 which is related to the second coming judgment content of Revelation 14 and thereby indirectly to Revelation 14:11. At first blush Psalm 45 just looks like a description of a very victorious and successful Israelite king. We have a little help from the New Testament deciding who this is though. The Holy Spirit speaking through the apostle Paul just gives it to us straight. Paul quotes Psalm 45 in Hebrews 1:8-9 and tells us in no uncertain terms that Psalm 45 is about Jesus "*the Son*". See below:

- *[Hebrews 1:1-2, 8-9 NASB20] 1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world. ... 8 But regarding **the Son** He says, "YOUR THRONE, GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE SCEPTER OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. 9 "YOU HAVE LOVED RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HATED LAWLESSNESS; THEREFORE GOD, YOUR GOD, HAS ANOINTED YOU WITH THE OIL OF JOY ABOVE YOUR COMPANIONS."*

- *[Psalm 45:6-7 NASB20] 6 Your throne, God, is forever and ever; The scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of justice. 7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of joy above Your companions.*

This being Jesus in Psalm 45 seems a little odd though. Would Jesus have a queen who bows down to him as her "Lord"? Recall that the King Jesus takes a bride in Revelation. The wife of a King is a Queen, and Psalm 45 is just repeating the same bride motif found in the Song of Solomon and Revelation. Jesus, the Groom, comes out of his tent for the Sun, just as in Psalm 19 (which we previously discussed), and marries his people. They become a Queen, and they rule and reign with Him, as they continue to bow to Him in reverence:

[2 Timothy 2:11-12 NASB20] 11 The statement is trustworthy: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He will also deny us;

How does it make you feel to be held up as a Queen, to know that He loves you that much? And then further on, we see the second coming judgment content of Revelation 14 also found in Psalm 45:3-7 where Jesus is described at his second coming judgement strapping on his "sword", shooting his "arrows", defeating the "peoples" who oppose him, and then being anointed as "King". Does this sound like the second coming of Christ?:

*[Psalm 45:3-7 NASB20] 3 Strap **Your sword** on Your thigh, Mighty One, In Your splendor and majesty! 4 And in Your majesty **ride** on victoriously, For the cause of **truth**, humility,*

and **righteousness**; Let Your right hand teach You awesome things. 5 Your **arrows** are sharp; The peoples fall under You; Your arrows are in the heart of the King's enemies. 6 Your throne, God, is forever and ever; The scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of justice. 7 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has **anointed You** With the oil of joy **above** Your companions.

Of course the "sword" in Psalm 45 is the same one coming out of Jesus' mouth at His second coming in Revelation 1:16; 2:16; 19:15; 19:21, and the arrows in Psalm 45 being used by Jesus are a frequent second coming theme in various other passages such as these:

Habakkuk 3; Psalm 18; 2 Samuel 22:8-16; Psalm 144:5-8; Psalm 77:16-20

Also notice in the Psalm 45 passage far above that this "ride" to victory in which Jesus' judgments are doled out to the "peoples" at the second coming is said to be "true" and "righteous", just as we previously saw Jesus' second coming judgments are in Revelation 16 and the related Psalm 19. What do you suppose Jesus is "riding" on in Psalm 45:4 above? Something about Somebody and some other people riding on white horses in Revelation 19:14.....?

I should point out at this juncture that I have now demonstrated, throughout this book, that all seven of the passages which are pointed to by the odd Revelation 14:11 word construction, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" are very highly related to the content of Revelation 14:11. Each of the seven either relate directly to the content of Revelation 14:11, or are indirectly related to Revelation 14:11 by containing second coming judgment content, just as the verses closely surrounding Revelation 14:11 in Revelation 14 do. Each of the seven either share the same wording or the same content of Revelation 14:11, or more broadly the same wording or the same content of Revelation 14. If just a few of these seven passages connected well to Revelation 14, we might be tempted to call it a coincidence, but as you've seen, they are all highly related to Revelation 14:11 or more broadly to Revelation 14. Lightning doesn't strike seven times in the same place, unless somebody intentionally puts a lightning rod there. With the phrases "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" and "αἰῶνα αἰῶνος" placed in Revelation and in the Greek Septuagint Old Testament, we clearly have an intentionally placed highly conductive pathway. Also, it is clearly not a coincidence that this unique pathway directly connects to seven passages which are all related to other Old Testament content which is being pointed to in other places in Revelation without any use of the phrase "αἰῶνας αἰώνων" to do the pointing. So we clearly have an intentional design and not a mere coincidence.

Chapter 11

Hell is Made Holy and Poetic

Justice is Served

At this time I would like to circle back to the repeated theme of the final fate of the wicked being turned to ashes. As I've already shown, hell, Gehenna, the lake of fire, is described in the Bible as a physical literal place just outside of Jerusalem. The traditional view of hell urges us to see this place as an endlessly burning pit of torment that will exist for all of eternity. In sharp contrast to this, we may have a direct biblical pronouncement that Gehenna, the place of dead bodies and ashes, will be completely restored, just as it must be in order for these passages below from Revelation 21, Isaiah 65, and Isaiah 26 to be fulfilled:

Revelation 21 WEB - "the former things have passed away"

Isaiah 65 WEB - "the former things will not be remembered or come to mind"

[Isaiah 26:14 NASB20] The dead will not live, the departed spirits will not rise; Therefore You have punished and destroyed them, And You have eliminated all remembrance of them.

If your interpretation of scripture leads you to believe that the new heavens and the new earth involve a complete and total destruction of the old heavens and old earth, then there will no longer be a valley of Gehenna, because the earth that it is now physically and literally located on will no longer exist. It's important to mention here that some of the best ancient manuscript evidence demonstrates that 2 Peter 3:10 shows the earth and its works will be something like "*laid bare*" or "*discovered*", not "*burned up*". See several commentaries on 2 Peter 3:10 as sources:

- 1983, Richard Bauckham, *Word Biblical Commentary, Jude & 2 Peter*, Vol. 50
- 2003, Thomas R. Schreiner. *The New American Commentary, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude*, Vol. 37
- 2008, Gene L. Green, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, Jude and 2 Peter*

"*Laid bare*" or "*discovered*" in 2 Peter 3:10 is very likely combining the language of burning up unacceptable works and exposing them with the language of burning everything off the surface of the earth and exposing the earth. In other words, the verse could be playing on a double meaning for "*laid bare*" or "*discovered*" which describes the earth and its works in two separate ways. "*Laid bare*" or "*discovered*" in 2 Peter 3:10 may be referring to the statement "*each one's work will become evident; for the day will show it*" from Paul's work in 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 where Paul writes in the

same thematic arc as 2 Peter 3. Peter even mentions Paul's work and his name in 2 Peter 3. Alternatively, 2 Peter 3:10 may be referring to a Targum wording just as John does in Revelation. See the Targum verse below. Recall from chapter 6 that **Targum Jonathan of Zechariah is one of the Targums which underwent its first phase of development in the 1st to 2nd centuries AD (Flesher, 2011, pgs. 199, 226)** and may contain pre-Christian concepts and phrases:

The Targum.....

[Zechariah 4:10 Targum Jonathan] For who is this who has despised this day on account of the building, because it is small? Will he not rejoice again when he sees the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel seven layers like these? The works of people throughout the whole earth are revealed before the Lord. (Cathcart, 1989, Vol. 14, pgs. 194 to 195)

Or 2 Peter 3:10 may be drawing a known concept from the Psalms:

[Psalm 18:15 NASB20] 15 Then the channels of water appeared, And the foundations of the world were exposed By Your rebuke, LORD, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils.

Regardless, we can tell from the passages just shown that the concepts of exposing or discovering or laying bare or

revealing both works and the earth are known to circulate in the thoughts of God for Peter to use them in 2 Peter 3:10. The ancient scribe who very likely altered the difficult reading in 2 Peter 3:10, *"the earth and its works will be discovered"* to say, *"the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up"* had no legitimate reason to do so. He just may not have known the scriptures well enough to know of these themes. It is a belief among scholars that a scribe intentionally did this alteration because he did not understand the meaning of the wording. It seems to be a likely scenario because people today still do not understand it. If your interpretation of 2 Peter 3, Revelation 20-22, and Isaiah 65-66 lead you to believe that the new heavens and new earth are only a partial surface destruction on the earth like the flood was, then here in the very characteristically end times context of Jeremiah 31 below we very likely have a prophecy that the fires of Gehenna will go out. They will *"not be quenched"* by any human hand, as Isaiah 66 says, but they will very likely burn until they go out on their own:

*[Jeremiah 31:38-40 NASB20] 38 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 "The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead, to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah. 40 "And the entire **valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes**, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron to the corner of the Horse Gate toward*

the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be uprooted or overthrown ever again."

Recall again that the Old Testament Hebrew word for "quenched" in Isaiah 66, and its description of fires that will never be quenched in Gehenna, is used several times in Old Testament contexts which clearly demonstrate that it can mean intentionally putting out a fire. In that sense, if a fire is not quenched, it burns until it completely consumes. Did you see that word "consume" anywhere else in the scripture passages in this book? And how about those "ashes" in the Jeremiah 31 passage above? Where else do dead bodies and ashes and fire very likely get together? Here in Isaiah 66 below we have Gehenna with the fire and the dead bodies in it still existing in what may be the new heavens and the new earth, sometime maybe shortly before Jeremiah 31:38-40 above is finally fulfilled:

*[Isaiah 66:22-24 NASB20] 22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth, Which I make, will endure before Me," declares the LORD, "So will your descendants and your name endure. 23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from Sabbath to Sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me," says the LORD. 24 "Then they will go out and look At the **corpses** of the people Who have rebelled against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be extinguished; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."*

Notice how both these Isaiah 66 and Jeremiah 31 passages above locate this place of judgment that Jesus refers to as "*Gehenna*", just outside of Jerusalem where we still see it on the map today? God's place of residence will be in Jerusalem when he rules the earth, so when the people "*go out*" after bowing down before the Lord, they will walk past the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, just as Jesus implied when he quoted the line from Isaiah 66, "*their worm will not die and their fire will not be extinguished*" in Mark 9:47-48 and called it "*Gehenna*". Of course, most modern translators have covered this fact up by essentially mistranslating Gehenna as "*hell*" in Mark 9:47-48 and all throughout the New Testament. Of course, this mistranslation artificially pastes all the traditionalist connotations of the word "*hell*" onto a literal physical valley outside of Jerusalem which in no way conforms to the traditional view of hell. Recall again that Greek lexicons and dictionaries overwhelmingly acknowledge that Gehenna is a proper place name for the valley of Hinnom, outside of Jerusalem. This is demonstrated by the fact that when we pronounce the Hebrew words for the "*Valley of Hinnom*", as they are found in the Hebrew Old Testament in Nehemiah 11:30 for example, they sound like this:

gay-hen-ome "gay" like happy "hen" like a girl chicken
"ome" as in home

When we pronounce the Greek word for Gehenna found in the New Testament, in Mark 9:47 for example, it sounds like this:

geh-in-non "geh" like the ge in get "in" like in the basket
"non" like non-stick pan

The similarities between the pronunciations illustrate for us that the Greek word is spelled in Greek in such a way that it sounds like it sounds when pronounced in Hebrew. This is phonetic transliteration, and it is a linguistic tool for making a word in one language be equivalent to a word or phrase in another language. Gehenna in Greek is the valley of Hinnom in Hebrew.

With a little knowledge about the geography surrounding the city of Jerusalem we can deduce with a considerable degree of confidence that the Jeremiah 31 passage above, when it says "*the entire valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes*" is referring to the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna. On this topic, an excellent source is the following paper:

Dennis M. Swanson, "*Expansion of Jerusalem in Jer 31:38-40: Never, Already or Not Yet?*", The Master's Seminary Journal, Spring 2006, 17/1, pgs. 17 to 34

From the paper above we can learn the following, paraphrased in my words.....

All of the geographical locations in the Jeremiah 31:38-40 passage I showed far above are known with great confidence, with the exceptions of Gareb and Goah which are only known with any confidence to be on the west or southwest sides of Jerusalem. Jeremiah 31:38-40 describes an encircling counterclockwise route around the city of Jerusalem, with each landmark listed in order as the description proceeds around the city. The "*valley of the dead bodies and the ashes*" is known with confidence to be, Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom. For much of Jerusalem's biblical history, Gehenna has been a natural border barrier on the southwest and south sides of Jerusalem.

A general perusal of commentaries shows that many scholars agree with the findings of Swanson in the paper I cited above. The wider context of the entire book of Jeremiah further supports the idea that this "*valley of the dead bodies and the ashes*" in Jeremiah 31:49 is Gehenna. Near the beginning of the book of Jeremiah, in chapter 2, God names a place He calls "*the valley*" in which the Israelites are worshiping baal. Then in chapter 7, God brings it up again, calling it by both its names this time as the "*Valley of Ben-Hinnom*" and "*Topheth*". He describes His disgust with the people of Israel burning their sons and

daughters there and describes how it will be their bodies this time which will be buried there or left in the open to be scavenged on by animals. There will be so many bodies there, God says it will be given a new name, "*the Valley of Slaughter*". Then with persistent anger, like a horribly offended person who just can't let something go, God brings it up again in Jeremiah 19, devoting much of the chapter to it. He repeats all of what he has already described in chapter 7, but this time clarifies that this "*Valley of Ben-Hinnom*" is outside the city and it is a place of baal worship. This clues us in that chapters 7 and 19 are a wider description of "*the valley*" of baal worship as it is named in chapter 2. Still not being over His anger, God brings it up yet another time by name in Jeremiah 32, "*Valley of Ben-Hinnom*". Then, as if to give the place an ultimate smackdown, He pronounces in our Jeremiah 31:38-40 passage that this "*valley of the dead bodies and the ashes*" will be made "*holy*" and never again be "*overthrown*". With all this context, which valley is God talking about when He says "*valley of the dead bodies and the ashes*" in Jeremiah 31:40? What other valley would it be? He's most likely referring to the valley full of dead bodies that He denounces numerous times in Jeremiah, the Valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, hell, the lake of fire. The specific passages showing all these details are: Jeremiah 2:23; 7:31-33; 19:1-15; 32:35.

What about the ashes in the "*valley of the dead bodies and the ashes*"? How would "*ashes*" give any useful information to the ancient audience of Jeremiah that would help them understand which valley was being referred to? The author grins, with a sense of expectancy.....of course these "*ashes*" may be the same ashes which mysteriously keep coming up as the final end of the wicked in this book. As far as what ashes would have meant to the ancient audience of Jeremiah, we see this directly in the book of Jeremiah. The Israelites were burning their sons and daughters in the valley of Hinnom according to Phoenician religious worship of baal, possibly also known as moloch or molech, in Jeremiah 32:35. The alternate name for the valley of Hinnom, "*Topheth*", was also an ancient generic name for a place that child sacrifice was offered to baal at various other cities. The Israelites literally turned their sons and daughters to ashes in the valley of Hinnom. Even much archaeological evidence has been found to support these facts about the Topheths. Ash urns, inscriptions verbally dedicating the human sacrifices to baal, and even a disgusting ancient depiction showing a cultic priest holding a baby before a sacrifice have been discovered. See below:



Photo credit: © The Bardo National Museum (Tunisia) www.bardomuseum.tn

In Ezekiel 28, satan is shown being the king of the Phoenician city of Tyre, just as satan is shown as being influential on and/or controlling of evil human kingdoms in Revelation 12-13 and Daniel 7. There are even some who argue that the name "*beelzebul*", identified by Jesus in Mark 3:22-24 as being another name for satan, has contained in it an identification of baal. So satan very likely had his influence working very actively in Phoenicia, Tyre, Topheth, baal/molech worship in the valley of Hinnom, and worst of all in turning God's children into ashes. We can even see

what may have been the initial incursion of this type of religious practice into Israel through the wicked queen of Israel, Jezebel in 1 Kings 16:31 who is there named as the daughter of the king of the Phoenician city of Sidon. So she was a princess of the sister city of satan's Phoenician city of Tyre. In 1 Kings 16:31 and in 1 Kings 18:19, Jezebel is clearly associated with baal worship, helping us to make the connections between Phoenicia, baal worship in Israel, satan, and Jezebel. So in some sense, satan was responsible for turning God's children into ashes in the valley of Hinnom. Then according to the "*Swift Witness*" pointing reference in Revelation 22 and many other pointing references in Revelation, God turns the children of the devil to ashes in the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna, the lake of fire. Could this be God delivering the ultimate smackdown of poetic justice against beelzebul, baal, satan, and his children. Does satan have children?

[1 John 3:10 NASB20] 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother and sister.

Satan sacrifices God/Jesus and his Israelite children "*outside the city*" on the cross and in the valley of Hinnom. Satan "*crushes*" Jesus' heel in this way as foretold in Genesis 3. God sacrifices satan and his children "*outside the city*" in the valley of Hinnom. Jesus "*crushes*" satan's head! Could this

be an intentional poetically just closing of the circle of evil and final justice? No matter who you are and how powerful you are, you can never get one over on God. He's always 7 steps ahead of you unfolding his plan. An excellent paper which shows many details of the Israelite child sacrifice and its link with Phoenician religious practice is:

Henry B. Smith Jr.

"Canaanite Child Sacrifice, Abortion, and the Bible"

The Journal of Ministry and Theology.

Fall 2013, Volume 7, Number 2, pp. 90-125.

I know you doth protest the progression of thought to conclusion that I just showed you regarding Hinnom. You might say that the prophecy about the valley of the dead bodies and ashes in Jeremiah 31:39-40 has already been fulfilled. Notice below though in Jeremiah 31, the new covenant with Israel which almost directly precedes the Jeremiah 31:38-40 pronouncement that the valley of Hinnom will be holy and never again overthrown. This new covenant involves all of the Israelites knowing God, an abolishment of evangelism, God's law is on all of their hearts. Evil is gone. They all know him. Take a look:

*[Jeremiah 31:31-34, 38-40 NASB20] 31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the*

day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "For this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD: "I will put **My law within them and write it on their heart**; and **I will be their God, and they shall be My people**. 34 "They will **not teach again, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them**," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin **I will no longer remember**." ... 38 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the city will be rebuilt for the LORD from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. 39 "The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead, to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah. 40 "And the entire valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to the LORD; it will not be uprooted or overthrown ever again."

Where on the prophetic timeline have the things in the new covenant above in Jeremiah 31 ever happened, or where will they ever happen? Revelation might put this full development of the "*new covenant*" to be starting at the beginning of the perfected eternal state described in Revelation 21-22. Revelation below even uses some of the same language as Jeremiah 31 above. Remember from

chapter 9 that "no longer any sea" in Revelation below means that the wicked are no more just as in Jeremiah 31 above:

*[Revelation 21:1-3 NASB20] 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is **no longer any sea**. 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among the people, and He will dwell among them, and **they shall be His people**, and **God Himself will be among them**,*

The New Covenant in Jeremiah 31 far above is even unlike descriptions of the millennium in which: the millennial temple exists to make the Israelites "ashamed" of their sin, their sin is said to be ongoing, they still must be taught God's laws, and some of them even rebel against God coming under a "curse" leading to their death at the young age of 100. See these passages:

Ezekiel 40:39; 43:10-11, 18; 44:15-24; 45:17-25; 46:18-24; Isaiah 65:17-23

It may also be helpful to consider history and the future prophetic timeline for Gehenna when trying to determine when Jeremiah 31:38-40 will be fulfilled, leaving Gehenna

holy and never again to be overthrown. We need to consider that Gehenna was likely again filled with bodies during the overthrow of Jerusalem in 70 AD by the Romans. The Jewish historian Josephus records the filling of the "ravines" around Jerusalem with bodies. So many Jews perished, there was no way to bury them all, and they were just tossed outside of the city by the hundreds of thousands. Gehenna, being one of the deepest and largest ravines, just outside the city walls, would almost certainly have been one of the ones filled with dead bodies. See Josephus' words here below:

Josephus, The Jewish War, Book V, chapter xii, verses 3-4:

"The latter at the outset ordered the bodies to be buried at the public expense, finding the stench intolerable; afterwards, when incapable of continuing this, they flung them from the ramparts into the ravines. When Titus, going his rounds, beheld these valleys choked with dead and the thick matter oozing from under the clammy carcasses, he groaned and, raising his hands to heaven, called God to witness that this was not his doing."

(Thackeray, 1968, Vol. 3)

Josephus, The Jewish War, Book V, chapter xiii, verse 7:

"But why need I severally recount the calamities? Why, indeed, when Mannaeus, son of Lazarus, who sought refuge in those days with Titus, reported that there were carried out

through a single gate, which had been entrusted to him, 115,880 corpses, between the fourteenth of the month Xanthicus, on which the general encamped before their walls, and the new moon of Panemus? All these were of the poorer class; nor had he undertaken this charge himself, but being responsible for the payment of public funds he was bound to keep count. The remainder were buried by their relatives, burial consisting merely in bringing them forth and casting them out of the town. This refugee was followed by many eminent citizens, who reported that the corpses of the lower classes thrown out through the gates amounted in all to 600,000; of the rest it was impossible to discover the number." (Thackeray, 1968, Vol. 3)

So Gehenna has not remained holy on the historical timeline, and of course, it will not remain holy on the prophetic timeline until after the final judgment at the end of the millennium in Revelation 20 as you see in Mark 9 and Isaiah 66 below:

*[Mark 9:47-48 WEB] 47 If your eye causes you to stumble, cast it out. It is better for you to enter into God's Kingdom with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the Gehenna of fire, 48 **'where their worm doesn't die, and the fire is not quenched.'***

[Isaiah 66:23-24 NASB20] 23 "And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from Sabbath to Sabbath, All mankind will

come to bow down before Me," says the LORD. 24 "Then they will go out and look At the corpses of the people Who have rebelled against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be extinguished; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

Does the "*abhorrence to all mankind*" description in Isaiah 66 above sound anything like the Roman general Titus' literal reaction of disgust to the ravines full of dead bodies in 70 AD, as described by Josephus far above? Maybe Gehenna in Isaiah 66 above is a literal description, and not the spiritual ethereal endless torture chamber of souls that our pastors told us it is? Our pastors have made the mistake of interpreting Jesus' parable of the rich man and Lazarus as defining Gehenna to be an endless spiritual ethereal torture chamber of souls. In his 2013 book "*The Geography of Hell in the Teachings of Jesus*" on pgs. 111 to 135, scholar and pastor Kim Papaioannou solidly defeats this misinterpretation of the rich man and Lazarus parable. He adds a lot onto the already obvious argument that the parable has "*Hades*" named in it, not Gehenna/"*hell*" as many modern translators have erroneously pasted over it. We know that Hades, according to the clear biblical narrative, does not go on endlessly because it is cast into the lake of fire in Revelation 20:13-15 and completely emptied of all its dead.

So we can see the most likely point on the timeline where Gehenna will finally be made holy, never again to be overthrown, will be at the beginning of the eternal state described in Revelation 21-22 when Gehenna will be a clean, holy place "*outside*" the city where the ashes of the sacrifice of the wicked finally come to reside. This is just as in the Old Testament sacrificial system inaugurated at the coming of the Lord to the tabernacle. Just like the Old Testament tabernacle inauguration and its ensuing sacrificial system, the priests/Christians are consecrated, they are fitted with new white robes, the priests/Christians kill the sacrifices/the wicked, fire falls from God/Jesus to turn the sacrifices/the wicked to ashes, God/Jesus takes up his residence among his people in the tabernacle/temple, the final place of the ashes is outside the camp/outside the city/Gehenna in a clean/holy place. *Hell is Made Holy:*

*[Leviticus 4:11-12 NASB20] 11 'But the hide of the bull and all its flesh, along with its head, its legs, its entrails, and its refuse, 12 that is, all the rest of the bull, he is to bring out to a **clean place outside the camp** where the fatty **ashes** are poured out, and **burn it on wood with fire**; where the fatty ashes are poured out it shall be burned.*

*[Jeremiah 31:40 NASB20] 40 "And **the entire valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes**, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the*

east, **shall be holy to the LORD**; it will not be uprooted or overthrown ever again."

And here below in Isaiah 30 and Daniel 7, we see the antichrist getting burned on a pile of **wood** outside the city in Topeth/the valley of Hinnom/Gehenna like a spent sacrifice. This perhaps follows right along with the symbolism of the sin sacrifice being burned on a pile of wood outside the camp in the Leviticus 4 passage above, and maybe also follows along with the theme of the wicked finally being ashes in Gehenna found throughout end times prophecy:

*[Isaiah 30:33 NASB20] For Topheth has long been ready, Indeed, it has been prepared for the king. He has made it deep and large, A pyre of fire with **plenty of wood**; The breath of the LORD, like a **torrent of brimstone**, sets it afire.*

*[Isaiah 30:33 NIV] Topheth has long been prepared; it has been made ready for the king. Its fire pit has been made deep and wide, with **an abundance of fire and wood**; the breath of the Lord, like a **stream of burning sulfur**, sets it ablaze.*

[Daniel 7:9-11 NASB20] 9 "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took His seat; His garment was white as snow, And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning

*fire. 10 "A **river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him**; Thousands upon thousands were serving Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court convened, And the books were opened. 11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until **the beast was killed, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire**.*

This Assyrian "*king*" in Isaiah 30 above is not the historical Assyrian king Sennacherib because the Bible clearly records in Isaiah 37:33-38 that Sennacherib returned to his own land and was killed by his own sons there and not in Topheth/Gehenna. So Isaiah 30:33 above puts the antichrist right where we see him in Revelation 19:20 at the beginning of the millennium, in Topheth/Gehenna/the lake of fire.

Chapter 12

The Language of Action with Endless Results and Finite Duration

This all leads us back to the looming question of whether or not the specific language and Greek words chosen by the Holy Spirit and John in Revelation 14:11; 19:3; & 20:10 can be in harmony with the final end of the wicked being nothing but ashes without violating the rules of correct Greek word usage. If Revelation was to be understandable to its ancient audience, then it must have been intelligible to those who read Greek by using Greek words in the way that Greek readers would understand them. On that topic, an important thing to understand about the Greek word αἰών, *aion*, Strong's word G165, forever, age is that it is used in ancient Greek and in the Bible to describe actions or events which have endless results, but do not themselves consist of an endless process or action. Even the stronger doubled up Greek phrases made up of two of G165, like "*age of the age*", "αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος", used extensively in the Septuagint, and its close plural form cousin like "*ages of the ages*", "αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων", used extensively in the New Testament, are used in contexts which force us to understand them to be describing the endlessness of the results of a process or action and not the endlessness of the

process or action itself. These phrases are of course the ones that are both most commonly translated as "*forever and ever*", instead of their literal translations, "*age of the age*" and "*ages of the ages*". Several examples of the **not** doubled up word use of αἰών, all by its onesie in singular inflected form, from the New Testament and the Septuagint, are below. These several examples demonstrate that the **not** doubled up use of the word αἰών can denote endless results and not endless processes or actions. The first two passages from Hebrews and Jude use specialized Greek verb tenses which specifically denote past one and done action, so we have even more confidence that the action being described by αἰών is not ongoing. The action is done. The results are ongoing:

*[Hebrews 7:28 NASB20] 28 For the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, who has been **made** perfect **forever**.*

*[Jude 1:13 NASB20] 13 wild waves of the sea, churning up their own shameful deeds like dirty foam; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of darkness **has been reserved forever**.*

[Genesis 13:14-15 LES2 Septuagint] 14 God said to Abram (after lot parted ways with him), "Look up with your eyes and look, from the place where you are now to the north and

*the south and the east and the sea, 15 because I **will give** you and your offspring all the land that you see, **forever**.*

And then some examples of the composite doubled up phrases describing verbal actions that have endless results and not endless actions or processes are here from the Septuagint and church father Clement:

*[Psalm 9:5 NETS Septuagint] You rebuked nations, and the impious perished; their name you **blotted** out forever and **forever and ever**.*

*[Tobit 14:14-15 NETS Sinaiticus manuscript only] 14 Then he died honorably at the age of one hundred seventeen years. 15 And before he died he saw and heard of the destruction of Nineue, and he saw its captivity being led into Media, which Achiacharos, the king of Media, had taken captive. And he blessed God for all the things that he had done to the sons of Nineue and Athouria; before he died he rejoiced over Nineue, and he **blessed** the Lord God **forever and ever**. Amen.*

*[Psalm 111:7-8 NETS Septuagint] 7 Works of his hands are truth and justice; trustworthy are all his commandments, 8 **fixed forever and ever**, made in truth and uprightness.*

[Psalm 92:7-9 NETS Septuagint] 7 When sinners sprang up like grass also all who practice lawlessness popped up so

that they may **be destroyed forever and ever**. 8 But you are most high forever, O Lord, because, look, your enemies, O Lord, 9 because, look, **your enemies shall perish** and all those who practice lawlessness shall be scattered.

[Clement's "Letter to the Corinthians" 45:8, 1st century AD]
But those who endured in faith inherited glory and honor, and were taken up and **were written** by God in the memory of him into the **ages of the ages**. Amen.
(Hoole, 1885)

From these examples above, we can clearly see that both the Greek word αἰών by its onesie, and the composite phrases in which the word is doubled up, can be used to describe the results of an action or process as endless, without necessarily describing the action or process itself as being endless. It is the context surrounding the word αἰών and/or the doubled up phrases which inform us whether the duration of results or the duration of process/action are being modified. Of course, in the case of the doubled up phrases in Revelation, the entire Bible is the context. The scriptures that I have shown you that John and the Holy Spirit are pointing to from Revelation, these are the context. All this context urges us to at least consider that the doubled up αἰών phrases in Revelation might be referring to endless results and not endless processes of smoke going up endlessly and torment going on endlessly.

We might also consider the context of the Old Testament sacrificial system in which the smoke of the sacrifices was a symbol and sign of God's satisfaction with the payment for sin which a sacrifice was:

[Leviticus 1:9 NASB20] 9 'Its entrails, however, and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer all of it up in smoke on the altar as a burnt offering, an offering by fire as a soothing aroma to the LORD.

[Exodus 29:18 NASB20] 18 "And you shall offer up in smoke the whole ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to the LORD: it is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD.

If we combine all three of the Pentateuch descriptions of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice which characteristically bear the concepts of burning day and night, smoke going up from generation to generation/forever, it will never be extinguished; we find it also described directly with smoke which is a sign of God's satisfaction:

[Leviticus 6:8-13 NASB20] 8 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 9 "Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the law for the burnt offering: the burnt offering itself shall remain on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire on the altar is to be kept burning on it. 10 'The priest is to put on his linen robe, and he shall put on linen

undergarments next to his body; and he shall take up the fatty ashes to which the fire reduces the burnt offering on the altar and place them beside the altar. 11 'Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments, and carry the fatty ashes outside the camp to a clean place. 12 'The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out, but the priest shall burn wood on it every morning; and he shall lay out the burnt offering on it, and offer **up in smoke** the fat portions of the peace offerings on it. 13 'Fire shall be kept burning continually on the altar; it is not to go out.

[Numbers 28:2-6 NASB20] 2 "Command the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be careful to present to Me My offering, My food for My offerings by fire, of a **soothing aroma** to Me, at their appointed time.' 3 "And you shall say to them, 'This is the offering by fire which you shall offer to the LORD: two male lambs one year old without defect as a continual burnt offering every day. 4 'You shall offer the one lamb in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; 5 also a tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a grain offering, mixed with a fourth of a hin of pure oil. 6 'It is a continual burnt offering which was ordained on Mount Sinai as a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD.

[Exodus 29:38-42 NASB20] 38 "Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one-year-old lambs each day, continuously. 39 "The one lamb you shall offer in the

*morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; 40 and there shall be a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering with one lamb. 41 "The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it the same grain offering and the same drink offering as in the morning, for a **soothing aroma**, an offering by fire to the LORD. 42 "It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.*

If the smoke is a symbol of God's satisfaction with a sacrifice, is it possible that the doubled up αἰών phrases in Revelation about smoke going up "*forever and ever*" are describing the endless results of the smoke, or in other words describing that God's vengeance is endlessly, permanently satisfied with these last and final sacrifices of wicked people and evil Babylon? I want to be very careful at this point to clarify that we see in scripture that God does not take pleasure in the sacrifice or death of the wicked. We see this made abundantly clear in Ezekiel 33 and 1 Timothy 2 below:

[Ezekiel 33:11 NASB20] 11 "Say to them, 'As I live!' declares the Lord GOD, 'I take no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil ways! Why then should you die, house of Israel?'

[1 Timothy 2:1-4 NASB20] 1 First of all, then, I urge that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made in behalf of all people, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Although there may be some language in the Old Testament which could be interpreted to mean that God was pleased with the Old Testament animal sacrifices, the sacrifice of the wicked in the end times must be in some way dissimilar to the Old Testament animal sacrifices if we are to see the two passages above in harmony with the rest of scripture. The Old Testament animal sacrifices were usually accompanied by repentance and submission from those who offered them. These may have been the aspects of the Old Testament animal sacrifices which were pleasing to God. The sacrifice of the wicked in the end times is not accompanied by any repentance though. So it may be proper for us to understand the sacrifice of the wicked in the end times as being an endless satisfaction of God's vengeance, but not something that pleases Him. Is Babylon really a sacrifice in Revelation though? In Revelation 19:3 when it says about Babylon "*HER SMOKE RISES FOREVER AND EVER*", is that really describing the smoke of the sacrifice in a way that parallels the Old Testament sacrifices?

In Revelation 19:2, just one verse before Babylon's smoke is described as rising forever and ever, we read, "**HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND SERVANTS ON HER**".

This mentions vengeance but it also points to another passage that describes vengeance in Deuteronomy 32 here:

*[Deuteronomy 32:41-43 NASB20] 41 If I have sharpened My flashing sword, And My hand has taken hold of justice, I will return vengeance on My adversaries, And I will repay those who hate Me. 42 'I will make My arrows drunk with blood, And My sword will devour flesh, With the blood of the slain and the captives, From the long-haired leaders of the enemy.' 43 "Rejoice, you nations, with His people; For He will **avenge the blood of His servants**, And will **return vengeance** on His adversaries, And will **atone** for His land and His people."*

Doesn't this Deuteronomy 32 passage above sound a lot like the second coming vengeance of Jesus with his sword and his arrows which are the same weapons we've seen him wielding in previous passages? The Hebrew word for "*atone*" in Deuteronomy 32 above is the same Hebrew word used throughout the Old Testament sacrificial system in regard to the atoning effect of the sacrifices. So just after the smoke is described rising forever and ever in Revelation 19:2, verse 3 follows with a direct reference to what could be sacrificial "*atoning*" described in Deuteronomy 32 above. So does the smoke rising forever and ever in Revelation 19:2

describe Babylon as a sacrifice? To answer this we can recall that we've already discussed extensively on pages 99 through 105 in chapter 5 how Jeremiah 51 is an account of the destruction of Babylon which is highly parallel to the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 17-19 where we see the smoke rising forever and ever. On those same pages in chapter 5 we discussed how the "*second death*" and many other similar items to Jeremiah 51 in Revelation may point from Revelation to the parallel account of the destruction of Babylon in Jeremiah 51 of the Targums. On those same pages in chapter 5 we also looked at how Jeremiah 51 describes Babylon as a sacrifice, but what about smoke? Are there any hints in Jeremiah 51 as to what the results of the smoke are? Does Jeremiah 51 describe smoke in any way which is similar to the smoke of Babylon going up forever and ever in Revelation 19:3? With Revelation 17-19 being so tightly related to and mirrored by Jeremiah 51, we are being urged on to take whatever we learn about the results of the smoke in Jeremiah 51 and also apply these results to the smoke going up forever and ever in Revelation 19:3. See the results of the smoke in Jeremiah 51 here:

*[Jeremiah 51:8-9, 39-40 NASB20] 8 Suddenly **Babylon has fallen** and been broken; Wail over her! Bring balm for her pain; Perhaps she may be healed. 9 We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed; Abandon her and let's each go to his own country, For **her judgment has reached to heaven And it rises to the clouds.** ... 39 "When they become*

heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up," declares the LORD. 40 "I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, Like rams together with male goats.

What do you suppose it is that is rising up to the clouds in Jeremiah 51 above? It looks like the smoke that rises forever and ever from the destruction of Babylon in Revelation 19:3, and it even sounds like the smoke of the sacrificed wicked people (who are lambs, rams, and goats) is kind of rising to heaven, as if to say the results of the smoke are that God accepts the sacrifice? As we can see in the Job passage below, God in a biblical symbolic sense lives in the clouds and in the heavens, right where the smoke of the judgment may be rising up to in Jeremiah 51 above:

[Job 22:12-14 NASB20] 12 "Is God not in the height of heaven? Look also at the highest stars, how high they are! 13 "But you say, 'What does God know? Can He judge through the thick darkness? 14 'Clouds are a hiding place for Him, so that He cannot see; And He walks on the vault of heaven.'

The Septuagint of Job 20:5-7 below may describe an aspect of typical Bible sacrifice symbolism that can help us to understand what it is that is rising up to the clouds and heaven in Jeremiah 51 far above:

[Job 20:5-7 LES2 Septuagint] 5 But the merriment of the wicked is a disastrous fall, and the joy of the lawless is destruction; 6 even if his gifts should go up into the heavens, and his sacrifice should reach the clouds. 7 For when he should imagine that now he has been established, then he shall be destroyed completely, and those who know him shall say, 'Where is he?'

Following on that, could it be the smoke in Job 20 above which is symbolically reaching God where He lives in the heavens and clouds to appease or satisfy Him as we see for example happening below in Numbers 28:

[Numbers 28:1-3 LEB] 1 Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 2 "Command the Israelites and say to them, 'You will be careful to present my offering, my food of my offerings made by fire, of a fragrance of appeasement to me, at its appointed time.' 3 You will say to them, 'This is the offering made by fire that you will offer to Yahweh: two male lambs without defect in their first year as a continual burnt offering each day.

We do have evidence that biblical symbolism depicts the smoke of a burnt offering being what is given to God. Take Psalm 66 below for example:

[Psalm 66:15 NASB20] I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat animals, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah

If your favorite translation doesn't show "smoke" in the Psalm 66 verse above, don't worry we will address this later in chapter 13. So could it be this appeasement or satisfaction of God's wrath which is one of the endless results of the forever and ever rising smoke of the destruction of the wicked in Revelation and Isaiah 34? Could it be that when the wicked are sacrificed and destroyed, God will be satisfied with the smoke, satisfied with the sacrifice, his vengeance satisfied, forever and ever? It's possible. As I've already shown you, ancient people used the Greek words for forever and ever in just this way to describe how only the results of an event are endless and not the duration of the event itself.

If we take a more direct approach and go straight to the Isaiah 34 passage that smoke "*rising forever and ever*" in Revelation 14:11 is pointing to, we find even more clues as to what the endless results of the smoke may be:

*[Isaiah 34:8, 10 NASB20] 8 For the LORD has a **day of vengeance**, A year of **retribution** for the cause of Zion. ... 10 It will not be extinguished night or day; Its **smoke will go up forever**. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.*

The vengeance in Isaiah 34 above is just the same vengeance that we see described directly in Revelation 19 below, right alongside the smoke going up forever and ever. Could this mean that the rising smoke of the sacrifices represents the endless result of the endless satisfaction of God's vengeance on the wicked? Take a look:

*[Revelation 19:1-3 NASB20] 1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God, 2 BECAUSE HIS **JUDGMENTS** ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great prostitute who was corrupting the earth with her sexual immorality, and HE HAS **AVENGED** THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." 3 And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! **HER SMOKE RISES FOREVER AND EVER.**"*

If we look at Isaiah 34:8 from the Septuagint below, we even find that the same Greek word for "*judgment*" is used there directly preceding the rising smoke in Isaiah 34:10, just as the same Greek word "*judgment*" directly precedes the rising smoke in Revelation 19 above. This gives us an even closer connection between the symbolic endlessly rising smoke and the endless results that it may represent, the endless satisfaction of the judgment and vengeance of God:

*[Isaiah 34:8-10 LES2 Septuagint] 8 For it is a day of the Lord's **judgment** and a year of the repayment of Zion's **judgment**. 9 And its ravines will be turned into pitch, and its land into brimstone; and its land will be like pitch burning 10 night and day, and it will not be extinguished for eternal time, and its **smoke** will go up above; for generations it will be desolate and for a long time.*

Does this all hint to us that the smoke going up in Revelation is the smoke of sacrifice that symbolizes God's satisfaction of his vengeance on sin accomplished with an atoning sacrifice of the wicked and Babylon? I'll ask again, is it possible that the doubled up αἰών phrases in Revelation about smoke going up "*forever and ever*" are describing the endless results of the smoke and not smoke literally going up endlessly?

We might also consider the fact that Revelation intentionally and very clearly points to the death of satan in Isaiah 27:1. Revelation uses imagery and names that equate the seven headed ten horned dragon, satan as being equal in some way to the seven headed ten horned beast which comes up out of the sea. So in some sense, satan in Revelation comes out of the sea, implying that he is the dragon who lives in the sea. In the Hebrew Masoretic text version of Isaiah 27:1, we find satan who lives in the sea getting killed! In the Septuagint of Isaiah 27:1, we find satan with the same exact two Greek word names, "*dragon*" and

"serpent", as in Revelation. There in the Septuagint of Isaiah 27:1 satan is also getting killed. See the verses and the two Greek word names being the same in Revelation and in the Septuagint of Isaiah below:

*[Revelation 12:3-4, 9, 17-18; 13:1 TLV] 3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: a great fiery red **dragon (δράκων, G1404)** that had seven heads and ten horns, and **seven royal crowns on his heads**. 4 His tail sweeps away a third of the stars of heaven—it hurled them to the earth. Now the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that whenever she gave birth he might devour her child. ... 9 And the great **dragon (δράκων, G1404)** was thrown down—the ancient **serpent, (ὄφις, G3789)** called the **devil** and **satan**, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ... 17 So the **dragon (δράκων, G1404)** became enraged at the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring—those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Yeshua. 18 And he stood on the shore of the sea. 1 Then I saw a **beast** rising **out of the sea**, that had **ten horns and seven heads**. **On his horns were ten royal crowns**, and upon his heads were slanderous names.*

*[Isaiah 27:1 LES2 Septuagint] 27 On that day God will bring the holy and great and mighty sword against the **dragon (δράκων, G1404)**, a fleeing **serpent (ὄφις, G3789)**, against*

the **dragon** (**δράκων, G1404**), a twisted **serpent** (**ὄφις, G3789**); **he will slay the dragon** (**δράκων, G1404**).

*[Isaiah 27:1 NASB20 Masoretic Hebrew] 1 On that day the LORD will punish **Leviathan** the fleeing **serpent**, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even **Leviathan** the twisted **serpent**; And **He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea**.*

Who is it who has the Hebrew name "serpent" in the Masoretic text of Isaiah 27:1 above translated by the NASB20? This is just the same Hebrew word name, "serpent" for satan in the garden of Eden in Genesis 3:14-15 being referred to in the Hebrew Masoretic text of Isaiah 27:1. Who is it who has the Hebrew word name "dragon" and lives in the sea in the Masoretic text of Isaiah 27:1 above translated by the NASB20? The translations have this all fouled up, but the Hebrew word "dragon" in Isaiah 27:1 of the Masoretic text in the NASB20 above is the Hebrew word "dragon" or "serpent", תנין, H8577, tannin. This is the same Hebrew word name for satan, the "serpent", in Psalm 91:11-13. I already showed you all these previously, but see the five passages again below which allow us to confidently identify satan, the "dragon" or "serpent", תנין, H8577, tannin in Psalm 91:11-13:

*[Genesis 3:14-15 TLV] 14 Adonai Elohim said to the **serpent**, "Because you did this, Cursed are you above all the*

*livestock and above every animal of the field. On your belly will you go, and dust will you eat all the days of your life. 15 I will put animosity between you and the woman— between your seed and her seed. He will **crush your head, and you will crush his heel.***

Notice here in Matthew 4 below how satan may be displaying his knowledge of both Genesis 3 above and Psalm 91 below.....

*[Matthew 4:5-6 WEB] 5 Then the devil took him into the holy city. He set him on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and, **'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you don't dash your foot against a stone.'**"*

*[Psalm 91:11-13 WEB] 11 For he will put his angels in charge of you, to guard you in all your ways. 12 **They will bear you up in their hands, so that you won't dash your foot against a stone.** 13 You will tread on the lion and cobra. **You will trample the young lion and the serpent underfoot.***

*[Romans 16:19-20 WEB] 19 For your obedience has become known to all. I rejoice therefore over you. But I desire to have you wise in that which is good, but innocent in that which is evil. 20 And the God of peace will quickly **crush Satan under your feet.***

*[Habakkuk 3:12-13 NASB20] 12 In indignation You marched through the earth; In anger You trampled the nations. 13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people, For the salvation of Your anointed. **You smashed the head of the house of evil** To uncover him from foot to neck. Selah*

So you can see, it looks as if John in Revelation is just about falling over himself to point to the killing of satan, the dragon who lives in the sea, in Isaiah 27:1. He describes satan coming out of the sea for his readers of Isaiah 27:1 in the Hebrew, and he calls satan by two of his Greek word names that are found in Isaiah 27:1 of the Septuagint for his Greek literate audience. This is not even mentioning that when John connects in with the Hebrew of Isaiah 27:1 and its Hebrew word for "serpent" or "dragon", תַּנִּין, H8577, tannin, he is by association also indirectly connecting in with the other four passages above which also show satan getting killed. Does this give us any motivation at all to consider that Revelation 20:10, when it says satan, "*will be tormented day and night forever and ever*" is describing the endless results of the torment and not necessarily the endless process or action of the torment. This would just be according to the examples of this type of ancient word usage that I've already shown you. We don't really think of torment as a process or action which has results though. So how can the result be endless? This type of thinking is unlike how the Greek word for "torment" was used by

ancient Greek literate people though. The Greek word for "*torment*" can be used to describe tormenting which is specifically and intentionally done to achieve the results of vengeance and/or death on the one being tormented. Here are some ancient literary examples which follow. They are all written close to or before the time of the New Testament, so their word usage is highly informative about the way the New Testament uses the word "*torment*". They use the same Greek word for "*torment/torture*" which is used in Revelation 14:10-11 & 20:10 to describe the torment of wicked people, satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. It's probably helpful too to give some thought to the idea that the word which the translators use in the following passages is not "*torment*" but "*torture*". **One of the definitions for the word appearing in the dominant "*Liddell-Scott-Jones, Greek-English Lexicon*" and most other lexicons is "*torture*" (Liddell, 1996).** We probably think of the word, "*torture*" more as something that can be done with the intention of having a result which can be endless. Those results for example being the extraction of information, vengeance, or both vengeance and death. I have underlined and boldened every English word which is translated from the same Revelation 14 & 20 Greek word for "*torment*" in the following four ancient word usage examples:

From chapter 19 verses 1 to 2 of "*Philopoemen*" written by Plutarch who lived from AD 46 to 119 we see that the

enemies of Philopoemen wanted to torture and execute him for justice and/or vengeance against an enemy.....

[1] The people of Messene, wonderfully elated at the news, gathered in throngs at the gates. But when they saw Philopoemen dragged along in a manner unworthy of his fame and of his former exploits and trophies, most of them were struck with pity and felt sympathy for him, so that they actually shed tears and spoke with bitterness of the inconstancy and vanity of human greatness.

[2] And so, little by little, many were led to say humanely that they ought to remember his former benefactions, and especially how he had restored to them their freedom by expelling the tyrant Nabis. But there were a few who, to gratify Deinocrates, urged that the captive should be tortured and put to death as a stern and implacable enemy, and one more than ever to be feared by Deinocrates himself in case he made his escape after having been taken prisoner and loaded with insults by him. (Perrin, 1921, Vol. X)

And then later in chapter 21 verse 2 of Plutarch's same work "*Philopoemen*" we see the Revelation 14:10-11 & 20:10 word for "*torment*"/"*torture*" used by Plutarch to describe what Philopoemen's enemies wanted to do to him.....

[2] Deinocrates anticipated their vengeance by making away with himself, but all the others who had voted to put Philopoemen to death they slew, and as for those who would

*have had him **tortured** also, these Lycortas seized and held for a more excruciating death. Then they burned Philopoemen's body, collected his ashes in an urn, and set out for home, not in loose or promiscuous order, but with a blending of triumphal procession and funeral rites.*
(Perrin, 1921, Vol. X)

So Plutarch above demonstrates that in the Greek sense, "torment/torture" could be done with the intentionally desired result of vengeance or justice being satisfied.

2 Maccabees 7, translated from the Septuagint below, shows that the understanding of the same Greek word for "torment"/"torture" was that it could be done intentionally with the motive of vengeance, even the vengeance of God.....

*[2 Maccabees 7:15-17 NETS] 15 Next they brought forward the fifth and maltreated him. 16 But he looked at him and said, "Because you have authority among human beings, though you also are mortal, you do what you please. But do not think that our people have been forsaken by God. 17 Keep on, and see how his mighty power will **torture** you and your descendants!"*

In the "Martyrdom of Polycarp" below in chapter 2, verse 2, written in the 2nd century AD, we see the same Greek word "torment/torture" resulting in the death of a Christian

martyr and possibly also resulting in unjust vengeance. Notice the comfort of Christ always standing by the martyr, just as God was standing by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the furnace.....

Blessed therefore and noble are all the martyrdoms which have taken place according to the will of God (for it behoveth us to be very scrupulous and to assign to God the power over all things). For who could fail to admire their nobleness and patient endurance and loyalty to the Master? seeing that when they were so torn by lashes that the.....

I removed this portion of the sentence. It is highly graphic and very hard to un-see in your mind. Read this book free on archive.org if you want to see this description.they endured patiently, so that the very bystanders had pity and wept; while they themselves reached such a pitch of bravery that none of them uttered a cry or a groan, thus showing to us all that at that hour the martyrs of Christ being **tortured** were absent from the flesh, or rather that the Lord was standing by and conversing with them. (Hoole, 1885)

[Daniel 3:25 NASB20] 25 He responded, "Look! I see four men untied and walking about in the middle of the fire unharmed, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!"

In Josephus' "*Jewish Antiquities*", Book 5, chapter 1, again below, we see the same Greek word "*torment*"/"*torture*"

resulting in death and possible tyrannical deterrence of future behavior.....

*Then Bacchides gathered together those of the Jews who had given up the customs of their country and had chosen the kind of life common to other nations, and entrusted to them the government of the country; and these men seized the friends of Judas and those who sympathized with him, and delivered them to Bacchides, whereupon he first **tortured** and maltreated them at his pleasure, and then made an end of them in this way. (Marcus, 1966, Vol. VII)*

So by these several word usage examples just given, we can see that the doubled up αἰών phrases in Revelation describing torment and smoke "*forever and ever*" could be describing the endlessness of the intended results of the torment. Those endless results being endlessly satisfied vengeance and permanent death. Does that ring a bell? Have we read anything yet which may indicate that God is intending that His satisfied vengeance or an irreversible killing be the results of the smoke and the torment/torture? Of course we have. Almost the entire contents of this book are describing a deathly execution of those who oppose God, but here again below are the specific connections between the smoke, the torment, and the death and vengeance on satan and wicked people:

*[Isaiah 34:8, 10 NASB20] 8 For the LORD has a **day of vengeance**, A year of retribution for the cause of Zion. ... 10 It will not be extinguished night or day; Its **smoke will go up forever**. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.*

*[Revelation 14:10-11 NASB20] 10 he also will drink of the wine of the **wrath** of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His **anger**; and he will be **tormented** with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 "And **the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever**; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

*[Isaiah 27:1 NASB20 Masoretic] 1 On that day the LORD will punish **Leviathan** the fleeing **serpent**, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even **Leviathan** the twisted **serpent**; And **He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea**.*

Recall that the dragon who "lives in the sea" in Isaiah 27:1 above is the seven-headed ten horned dragon and beast who comes out of the sea in Revelation 12 and 13 below.....

*[Revelation 12:3, 9; 13:1 TLV] 3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: a great fiery red **dragon that had seven heads and ten horns**, and **seven royal crowns on his heads**. 9 And*

*the great **dragon** was thrown down—the ancient **serpent**, called the **devil** and **satan**, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ... 1 Then I saw a **beast** rising **out of the sea**, that had **ten horns and seven heads**. **On his horns were ten royal crowns**, and upon his heads were slanderous names.*

It may also be helpful to recall that there has never been in the history of humanity anyone who has been tortured endlessly. The torture always ended, and if the intended result was achieved, the result was always permanent. The torturer always achieved their intended permanent results of extracting information, vengeance, or both vengeance and death of the torturee. So to conceive of the idea of the Greek word for torment/torture being used in a biblical passage in Revelation to describe an intended endless result coming from a finite duration of torturing is very likely perfectly in line with the way the word has been frequently used in the Greek language.

I know it's hard to believe that Revelation is pointing to the execution of satan. The words describing his fate in Revelation 20:10 seem so definitively to describe endless torment. The descriptors of the duration seem to be piled up high right on top of each other with the intention of providing absolutely no way for us to reach any other

conclusion, *"they will be tormented day and night forever and ever"*. The only problem is that the real actual Greek sentence structure does not pile these descriptors on top of each other as you see them in the English translation. It separates them in a way that may support a different interpretation. Do you see in the interlinear translation^G below of Revelation 20:10b how *"day and night"* is separated from *"ages of the ages"* by *"to the"*?

Original English translation with Greek text from (Robinson, 2005), Revelation 20:10b.....

καὶ	βασανισθήσονται	ἡμέρας	καὶ	νυκτὸς
and	they will be tormented	day	and	night

εἰς	τοὺς	αἰῶνας	τῶν	αἰώνων
to	the	ages	of the	ages

(The English translation above preserves the exact Greek word order in "forward" interlinear format, and is in agreement with numerous widely available interlinear and literal translations^G.) This separation may be a not-so-subtle hint that the two phrases play a different role which must be discreetly separated from one another for us to understand the meaning. What I am suggesting is that *"day and night"* describes the unbroken continuity of the action of the torment which is never significantly paused as long as it lasts, and then *"to the ages of the ages"* is the description

of only the duration of the endless results of the action of the torment which comes to an abrupt end when satan is killed in obedient submission to scripture. His head is crushed. I know you protest. *"This is day and night. It lasts forever!"* Scholar Edward William Fudge in the 2011 third edition of his landmark work *"The Fire That Consumes"* on pages 242-244 describes how the phrase *"day and night"* used in both Revelation 14:11 & 20:10 is a *"Greek genitival construction"* which forces it to **not** describe the length of the duration of action. He even gives a reference to a book written by an expert scholar in Greek grammar to support his assertion. Fudge further explains how this Greek genitival construction, *"day and night"*, can only describe unbroken continuousness of an action, not duration of the process of the action. Fudge is the godfather of conditionalism, so of course he would take this view right? We need not trust only in the godfather though. Fudge and famous Greek scholar G.K. Beale have a little back and forth debating each other about this topic in their books. G.K. Beale is an avowed traditionalist. Beale, in his massive 1999 commentary on Revelation, *"New International Greek Testament Commentary"*, on pages 761 to 765 somewhat concedes the point to Fudge that the Greek genitival construction can sometimes describe only unbroken continuity of an action without describing the duration of the action itself. Beale though, does go on to contradict the Greek grammar expert cited by Fudge, and argues that he believes *"day and night"* describes both unbroken continuity

of action and endless duration of action in Revelation. Regardless, I'll play to the safe average and just say that we have scholarly support from both sides of the debate over the duration of hell that the Greek genitival construction "*day and night*" **can possibly be describing** only unbroken continuousness of action and not endless duration of action. And of course, the Bible is full of examples of this Greek genitival construction "*day and night*" only doing just that. A very clear quasi-example of this which we have already looked at is Psalm 22. Psalm 22 is one of the six Psalms that John, not so coincidentally, is very likely pointing to in Revelation 14:11 with his use of our much discussed very rare word construction, "αἰῶνας αἰώνων", "*ages ages*". I say "quasi-example" because the phrase "*day and night*" is not actually used in Psalm 22, but this quasi-example is even more applicable to this discussion than any other use of the exact genitival phrase. Psalm 22 is the Psalm about Jesus. He cries out day and night, with no "*rest*", just as in Revelation 14:11, which is directly pointing to this Psalm. In spite of that, Jesus' crying out is not endless. He is delivered. Take a look again:

[Psalm 22:2 NASB20] 2 My God, I cry out by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest.

[Revelation 14:11 NASB20] 11 "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and

night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

This demonstrates to us in no uncertain terms that the concept of "*day and night*" action without "*rest*" does not necessarily describe endlessness. It can and does describe significantly unbroken, unpaused action which comes to an end, even right in a passage that John is very likely directly pointing to while using the phrase "*day and night*" in his own Revelation text. This evidence should be sufficient to support the point, but here below is a long list of other examples to demonstrate for skeptics that the same genitival phrase can be used to only denote significantly unpaused continuity of action and not endless duration of action:

New Testament: Mark 5:1-5; Luke 18:6-8; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-10; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-8; 1 Timothy 5:3-5; 2 Timothy 1:3

Septuagint: Psalm 32:4; Psalm 42:3; Psalm 55:10; Isaiah 60:11; Jeremiah 9:1; Jeremiah 14:16-17; Lamentations 2:18

So with all this considered, I propose that the norms of the ancient Greek language can support the idea that satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet are continuously tormented, "*day and night*", as long as God sees fit to satisfy his intended goal of vengeance, and then they are killed.

This is because God keeps his word, *"He will kill the dragon who lives in the sea."* The results of their death will be endless, *"to the ages of the ages"*, *"Forever and ever"*. The *"head of the house of evil"* will be permanently crushed. God's vengeance will be endlessly satisfied. God's people will be endlessly free of satan's death and destruction. God's people will be endlessly delivered from evil. This idea that the torment of satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet has the endless result of just being dead forever can even hold up under the critique of extensive scholarship in the Greek language. In Chris Date's 2014 book *"Rethinking Hell"* on pages 99 to 115, Chris shows the entirety of an article entitled, *"The Doom of the Lost"* written by PhD scholar Basil F.C. Atkinson whose training was in the Classics, which includes extensive Greek language studies. We see specifically on pages 113 to 114 of *"Rethinking Hell"* that Atkinson supports the idea that the results of the torment of the devil in Revelation 20:10 are what is endless. He describes in so many words how the tormenting itself is not endless, but results in being eternally destroyed. Although he may not be specifically embracing all the language arguments that I have just described, Sigve K. Tonstad who earned his PhD in New Testament studies also argues that Revelation 20:10 is describing the endless results of Satan's torment and not endless duration. A PhD in New Testament studies involves extensive training in biblical Greek. In the 2019 Revelation volume of the *"Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament"* series,

Sigve K. Tonstad says the following in regard to the duration of the torment of satan in Revelation 20:10:

"As in the OT, 'forever' is often a figure of speech for finality and closure, not for duration (Jer. 15:14; 17:4; Gen. 19:28; Isa. 34:10)."

Many other scholars who are highly trained in biblical Greek also support the general idea that the various biblical words describing the punishment of the wicked as endless throughout the Bible, are describing the endlessness of the result and not the endlessness of the process of punishing. Edward William Fudge in his 2011 book, *"The Fire That Consumes"* is a good author to start with on this topic. Fudge earned two degrees in the biblical languages.

If we for a minute step away from the fancy and technical arguments related to the particulars of Greek language rules, there is another excellent argument to be made in support of the idea that satan's torment may be continuous, but with a finite duration and endless results. This is an argument that is instead based directly on the way we can see the Bible obviously using symbolism. As I have already described extensively back at the beginning of chapter 2, starting on page 10, we know Revelation 14:10-11; 19:3; 20:10; and 20:15 are all connected to Isaiah 34 via their shared wording and other connections. In addition to all the other connections described at the

beginning of chapter 2, see again for example just the language directly shared between Revelation 20:10 and Isaiah 34 below:

*[Isaiah 34:9-11 WEB] 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, its dust into **sulfur**, and its land will become **burning** pitch. 10 It won't be quenched **night** or **day**. Its smoke will go up **forever**. From generation to generation, it will lie waste. No one will pass through it forever and ever. 11 But the pelican and the porcupine will possess it. The owl and the raven will dwell in it. He will stretch the line of confusion over it, and the plumb line of emptiness.*

*[Revelation 20:10 BSB] 10 And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of **fire and sulfur**, into which the beast and the false prophet had already been thrown. There they will be tormented **day and night forever and ever**.*

So if we are looking for a blueprint to illuminate how Revelation 20:10 is using words in its description, "they will be tormented day and night forever and ever", Isaiah 34 should be our guide. Isaiah 34 is where John is specifically and intentionally pointing us to. There in Isaiah 34, we find clear and strong evidence that fits the interpretation I've been describing at length. Any words like "forever" in Isaiah 34, used to describe endless longevity, whether they be Greek in the Septuagint or Hebrew in the Masoretic text,

must be describing only the endlessness of results and not the endlessness of the action of the burning. All this happens in Isaiah 34 right in the presence of our notorious phrase, "*night and day*". Isaiah 34 must be describing only the endlessness of results and not the endlessness of the action because Isaiah 34 itself describes how Edom stops burning and turns into a plant and animal extravaganza. So Isaiah 34 is tightly related to Revelation 20:10, and Isaiah 34 clearly uses "*day and night*" and "*forever*" sandwiched right together in a similar way to Revelation 20:10 in order to describe continuous unpaused action, i.e. the rising of smoke, that has endless results but finite duration. And for the cherry on top we can switch back into wannabe Greek scholar mode just briefly and point out that the, "*day and night*" phrase used in the Septuagint translation of Isaiah 34, is the same Greek genitival word construction that scholars Fudge and Beale both agree can possibly describe continuous unpaused action with finite duration. So Isaiah 34 provides the blueprint for us to understand the final torment of satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet to have unpaused continuity for as long as it lasts, finite duration, and then endless results. Why else would the Bible, over and over and over again, describe satan as being killed? You might respond to me by saying something like:

"Revelation 20:10 can't be pointing to Isaiah 34 and using 'day and night' and 'forever' in the same way that Isaiah 34 is using them to describe continuous action with finite

duration that has endless results. Isaiah 34 has no 'torment' mentioned in it. So how can Revelation 20:10 be following so closely along in the pattern of Isaiah 34?"

Does Isaiah 34 really have no torment in it? Does Revelation 14:11 tell us otherwise? Revelation 14:11 also uses phrases and wording to point directly to Isaiah 34, and then in its own text Revelation 14:11 describes torment. So is it safe to infer then that Isaiah 34 has torment in it? Does Isaiah 34 below sound like it has any torment in it?:

[Isaiah 34:2-3, 5-8 NASB20] 2 For the LORD'S anger is against all the nations, And His wrath against all their armies. He has utterly destroyed them, He has turned them over to slaughter. 3 So their slain will be thrown out, And their corpses will give off their stench, And the mountains will be drenched with their blood. ... 5 For My sword has drunk its fill in heaven; Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom, And upon the people whom I have designated for destruction. 6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It drips with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Edom. 7 Wild oxen will also fall with them And young bulls with strong ones; So their land will be soaked with blood, And their dust become greasy with fat. 8 For the LORD has a day of vengeance, A year of retribution for the cause of Zion.

With that line of thinking then, the text of Revelation 14:11 and the tormentuous content of Isaiah 34 above give us plenty of room to infer that all of the elements you see underlined below in Revelation 20:10 are also contained in Isaiah 34. This includes the torment:

[Revelation 20:10 BSB] 10 And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, into which the beast and the false prophet had already been thrown. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

So like is pointing to like is pointing to like, and from that, the word usage of Isaiah 34 can very reasonably be selected as a highly applicable blueprint for the word usage in Revelation 20:10. The line "*and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever*" regarding satan in Revelation 20:10 can describe a continuous action that comes to an end, but has endless results, "*unto the ages of the ages*", just as its muse Isaiah 34 does.

We can make yet another similar argument about Revelation 20:10 by recognizing its tight connection to the pair of passages Revelation 14:10-11 and 19:3, shown again below:

[Revelation 14:10-11 WEB] 10 he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of

his anger. He will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. 11 The smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever. They have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

[Revelation 19:2-3 WEB] 2 for his judgments are true and righteous. For he has judged the great prostitute, who corrupted the earth with her sexual immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." 3 A second said, "Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up forever and ever."

As described extensively back at the beginning of chapter 2, starting on page 10, the pair of passages are unmistakably and intentionally connected to Revelation 20:10 using the elements, "*torment*", "*day and night*", "*lake of fire*", "*sulfur*", and "*forever and ever*". As we have discussed, Revelation 14:10-11 & 19:3, with their pointing phrases, clearly utilize the approach of using "*forever and ever*" to describe finite duration action which has endless results. Those pointing phrases, as we have discussed throughout this book, are pointing to numerous other passages which have: "*they are no more*", "*they will sleep a perpetual sleep and never wake up*", "*they cannot keep their soul alive*", "*they will be ashes under the soles of your feet*", "*destroy body and soul in Gehenna*", etc. etc. on and on and on. Revelation 14:10-11 and 19:3 contain symbolic, endlessly rising smoke of

sacrifices, just as in Isaiah 34, which has literal, endless, ongoing results of peace, satisfied vengeance, perfect togetherness with God, and the never ending bond of an unbreakable covenant. Revelation 20:10 unmistakably connects to all this by connecting to Revelation 14:10-11 and 19:3 with numerous words and phrases. So should we understand Revelation 20:10 to use the phrase "*forever and ever*" in the same way as the pair Revelation 14:10-11 & 19:3? Of course we should. Revelation 20:10 intentionally uses the same words as Revelation 14:10-11 & 19:3, and Revelation intentionally connects satan to death in Isaiah 27:1, not endless torment. This is just like how the wicked human subjects of Revelation 14:10-11 & 19:3 are connected numerous times to just death in Revelation. So of course we should interpret Revelation 20:10 as describing the endless result of a dead serpent with a crushed head. How else would we interpret it without flatly contradicting every numerous and clear clue that has been given to us about its meaning? Satan and his two cohorts are endlessly dead "*forever and ever*", having succumbed to their continuous but not endless "*day and night*" torment, just as we see the Greek word "*torment*" resulting in death in ancient Greek literature.

Chapter 13

The Continual Morning and Evening Sacrifice is Smoke Going Up

Throughout this book I have been relentlessly attempting to establish that Revelation 14:11, "*And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night*" is applying the language and content of the Old Testament continual morning and evening regular sacrifice onto the final judgment of the wicked. I've already shown much evidence to support this connection, but there is still some very important evidence that I haven't discussed yet. It may be some of the most forceful evidence on this topic. If you think like I do, when you read Revelation 14:11 and the passage which it is directly referencing, Isaiah 34:10, you probably hear a quiet little question in your mind, "*What's the point of describing and emphasizing the smoke going up?*" Here are the verses again for reference:

[Revelation 14:11 NASB20] "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

[Isaiah 34:10 NASB20] It will not be extinguished night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.

When reading these verses, I ask myself this same question because the first thing that comes to my mind when thinking of spectacular and raging fires that I've seen is certainly not the smoke. It is the spectacular height of the flames and the complete and total resulting destruction which are most prominently displayed in my memories. The aspect of the smoke going up takes a third place spot in regard to what characteristics of the fire are the most impressive. So this question of why Revelation 14:11 and Isaiah 34:10 oddly emphasize and describe one of the least impressive aspects of a raging fire might be a little red flag which could clue us in to the deeper meaning of these verses. It turns out that this is in fact the case. In the Old Testament, the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice is described using two special Hebrew words. For example, these two Hebrew words are translated as "*burnt offering*" and "*offer up in smoke*" in a description of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice in the NASB 2020 edition here:

[Leviticus 6:12 NASB20] 12 'The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out, but the priest shall burn wood on it every morning; and he shall lay out the burnt

offering on it, and offer up in smoke the fat portions of the peace offerings on it.

The information provided for these two special words in some of the most dominant or exhaustive Hebrew lexicons and Bible dictionaries may be important. The word translated by NASB 2020 as "*burnt offering*", the Hebrew word עלה, pronounced "ohhh-laaa", in the verse above, is described in short excerpts from these dominant or exhaustive resources as follows:

The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament:

- probably abbreviation for מנחה עלה "tribute rising (in the fire)"
- sacrifice which is wholly burned, comprising domestic animals and occasionally birds
(Koehler, 1994-2000)

The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon:

- whole burnt-offering (that which goes up to heaven (others, on altar)) (Brown, 1906)

The Anchor Bible Dictionary:

- The Hebrew term for "burnt offering" is ola, literally, "an offering of ascent" or "an ascending offering"
- The ola sacrifice was one which was entirely burnt on the altar and so its smoke—or better, its scent—was

directed toward the heavenly realm, wherein the deity was thought to have "inhaled" it.

(Freedman, 1992, Vol. 5, pg. 877)

The New Interpreter's® Dictionary of the Bible:

- The burnt offering (olah) is related to the Hebrew verb "to ascend", a reference to the ascending smoke of the sacrifice. (Sakenfeld, 2009, Vol. 5, pgs. 22 to 23)

Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words:

- The entire sacrifice was then consumed by the fire and its essence sent up to God as a placating (pleasing) odor. (Vine, 1985, pg. 169)

The word translated by NASB 2020 in the description of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice as "*offer up in smoke*", the Hebrew word קטר, pronounced "kaaaaw-tare", in Leviticus 6:12 far above, is described in short excerpts from the lexicons and dictionaries below. Take note that this word, "kaaaaw-tare", is the word translated by many modern Bible translations, throughout all of the Old Testament descriptions of burnt offerings, without any sign whatsoever of the concept of smoke being detectable in their translations. They do us a great favor by completely erasing the important meaning and significance of the smoke.

The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament:

- to smoke
- to cause to go up in smoke

(Koehler, 1994-2000)

The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon:

- make sacrifices smoke, send them up in smoke
- cause incense to smoke, offer incense
- make smoke upon both altars (of burnt-offering and of incense)

(Brown, 1906)

The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew

- burn, offer, literally 'make smoke', usually in connection with ritual law and practice of it
- burn an offering, burn incense, literally 'make an offering smoke' or literally 'make incense smoke'

(Clines, 2011, Vol. VII)

Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament:

- burn incense or sacrifices
- Qatar means "to cause to rise up in smoke."
- Our verb is a technical expression denoting not only the burning of incense but all other offerings as well.

- The purpose of such burning is to render the thing offered into smoke which would ascend (as the ethereal essence of the thing) to the deity as a Sweet-smelling savor.

(Harris, 1980, pg. 796)

All the lexicon and dictionary information just given above for these two special words ohhh-laaa and kaaaaw-tare looks a lot like the language of Revelation 14:11 and Isaiah 34:10:

[Revelation 14:11a NASB20] - "And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever"

[Isaiah 34:10b NASB20] - "Its smoke will go up forever."

The resemblance is striking. For full disclosure I will say that not all of the lexicons and dictionaries contain information which bears this striking resemblance, but roughly 2/3 to 3/4 of the ones consulted by this author do. We won't need to rely only on the lexicons and dictionaries though. We will see that there is much more evidence which will validate and reinforce the conceptual resemblance that we have just seen. I've already given you some of this evidence in chapter 12, pages 355 to 358 in our discussion of the smoke rising up to God in the heavens and clouds in Jeremiah 51, but there's more. To start this off we should observe that the Hebrew word translated as "go up", the Hebrew word

עלה, pronounced "aaahh-laaa", in Isaiah 34:10 above, belongs to the same family of words as the word translated as "*burnt offering*", the Hebrew word עלה, pronounced "ohhh-laaa" in the description of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice in Leviticus 6:12. As you can see, even their letters are the same: עלה. Families of words in Hebrew are derived from something called a "root". This is not like a "root word" as a "root word" operates in English or Greek. The root is a two or three consonant letter combination to which vowel sounds and other consonant letters are added to form the various different words in the word family. For many words, all of the letters of the root are used to form the foundation of the word. For many words, not all the root letters are used. Vowel sounds which are needed to pronounce the words are represented by marks appearing above and below the consonant letters. The root is not actually a word. The root represents a concept or a thing whose meaning and significance is, with a considerable degree of consistency, installed into the Hebrew words which utilize that root. For example, in regard to the words עלה, "aaah-laaa", "*go up*" and עלה, "ohhh-laaa", "*burnt offering*", they both have the same three letter root עלה. The meaning of a root can be observed and understood by looking at all the words which share the root. This is just looking at all the words in the word family. Meet the family of words to which "aaah-laaa", "*go up*" and "ohhh-laaa", "*burnt offering*" both belong below. It is not important to the reader here to be

able to read the Hebrew words in the word family below. For the purposes of this discussion, the reader should just observe how all of the words in the family share a common root concept in their lexicon definitions below, and also observe how they all contain some of the Hebrew letters from the root עלה:

- "ohhh-laaa", עלה , noun feminine: whole burnt-offering (that which goes up to heaven (others, on altar)) (Brown, 1906)
- "aaah-laaa", עלה , verb: go up; ascend; climb (Brown, 1906)
- עלה , noun masculine: leaf; leafage; (verb form is: of vegetation, spring up, grow, shoot forth) (Brown, 1906)
- עלה , noun masculine: outgrowth; sprout; leaf; leafage (Koehler, 1994-2000)
- עלי , noun masculine: pestle (as rising before the blow) (Brown, 1906)
- עלה , noun feminine: ascent; stairway (Brown, 1906)
- עלי , adjective: upper (Brown, 1906)
- עליה , noun feminine: roof-chamber (Brown, 1906)
- עליון , adjective: high (Brown, 1906)

- עליון , noun masculine: Highest; Most High (Brown, 1906)
- מעל , noun masculine: lifting (Brown, 1906)
- מעלה noun masculine: ascent (Brown, 1906)
- מעל , substantive: higher part; only in adverb and preposition phrases, above, upwards (Brown, 1906)
- תעלה , noun feminine: covering; coating; referring to the healing process of a wound as the skin reforms and new flesh is built up (Koehler, 1994-2000)
- תעלה , noun feminine: healing (of new flesh and skin forming over wound) (Brown, 1906)

As you can see, the root concept which clearly lives in all of the words in the family is positional or spatial upwardness, even if that upwardness is a symbolism representing the supremacy of God, the "*Most High*", or the upward growth of plants, or the building up of flesh in the process of healing. We can confirm that all of the Hebrew words shown above are from the same family because *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* very conveniently groups together words with the same root on the same pages to help the reader understand the meaning of the words and their root. **For example, in the August 2010, 13th printing of *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew***

and English Lexicon on pages 748 to 752 we see all of the words in the word family above situated together to show their relatedness (Brown, 1906). All of the words in the word family above are also indicated to have the same root in the *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler, 1994-2000). The important point that we can understand from the relatedness of the word family above is that the essence of the Hebrew word for "burnt offering", עלה, "ohhh-laaa" is upwardness or going up, just as we see directly in portions of its lexicon entries: **"tribute rising (in the fire)", "that which goes up to heaven" (Brown, 1906 | Koehler, 1994-2000). The shared root letters involved in the pronunciation and spelling of all the words in its word family tell us this according to the lexicons. This word family relatedness serves to provide evidence for a striking resemblance between the smoke "going up", עלה, "aaah-laaa", in Isaiah 34:10, Revelation 14:11 and the smoke going up in the "burnt offering", עלה, "ohhh-laaa" of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice in the Pentateuch. For those who would like to confirm my previous description of how Hebrew roots work, the following beginner level Hebrew grammar books with page locations will be useful:**

- a. Jeff A. Benner, 2004, *Learn to Read Biblical Hebrew*, pgs. 39 to 40
- b. Ethelyn Simon, Irene Resnikoff, Linda Motzkin, 1992, *The First Hebrew Primer*, pgs. 34 to 35

- c. C.L. Seow, 1995, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, pgs. 23 to 25
- d. Thomas O. Lambdin, 1971, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, pgs. 18 to 19
- e. Arthur W. Walker-Jones, 2003, *Hebrew for Biblical Interpretation*, pgs. 12 to 14
- f. Moshe Greenberg, 1965, *Introduction to Hebrew*, pgs. 41 to 43

If we assume that the lexicons and Bible dictionaries I've shown are correct about the definitions of the two special Hebrew words (עלה, "ohhh-laaa", "*burnt offering*" and קטר, "kaaaaw-tare", "*offer up in smoke*") used to describe the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice in the Pentateuch, what new similarities can we detect between the smoke going up in Revelation 14:11/Isaiah 34:10 versus the descriptions of the smoke going up in the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice in the Pentateuch? Accepting the definitions of the lexicons and Bible dictionaries for these two special Hebrew words allows us to understand the burnt offering of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice to be "*an ascending offering*" which is "*sent up in smoke*" to God as a "*soothing aroma*". Applying these definitions into the descriptions of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice gives us:

[Leviticus 6:12 NASB20] 12 'The fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it. It shall not go out, but the priest shall burn

wood on it every morning; and he shall lay out the burnt offering (ascending offering) on it, and offer up in smoke (send up in smoke) the fat portions of the peace offerings on it.

[Exodus 29:41-42 NASB20] 41 "The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it the same grain offering and the same drink offering as in the morning, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD. 42 "It shall be a continual burnt offering (ascending offering) throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.

Then if we return to the Dead Sea Scrolls version of Isaiah 34:10 below, we see what may be a very important connection, which I have underlined. Compare the underlined text below with the underlined text in Exodus 29 above:

[Isaiah 34:10 DSSB Dead Sea scrolls] It will burn night and day and will never be extinguished. Its smoke will go up from generation to generation; and it will lie waste forever and ever. No one will pass through it.

Now we can recall and compare all the Pentateuch content about the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice with what we see in Isaiah 34:10 above. According to the

lexicons and dictionaries, in the Pentateuch, it is described as an ascending (going up) offering of smoke being sent up, which is to burn night and day, throughout your generations, and is to never be extinguished. This is the same as the content of Isaiah 34:10 above. Then we should also recall that Isaiah 34:10 very conspicuously and directly follows all the abundant sacrifice language found in Isaiah 34 which gives us even more reason to recognize Isaiah 34:10 as describing the content of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. Here's Isaiah 34:10 again below from the Dead Sea scrolls in its broader context:

*[Isaiah 34:2-10 DSSB, Dead Sea scrolls] 2 For the LORD is angry against all the nations and furious at all their host. He has doomed them and has determined that they be **slaughtered**. 3 Their slain and their corpses will be cast down, and their stench will rise up. The mountains will be soaked with their **blood**. 4 The valleys will be split, all the host of the heavens will fall, and the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll. All their host will wither, like a leaf withering off the vine or like withering off the fig tree. 5 Indeed my sword will be seen in the heavens. Watch, it will come down upon Edom, upon the people I have doomed for judgment. 6 The Lord has a sword filled with **blood**, **gorged with fat**, with the **blood of lambs and goats**, with the **fat of rams' kidneys**. Indeed the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. 7 The*

wild oxen will fall with them and the young bulls with the mighty steers. Their land will be **drunk with blood and their soil saturated with fat.** 8 Indeed the Lord has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion. 9 Its streams will be turned into pitch, and its soil into sulfur, and its land will become pitch. 10 It will **burn night and day** and will **never be extinguished.** Its **smoke will go up from generation to generation;** and it will lie waste **forever and ever.** No one will pass through it.

You may be asking yourself at this point, "If the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice is truly a burnt offering which should be translated as an 'ascending offering' which is 'sent up in smoke' to God, then why don't any of the English translations of the Bible show this?" The answer to this question is that some of them, to some extent, actually do; although they are admittedly in a small minority. This is very likely due to the fact that incorporating English language like, "ascending offering" and "send it up in smoke" into a translation sounds altogether awkward and generally cannot be understood by a modern audience, which for the most part knows very little about Old Testament offerings being biblically characterized by their smoke going up to God. Regardless, see a few translations below which do show the ascending smokey character of a burnt offering:

Rotherham Emphasized Bible:

[Leviticus 6:12 REB] And, the fire on the altar, shall be kept burning therein, it shall not be suffered to go out, but the priest shall kindle up thereon pieces of wood, morning by morning,—and shall set in order thereupon the ascending-sacrifice, and shall make a perfume thereon, with the fat-pieces of the peace-offerings:

Amplified Bible Classic Edition:

[Genesis 22:13 AMPC] Then Abraham looked up and glanced around, and behold, behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering and an ascending sacrifice instead of his son!

Contemporary English Version:

[Leviticus 6:12 CEV] The fire must never go out, so put wood on it each morning. After this, you are to lay an animal on the altar next to the fat that you sacrifice to ask my blessing. Then send it all up in smoke to me.

International Standard Version:

[Exodus 29:18 ISV] and send up the whole ram in smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord; it's a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the Lord.

Jewish Publication Society Tanakh:

[Exodus 29:18 JPS] And thou shalt make the whole ram smoke upon the altar; it is a burnt-offering unto the LORD; it is a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Lexham English Bible:

[Exodus 29:18 LEB] And you will turn into smoke on the altar all of the ram; it is a burnt offering for Yahweh; it is a smell of appeasement, an offering by fire for Yahweh.

Evangelical Heritage Version:

[2 Chronicles 13:11 EHV] They send burnt offerings up to the Lord in smoke, every morning and every evening, along with incense made of sweet spices. They arrange the bread on the pure table and take care of the gold lampstand, lighting its lamps every evening. We are fulfilling our duties to the Lord our God, but you have forsaken him.

Bible in Basic English:

[2 Chronicles 13:11 BBE] By whom burned offerings and perfumes are sent up in smoke before the Lord every morning and every evening; and they put out the holy bread on its table and the gold support for the lights with its lights burning every evening; for we keep the orders given to us by the Lord our God, but you have gone away from him.

If you look at the verses above in the broader context of the chapters in which they appear, you will notice that all of them, except for Leviticus 6:12 and 2 Chronicles 13:11, are not directly describing the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. In spite of this, their wording and translation can still be understood to inform us about the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. This is due to the fact that many of the different types of sacrificial offerings described in the Pentateuch also involve burnt offerings, just like the continual morning and evening sacrifice does. Many of the other different types of sacrificial offerings involve burnt offerings described with one or both of the same two special Hebrew words we have been discussing at length, עלה, "ohhh-laaa", "*ascending offering*", "burnt offering" and קטר, "kaaaaw-tare", "*send it up in smoke*", "*offer it up in smoke*". In this sense, it is confusing to refer to the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice as just, "*the burnt offering*". The continual morning and evening regular sacrifice includes two daily "*burnt offerings*", but it is not the only sacrificial offering which includes a "*burnt offering*", עלה, "ohhh-laaa". For this reason we can look at the way the two special words עלה, "ohhh-laaa", "*burnt offering*", "*ascending offering*" and קטר, "kaaaaw-tare", "*send it up in smoke*", "*offer it up in smoke*" are used to describe these other burnt offerings and still learn something about what these words also mean in regard to

the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. Specifically, in the verses just shown above, we can learn something about the burnt offerings which are included in the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice by the fact that translators have translated the two special Hebrew words עלה, "ohhh-laaa", "*burnt offering*", "*ascending offering*" and קטר, "kaaaaw-tare", "*send it up in smoke*", "*offer it up in smoke*", with English words displaying clear connotations of the smoke going up or ascending to God.

It's probably a far too obvious thing to point out that God being described as receiving a burnt offering, like those of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice, as a "*soothing aroma*" is in itself clear evidence of the predominant symbolic theme of the smoke of a burnt offering rising up to God. How does God symbolically smell the sacrifice as a "*soothing aroma*" unless the sacrificial symbolism involves the smoke rising up and going into His nose? This may be exactly what we find. In the biblical symbolism, the smoke may be explicitly depicted going into God's nose. Compare the next three passages which follow:

[Exodus 29:18 ISV] and send up the whole ram in smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord; it's a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the Lord.

The passage below is translated from the Septuagint:

*[Genesis 8:20-21 LES2 Septuagint] 20 Noah built an altar to God, and he took from all the clean livestock and from all the clean birds, and he offered a whole burnt offering on the altar. 21 And **the Lord God smelled a sweet smell**, and the Lord God, pondered it and said: "I will never curse the earth further because of the deeds of humans, because the intention of humankind is focused on what is evil from youth. Therefore, I will proceed to strike all living flesh no further as I have done.*

The underlined boldened words in the verse below are where I have altered the text according to a note provided by the NASB 2020 edition describing a literal translation for this portion of the verse:

*[Deuteronomy 33:10 NASB20 With Literal Note Inserted] "They will teach Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your Law to Israel. They shall put **smoke in Your nostrils**, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.*

So we can see from the previous three passages that the symbolism of a burnt offering does involve the smoke going up into God's nose so he can smell it. Psalm 66 below, which you have already seen in chapter 12, gives us an even more direct description of the smoke itself being given to God:

[Psalm 66:15 NASB20] 15 I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat animals, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah

Another passage which made an appearance in chapter 12 is Job 20:5-7 below from the Septuagint. Its description of gifts and sacrifices going up to God does not appear in the corresponding version of the Old Testament Hebrew Masoretic text which our modern Bibles are primarily translated from:

*[Job 20:5-7 LES2 Septuagint] 5 But the merriment of the wicked is a disastrous fall, and the joy of the lawless is **destruction**; 6 even if **his gifts should go up into the heavens, and his sacrifice should reach the clouds**. 7 For when he should imagine that now he has been established, then he shall be **destroyed completely**, and those who know him shall say, **'Where is he?'***

As I've already shown in chapter 12, pages 355 to 358, the broader context of the biblical theme of the smoke of burnt offerings going up to God allows us to infer with some confidence that the Job passage above is referring to the smoke or aroma of sacrifices going up to God. It may even be possible that the book of Jeremiah passage below is intentionally quoting from a very old Hebrew version of Job which was also used by the ancient Septuagint translator to generate the Greek Septuagint Job passage shown above.

The book of Job is believed by some Bible scholars to be the oldest book in the Bible, much older than the book of Jeremiah.

*[Jeremiah 51:9, 39-40 NASB20] 9 We applied healing to Babylon, but she was not healed; Abandon her and let's each go to his own country, For **her judgment has reached to heaven And it rises to the clouds.** ... 39 "When they become heated up, I will serve them their banquet And make them drunk, so that they may rejoice in triumph, And may **sleep a perpetual sleep And not wake up,**" declares the LORD. 40 "I will bring them down **like lambs to the slaughter, Like rams together with male goats.***

If Jeremiah above is quoting from the book of Job, it's possible that Jeremiah is making an even deeper statement than simply saying that the wicked are a sacrifice of smoke rising up to God. Zophar the Naamathite in Job 20:5-7 far above is saying that the wicked cannot save themselves from destruction by offering sacrifices and gifts to God. With his potential quote of Zophar, Jeremiah may be saying, *"Not only can the wicked not bribe God with their gifts and sacrifices, the only sacrifice which God will accept from the wicked is they themselves being sacrificed. This leads to their own complete and utter destruction and non-existence!"* I know it may seem like I'm putting words in Jeremiah's mouth, but look at the common elements between the Jeremiah and Job passages above. There are

far too many for their connection to be a mere coincidence: clouds, heavens, sacrifices, implied or expressed smoke, and a complete and total destruction of the wicked, accomplished by God Himself. Jeremiah's potential reference to Job may be dripping with some of the thickest irony achievable in a literary work. If correct, this irony would be an extremely powerful emphasis on God's justice. Without true repentance, even the gifts of the wicked to God are met by God making the wicked a wrath appeasing sacrifice. Don't put on a false front towards God. He sees right through it.

The symbolism of the smoke and aroma of burnt offerings going up to God is not just limited to the Old Testament. The New Testament continues to use the same sacrifice symbolism, but applies it to other things in an even more symbolic way. See the several passages below:

[Acts 10:3-4 NASB20] 3 About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, "Cornelius!" 4 And he looked at him intently and became terrified, and said, "What is it, lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and charitable gifts have ascended as a memorial offering before God.

[Philippians 4:18 NASB20] But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having

received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

[Ephesians 5:2 NASB20] and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

The biblical books are not alone in their symbolic theme of the smoke of sacrifices going up to God. This theme can even be detected in other ancient documents. This may help to further demonstrate that it was a well known common theme in the minds of ancient people by the time of the writing of Revelation. That in turn may help to demonstrate that John's ancient audience of Revelation would have very easily recognized John's wording in Revelation 14:11 as sacrifice language, "*the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever*". Their recognition of Revelation 14:11 as sacrifice language, of course would have been made even easier after they realized John is quoting from Isaiah 34 where there is an abundance of additional sacrifice language. The first example we can look at is from an ancient document called the Testament of Levi. **The original writing of the Testament of Levi is dated to the 2nd century BC (Charlesworth, 1983, Vol. 1, pgs. 777 to 778).** The portion of it that we will look at has even been found in fragments of an ancient Aramaic manuscript that was found in the Dead Sea scrolls (manuscript 4Q214). **The fragmented Dead Sea scrolls ancient manuscript, with**

many missing words, is dated to have been produced in the Hasmonean period according to the website of the Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library which is run by the Israel Antiquities Authority (October 10, 2024; <https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il>). The Hasmonean period was in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC. **The unfragmented text that we will be looking at can be read without missing words in a much younger medieval manuscript which was produced in the 10th century AD or earlier according to the website of the University of Cambridge Digital Library (October 10, 2024; <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-TS-00016-00094/1>).** Parts of the medieval manuscript are held by the University of Cambridge, and other parts are held by the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford. The portion we will look at is in the Bodleian Library collection. This medieval manuscript was found in the Cairo Geniza at the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Cairo Egypt. The Cairo Geniza was a massive treasure trove of ancient manuscripts housed in a storeroom at the Ben Ezra Synagogue. Western scholars had not even significantly explored the contents of the Geniza until the late 1800s. The medieval manuscript in our portion of interest reads like this:

[Testament of Levi, CTLevi ar, CTL, Bodleian, column c : lines 12-15, Cairo Geniza] 12 I saw Abraham, my father, taking heed 13 of everything. Twelve kinds of wood he showed 14

me, which kinds are fitting to be offered upon the altar, 15 of which the smell of their smoke goes up pleasing.
(Martinez, 1999, pg. 53)

The much older, but very fragmented, Dead Sea scrolls manuscript from the Hasmonean period in the 2nd to 1st centuries BC reads like this below. The words which are missing from the fragmented manuscript are shown in brackets to help orient the reader to where they are reading in the text:

[Testament of Levi, 4QLevi^f ar, 4QAramaic Levi^f, 4Q214b, column 1 : lines 2b-4a] [For] thus I saw Abraha[m,] 3 [my father, looking out for any obstacle. Twe]lve (kinds of) wood did he s[ho]w me of those [which are fitting to be] offered upon the altar, 4 [whose aroma] rises, [pleasing.]
(Martinez, 1999, pg. 455)

As you can see from the fragmented Dead Sea scrolls text above, it gives us limited information, but it does help to confirm for us that this text of the Testament of Levi existed before the New Testament. So it may have been known to some of John's ancient readers of Revelation. The fragmented Dead Sea scrolls text also helps, to some small degree, to confirm that the text of the much younger medieval manuscript is accurate. The two manuscripts together generally witness to the fact that the smoke rising

from the altar, up to God, was an important pre-New Testament symbol of God's satisfaction with the ritual.

The next example of what likely is the smoke of the altar rising up to God is found in the Mishnah^G, which as you may recall from our previous discussion was composed in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Although it may not all have been written before the New Testament, it is known to contain many general concepts and content which come from the traditional Jewish practices and beliefs of pre-New Testament Judaism. Our Mishna text of interest is below:

[Mishna, Nezikin, Pirkei Avot 5:5] Ten wonders were wrought for our fathers in the Sanctuary: No woman miscarried from the smell of the holy meat; and the holy meat never stank; and no uncleanness befell the high-priest on the Day of Atonement; and no fly was seen in the slaughter-house; and no defect was found in the sheaf, nor in the two loaves, nor in the shewbread; and rains quenched not the fire of the wood for the altar; and no wind prevailed against the pillar of smoke; (though) they stood pressed together (yet) they bowed down (to worship) at ease; and no serpent or scorpion harmed (any) in Jerusalem; and no man said to his neighbour, "The place is too strait for me," that I may lodge in Jerusalem. (Oesterley, 1919, pgs. 62 to 63)

As you can see in the passage above, it was considered a "wonder" (or in many other English translations not shown

here, a "*miracle*") that the pillar of smoke rising above the temple, or "*sanctuary*", was not blown away by the wind. In the context of all the other evidence that I have already presented in regard to the smoke of sacrifices going up to God, we can easily recognize that this pillar of smoke described in the Mishna above is the smoke going up to God as a gift to Him. It's important that the wind not blow it away, so that God can, in a symbolic sense, receive it as the gift. It must ascend up to the clouds in the heavens where God lives and go into his nose so God can smell it and be appeased. Like the previously shown Testament of Levi passage, this Mishna passage may simply help to demonstrate that smoke going up to God from the temple was a concept which was part of the body of the common knowledge which John's ancient audience of Revelation would have easily known. And so the argument goes, John's ancient audience of Revelation would have easily been able to recognize the smoke going up "*forever and ever*" in Revelation as the smoke of the sacrifice of the wicked, a symbol of God's anger against sin having been forever and ever appeased. This concept may have even been still circulating as common knowledge in the **4th to 6th centuries AD when the Aramaic Targum of Psalms is roughly estimated to have been written (Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 2)**. See the Targum Psalms group of verses below for example. We've already looked at one of these verses translated from the Hebrew Masoretic text, but the Targum version may be enlightening too:

*[Psalm 66:8-9, 15 Targum] 8 Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of his praise heard. 9 Who has designated our **souls for the life of the age to come**, and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. ... 15 Fat burnt-offerings I will offer in your presence, with the **sweet smell of the sacrifice of rams**; I will make [sacrifice of] bulls with he-goats **forever**.*
(Cook, 2001)

The Aramaic word in the Psalms Targum group of verses above which has been translated as "smell", is an equivalent word to the Hebrew word which has been **defined as "smoke", "odour of sacrifice", "incense", or "sweet smoke of sacrifice" by the Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon of Hebrew (Brown, 1906)**. So we will make a reasonable alteration to the word in the Psalms Targum translation above to see the verses like this:

*[Psalms 66:8-9, 15 Targum, Altered Translation] 8 Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of his praise heard. 9 Who has designated our **souls for the life of the age to come**, and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. ... 15 Fat burnt-offerings I will offer in your presence, with the **sweet smoke of the sacrifice of rams**; I will make [sacrifice of] bulls with he-goats **forever**.*
(Cook, 2001)

The word whose translation we have altered, exactly as it appears in the Aramaic Targum and in the Hebrew Masoretic version of the verse, looks like this below. Notice the nearly identical spelling:

Hebrew: קטרַת

Aramaic: קטורת

Then we see in the *Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon*, a note which says that the Aramaic word קטורת, shown above, is "*probably to be read as*" the biblical Hebrew word קטרַת, also shown above. Then we see further in the *Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon* that the definition given for the Aramaic word קטורת is "*incense*" (Kaufman, October 10, 2024). This definition, "*incense*", is the same as one of the definitions given for the Hebrew word shown above, קטרַת, by the *Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon of Hebrew* (Brown, 1906). So it's safe to say that the two words are equivalents and my altering the word "*smell*" to instead be the word "*smoke*" in the Psalms Targum group of verses far above is justified. Given all that, maybe you noticed the "*smoke*" of the sacrifices being offered to God "*forever*" in the altered translation of the Targum Psalms group of verses? Was the Psalms Targum translator recording a concept which had already been in common circulation among ancient people for hundreds of years before he wrote it into his Targum? **Even though he**

roughly estimates the date of origination for Targum Psalms as 4th to 6th centuries AD, Targum scholar David M. Stec adds, *"It is possible and even likely that it contains material from more than one period."* (Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 2) With that comment, Stec may be stating that it's likely Targum Psalms contains concepts and/or phrases from earlier than 4th to 6th centuries AD. With that in mind, maybe John in Revelation and the Targum Psalms are both showing the same common pre-New Testament sacrifice concept, the smoke of sacrifices is offered to God forever! And how about our souls living in the *"age to come"*, as described in the Psalms Targum far above!? It sounds a lot like Jesus doesn't it? Here's Jesus again below:

*[Mark 10:29-30 NASB20] 29 Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, 30 but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and **in the age to come, eternal life.***

*[Matthew 10:28 NASB20] "And do not be afraid of those who kill the body but are unable to **kill the soul**; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

For full disclosure, the reader should be aware that English translations of the Targum of Psalms are very rare. This

author could only find two translations. The other translation, which I did not show above, is from the Targum book set, *The Aramaic Bible*. In *The Aramaic Bible*, the translation of Targum Psalms 66:15 which we have been discussing reads like this:

[Psalms 66:15 Targum] I will offer before you burnt offerings of fatlings, with sweet incense an offering of rams; I will offer bulls with goats . For ever.
(Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 127)

As you can see, the verse is translated in such a way that the "incense" or "smoke" is not coming from the rams, but is with the rams. So we could retain some skepticism about either of the two available translations without further investigation.

Considering the sum total of all the evidence that I have presented in this chapter, it's clear that John's ancient audience of Revelation would have been very well acquainted with the concept of the smoke of sacrifices symbolically going up to God. They would have seen this in the Old Testament, the New Testament, Jewish traditions, ancient pseudepigraphal writing, and even possibly in Targum writing. Whereas our modern imaginations may run wild with visions of endless torment when we read the Revelation 14:11 words, "*the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever*", the more informed perspective

of ancient people would have easily allowed them to recognize this as the symbolism of the smoke of complete and total destruction in the sacrificial system as also described in Isaiah 34 here:

*[Isaiah 34:5-7, 10 NASB20] 5 For My sword has drunk its fill in heaven; Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom, And upon the people whom I have designated for **destruction**. 6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, It drips with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, With the fat of the kidneys of rams. For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, And a great slaughter in the land of Edom. 7 Wild oxen will also fall with them And young bulls with strong ones; So their land will be soaked with blood, And their dust become greasy with fat. ... 10 It will not be extinguished night or day; **Its smoke will go up forever**. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.*

Sacrifices aren't tormented on the altar endlessly, they just die:

[1 John 5:12 NASB20] 12 The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

"Forever and ever", on the other hand, very likely tells us for how long God's anger is appeased by the smoke of the

sacrifices. Symbolically, forever and ever, day and night, the smoke is going up to Him, representing his final and endlessly ongoing appeasement:

[Psalm 30:4-5 NASB20] 4 Sing praise to the LORD, you His godly ones, And praise the mention of His holiness. 5 For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning.

Some of my readers who like to delve further into the details may have noticed that many modern English Bible translations read quite a bit different than the translations I previously showed for these two passages below which have been important to my central argument in this chapter:

*[Deuteronomy 33:10 NASB20 With Literal Note Inserted]
"They will teach Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your Law to Israel. They shall put **smoke in Your nostrils**, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.*

[Psalm 66:15 NASB20] I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat animals, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah

As you may recall, I inserted an alternate translation note provided by the translators of the NASB 2020 edition into Deuteronomy 33:10 above so that it appears as you see it

above with the phrase "*smoke in Your nostrils*" showing in the verse. Without the literal note being inserted, the NASB 2020 translation of the verse just reads like this:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 NASB20] "They will teach Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your Law to Israel. They shall put incense before You, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.

The note provided by the NASB 2020 which applies to the underlined portion of the text in the verse above reads exactly like this:

Lit smoke in Your nostrils

With the use of this note, the NASB 2020 translators are communicating specifically that "*smoke in Your nostrils*" is the correct translation to replace the phrase "*incense before you*", if the users of their translation do not need to read the verse with the mysterious and symbolic figure of speech, "*smoke in Your nostrils*" eliminated from the verse. We are in on the mystery now though. We don't need this mysterious figure of speech removed. We understand the symbolic meaning of the smoke of the sacrificial system going up to God, into His nose. To increase your confidence in the literal translation, "*smoke in your nostrils*", we can simply refer to the fact that the actual Hebrew word for "*nose*", *ḥā*, actually, literally is contained in the Hebrew words of the verse. The Hebrew word for "*nose*" is altered and combined into a specific word form in the verse, but it is

there, as we can see evidenced in the year 2000 *Zondervan NASB Exhaustive Concordance* by Robert L. Thomas. At the far bottom left of page 120 we see the record of an occurrence of the Hebrew word for nose, $\text{נָחַ$, referenced with Strong's number H639 in Deuteronomy 33:10. If we take this Strong's number and use it to look up the corresponding Hebrew word in the ***Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon of Hebrew***, we find the following definitions: "***nostril***", "***nose***", "***face***", "***anger***" (Brown, 1906). If we consult various literal translations^G which intentionally strive to preserve and show mysterious figures of speech in their translations, we can see that they also show God's nose just like the NASB 2020 edition literal translation note does:

Literal Standard Version:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 LSV] They teach Your judgments to Jacob, And Your law to Israel; They put incense in Your nose, And whole burnt-offering on Your altar.

Young's Literal Translation:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 YLT] They teach Thy judgments to Jacob, And Thy law to Israel; They put perfume in Thy nose, And whole burnt-offering on Thine altar.

Smith's Literal Translation:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 SLT] And they shall teach thy judgments to Jacob, and thy law to Israel; they will put

incense at thy nose, and whole burnt-offerings upon thine altar.

Rotherham Emphasized Bible:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 REB] May teach thy regulations unto Jacob, And thy law unto Israel, May put incense in thy nostrils, And a whole offering upon thine altar.

In addition to the literal translations shown above, we can also look again in the *Zondervan NASB Exhaustive Concordance* to find that **the sum total of all the appearances of all the words "nose", "noses", "nostril", and "nostrils" in the English translation of the Old Testament in the NASB 1995 edition is 26 times. Of these 26 times, 25 of them are translating the same Hebrew word, נַחַשׁ, having Strong's number H639, which appears in our Deuteronomy 33:10 verse in question. (Thomas, 2000, pg. 779)** A few examples of the 25 times that the NASB 1995 edition translates this Hebrew word, H639, נַחַשׁ, to refer to a nose are here:

[Amos 4:10 NASB95] 10 "I sent a plague among you after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, And I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; Yet you have not returned to Me," declares the LORD.

[Psalm 115:6 NASB95] 6 They have ears, but they cannot hear; They have noses, but they cannot smell;

So we can see that the correct translation of Deuteronomy 33:10 clearly mentions God's nose. The question remains though, does Deuteronomy 33:10 describe "smoke" going into God's nose or "incense" going into God's nose? It seems absurd for a translation to show incense going into God's nose, because in our modern way of thinking, incense is the word that we use to refer to the unburned aromatic plant matter that you buy in a package at your local store. When we get the unburned aromatic plant matter home from the store, we burn it to produce aromatic smoke. We don't call that aromatic smoke "incense". So when a Bible translation appears to show God's people stuffing unburned aromatic plant matter into God's nose, it should probably raise a red flag that their translation is not correct if strictly measured by the way we modern people use the word incense. Even in a symbolic sense, stuffing unburned aromatic plant matter into anybody's nose makes no sense. This fact urges us to reject the use of the word "incense" being used in the translation of Deuteronomy 33:10. The Hebrew lexicon which is the most dominant today, ***The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament***, rejects the word "incense", just as I have suggested, and shows the definition "fumes" instead (Koehler, 1994-2000). The lexicon which was previously the most dominant lexicon, ***The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon***, also

rejects the word *"incense"* and shows the definition of *"smoke of sacrifice"*, although it mentions that other scholars favor the definition *"incense"* (Brown, 1906). Maybe these dominant lexicons have recognized the nonsense of using the word *"incense"*. **The less dominant, but very exhaustive lexicon, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* shows the definition *"smoke, fumes, perhaps of incense"* (Clines, 2011, Vol. VII).** This back and forth among scholars and translators where some favor *"incense"* and some favor *"smoke"* or *"fumes"* is at least in part likely caused by the fact that this Hebrew word for *"smoke"* or *"incense"* in Deuteronomy 33:10 is only used once in all the Old Testament. This means that the word has very few word usage examples to help understand the meaning. It is important to understand it though, as Deuteronomy 33:10 can add to our understanding of the smoke of sacrifices going up to God if the word means *"smoke"* or *"fumes"*. On the other hand, if the word means *"incense"*, Deuteronomy 33:10 is less applicable to our topic of discussion regarding the smoke of sacrifices. To add some much needed evidence to solve this mystery, it is helpful to look at the meaning of the Hebrew root which is installed in the word. Just as in our previous discussion of the word for burnt offering or ascending offering, we can observe and understand the meaning of the root by observing the meanings of all of the family of words which utilize the root. The root in this case is קטר. Meet the word family below which all share the root קטר. The word we have been

discussing, "*smoke*" from Deuteronomy 33:10 is first in the word family list below. It is pronounced "ket-or-ahhhhh", with "et" in "ket" sounding like "et" in the English word pet, and with "or" being pronounced like the English word or, and "ahhhh" like "ahhhhhh refreshing". Just as in our previous discussion of Hebrew roots, the reader only needs to notice how all the words in the word family list below contain the root letters קטר, and also how there is a smokey core root meaning which can be detected in the lexicon definitions of all the words:

- קטורה , pronounced "ket-or-ahhhhh", as in Deuteronomy 33:10, noun masculine: smoke of sacrifice (Brown, 1906)
- קיטור , noun masculine: thick smoke (Brown, 1906)
- קטרת , noun feminine: smoke, odour of (burning) sacrifice, incense, sweet smoke of sacrifice, perfume (Brown, 1906)
- קטר , pronounced "kaaaaw-tare", verb: Altered to its various different Hebrew verb forms or "*stems*", this verb takes on different meanings:
 1. Piel verb form/stem: make sacrifices smoke, send them up in smoke (properly produce קטרת), offer them by burning
 2. Pual verb form/stem: fumigated with myrrh

3. Hiphil verb form/stem:

- a. make sacrifices smoke, send them up in smoke (properly produce קטרת)
- b. cause incense to smoke, offer incense
- c. make smoke upon both altars (of burnt-offering and of incense)

4. Hophal verb form/stem: be made to smoke as a sacrifice

(Brown, 1906)

- קטר , noun feminine: incense (Brown, 1906)
- מקטר and מקטר , noun masculine: place of sacrificial smoke (Brown, 1906)
- מקטר , noun masculine: incense (Brown, 1906)
- מקטרת , noun feminine: censer (Brown, 1906)
- מקטרה , noun feminine: incense-altar (Brown, 1906)

An important thing to notice in the smokey family of words shown above is that the Hiphil verb form/stem of the verb קטר, pronounced "kaaaaw-tare", is the smokey word used in Leviticus 6:12 to describe the action of sending the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice up in smoke. In Leviticus 6:12 and throughout all the Old Testament descriptions of all the other types of burnt offerings, many

modern English translations have translated the Hiphil form/stem of this verb, "kaaaaw-tare", completely without using any hint of the concept of "smoke" in their translations. We can clearly see from its broader word family core root meaning in the list above that this is not the correct approach to translating this word. "Smoke" is part of its meaning. Another important thing to notice from the smokey family of words above is that there is a pervasive mixing of definitions which demonstrates to us that their shared family root, קטר is broadly used for both the smoke of the burning of incense and the smoke of the burning of sacrifices. When we look at the various Bible verses which use words from the smokey family of words, we even see this pervasive mixing occurring there. For example, the feminine noun קטרת for "smoke" or "incense", from the smokey family of words above is used in the first verse below to refer to the smoke of the burning of rams. Then in the second verse below we can see clearly from the context of the verse that the same word is used to refer to the smoke of the burning of incense:

[Psalm 66:15 NASB20] 15 I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat animals, With the smoke (קטרת) of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah

[Ezekiel 8:11 NASB20] 11 And standing in front of them were seventy elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them, each man with his censer

in his hand; and the fragrance of the cloud of incense (קטררת) was rising.

The Hiphil form/stem of the verb קטר, "kaaaaw-tare", from the smokey family of words far above, can also easily be seen in Bible verses to have a dual use for sending up the smoke of incense and sending up the smoke of sacrifices. The underlined words in the two verses below, for example, are all translating the Hiphil form of the verb קטר, "kaaaaw-tare":

[Exodus 29:18 ISV] and send up the whole ram in smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering to the Lord; it's a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the Lord.

[2 Chronicles 26:19 ISV] Uzziah flew into a rage while he held in his hand a censer to burn incense. As he got angry at the priests, leprosy broke out all over his forehead right in front of the priests beside the incense altar in the LORD's Temple.

The clear dual use of the words קטר and קטררת, just shown above referring to incense smoke and the smoke of sacrifices gives us some encouragement to conclude that this kind of dual use may also apply to the noun word קטורה, "ket-or-ahhhhh", for "smoke" or "incense", that we have been discussing extensively in Deuteronomy 33:10, shown again in the two translations below. The noun word קטורה, "ket-or-ahhhhh", in Deuteronomy 33:10, is from the same

word family as the two dual use words that I just showed, so we may interpret this as evidence that it is also a dual use word for both the smoke of incense and the smoke of sacrifices:

[Deuteronomy 33:10 LSV] They teach Your judgments to Jacob, And Your law to Israel; They put incense (קטורה) in Your nose, And whole burnt-offering on Your altar.

[Deuteronomy 33:10 NASB20 With Literal Note Inserted] "They will teach Your ordinances to Jacob, And Your Law to Israel. They shall put smoke (קטורה) in Your nostrils, And whole burnt offerings on Your altar.

As I've already shown you previously, and in the two translations again above, the word, קטורה, "ket-or-ahhhhh", in Deuteronomy 33:10 gets a split decision from the translators and the lexicons. Some characterize it as referring to the smoke of sacrifices, and others characterize it as referring to the smoke of incense. Why couldn't it be both, just as we see occurring extensively in the smokey family of words to which the Deuteronomy 33:10 word "ket-or-ahhhhh" belongs? If correct, this would mean that Deuteronomy 33:10 could be generally describing the ritual smoke of both incense and sacrifices rising up to go into God's nose, and not just one or the other. This would mean that Deuteronomy 33:10 is a more general dual use reference to both types of smoke produced by the sacrificial

system as a whole. Of course this would mean that Deuteronomy 33:10 is highly related to the theme of the smoke of sacrifices going up to God. And then, of course, it would help us to recognize the smoke of the sacrifice of the wicked in Revelation and Isaiah 34 as a non-literal symbol of smoke going up into God's nose to represent his forever-appeasement with the sacrifice of the wicked. And additionally, we aren't forced to just rely on our imaginations to envision the incense part of this dual word usage that I have just proposed. John makes it clear for us in Revelation that the smoke of burning incense can and does symbolically rise up to God in the biblical way of thinking:

[Revelation 8:3-4 NASB20] 3 Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. 4 And the smoke of the incense ascended from the angel's hand with the prayers of the saints before God.

There must be some similarity between God receiving the rising smoke of saintly prayer incense and Him receiving the rising smoke of the utterly destructive sacrifice of the wicked. Both are signs of all things being brought together under God's Supreme Kingship. His plan will be accomplished, no matter who supports or opposes him:

[Ephesians 1:9-10 NASB20] 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He set forth in Him, 10 regarding His plan of the fullness of the times, to bring all things together in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

Chapter 14

Final Interpretation and Checking the Answer in the Back of the Book

To sum up the heart of what I'm showing in this book, we might have a progression of divine thought and action for the book of Revelation that goes something like this. Revelation, and all the events it describes, are a coming of the Lord which is parallel to and a prophetic fulfillment of God's Old Testament deliverance of His people from Egypt and His coming to dwell among them in relationship, having taken up residence among them in His new house/tabernacle. The Old Testament sacrificial system and its almost never ending burning and continuous daily smoke going up, which starts at the tabernacle inauguration, becomes a visible symbol of God's ongoing covenant love, deliverance, and faithfulness to his people. It burns day and night. They see the smoke every day rising above the tabernacle. The smoke goes up from generation to generation:

[Exodus 29:38-46 NASB20] 38 "Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one-year-old lambs each day, continuously. 39 "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; 40 and there shall be a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed

with a fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth of a hin of wine for a drink offering with one lamb. 41 "The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it the same grain offering and the same drink offering as in the morning, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to the LORD. 42 "It shall be a **continual burnt offering throughout your generations** at the doorway of the tent of meeting before the LORD, where **I will meet with you, to speak to you there.** 43 "**I will meet there with the sons of Israel,** and it shall be consecrated by My glory. 44 "I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; **I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve as priests** to Me. 45 "And **I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God.** 46 "And **they shall know that I am the LORD their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, so that I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God.**

As long as repentance and the covenant duties were kept by the people, and the smoke could be seen going up from generation to generation, God remained present and active in relationship with the nation of Israel and its people. God's people betrayed him though. The smoke did not go up forever and ever. They cheated on Him with the gods of the nations and the covenant was in some ways temporarily obstructed. The togetherness of God and His people was interrupted. The smoke stopped. God will not allow his love and togetherness with his people to be thwarted though. He will return again to inaugurate the

temple/tabernacle for a last and final time with great sacrifices consumed by fire, just as before in the Old Testament by the falling of His Fire. He will take up residence again among His Beloved People, except this time the covenant bond will never end. Symbolically and not literally, just as in Isaiah 34, the smoke of the sacrifices will go up forever and ever, unto the ages of the ages. The covenant will be *"forever and ever"*. Its results will be literally endless, but the flames will not, just as in the symbolic use of sacrifice language in Isaiah 34. God's togetherness with His people and His deliverance of them will be *"forever and ever"* just as the smoke symbolism is. The smoke, symbolically but not literally, just as in Isaiah 34, will go up forever and ever, representing its endless result of His endlessly satisfied vengeance. God will not be satisfied though with only the death of the defiled three: satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet. For wicked humans, the smoke resulting from their possibly quick torment and ultimate death will be enough to endlessly satisfy God. This is just as in the sacrifices of the Old Testament sacrificial system. The sacrificed animals are killed quickly. For the defiled three though, this likely will not be enough. In the language of Revelation 20:10, their *"torment"*, *"day and night, forever and ever"* is described instead of, *"the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever"* in Revelation 14:11 for wicked humans. This may indicate that the prolonged day and night torment of the defiled three is necessary to satisfy God instead of just brief torment and

death as for wicked people in Revelation 14:10-11. Unlike wicked people, God may only be satisfied to throw the defiled three into the lake of fire *"alive"* (Revelation 19:20) and to torment them for an uninterrupted extended period, *"day and night"*. Their *"torment day and night"* though, very likely will only have endless results, *"to the ages of the ages"*, just as the *"night and day"* fires of Isaiah 34 will. The night and day fires of Isaiah 34 will go out, just as the passage describes, and animals will come in and move into the land. The night and day torment of the defiled three will very likely finally end, and they will be dead, intentionally punished and killed by their torment, just as torment was sometimes intended to do in the common language usage of ancient Greek:

*[Daniel 7:11 NASB20] 11 "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking until the **beast was killed**, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire.*

[Ezekiel 28:13-14, 16, 18-19 NASB20] 13 "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The ruby, the topaz and the diamond; The beryl, the onyx and the jasper; The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, Was in you. On the day that you were created They were prepared. 14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy

*mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. ... 16 "By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, you covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire. ... 18 "By the multitude of your wrongdoings, In the unrighteousness of your trade You profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, And **I have turned you to ashes on the earth** In the eyes of all who see you. 19 "All who know you among the peoples Are appalled at you; You have become terrified And **you will cease to be forever.**""*

In Isaiah 34, the results of the day and night fire which will finally go out, are endless. The land and its people are delivered from the presence of evil "*forever*". In Revelation, there will be endless results of the temporary day and night torment of the defiled three. The land and its people will be delivered from the presence of evil "*forever and ever*", "*to the ages of the ages*". God's vengeance will be permanently satisfied.

In the Old Testament, the progression of events goes something like this. God delivers his people from the wicked army which drowns in the Red Sea, just as also in Revelation:

*[Exodus 15:4-5 NASB20] 4 "Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has thrown into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. 5 "The waters cover them; **They went down into the depths like a stone.***

*[Revelation 18:21 NASB20] 21 Then a strong angel **picked up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea,** saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will never be found again.*

God then consecrates His priests. His priests kill the sacrifices and offer them to God. God's fire comes from heaven to devour the sacrifices. The sacrificial system starts, and the smoke begins to go up from generation to generation, forever. The burning and smoke begin to persist day and night, symbolizing God's togetherness with his people. Then emerging from all this, God gives a pronouncement of the wonderful relationship results of the keeping of the covenant:

[Exodus 29:44-46 NASB20] 44 "I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve as priests to Me. 45 "And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. 46 "And they shall know that I am the LORD their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, so that I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God.

If Revelation follows this same Old Testament pattern described above, even being a literal prophetic fulfillment of it, then we should expect that a similar pronouncement of the wonderful relationship results of the new Revelation 21-22 eternal state covenant should also be communicated by God in Revelation after all the action has taken place and the smoke has begun to symbolically go up forever and ever. Here it is below. We are looking in the back of the book to check our answer. What are the endless results of the action and the forever and ever symbolically rising smoke? Do they follow the Old Testament pattern as we are expecting?:

*[Revelation 21:2-4 NKJV] 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, **prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.** 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and **He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people.** God Himself will be with them **and be their God.** 4 "**And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.**"*

*[Exodus 29:44-46 NASB20] 44 "I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate **Aaron and his sons to serve as priests to Me.** 45 "**And I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God.** 46 "And they shall*

know that ***I am the LORD their God*** who ***brought them out of the land of Egypt***, so that ***I might dwell among them; I am the LORD their God.***

Revelation 21:2-4 is only preserved in two of the oldest nearly complete ancient manuscripts of the Bible dating to the 4th and 5th centuries AD, and then also in a very high number of manuscripts which are centuries younger. One of those two oldest manuscripts and roughly 3/4 of all the existing manuscripts show something like this NASB20 version of Revelation 21:2-4 below which is missing one of the phrases, "*and be their God*", which its NKJV version far above has in common with Exodus 29:44-46 above. A majority of all modern Bible translations recognize a version of Revelation 21:2-4 like the NKJV far above as being a more likely reflection of the original, and not the one below which is missing the phrase, "*and be their God*":

*[Revelation 21:2-4 NASB20] 2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as **a bride adorned for her husband.** 3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "**Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among the people, and *He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them,*** 4 and **He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.**"*

Even with the differences in the ancient Revelation manuscripts, do the covenant pronouncements in Revelation 21 and Exodus 29 above look similar? They both are an expression of God's deliverance of His people and His togetherness with them. We know they look similar, because the ending is the fulfillment of the beginning. God can use the Old Testament symbolism of a literal Israelite people and a literal Israelite nation and His love for them to demonstrate what He will do for His beloved peoples and nations of all the world:

[Genesis 22:18 NASB20] 18 "And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

[2 Peter 3:9 NASB20] 9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not willing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance.

[Romans 5:6-8 NASB20] 6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous person; though perhaps for the good person someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

As you may have already noticed in this book, some modern translations of the Bible translate Psalm 37:20 as you see it below from the ESV:

[Psalm 37:20 ESV] But the wicked will perish; the enemies of the LORD are like the glory of the pastures; they vanish--like smoke they vanish away.

Some modern translations translate the same exact Hebrew words from the Masoretic text of Psalm 37:20 showing something like, "*fat of lambs*", instead of something like, "*glory of the pastures*", as you see above in the ESV. The ASV below is an example of this:

[Psalm 37:20 ASV] But the wicked shall perish, And the enemies of Jehovah shall be as the fat of lambs: They shall consume; In smoke shall they consume away.

Writing sometime in the 2nd century AD, **ancient Bible translator Aquila, in his Greek translation of the Old Testament, agrees with the translation of the ASV above, showing a Greek word for "*lambs*" and not "*pastures*" (Field, 1875, Vol. 2, pg. 144), effectively repeating and confirming the sacrificial connotations of the verse. Probably writing sometime in the 4th to 6th centuries AD (Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 2), an ancient Targum translator records an interpretive translation of Psalm 37:20 which also confirms the presence of the "*sheep*" in the verse. As**

you can see for yourself in his Targum version of the verse below, he also records some additional interpretive commentary in the verse which you may find familiar:

[Psalm 37:20 Targum] For the wicked shall perish; and (as for) the enemies of the Lord, as the glory of sheep that in the beginning are fattened, and (at) their end they are slaughtered, even so shall the wicked come to an end, and they shall be destroyed in the smoke of Gehenna.

(Stec, 2004, Vol. 16, pg. 80)

Recall that Psalm 37 is one of the several Psalms which John is very likely pointing to from within Revelation 14:11 with his use of the exceedingly rare greek word construction, "*αἰῶνας αἰώνων*", "*ages ages*", "*forever and ever*". We discussed this pointing reference and how it works in chapter 5, pages 136 to 142 and chapter 6, pages 191 to 196. Maybe the person in antiquity who produced the translation and commentary in Targum Psalm 37:20 above read this book "*Hell is Made Holy*"? Or maybe the central thesis of this book just mirrors an understanding of hell which was ancient common knowledge gleaned from the Old Testament? Maybe John in Revelation 14:11 was just referencing that knowledge?

[Psong^G 152 DABV]

1 A Psong^G of David

For his beloved King

On the keys of the computer

2 Praise Him all ye creatures here below

His love goes on unto the ages of the ages

Praise Him all ye peoples in the land

His strength abides unto the age age

3 Praise him all ye evil ones on bended knee

His vengeance clears a way through the sea

Praise Him all ye who wear white robes

His city is everlasting

4 Praise Him all you in torment night and day

His judgments make you cease to be

Praise Him, Praise Him, Praise Him

5 He is unto the ages ages

He is unto the age and the ages of the ages

He is unto the age of the age

6 In Him alone we have Rest

Praise Him forever night and day

Amen our Holy King, our love is unto You

In your timing Swift Witness, in your timing our Savior!

Thank you for reading *Hell is Made Holy*. Please consider again if you would be willing to leave a review for this book on the amazon website that you shop on. Buying this book on amazon before posting your review there will cause your review to show up on all of the dozens of amazon websites worldwide instead of just the one that you shop on. This

small investment would go towards helping more people to be free from a misunderstanding of God which has often created a detrimental separation between God and many of His people. I firmly believe that God is helping people all over the world to learn about conditionalism in order to draw these people back close to Himself. Please pray that this book will have a far reaching impact. Thank you again for reading *Hell is Made Holy*. May He Bless you and keep you. May His face shine upon you and give you peace.

David Aaron Beaty

Glossary

***Note:** Underlined words in the definitions also have their own glossary entry for further explanation.*

annihilationism, annihilationist, annihilation - The doctrine which holds to the idea that the punishment in hell involves both a temporary torment and then a complete cessation of existence, body and soul.

Aramaic - The most prevalent spoken language of Israel in the first century AD. This was most likely the primary spoken language of Jesus and His disciples.

Aramaic Targum - See "Targum".

codex, plural: codices - An ancient handwritten manuscript in book form. Before the invention of the codex, manuscripts were in scroll form, rolled up in a roll, and very difficult to use. The codex uses pages like a modern book, instead of the awkward rolled up format of a scroll.

conditionalism, conditionalist, conditional - The doctrine which holds to the idea that endless life and consciousness is not guaranteed to any person, either in heaven or hell, but is granted or withheld on the condition that a person places their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The wicked ultimately cease to exist, body and soul, with no

further consciousness or life. The punishment in hell consists of both a temporary torment and then a final cessation of existence, body and soul.

continual morning and evening regular sacrifice - Also known as the, "*burnt offering*". A sacrifice described in the Old Testament which consists of sacrificing an animal in the morning and an animal in the evening at twilight every day. Each sacrifice was accompanied by a grain offering and a drink offering. Portions of fat from the peace offerings were also laid on the altar with the burning animals of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice. The fire of the continual morning and evening regular sacrifice was kept going day and night, and would have been specifically characterized by virtually endless rising smoke, and by the excessive smoke generated by the fat of the peace offerings being laid on the altar with them.

critical apparatus - The notes which are typically located at the bottom of each page in a critical edition of the Bible which describe what textual variants for each verse exist in the various important ancient manuscripts of the Bible.

critical edition - A modern reproduction of an Old Testament or New Testament Bible in the ancient language which attempts to use analysis of numerous existing ancient manuscripts to determine what the most likely original words were that were penned by the original writers.

critical text - A scholarly slang term most often used to refer to what the Greek New Testament looks like if it is generally constructed by relying heavily on the much fewer but oldest manuscripts of the New Testament. These manuscripts were generally produced in the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD.

Dead Sea scrolls - A broad general title for all of the ancient manuscripts found in various caves in the vicinity of the Dead Sea on the east side of Israel. The Dead Sea scrolls are generally all dated to have been written from the third century BC to the first century AD. Every book of the Old Testament, now also including Esther and Nehemiah, can be found in either fragments of scrolls or nearly complete copies of scrolls among the Dead Sea scrolls.

electronic transcription - A copy of an ancient document which has been produced by entering the text of an ancient handwritten manuscript into an electronic format with a standard electronic computer font, for example like this for Hebrew, היתה תהו ובהו or like this for Greek, καὶ εἰσῆλθον ἐν. This makes the electronic transcription accessible on a computer or other electronic document viewing devices.

facsimile - A document which is produced by photographing a handwritten ancient manuscript. Each page of the facsimile is a photo of a portion of the handwritten ancient manuscript. Facsimiles allow for the unhindered analysis of

a high quality, high resolution copy of the ancient manuscript without actually physically having the ancient manuscript.

forward interlinear translation - An interlinear translation which puts the words in the order they are found in the ancient language being translated. The corresponding modern translated words found in the next line down from each ancient language line of words are not in the order adhering to the proper word order of the modern destination language. The lines of modern destination language will read very awkwardly because they follow the ancient language word order. A forward Interlinear translation of a Hebrew text will read from right to left, as that is the word order of Hebrew.

Four Great Uncials - Four manuscripts of the Bible. They are some of the very oldest and are all written in a special type of "uncial" script using capitalized Greek letters. Three of them are nearly complete copies of the Bible. They are among the most authoritative for scholars who are engaged in the work of determining what the original wording of the Bible was.

Great Isaiah Scroll, also known as 1QIsa^a - An ancient Hebrew manuscript found in the Dead Sea scrolls which is a nearly complete copy of the book of Isaiah. The scroll dates to roughly the second century BC.

headword or lemma - For example, in a dictionary or lexicon, only the single word, "eat" is given an entry in the dictionary or lexicon to define its meaning and the meaning of all of its forms: eaten, eating, ate, and eats. "Eat" is the headword, or also known as the lemma. The headword gets its own entry in the dictionary or lexicon and the various other forms of the word do not.

inflection, inflected form - In Greek, the same word, such as a Greek verb for example, can be spelled many slightly different ways to give it various different nuanced shades of meaning. Various different inflections are used to express verb tense; past, present, or future and other nuances of meaning. Various different inflections of a verb are also used to express whether an action is completed or whether it is continuously ongoing. Other Greek parts of speech, such as adjectives, nouns, and adverbs, for example, are also inflected to different forms to instill specific nuanced meanings.

interlinear translation - A Bible format in which each line of text in the ancient language to be translated has a corresponding modern translated line of text under it with each translated modern word positioned directly under its corresponding ancient language word in the line above. The purpose of an Interlinear translation is primarily to help the

reader discover which modern translated word corresponds to each ancient language word.

interpretation - Analyzing a biblical text to determine its meaning. When a Bible translation is infused with interpretation, this means that the final product from the translator goes beyond the simple translation of the text from one language to another and relies instead on both the translator's understanding of the meaning of the text and his pure translation skills.

Latin Vulgate - An ancient translation of most of the Old and New Testament Bible into Latin. The Vulgate originated in the 4th century AD, being translated by Saint Jerome.

lingua franca - A language which is used across a broad geographical region which contains many different people groups who natively speak many other languages which are not the lingua franca. The lingua franca serves as a common language which allows all the people groups to be able to communicate with one another, even though all their native languages are different.

literal translation - A translation from one of the ancient biblical languages which generally attempts to do the following: translate each ancient language word with one corresponding English word, translates any figures of speech used in the ancient language with their actual words instead

of interpreting the figure of speech for the reader, attempts to use the least amount of interpretation as possible. Literal translations are generally seen as more accurate as they do not suffer from as many mistakes which may be made in any interpretation which is infused into the translation. When a Bible translation is infused with interpretation this means that the final product from the translator goes beyond the simple translation of the text from one language to another, and instead relies on both the translator's interpretive understanding of the meaning of the text and his translation skills. The less interpretation done in a translation, the more literal it is. Translation is not possible without instilling at least some interpretation into it.

Majority text - A scholarly slang term which is frequently used to refer to what the Greek New Testament generally looks like if it is constructed by relying heavily on the very numerous but very much younger manuscripts of the New Testament. The younger manuscripts used in the construction of the Majority text number in the thousands and are mostly from the 9th century AD and later. A notable exception to these generalizations occurs in the gospels where the majority text enjoys roughly 11 manuscripts ranging from the 5th to 8th centuries AD.

manuscript - Typically an ancient handwritten copy of a document created before the advent of the printing press.

Masoretic text - The most dominant form of the Old Testament Hebrew Bible in use today. When a form of the Old Testament is referred to as "the Hebrew", this is usually referring to the Masoretic text. The Masoretic text has its roots and lineage even in many of the ancient scrolls found in the Dead Sea scrolls. The Masoretic text has been preserved, transmitted, and maintained by the adherents to Rabbinic Judaism, which is the descendant of the sect of the Pharisees described in the Bible. The oldest, mostly complete ancient manuscripts containing the Masoretic text date to the 10th and 11th centuries AD. All of the existing ancient manuscripts of the Masoretic text have a characteristic uniformity with relatively few differences. This characteristic uniformity is intentional and has been very effectively maintained by Rabbinic Judaism for hundreds of years. This characteristic uniformity is part of what makes them the "Masoretic text".

Mishnah - A written record of the Oral Torah, which allegedly was passed down orally for centuries since the time of Moses. The Oral Torah is not the Torah, the first five biblical books of Moses, but is a very large additional group of rules and traditions, many of which Rabbinic Jews still follow today. The written Mishnah was composed in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD.

Oral Torah - See Mishnah

Pentateuch - The first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

phonetic transliteration - When a word is translated from one language to the other by simply spelling out the word in the destination language according to the way that it sounds when pronounced in the original language.

point, pointers, pointing phrases - Words, phrases, or longer quotations found in a biblical passage which are intentionally borrowed from another passage in order to intentionally direct the reader to that other passage. The passage that the reader is being directed to explains or expounds further on the topic being discussed.

pre-Christian Targums - Written Targums which were circulated before Christianity.

Proto-Masoretic text - The preceding ancestor of the Masoretic text from which the Masoretic text originated. Scholars believe that the Proto-Masoretic text can be found even among a majority of the Dead Sea scrolls biblical manuscripts, where its text is almost identical to the Masoretic text. Among the first century AD Christians and Jews who could read Hebrew, one of the most widespread Hebrew Old Testament Bibles was the Proto-Masoretic text.

Psong - A silly name made up by this author for any literary poetic creation of this author which is intended to sound sorta like a biblical Psalm.

Rabbinic Judaism, Rabbinic - The most common variant of Judaism in existence today. It is characterized by its rejection of Jesus as Messiah. It has its ancestry in the sect of the Pharisees that are described in the New Testament. It places moral authority on the Old Testament, but very consistently relies on the opinions and writings of the rabbis, who overtly reject Jesus, to determine the authoritative interpretation of the Old Testament. Some of its most utilized and authoritative religious documents are the Mishnah, Talmud, and commentaries on the Old Testament called the Midrash. These all contain the writings and opinions of the rabbis, and much material which Rabbinic Jews believe must be followed.

semielectic text - A critical edition of the Bible which makes a partial attempt at reconstructing the original ancient language text of the Bible. It does not use an exhaustive set of the existing ancient manuscripts in order to determine its text. It usually only utilizes a limited group of the most authoritative manuscripts on hand to determine its text. A full eclectic text on the other hand will typically use a nearly exhaustive set of manuscripts and a nearly exhaustive evaluation of them in order to determine its ancient language text.

Septuagint - A Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament whose translation began in the third century BC and was completed in roughly the second or first centuries BC. This translation was likely started by a large committee of 72 Jewish scholars commissioned by King Ptolemy II of Egypt. The shorthand abbreviation, LXX, is commonly used to refer to the Septuagint.

Strong's word - The Strong's numbering system is a system that assigns a reference number to every word in the Bible. These reference numbers can be used on various websites and in various Bible concordances to find all the occurrences of a particular word throughout the Bible. Strong's reference numbers are also utilized by Bible dictionaries and various other Bible study materials to help the reader find explanations of each word in these resources. The format of a Strong's number for a Greek word is for example like this, G1522; and for a Hebrew word like this, H1234.

Syriac Peshitta - An ancient translation of the Old and New Testament Bible, translated to Syriac. The Old Testament of the Syriac Peshitta originated in roughly the 2nd century AD.

tabernacle - A portable tent which essentially served the same purpose as the Jewish temple while the Jews were wandering in the wilderness before they reached the

promised land. This was the dwelling place of God among the Jews, just as the temple was.

Talmud - One of the primary religious texts of Rabbinic Judaism. It is considered to be an authoritative guide on life and religious practice. It is a collection of the opinions and writings of the leaders of Rabbinic Judaism, the rabbis, and it was composed from approximately the 3rd to the 8th centuries AD. It is divided into two major portions referred to as the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud, with the Babylonian Talmud being considered the more authoritative of the two in Rabbinic Judaism.

Targum - An ancient Aramaic translation of a book of the Hebrew Old Testament. The evidence strongly suggests that many Targums originated before the time of Christ. Most of the Old Testament books of the Bible have a corresponding Targum. The Targums contain many explanatory alterations and additions which are not found in the Hebrew Old Testament. This makes the Targums effectively a blend of commentary and translation. Aramaic was the primary language in Israel in the 1st century AD. The Targums were commonly read aloud and listened to by Jewish synagogue attendees in the 1st century AD. The Targums were very likely the primary access to the Old Testament for illiterate Jews in the first century AD, although literate Jews would have also been hearing them read aloud in the synagogues. The Targums were very likely the primary access to the Old

Testament for many of Saint John's audience of the book of Revelation in the 1st century AD.

textual criticism - The scholarly discipline of analyzing numerous ancient manuscripts of the Bible to determine what the most likely original words were that were penned by the original authors.

textual variant - Various different important ancient manuscripts of the Bible have places in their text which are different from one another. These are called textual variants and are frequently noted in the critical apparatus of critical editions of the Bible.

traditionalist - An individual who holds to the traditional view of hell involving endless conscious torment and endless conscious life in hell for those who reject Christ.

Westminster Leningrad Codex - The oldest complete handwritten manuscript of the Old Testament in Hebrew, dating to the early 11th century AD. It contains the Masoretic text. The Old Testament of most modern English Bibles are primarily translations of the Westminster Leningrad Codex, quite possibly making it the most important ancient manuscript of the Old Testament in existence today.

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