

JESUS INTRODUCES TWO APOCALYPTIC “INTERLUDES”

Revelation 7 is an “interlude” or *prophetic pause* within the Seven Seals narrative. God has just drawn our attention to the **key** end-time “players” through Seals one through five. In the sixth Seal the story moves right into the Second Coming. Chapter 7’s “time out” reveals two of those “players” whom God eternally honors – the 144,000 (symbolized by the white horse) and a multitude too great to number (represented by those who “came out” of Babylon – the black horse). This pause in the prophetic missive comes between Seals 6 and 7.

Revelation 10 and 11 (through verse 13) is also an “interlude” between Trumpets 6 and 7 (identified also as “woes” 2 and 3).

1. In chapter 7 God is revealing **who His people are** – sealed, tribulation survivors who are set apart.
2. In chapters 10 and 11 God is revealing **what their end-time mission will be** – all in preparation for the Second Advent!

Both prophetic pauses **do not** narrate future events to follow their preceding chapters – **but they cover the same period of time**.¹ They are powerful messages that add important information to the events just given. Intriguing is an important prophetic addition in the second interlude – a “clock” that reveals **when** those events transpire:

Seals 1–6	Interlude – no time period	Seal 7 – journey to heaven
	Sequence of “players” entering the apocalypse, ending at the Second Coming	
Trumpets 1–6	Interlude – with time period	Trumpet 7 – journey to and arrival in heaven
	Preparation, judgment and evangelization of the world	

In both interludes God’s people are the unique focus. They will be the object of the beast’s wrath. But in assuring imagery, God’s wrath turns on their persecutors at the end.² These interludes are like special letters to God’s people within tense drama as good and evil compete for earth’s final “space.” It is incredible that **Jesus introduces both prophetic pauses**. He is seen as an “angel” by John. This adds drama, hope and urgency to the message.

John is privileged to observe many *angels* with distinct messages. They all suggest that each communiqué has heavenly origins. They are dispatches from God to man which are timed to

¹ Beale, G. K.; *The New International Greek Testament Commentary; The Book of Revelation* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan – 1999), p. 521.

² Osborne, Grant R.; *Revelation* (Baker Book House; Grand Rapids, MI), p. 391.

meet a precise need. Engaging us now are the roles “angel Jesus” plays in apocalyptic prophecy.

“Another angel” – Revelation 7: First Interlude

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. He cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads” (Revelation 7:2-3).

This angel has great authority, holding the “seal of God.” He orders four angels, who are holding back the winds of strife, to continue their restraining act till God’s people are “sealed;” in reality, until He finishes the sealing work. Interesting, also, is how this angel arrives in John’s visual field.

He “ascends” from the east. East represents “deliverance” for God’s people. This is dealt with in a dramatic narrative in Daniel 8 with Ram Jesus coming from the east. That Ram had two horns – one smaller and one larger, representing the 144,000 and the great multitude, respectfully. The king of Medo-Persia (Cyrus – a symbol of Christ) also came from the east to bring deliverance to God’s people enslaved in Babylon – also typified in the same chapter. All are focused metaphors for the **time of the end**.

John actually says that this angel comes “from the rising sun.” This “sealing” angel is also described in Ezekiel 9 as a “man” clothed in linen (Day of Atonement High Priest imagery). He “sets a mark” on the foreheads of those who “sigh and cry” for the abominations that are done among God’s people – in His church (Ezekiel 9:4). This seal is an irrevocable judicial sign that the individual has been adopted into God’s eternal kingdom.

Christ **rising** out of the east means that a new day or point in time has arrived (like the rising sun) in redemptive history! A major transition in prophecy is emerging!

The Atonement imagery, the priestly garb and the stamp of eternal assurance on the foreheads of the saints, at a time the end is anticipated, all reveal that this **is** a divine being – Jesus Christ (cf. Exodus 28:29-42), our High Priest and Savior. That mark or seal is life-saving. Saints are being set apart, judicially recognized as citizens of heaven!

The white horse of the first Seal that goes out with Jesus as its rider dramatically portrays that that corporate body of people (the 144,000) are sealed, (“made up”) as it moves out to “conquer” or witness. This would have to occur just before that final move to evangelize the earth! This is an important observation.

“The **seal** empowers the 144,000 to perform the witnessing role intended for true Israel (e.g., Isa. 42:6-7; 49:6; 51:4-8). Therefore, the ‘new name’ and the ‘seal’ are marks of genuine membership in the community of the redeemed, without which entry into the eternal ‘city of God’ is impossible (cf. Hermas, *Similitudes* 9.16-17, where ‘the name of the Son of God’ is equated with ‘the seal of the Son of God’).”³

³ Beale, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

“Likewise, in Rev. 7:2-3 God’s seal identifies his people and sets them apart from sinful compromise with the world by means of the Lamb’s blood, which has been applied to them. Consequently, they will not suffer the divine wrath that the world of unbelief must endure. It will become evident in the following verses that [all] believers must also be sealed in order to enter the heavenly tabernacle and *minister* before God as priests (see on 7:13-15).”⁴

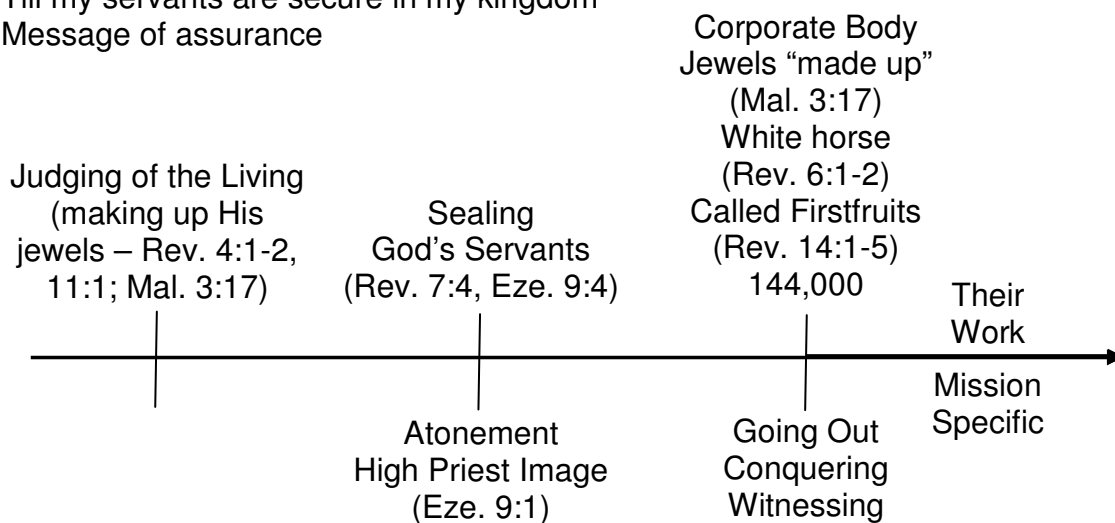
Angel Jesus, in commanding imagery, **before** the 144,000 go out to witness and finish the work:

1. Arises in a deliverance setting to:
 - a. Warn the “angels of wrath” to “hold the winds of strife” a little longer – so He can
 - b. Complete the sealing task of His anticipated “bride.”
2. Then directs and leads His people (Rider of white horse – Rev. 6:1-2) into earth’s final battle.

“John’s attention was called to another scene: ‘And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God’ (Revelation 7:2). Who is this? The Angel of the covenant. He comes from the sunrising. He is the Dayspring from on high. He is the Light of the world. ‘In Him was life; and the life was the light of men’ (John 1:4). This is the One Isaiah describes: ‘Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace’ (Isaiah 9:6). He cried, as One who had superiority over the hosts of angels in heaven ‘to whom it was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying, “hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads”’ (Revelation 7:2, 3).”⁵

Summary of Angel Jesus ascending from the east (associated with Revelation 6:1-2, 11:1, 14:1-5).

1. Cries with a “loud voice” – this is His loud cry
2. Hold back the annihilating wars, political strife and natural disasters
3. Till my servants are secure in my kingdom
4. Message of assurance



⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁵ White, Ellen G.; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, pp. 221-222.

“Another angel” – Revelation 10: Interlude Two

“And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire” (Revelation 10:1).

This time John adds the word *ischyron* to describe this angel – “another **mighty** angel.” He approaches planet earth, noted as “descending” from heaven (vs 1).

Because this angel’s description is similar to that in Revelation 1:12-16, He is the Christ. But here, the imagery is probably the most majestic of any narrative in Revelation.⁶

1. He is clothed in a cloud (Christ is later coming in the clouds – 1:7; cf. 7:13; Matthew 24:30, 26:64; Acts 1:9-11).
2. A rainbow is about His head, just as God has in 4:3.
3. His face is “like the sun,” similar to 1:16 and Matthew 17:2 (there, also referring to Jesus Christ).
4. He has legs like fiery pillars, just like Christ in 1:15.

This picture of Jesus dramatically symbolizes **specific roles** that He is or is about to begin (cf. Ezekiel 1:26-28) with unique timing clues. The information is stunning and apropos to us now.

- The cloud attire suggests that the time for the Second Coming is approaching. Clouds are the sign of His coming (Matthew 24:30, Mark 13:26, Luke 21:27). When God appeared in the Old Testament in a cloud, it was also a sign of His glory (Exodus 16:10, Leviticus 16:2, Ezekiel 10:4).
- The rainbow represents mercy that still pleads, and His covenant promises are sure.
- The face like the sun means His judicial power is now being exercised. In chapter 1, verse 14, it was specifically His eyes, penetrating the very heart of man.
- The legs like fiery pillars depict His moving among His churches with special power and that His execution of executive judgment is pending (cf. 2:18-19 – as against Thyatira)
- The next verse reveals that He is exercising special dominion over planet earth (vs 2). This symbolizes a time depicting when He exercises unique power over all of God’s creation (Job 11:9, Psalm 146:6, Proverbs 8:29, Isaiah 42:10).⁷

“The mighty Angel who instructed John was no less a personage than Jesus Christ. Setting His right foot on the sea, and His left upon the dry land [vs 2], shows the part which He is acting in the **closing scenes** of the great controversy with Satan. This position denotes His supreme power and authority over the whole earth. The controversy has waxed stronger and more determined from age to age, and will continue to do so, to the concluding scenes when the masterly working of the powers of darkness shall reach their height. Satan, united with evil men, will deceive the whole world and the churches who receive not the love of the truth. But the mighty Angel demands attention. He cries with a loud voice. He is to show the power and authority of His voice to those who have united with Satan to oppose the truth.”⁸

⁶ Osborne, *op. cit.*, pp. 394-395.

⁷ Beale, *op. cit.*, p. 529.

⁸ White, Ellen G.; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 19, pp. 319-320.

This “angel” – Jesus Christ – has an open “little book” in His hand (vs 2). The note that it is “open” suggests that it had been closed. This immediately alludes to the sealed book of Daniel (12:4, 9), which was to be opened at “the time of the end.” Earth’s closing scenes are in evidence! This must be that book.

“Daniel shall stand in his lot at the end of the days. **John sees the little book unsealed.** Then **Daniel’s prophecies** have their proper place in the first, second, and third angels’ messages to be given to the world. The unsealing of the little book was the **message in relation to time.**”⁹

This echo from Daniel now reveals a time **when** God’s people will understand the contents of the little book. Since John’s eating it is preparatory to prophesying/witnessing (10:10-11), that reveals a divine mandate to know Daniel before the final evangelization of the world!

Daniel had asked “how long” would it be until these astonishing things (“wonders”) would come to an end (referring the *ha hazon* vision) (Daniel 12:6). Christ then, in an oath to Yahweh, said that it would cover three and a half years, **then** it would end (Daniel 12:7). Here in Revelation Jesus once again takes a similar oath (with that little book open in His hand) and says that time would soon be no longer delayed (Revelation 10:6) (a pending fulfillment of prophecy). What time? The next chapter notes in two ways that same *three-and-a-half-year period* (42 months and 1260 days) (11:2-3). The links between the Old and New Testaments are precise and amazing! This is stunning information!

These prophecies (Daniel and John) have a theme focusing on the end of all earthly things – when the eschaton is anticipated.¹⁰ “It is the final act in the great drama of God’s creative and redemptive activity.”¹¹

After the onset of a judgment (11:1 – begun in 4:1-2), God’s people witness to the world (11:5-6). This is followed by a silencing tribulation and the Second Advent (11:12).

Once again, an apocalyptic angel – Jesus – is drawing the attention of God’s remnant people with a “loud voice” (“Don’t miss this!”) to earth’s final events and the role they will have. The preparation is to take the “open book” of Daniel and eat it – know what was in that sealed portion!

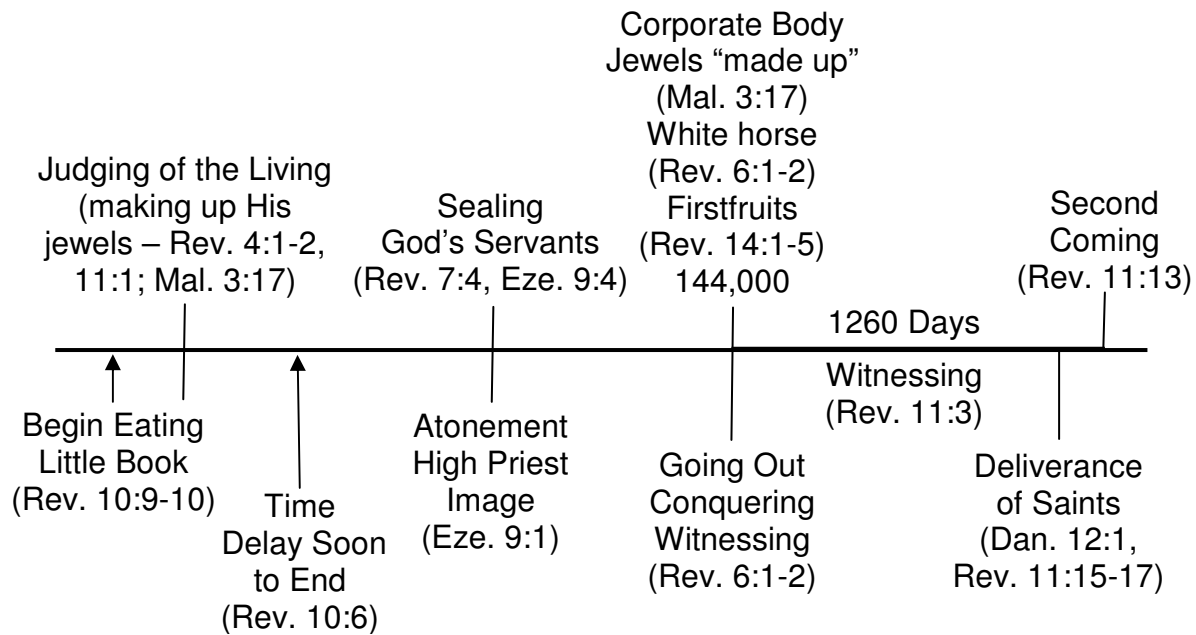
Summary of Angel Jesus descending from heaven:

1. Cries with a “loud voice” – everyone must hear and understand.
2. He is seen as Priest and Judge – Atonement imagery.
3. He held the unsealed portion of Daniel in his hand.
4. A three and-a-half-year period is just ahead to witness.
5. The message is one of urgent preparation and then mission.

⁹ White, Ellen G.; *Manuscript Releases*, vol. 1, p. 99.

¹⁰ Osborne, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

¹¹ Mounce, Robert H.; *The Book of Revelation* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977), p. 211.



To complement this “brief” of Jesus’ apocalyptic roles, there is another prophecy that templates over these first two. It is that “certain man” that Daniel saw when at the Hiddekel River.

That “certain man” – Daniel 10

Daniel’s elevating prayer of covenant restoration recorded in Daniel 9:4-19 began the final three and a half years of Judah’s captivity (539 B.C.). His prayer in Daniel 10 (implied in vs 2) comes at its end (536 B.C.). This occurs when the 70-year captivity is ending. It is time for the Jewish people to return to Canaan (Jeremiah 29:10-11).

Both prayers were preparatory to visions of climatic events in God’s redemptive end. The prophet Daniel presents a “model” for God’s people as earth’s apocalyptic end approaches. We see him:

- Fasting – to have focused submission to God
- In sackcloth and ashes – humiliation
- Mourning – this is grief so deep that it is like that over a loved one’s death (Genesis 27:34) or from a severe calamity (Ezekiel 7:12) – over the sins of God’s people

The time had come for Cyrus to “perform all of God’s pleasure” (Isaiah 44:28 – paraphrased) to let the “captives go” (Isaiah 45:13 – paraphrased).

“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying ... Now these are the children of the province that went up out of the captivity (Ezra 1:1, 2:1).

The Daniel 10 **vision** begins: *“Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his*

arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude" (Daniel 10:5-6).

Daniel "looked up" and saw a "man" (10:5). This echoes the phrases, "I lifted up mine eyes" and saw a ram (Daniel 8:3, Genesis 22:13). In elevating symbolism the redirecting of our eyes upward brings Jesus into view. Here, this "man" resembles the description of the glory of the Lord in Ezekiel 1:26-28, Revelation 1:12-16 and 10:1.¹² It is Jesus in "anticipatory imagery," reflecting when He is Priest, Judge and King.

The timing of this vision is on Abib 24 or April 23, 536 B.C. (Daniel 10:4). This is when the spring or latter rains start. Thus, Daniel's three-week prayer was through the time of Passover (celebrating deliverance) through the time of the Feast of unleavened Bread (commemorating the giving up of sin). A great transition in prophetic time is in view! Daniel's *mareh* visions bring us into the time of the Latter Rain – symbolic of a massive outpouring of His Spirit.

Intriguingly, this occurs by the Hiddekel (Tigris) River. In Daniel's prophetic symbols the Ulai River represents the 144,000 (far to the east – Daniel 8:2-3, 16) and the Hiddekel River the great multitude, still east of Babylon and the Euphrates River, the apostates serving Babylon.

The story is dramatized by two notes:

1. Daniel is alone because his two friends abandoned him. This alludes to the time when the gospel work is about to penetrate the multitudes of the world. The majority will forsake us (10:7). This is depicted as the time of "sifting" or "shaking" of God's church!
2. He is so overwhelmed that he falls into a deep sleep, with his face to the ground (10:8-9). Then Gabriel comes to set him on his feet and announces that deliverance has come!

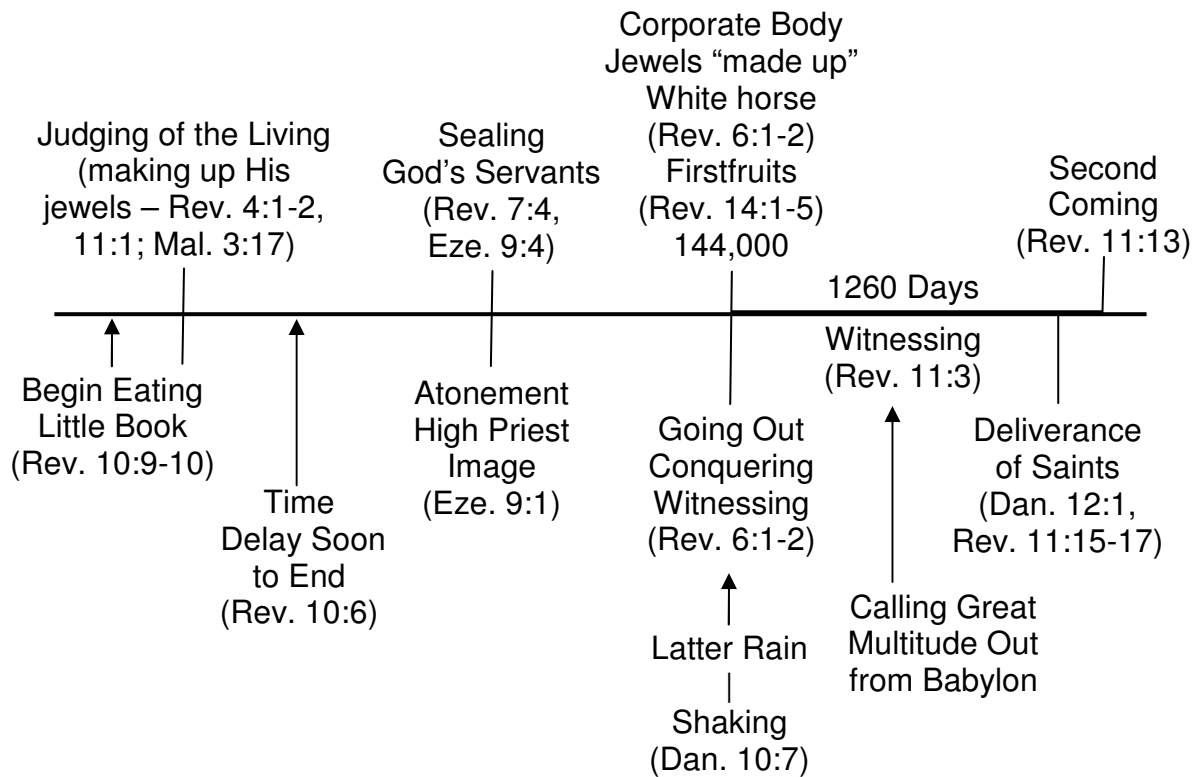
Daniel is now visited by a heavenly being (likely Gabriel – 8:16, 9:21) to address the captivity issue. "*Thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words*" (Daniel 10:12c). Shortly before that time, the "greatly beloved" of heaven (Daniel 9:23) is given the special Daniel 9 vision. Since it concludes at a time surrounding the consummation ("a decreed end") (vs 27),¹³ one must assume that this new communiqué relates to that time. This is affirmed by Gabriel noting that it, too, was the *mareh* vision (10:7-8). That great unveiling of a set of visions (within Daniel) relates to the deliverance of God's people – when and how the fulfillment of the covenant promises occurs!

Summary of Christ in Daniel 10 (similar to Revelation 1):

1. At the time of the Latter Rain
2. With imagery related to the great multitude – Hiddekel River
3. Daniel sees Jesus as Judge, Priest and King
4. Daniel doesn't tell us what He says (That is recorded in Revelation 10!)
5. His fellow believers leave – are shaken out
6. God's people are delivered (immediate tie to 8:14, when holiness is vindicated)

¹² Whitcomb, John C.; *Daniel* (Moody Press; Chicago, IL - 1985), p. 138.

¹³ Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis), p. 449.



“The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass.”¹⁴

“Four mighty angels are still holding the four winds of the earth. Terrible destruction is forbidden to come in full. The accidents by land and by sea; the loss of life, steadily increasing, by storm, by tempest, by railroad disaster, by conflagration; the terrible floods, the earthquakes, and the winds will be the stirring up of the nations to one deadly combat, while the angels hold the four winds, forbidding the terrible power of Satan to be exercised in its fury until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. Get ready, get ready, I beseech you, get ready before it shall be forever too late! The ministers of vengeance will pour all the terrible judgments upon a God-forsaken people. The way of obedience is the only path of life. May the Lord help you to see it in time to open your ears, that you may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”¹⁵

Intriguing is Christ’s imagery within many of the prophetic narratives. Some prophecies are given **only** by Him. In Daniel 8–12 He personally appears to the seer three times – each related to timing missives. In Revelation the associated themes draw on a similar plan from the divine courts. We are being given not only a sequence of events but dramatic “clocks” as to **when** they will occur.

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¹⁴ White, Ellen G.; *The Upward Look*, p. 161.

¹⁵ White, Ellen G.; *The Review and Herald*, June 7, 1887.