

CHAPTER 4

A HISTORICIST INTERPRETATION OF REVELATION 7:1-3

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 A brief survey of contents

This Chapter employs the historicist approach as method to explain and justify the presence of the holistic Sabbath in Revelation 7:1-3. As it has been previously noted, in the ANE, the Old Testament, the Graeco-Roman world, and the New Testament, the usage of sealing terminology denotes authenticity, identity, inviolability, ownership, protection, and security. These sealing characteristics, together with the various historical and figurative references to sealing in Old and New Testament, will be used to illustrate the term of sealing as a *continuum* in history. A theological study of terms for sealing (εἰκων, στίγμα, σφραγίς, δοῦλος and χάραγμα) found in the book of Revelation will provide additional explanation for the Historicist approach to Revelation 7:1-3. Also, there are some other words, such as ἀριθμέω, ψηφίζω, θηρίον, that that will be discussed with relation to the meaning of ghematric functionality in the New Testament world. This Chapter also includes a brief description of the various Caesar kingdom-theories regarding the date of writing of Revelation. The Domitian-theory is supported in this study. In the discussion of the Domitian-theory, attention is also given to the Domitian persecutions. The connection between the evolvment of sun worship and the Roman emperors is described as well. This section includes the emperor *apotheosis* and a possible eschatological presence in Roman religion. The explanations of Κύριος, ἥλιος, δοῦλος and θηρίον are depicted in the cultic realm to show the difference between Christ worship and that of Caesar.

The research gap of this study relates to the comparison between the seal of God (Rv 7:1-3) and the χάραγμα of the beast encoded in the number ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἑξς and its ghematric meaning variants. An analysis of the number χις

(Rv13: 18) is given based on the *Oxyrhynchus* papyri. In Revelation, the mark of the θηρίον is branded upon their worshippers in the spiritual kingdom of βαβυλῶν. For a better view of Babylon in prophecy, an analysis is given of the various Babylonian interpretations. From the Historicist perspective, the presence of the Holistic Sabbath in Revelation 7:1-3 is not only part of history, but is also present in the life of the believer and will play a major end time role in the world.

Historicists and Recapitulum scholars accept the fact that there was an evolving change in church history regarding the Sabbath. Because historicism sees the Sabbath as a part of the seal in end time prophecy, it is also necessary to give a brief summary of the Bacchiocchian historicist approach on Sunday evolution and the legacy of Constantine in this respect. At the same time, it is well known that in the Genesis record there are two institutions established by the Creator: Sabbath and marriage. Therefore, the Chapter will also discuss a few parallels between Sabbath and marriage in the context of God's creation as understood from the perspective of the Historicist approach.

This Chapter also includes an exegetical discussion of the seal of God in Revelation 7:1-3 from a Historicist perspective. To undergird the hypothesis of this study, a connection between the holistic Sabbath, marriage and Trinity – which includes the relationship between the Holy Trinity *versus* the χξς – will be postulated. This triple number will be studied in relation with the code number hypothesis. The three verbs in Genesis 2:1-3, that is, “blessed,” “rested,” and “sanctified,” which form a triple reaction of the Trinity against the maligned alliance of Revelation 16:13, are also discussed.

4.1.2 Historicist methodology

The historical narratives in prophecy events connected to sealing from the Old Testament present in Exodus 12; Ezekiel 9; Daniel 2; 7; 8; 9 and Revelation 13; 14; 16; 17; 18 form part of the *continuum* parallel patterns that Historicism utilizes as a method for studying and interpreting Revelation 7:1-3. One peripheral example of this narrative historicist pattern between the Old and New Testament is found in Paul. Paul constructed his theology within the historical narratives he

extracted from the Old Testament (Witherington 2001: 2-4, 230-231, 237).

According to Witherington, there are five stories that are threaded in all the letters of Paul: 1) the story of God, 2) the story of the world after the fall of Adam, 3) the story of the people of God from Adam to Moses and beyond, 4) the story of the Jewish Messiah (Christ), and 5) the story of the Christians.

Paulin (2004:33-41) opines that Biblical narratives are also present in the historical *continuum* shown in past events. Historicism assumes a step-by-step progression throughout history without a polarization either in the past or in the eschatological future. Historicism neglects the endless interpretation of idealism. The so-called “fusion of horizons” school presented in the “hermeneutic circle” of some postmodern theologians undermines the historical-grammatical approach, which was previously affected by the increasing polarization towards the historical-critical reading of the Bible. This critical hermeneutic position views Revelation as a mere literary genre. As far as Revelation’s genre is concerned, Baird (1972:2, 226-227, 382) says that genre is the tool of Biblical criticism for studying the Apocalypse. For him genre-criticism can be defined as a category for classifying literary works as a whole. It is basically a literary designation, a mode that includes uniqueness, recurrence, coherence, persistence, and transference. For Blomberg (2006:512, citing Mathewson 1992:193-213) the genre of Revelation is a hybrid of other well known Jewish and Graeco Roman genres. Different scholars, including Collins (1993:6-9,41-54) and Bauckham (1993:6-9), frame Revelation within such a literary genre definition. Collins, for example, defines the genre of apocalypse as follows:

A genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an other-worldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation and spatial, insofar as it involves another supernatural world.

(Collins 1979:9)

Porter (1997:159) observes that the Apocalypse differ in form and content from other apocalypses. These differences are, among others “the visual imagery, the

commission of the prophet (Rv 1:17-19; 10:8-11:2); prophetic oracles (Rv 1:7, 8; 13:9-10; 14:12-13; 16:5; 19:9-10; 21:5-8); oaths (Rv 10:5-7), and the seemingly liturgical use of various forms like hymns (Rv 4:11; 5:9-14; 7:10-12, 15-17; 11:15-18; 12:10-12; 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-8) and dirge (Rv 18:2-4).

This study adopts the concept of Thomas and Barker (1992:362-363) for the Apocalypse vocable, which consider Revelation not as a mere Jewish literary work, but as a book applicable to every age. Even though the term apocalypse provides a useful literary field of exploration among Jewish literature, this study does not situate this book of Scripture under a Preterist-literalist Jewish production, but instead to a Historicist equivalent term for the book of Revelation. Therefore, this study considers Revelation to have relevancy for today, as much exegetically as devotionally. Charles (1920:110-115) presents the value of Revelation as follows: 1) The value of endurance and labor (Rv 2:2, 10, 19, 26; 3:2; 13:8, 19; 17:8, 14; 20:12; 22:12), 2) the doctrine of resurrection (Rv 15:4; 20:4-6; 21:9, 24; 22:9, 14-17), 3) the High Priest and the Lamb (Rv 1:18; 5:6, 7, 12; 12:11; 13:8; 7:19), 3) the historical Jesus (Rv 1:2, 5; 11:15; 12:10; 22:21), 4) the exalted Christ (Rv 1:13; 2:27; 3:20; 12:5; 14:13, 14; 19:15), the 5) Christ's judgment (Rv 1:7; 14:14, 18-20; 19:11-21; 20:7-10; 22:12), and 6) Son of God, pre-existent and divine (Rv 1:6; 2:8, 18, 27; 3:5, 14, 21; 6:10; 14:1; 21:6; 22:13).

Beside the various interpretative ways of thinking of consensus for the Apocalypse, the appearance of the postmodernism concept instills a very complex view on this book and its meaning for today. Historical-criticism, however, lost its dominion during the second half of the twentieth century. At that time it began to lose influence due to the emergence of postmodernism, which according to Bauman (1991: 35-52, 96, 101), is a product of four trends: 1) decline of the West, 2) legitimate crisis, 3) intellectual market place and, 4) the process of deconstruction. Under this perspective anything could be true; it just depends on the community where the consensus for that particular truth is borne or discussed. The moral and Biblical principles are then subjected to

circumstance and ethics-communities (Adam 1995:12, 60, 411-435; Thiselton 1992:50-51, 60, 112, 157, 314, 320-321, 380-381, 398-399, 414, 444, 436-437; Aichele 1998:100-130). The development of the science of Biblical archaeology came to the fore to support the historicity of various Biblical incidents (Kitchen 2004:9-19, 37-56, 108-20; McRay 1991:17-22, 65, 225, 243-250, 274, 360; Wright 1962:85-146, 245-260). Using these archaeological Biblical findings, Historicism has an opportunity to show the value of the historical-grammatical approach to Revelation.

Historicist methodology considers that symbolism sometimes is used in the Apocalypse to call for prophecy repetition using different symbology throughout the Biblical narrative, showing every time a different and new aspect in the prophecy drama that appears. The limitation of previous assumptions is the fact that *continuum* is determined and ruled by the Biblical context. To this end, Holbrook (1992a:20) speaks about the idea that Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem in Revelation 11:8, for example, embody a togetherness for a symbolic way for “the great city” which also represents the mystic Babylon. The whole context of symbolism repeats a similar characteristic of wickedness and oppression manifested in Revelation by Babylon (Rv 17: 6, 8; 18:3, 4, 8, 9, 11-17).

Historicism also considers conditional, for instance, how churches and individuals in them will respond to Christ’s appeal; how they will decide to stand in the future regarding their covenant relationship with the Lord is part of that conditionality (Holbrook 1992a:22). Therefore, Historicism does not neglect a devotional and spiritual response during the *continuum* periods through history. With regard to Historicism in Revelation 7:1-3, this study will consider a historical setting with a devotional and spiritual sealing perspective of Christians in the first century CE. This study process must also describe the writing paternity, Greek-styling of the authorship on Revelation. The next section will discuss the issues related to these implications.

4.2 REVELATION: DATE OF WRITING

Brown (1966:773) says that, even though the Apocalypse stands at the end of the New Testament, it was not the last book of the New Testament to be completed. Related to this statement, there are four theories on the date of writing of Revelation. Those theories are known as the Nero theory, the Domitian theory, a composite hypothesis that is called the Babylonian theory, and the Papias theory. This study adopts the Domitian theory as the time frame for the writing of Revelation.

4.2.1 The Nero theory

The Nero theory looks to revert the traditional writing date (96 CE). Reuss (1872:369, cited by Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584) is of the opinion that Revelation was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, during the reign of the emperor Galba, that is, in the second half of the year 68 CE. To defend this date, supporters of this date of writing use Revelation 13 to describe the Roman Empire as the *θηρίον* of Revelation 13 with seven heads meaning seven emperors, one to live again, one of which has been mortally wounded, but is for the present healed (Rv 13:3), and to live again as Antichrist (Rv 17:10).¹ The key of this theory is Revelation 13:18, where the number of the *θηρίον* is declared to be ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς). In this theory the application method of numerical values (the Jewish ghematria or dual meaning of earth measure; see Berkoff 2000:16-17) is found to correspond with the name “Nero Caesar.” According to this Preterist interpretation, Nero is the fifth head that is to live again; an interpretation confirmed by rumors prevalent at that time that Nero was not really dead, but only hidden, and was soon to return to claim his throne. As if to make assurance doubly sure, it is found that by dropping the final *n* in “Neron,” the number becomes χις, a number which Ireneaus (*Adv Haer* 13.30), in his comments on the subject (see Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584), says was actually found in some ancient copies. Therefore, writing under the emperor Galba, the

¹ For a more detailed explanation of the seven heads representing the emperors, see Minear (1968:250-251) and Strand (in Holbrook 1992b:177-201).

sixth emperor (reckoning from Augustus), the author anticipates, after a short reign of a seventh emperor (Rv 17:10) the return of the Antichrist Nero, and eighth, but of the seventh, with whom is to come the end. Jerusalem is to be miraculously preserved (Rv 11), but Rome is to perish. This is to happen within the space of three and a half years, “the final catastrophe, which was to destroy the city and empire, was to take place in three years and a half. The writer knows ...that Rome will in three years and a half perish finally, never to rise again” (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584). It does not matter for this theory that not one of the things predicted happened – that every anticipation was falsified. Nero did not return; Jerusalem was not saved; Rome did not perish; three and a half years did not see the end of all things. Yet the Christian church, though the failure of every one of these predictions had been decisively demonstrated, received the book as of divine inspiration, apparently without the least idea that such things had been intended (in Orr and Nuelsen 1974a:2584). Another remark that can be used against the Nero theory is the *gematria* absence in the book of Revelation. Minear (1968:257) observes that *gematric* formula appears to be foreign to this book in particular. Therefore is not a phenomenon characteristic of John’s writings. Keppler (1957:148) suggests on this *gematria* arena, that some interpreters apply Latin number values to the name Nero, but Kepler (1957:147-148), remarks this is not representing the main stream of Preterist tradition, which mostly follows the Higher Criticism approach for justifying Nero’s theory. Brady (1983:285-297) adds a little more dubious complexity to this *gematric* crux proposal for 13:18 saying that between 1560 and 1830 there were 147 different identifications including Nero’s on 13:18. Gentry (1998:127-129) cites that during the Patristic times there is no evidence of naming Nero for such *gematric* calculation, nor even whole or fragment writing of Patristic for Revelation in that sense. Afterward in this Chapter, there is a discussion that attempts to explain the identity of 13:18 and its relationship with sealing from Revelation 7:1-3 in connection with 16:12-13; Isaiah 44:28; 45:1-3 and Genesis 2:1-3.

4.2.2 The Nero *redivivus* myth

The *redivivus* myth appears the *Sibylline Oracles* 4.49-124, 137-139 (see Terry 1973:101-107). These so-called oracles, dated towards the end of the first century CE, were written between the second century CE and the fifth century CE in imitation of the *Greek Sibyl*, a pagan prophetess that, according to Salisbury (2001:323-24), were described by Varro, a Roman scholar during the Republic, who listed ten of prophetesses in the Hellenistic world. Salisbury (2001:323-24) suggests that probably the first Sibyl was the daughter of Trojan, but the most famous was a prophetess Lydia from Eritrea. The twelve extant books (out of an original fifteen works) contain a mixture of pagan, Jewish, and Greek items. In Book 4, within the context of a broad historical survey dealing with world kingdoms from Assyria to Rome and setting forth doom proclamations against a variety of places (such as Sicily, Greece, Thebes, Rhodes, Corinth, Carthage, Laodicea, and Armenia), there is an allusion to the Roman attack on Jerusalem that laid waste the temple of God (obviously the destruction in 70 CE).

Regarding the *redivivus* myth, the *Sibylline Oracles* render the following:

[A]nd then shall a great king from Italy flee away like a deserter, unseen, unheard of, beyond the ford of Euphrates, after he has polluted his hands with the hateful murder of his mother, doing the deed with wicked hand. And many round his throne shall drench the soil of Rome with their blood, when has fled beyond [or, “over”] the land of Parthia. Then shall come to the west the strife of war stirred up, and the exiled man of Rome, lifting up a mighty sword, crossing the Euphrates with tens of thousands.

(*Sibylline Oracles*, Book 5:141-143, in Terry 1973:101-107)

In this writing there are several references that clearly allude to Nero. One of these prophecies claims great evil at the return of a person “who shall make honey-sweet songs with a voice of melody, playing the actor, and shall slay both his wretched mother and many besides.” Within a year after Nero’s death, some *impersonators* of him began to appear. The first such was a Nero “look-alike” who, 69 CE with a group of “vagrants,” landed on the island of Cythnus (Tacitus, *History* 2.8-9, in Holbrook 1992b:194-197). This man not only resembled Nero in physical features, but also had a singing voice much like that of Nero. The deception was rather limited in outreach, though it temporarily aroused

considerable local interest. The “illusion”, as Tacitus calls it, vanished quickly when the pretender was captured and killed. (Tacitus, *History* 9, in Holbrook 1992b:194-197). In 79 CE Terentius Maximus, another individual reputed to be much like Nero, also impersonated the latter. He fled with some adherents to Parthia and there caused a stir by planning to invade Rome. Benson (1900:165, 166) has concluded that it was the escapades of this individual that gave rise to the *Nero redivivus* myth in the form in which it is set forth in Book 4 of the *Sibylline Oracles*. In the *Oracles* reference is made to eastward flight of “a great king from Italy” who had murdered his mother (which the real Nero indeed did) and who would cross the river Euphrates with a large army (Benson 1900:165). It is also possible to suggest the *Nero redivivus myth* as a superstition concept associated to the apotheosis adjudicated in this case, to Roman emperors. The traditional cruelty and pagan arcane attributed to Nero’s return could have sprout this myth into a temporary narrative among the superstitious Empire mob. This legend were told even in the time of Augustine of Hippo (2003:895-964, XX.19.3)



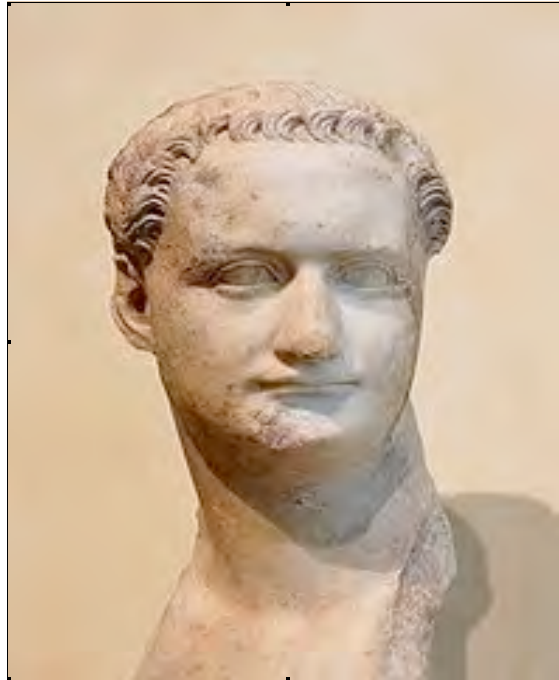
Bust of Caesar Nero in the *Musei Capitolini*, Rome

(www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Number_of_the_Beast)

4.2.3 The Domitian theory

Eusebius, in summing up the tradition of the church on this subject, assigns John's exile to Patmos and consequently the composition of the Apocalypse to the latter part of the reign of Domitian (81-96 CE). Ireneaus (180 CE) says of the book of Revelation: "For it was seen, not a long time ago, but almost in our generation, at the end of the reign of Domitian" (*Adv Haer* V.30, 3, in Orr and Nuelsen1974a:2584). This testimony is confirmed by Clement of Alexandria (who speaks of "the tyrant"), Origen, and other later writers. The former date answers to the conditions of the book (decadence of the churches; widespread and severe persecution), and to the predilection of Domitian for his persistent mode of banishment (cf. Tacitus *History* i.2; Eusebius, *HE*, III, 18, in Orr and Nuelsen1974a:2584). Epiphanius (315-403 CE), bishop of Salamis, puts the exile of Patmos in the reign of Claudius (41-54 CE, see *Haer* li.12, 223); but in the same sentence speaks in an anachronistic way of the apostle John as being 90 years of age; it is obvious there is a strange blunder in the name of the emperor (in Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584). Another interesting statement on the Domitian theory comes from Victorine of Petavius (who died in 303 CE) when he says that "when John said these things, he was in the island of Patmos, condemned to work in the mines (Latin = *metalus*) by Domitian Caesar. Therefore, there he saw the Apocalypse (Petavius 10:11, in Nichols and Cottrell 1990b:751). The Latin word *metallum* can refer to either a quarry or a mine. Patmos has quarries, but no vestige of a mine. Thus it is very probable that Victorinus is referring to the first. Regarding the identity of Patmos, Pliny wrote in the year 77 CE that the island was used as a penal colony (see *Natural History* iv, 12.23, in Nichol and Nuelsen 1990b:751).

Below is a bust of Domitian who reigned from 81-96 CE and signed the *relegatio* banishment for John to Patmos:



Bust of Caesar Domitianus in the *Capitoline Museum*, Rome

(www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domitian)

4.2.4 The Domitian theory: The banishment to Patmos

Ruiz (in Muoyise 2002:74) citing Friesen (1993:159-164) suggests that Domitian approved the establishment of the cult of the *Sebastoi* in Ephesus. This type of cult symbolized significant faces of life in Roman Asia in the late first century C.E: the benefits of imperial authority, gratitude toward and dependence upon the emperors, the ordering of the cities of the province, and the role of the elite in the mediation of imperial influence. The Cult of the *Sebastoi*, term associated to *Augusti*, provided regular opportunities for entertainment, travel, social intercourse, and extra economic activity (Trebilco 2004:28-35). Finally, this particular provincial cult affirmed local religious traditions and the larger heritage of the Greek world as a mode of life in the period of Roman supremacy. Ruiz (in Muoyise 2002:74) says that John seeks to motivate Christians either to give obeisance to the power and empire of God and the Lamb or to the dominion of Bayblon/Rome. The result was the apostle's banishment to Patmos.

Evidences for the Patmos banishment of John by Domitian in 90 CE is the testimony of Ireneaus (*Adv. Haer.* 5.30.3) who stated that John's apocalyptic vision occurred and was composed during Domitian's reign. Ireneaus also affirms that he had a personal relationship with John via Polycarpus, and says about the Apocalypse "that was seen not too long ago, but almost in our present time, toward the end of Domitian's reign" (Eusebius, *Hist Eccl* 3.18).

Hardinge (2005:19-20), citing Eusebius (*Eccl Hist* iii 20:8-9), writes that Eusebius and Tertullian agreed that Domitian was angry with John. Jones (1993:185), citing Suetonius (*Dom* 18.2), reinforces this anger from Domitian, saying the emperor was unable to cope with personal criticism of any sort. This personality disorder most probably quickened John's banishment. The apostle John kept pointing out the sins of Domitian and the empire were committing. The fact was that the empire was ignoring the ideals that God was holding up before him, and Domitian ordered John to be boiled in a caldron of oil before the *Porta Latina* at Rome. Eusebius and Tertullian remarked that he stepped from it as from a refreshing bath without suffering injury. Domitian, terrified, banished John to Patmos. Paulien says that "no one knows for sure why John was on Patmos, but most external traditions tell he was there as a prisoner. Perhaps Patmos was an ancient version of Alcatraz" (Paulien 2004:10). Revelation says plainly that he was there because διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ (Rv 1:9). Adams and Laurence (2001:43) notes that in Roman army maps found so far, there is no evidence of this island named as a penal center, although the lists are somewhat confused and disorganized. The Antonine itineraries survey is organized roughly into regional subgroups, sometimes explicitly so titled. The text begins, as was common in ancient geographical writing, from the pillars of Hercules (actually illustrated and so labeled in the earliest manuscript itself of Spanish origin). There are lists of islands, beginning with those around Britain (no distances) and continuing with those between (inter) various regions in the western Mediterranean and Adriatic, with distances from the shore in stades. After this, the collection peters out with a disorganized and somewhat confused

listing of islands in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean with a reasonable number of which are attached notes illustrating their role in classical mythology. Patmos is not even listed (Adams & Lawrence 2001:43; Saffrey 1975:393-407). Patmos was not barren in the time of John. It was inhabited and had a gymnasium and various religious temples (Adams & Lawrence 2001:8-9). The earliest Greek map in any form and the first relief map was discovered by Johnston on coins from the fourth century BCE. In the tale of a very learned man in the second century CE, the imperial doctor Galen, a reference is made to a special kind of blood-red soil only to be found in Hephaistias on the Greek island of Lemnos and, as a true scholar, he wanted to do “hands on” research on this feature personally. He says: “I had known that there are two cities on the island, but had assumed that, like Samos, Chios, Kos, Andros, Tenos and, all other islands in the Aegean, Lemnos as well had only one city by the same name on the island” (Adams & Lawrence 2001:9-10). There is a discovery of an antique mosaic in a rich third- or fourth-century CE villa in Ammaedara (modern Haidra) in the North African hinterland, some 160 miles southwest of Carthage. In a graphic display, which resembles a map, more than a dozen Mediterranean islands are presented, including Cnidus, Cyprus, Egusa, Naxos, Rhodes and Galen-Lemnos (Adams & Lawrence 2001:10-11).

Notwithstanding the apparent absence of evidence on Roman maps of the Mediterranean islands founded so far, there are also some interesting ancient authors’ statements that mention Patmos (see Spence & Exell 1950a:v-vii). This island is about the same distance east-south-east of Miletus as Miletus is to the south of Ephesus. Classical geographers designate the Icarian Sea, in the subdivision of the great Aegean, and in that group of its innumerable islands, which the ancients well named “Sporades” (“scattered” ones). The name of Patmos seems to derivate from Mount Latmos, where the goddess Diana was worshipped. Patmos was well known in the ancient world. It is mentioned by Thucydides, Pliny and Strabo (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2264). Pliny, in 77 CE, describes the island as being a penal colony (Pliny, *Natural History*, iv.12.23).

There is a tradition of Victorinus of Pettau (who died in 303 CE) being considered (see Kovacs and Rowland 2004:29, 80, 98) as the earliest Revelation commentator that uses the Latin word *metallum* to describe the mine penal work of John in Patmos. *Metallum* can be used to refer to a mine or to a quarry, since Patmos has some quarries but there is not any mine vestiges as Ramsay (1904:85) affirms. Lanciani (2003: 6, 8, 14, 40, 100, 271, 272, 311, 335) observes that Romans considered it to be a common form of punishment to banish criminals, or those Christians considered as such, to rocky and desolate islands. Suetonius says that Caesar banished some dilators *in asperrimas insularum* and Tacitus (*Ann* 4.30) adds that exile in its various forms was on the whole for the upper class, and hard labor for the lower. Beyond this point came the death penalty. Talbert located Patmos using the reference of the classic history (Talbert 1985:216-31). Another point to consider here is that according to Geraty and Herr (1986:3) “with the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity and the consequent decay of paganism, the motivating spirit of the classical geographers was lost, if not heir legacy itself.” This situation could also have been influential in the disappearing of many ancient maps related to various islands, including Patmos.

Eichhorn (Stuart 2007a:36-38), founder of the New Testament criticism, is of the opinion that the banishment of John was an imagination matter that only happened in the mind of John. Stuart objects to such a suggestion saying that no one doubts the permanency of Ezekiel beside the Chebar River when he had the visions narrated in Ezekiel 1, or the staying of Daniel in Susah in the province of Elam. John could have chosen a different place such as Sinai, Carmel, or even Hermon, if he had been able to. But he was sent as *relegatio*, exiled for a limited period of time to a small Greek island, which is mentioned only one time in the Scriptures and, scarcely three times in ancient pagan writings. It is interesting that the Romans had two classes of exiles: 1) *deportatio*, an exile for life to one isolated place, altogether with loss of property and other rights and, 2) *relegation*, a term that could indicate a temporary exile punishment. The latter was the case

of Ovidius (see *Tristia* ii.135). Twice Tertullian applies the term *relegatur* to John's banishment (Ireneaus, *Apology* 5; *Prescriptions against Heresies* 36) and Jerome did the same (*Lives of Illustrious Men*, IX in Ciguere 2009:2).

Nerva was the successor of Domitian from 96-98 CE. During his reign, institution of *alimentations*, the most genuinely charitable institution of the pagan world prospered (see Grainger 2003:59-66; Koch 1901:128). According to Jones (1891:117), this emperor's temper and administration was direct contrary to that of Domitian. He reversed the cruel decrees of Domitian, recalling many of the banished and prosecuted instead of encouraging the informers. Nerva rescinded the *relegatio* and *deportatio* condemnations of many politicians and thinkers such as *Dio* and pantomime actors (Grainger 2003:48, 54). He was the one to set free John from his Patmos exile (Jones 1891:91; Grainger 2003:86).



A bust of Caesar Nerva in the *Pallazo Massimo alle Terme*, Rome

(http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nerva_Tivoli_Massimo.jpg)

4.2.5 The composite hypotheses of the Babylonian theory

After 1882 a flood of disintegrating hypotheses came that were based on the idea that the Apocalypse was not a unity, but either a working up of one or more Jewish apocalypses by Christian hands or at least incorporated fragments of several apocalypses. Grotius, although he held that the apostle John was the author of the Apocalypse, for instance said that the apostle wrote the book in ten different parts on different occasions (Grotius 1644:1-19; IV.I; XIV.1, in Barton 1898:776-780; see also Weijsäcker 1882:78-79). Gunkel, in his *Schöpfung und Chaos* (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584-2585), started another line of criticism in derivation of the conceptions of the author of Revelation, not from Jewish apocalypse, but from Babylonian mythology, finding the beast number not for Nero, but for the primeval chaos (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2584-2585).

4.2.6 The Papias theory

This is the only testimony from the first two centuries that disagrees with the Johannine authorship of the book of Revelation. Papias, a church father (who died in 163 CE), has not left a complete written work because most of them are lost. The only written evidence comes from later writers. Two of this writings refer to John's death. One manuscript seems to be a summary of the Chronicle of Phillip of Side (fifth century CE). This manuscript declares: "Papias says in his second book that John the theologian and Jacob his brother were killed by the Jews." Another manuscript, the Chronicles of Georgius Harnotolus dated 860 CE, reads similarly: "because Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, being an ocular witness of this, in the second book of the proverbs of the Lord, it says that (John) was killed by the Jews, fulfilling clearly, with his brother, the Christ's prediction relative to them (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:735). There are some objections to these statements of Papias. The fact that the first statement refers to John as "theologian," indicates that it suffered modifications done by a medieval writer, because that term is not present in any Biblical manuscript prior to the eighth century CE. The Georgius Harnotolus is only found in one manuscript. The other manuscripts say simply that John died in peace, but do not cite Papias

(Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:735-736). A third Papias statement is registered by Eusebius (who died in 340 CE), and read as follows:

[A]nd I shall not hesitate to append to the interpretations all that I ever learnt well from the presbyters and remember well, for of their truth I am confident. But if ever anyone came who had followed the presbyters, I inquired into the words of the presbyters, what Andrew or Peter or Philip or Thomas or James or John or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, had said εἶπεν and what Ariston and the presbyter John, the Lord's disciples, were saying λέγουσιν. For I did not suppose that information from books would help me so much as the word of a living and surviving voice."

(Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* III.39.4, in Nichol & Cottrell 1999b:735)

The passage from Eusebius has been the subject of much conjecture. Eusebius interpreted it to mean that there were two men by the name of John who had lived in Asia in the late first century CE; the apostle, and another man who was a presbyter, or elder. Eusebius' opinion was that this latter man was the one whom Papias had known personally and that it was he who had written Revelation, whereas the apostle had been the author of the gospel of John (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:735-736). Zahn (1909:451-453), interpreting Eusebius' reference to Papias, points out that there is no real distinction made between presbyters and apostles. On this topic, Papias says that he "inquired into the words of the presbyters," and immediately goes on to list apostles; then when he mentions "the presbyter John" he identifies him at once as one of "the Lord's disciples." The real distinction between the two groups he mentions lies in the words εἶπεν (said) and λέγουσιν (were saying) – which suggests that those in the first group mentioned were disciples of Jesus who had lived and borne their testimony before Papias' time, whereas those in the second group were still living, and available for information in his day. If Ireneaus' testimony is accepted, the apostle John would be included in both groups, and so might conceivably have been mentioned twice (Zahn 1909:451-453).

4.2.7 Influence of Dionysius of Alexandria on Eusebius' Papias theory

Eusebius' effort to derive two Johns from Papias' statement is made more understandable if one sees that his conclusions were influenced by the work of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria (who died in 265 CE; Eusebius in Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:734-736). In reaction against some Christians who were stressing a literal millennium, Dionysius wrote the work titled *A treatise on the promises*, in which he sought to show by scholarly arguments that Revelation was not written by the apostle John, but by another man of the same name (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b: 734-736).

Another issue to consider when speaking of the fourth Gospel and Revelation being of the same authorship resides in the linguistic difference between the two works. These *adversis* situations, including the influence of Hebrew and the linguistic parallelism in the book, are now discussed.

4.3 THE GREEK USED IN REVELATION

4.3.1 The wrong conception about the usage of κοινή

Erasmus and other humanists considered Κοινή as an imperfect and deformed language (Vila & Escuin 1985:447-448). Others estimated its peculiarities related to the subjects treated about the divine revelation. They maintained that it was a "language of the Holy Spirit" (Vila & Escuin 1985:447-448). With such an approach, a great number of expressions and terminology would have then been locked or encoded for the function of transmitting the revelation of the New Testament. This posture was sustained during the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth century, especially due to its difference to classical Greek (Deissmann 1965:1-61).

The discoveries in 1896 and 1897 of a great quantity of Greek papyrus in *Oxyrhynchus* in Egypt gave a lot of material about the Greek grammar and syntax of the first century CE. Many of the terms that were *hapax legomena* in the New Testament appeared also in these papyri in commercial contexts

such as domestics. This made it possible to identify the language of Κοινή: the common language of the Greek Roman world (Vila & Escuin 1985:447-448).

The New Testament Κοινή was not a divine codex language. God, instead, was talking to the Graeco-Roman world in a language that was familiar to them and perfectly understandable, that is, a popular Greek, the ideal vehicle for communication that would be assimilated very easily. Thus, the Biblical Greek is no other than the Κοινή that was used in the daily communication of the Graeco-Roman world from 300 BCE to 300 CE (Vila & Escuin 1985:447-448).

4.3.2 The influence of Hebrew in Revelation

Mussies (1997:335) postulates a theory of a translator and *Bilingualism*. According to him, the Greek language has been in contact with Hebrew and/or Aramaic. For his part, Lancelot, elaborating on the verbs in the Apocalypse, offers the theory of “haphazard shifts,” which Bousset renders as “*das regellose Scheanken*.” In other words, there is a Biblical Hebrew verb system in the underlying substrate in Revelation (Mussies 1997:335). Lancelot (see Mussies 1997:335) is one of the few, if not the only scholar, that thus far devoted a special study to of the use of tenses in the Apocalypse. He holds the view of “haphazard shifts.” John wavers between past and present, and present and future, and this is due to the timelessness of both of the Biblical Hebrew indicatives. If the influence of Biblical Hebrew was so strong still that John could not clearly distinguish between present and future tenses, it is difficult to understand then why he did not avoid using the Greek future at all. The present indicative could then be used either as a present, past or future tense and the aorist as a past tense. Mussies (1997:311) says that Lanceloti’s point of view would be proved if in the Apocalypse future indicatives were misused for past tenses or with the value of the present tense, or if aorists were used as present or as future tenses. As long as this is not the case, it is more probable to assume that underlying Hebrew had developed to a great extent toward *Mishanic* Hebrew or was perhaps already identical to it. As it is, Mussies (1997:311) continues, the

transitions to the future tenses in the Apocalypse are usually preceded by another kind of transition, namely those from a past tense to the present indicative. Such a use of tenses seems quite natural for an author who has to recount visions actually seen in the past, but which at the same time predict future events. Mussies (1997:311) offers that this contact may have arisen in two ways: 1) John as a multilingual person was himself acquainted with Hebrew Aramaic and Greek, and his use of the latter was influenced by his mother tongue, and 2) John had no mastery of Greek, and composed the Apocalypse either in Hebrew or in Aramaic. The book was afterwards translated into Greek by another person, who must at least have been bilingual (having knowledge of Hebrew and Greek or of Aramaic and Greek). Mussies (1997:311) suggests that it is unlikely that this translator knew both languages. In this particular theory, the translator could have been a Christian of Jewish origin and knew both languages. This theory is simplified if it is admitted that John had limitations with the Greek language and that he himself wrote the book, incorporating Semitism from his mother tongue. One example of such Hebraism in Revelation is found in Revelation 9:11 where he translates a Hebrew name *expressis verbis* into Greek, אֲרַבְּאָ transiterated into Ἀβαδδὼν, καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ ὄνομα ἔχει Ἀπολλύων. The same happens with in Revelation 16:16 with the word ἁρμαγεδὼν. Another Hebrew influence term is noted in δισμυρίαδες in Revelation 9:16. It represents a Hebrew multiplicative dual (Mussies 1997:353). Thompson (1985:107-108), cited by Carson (et al 2008:627), explains that the Hebrew language that influenced the writer of Revelation is in fact Hebrew from the New Testament age and not posterior to it as some suggest, arguing for such posture that it is a translation from a later written source. Thompson agrees with the idea of the writing style for Revelation being Jewish-Greek. Porter (1989:582-603) reacted to this point of view saying that Thompson exaggerated the evidence in this regard. For Porter there is a reassessed conclusion in a socio-linguistic perspective.

4.3.3 Qumran and Nahal Heber research on Semitic writing influence on Revelation

Mussies (1997:311-315) asks the following important question: By which of the known varieties of Hebrew or Aramaic can be assumed that John's (or his translator's) use of Greek was influenced? The only contemporary documents of that New Testament period that can be compared are a few Hebrew and Aramaic letters and contracts found in the caves of Murabba 'at and Nahal Heber that definitely prove that Hebrew and Aramaic were used side by side in first-century Palestine. Mussies (1997:311-315) further opines that a second collection, which is roughly contemporaneous with the New Testament writings, are the Qumran scrolls which can be dated from the first century BCE up to 68 CE. Although they contain a sufficient quantity of linguistic material, neither of these may be used for comparison because the character of the Hebrew is classicistic, imitating the Biblical use of the language, though slightly modified by modernisms which crept in during the manuscript tradition. If the Qumran community, as is often supposed, is identical to the Essene sect, this manuscript tradition may have covered two centuries or more. Mussies (1997:311-315) adduces that this kind of Hebrew is not better, unless they know that the language, which underlies Apocalypse, is classicistic too. He is of the opinion that the Mishnah, which was drawn up in 200 CE (but that does not mean that the language dates from that time, the Mishnah Hebrew being a collection of material dating from the two centuries which preceded its final redaction) is the best basis for comparison with the use of the Greek in the Apocalypse because it is contemporary with Revelation, it is not classicistic but reveals the development of Hebrew after the Old Testament period, and the quantity of literature composed in it is sufficient. Mussies is opposed to the term "Mishnaic Hebrew" from used by Segal (2001:10-250) because it is somewhat anachronistic, covering the period 300 BCE-300 CE. The Palestinian Pentateuch Targum, which until recently had been preserved only in fragments, is considered by some scholars to contain the Aramaic that was spoken in Palestine during Jesus' time. One of the arguments that lead to this conclusion is the fact that this

Targum contains a considerable quantity of Greek loan words, which would point to a Hellenistic environment (Black and Kahle, in Mussies 1997:311-315).

4.3.4 κοινή in Egypt

The tendency to reject one characteristic as Semitic because it is found in the Egyptian papyrus does not take into consideration the Jewish influx in the formation of the Κοινή language of Egypt as an abundant Hellenized Jewish colony. Deissmann (Vila & Escuain 1985:448) makes a positive contribution when he identifies many of the “biblical” and “ecclesiastical” words as belonging to the common use of the age in the land of Egypt. Some of these examples are very peculiar to New Testament terminology: ἀποστολός, βαπτισμός, παροικός, et cetera. In the κοινή characteristic findings in connection with New Testament Greek was the forming of composed words with one or two prefixed prepositions, for example: ἀνταποκρίνομαι, συναντιλαμβάνομαι, et cetera (Villa & Escuain 1985:448). Another Hebrew influenced term is διςμυριάδες in Revelation 9:16. It represents a Hebrew multiplicative dual.

It is interesting that Mussies (1997:251-355) mentions that the linguistic peculiarities in the Apocalypse do not point to a specific era or area. In solving these problems, he says, it will have to remain dependent on non-linguistic evidence. Mussies concludes with a rather vague *terminus ante quem* based on the absence of the orthographical υ-οι from the best manuscripts in that field, the Codex Alexandrinus. This led Mussies (1997:231-365) to the conclusion that Egyptian Κοινή Greek being the original language, which is hardly surprising in view of the fact that the author himself mentioned Patmos and Western Asia Minor as the setting of his visions.

4.3.5 The κοινή linguistic differences between John and Revelation

The Greek style and syntax in the Apocalypse is certainly different to that of the gospel of John. Westcott (1971:lxvvi) tried to explain the Greek styling differences between John and Revelation under a compatible mode with a

literary common paternity. This suggests a period of time of some 30 years between the writing of the gospel of John and Revelation that explains the gap in writing styling on these two works. In this hypothesis, the gospel of John was written in 90 CE and Revelation in 60 CE. However, according to Mounce (2007:627), this elapse of time does not solve the styling problem between the two writings. The Greek grammar in John is simple and correct and the book relates the life of Jesus in a stunning, masterful way (Paulien 2004:9).

Revelation, on the other hand, contains numerous grammatical flaws in its original language. Paulien (2004:9) says that the Greek of Revelation reminds scholars of the practice writing of first-century school children. The difference in word occurrences between the gospel of John and Revelation caused Philo of Alexandria to apply the authorship of Revelation to someone other than John.

The following examples of differences are particularly notorious: κόσμος, is present 79 times in the gospel of John but only 3 times in the Apocalypse.

Ἀλήθεια, appears 25 times in John, but is absent in the Apocalypse. Φῶς occurs 22 times in John and in Revelation there are only 3 occurrences (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:736). Ἀγαπάω is found 37 times in the gospel of John but only 4 times in the Apocalypse. The term πιστεύω, is used 100 times in the gospel of John; and not once in the Apocalypse. Ἐνώπιον, appears once in the gospel of John but is found 36 times in Revelation. Ἐμός, occurs 42 times in John and only once in Revelation. When the John refers to Christ as the “Lamb” it always uses the word ἀμνός, Revelation the word used is ἀρνίον. Both words have the same meaning. In the Gospel, Jerusalem is ἱεροσόλυμα, while in Revelation it is ἱερουσαλήμ (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:736).

Mussies (1997:352) presents another authorship problem related to the morphological data in the gospel of John and the Apocalypse. For him, it was highly improbable that both the book of Revelation and the Corpus Johanneum were composed by the same author because several of the categories (such as the perfect indicative) that are seldom used in the Apocalypse, are not at all unusual in the Johannine writings. Chantraine adds to this that the Fourth Gospel

has 77 “resultative” perfects and 100 intransitive perfects. His remark, namely that the Apocalypse “*se trouve dans une situation analogue ... mais moins nette*”, is not maintained by Mussies (1997:352).

Another peculiarity is that the oppositional use of the nominative with any antecedent case is wholly absent from the Fourth Gospel. Mussies (1997:352) says that word order in the Apocalypse is divergent from that of the rest of the New testament, including the Fourth Gospel. One example of this is that the adjective in the Apocalypse is always placed after the substantive, but not so in the Johannine works (Mussies 1997:352). The author cites some pronouns that are virtually absent in the Apocalypse, but constantly present in the Corpus Johanneum. The progressives ἐμοῦ, σοῦ are only used in Revelation 2:20, but 51 times in the Corpus Johanneum. Mussies rejects the theory that John improved his style when writing the Gospel: if one should remove the un-Greek idioms from the Apocalypse, the result would be far from identical with the use of Greek as found in the Fourth Gospel (Mussies 1997:352). One possible theory for this significant linguistic problem of the Apocalypse is the exilic situation of the apostle (see Rv 1:9) where he did not have an actuary or scribe, and he, an Aramaic-writing background person, had to use his limitations in writing Κοινή in the Apocalypse. The Gospel of John was written in Ephesus, probably with the help of more than one scribe (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:736-737). Charles (1920:355) suggests that grammar flaws in Revelation were deliberate. He wrote that way, probably for the sudden nature of the vision.

Next, there will be a brief parallelism study between the Gospel and Revelation that indicates that, notwithstanding the real facts of styling differences, it is also possible to find linguistic parallelism between Gospel and Revelation in the Corpus Johanneum.

4.3.6 Linguistic parallelism in the Κοινή of John and Revelation

Even if the previous evidence concerning writing style is significant between the two works, there are also certain literary parallelisms between Revelation and the gospel of John that suggest the same literary paternity. Revelation speaks of ὕδωρ ζωῆς (Rv 21:6; 22:17) and the Gospel of ὕδωρ ζωῆς (Jn 4:10; 7:38). The Apocalypse invites Ἔρχου. καὶ ὁ διψῶν ἐρχέσθω, ὁ θέλων λαβέτω ὕδωρ ζωῆς δωρεάν (Rv 22:17), while Gospel declares: Ἐάν τις διψᾷ ἐπχέσθω πρὸς με καὶ πινέτω (Jn 7:37). The Greek word ὄψις is used in the New testament only in John's writings (Jn 7:24 and Rv 1:16). The same can be said of the phrases τρεῖν τὸν λόγον (Jn 8:51-52, 55; 14:23-24; 15:20; 17:6; 1 Jn 2:5; Rv 3:8, 10; 22:7, 9) and ὄνομα αὐτοῦ (Jn 1:6; 3:1; Rv 6:8).

Beza writes that in its style Revelation is an imitation of an Old Testament prophecy for which only Hebrew models were available to John, therefore he says "no one should be surprised that his style is not particularly polished, seeing as he did not depart from the prophets who wrote in Hebrew either by his vocabulary or by his style" (Beza, in Backus 2000:27).

Paulien (2004:9) declares that both John and Revelation make much use of the number seven, if not directly, at least by implication. In the gospel of John Jesus performs seven miracles and uses seven "I am-sayings". The number seven is even more crucial to the book of Revelation. Another common element in the two books is the use of the word μαρτυρία that appears in John 18 times in its different tenses and 7 times in Revelation. This word is used to describe fidelity to the gospel, and how the imagery of φῶς and ζόφος represent truth and error. Also, only John (Jn 1:1, 14; 1 Jn 1:1; 5:7) and Revelation (Rv 19:13) refer to Jesus as λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ (Paulien 2004:9).

The linguistic differences in Revelation and the Gospel could be explained to certain extent through different approaches. The internal evidence for Revelation reflects a possible Hebrew substrate. Did this substrate theory come simply

because John mother's language (Hebrew/Aramaic) and therefore, Patmos absence of a proficient and skilled Gk scribe or actuary? Do the Greek In Revelation points an intentional flaw methodology as it has previously suggested and, in that case why? Did John write in Hebrew or Aramaic and then, a non-skill scribe translated later the message into Gk? These questions probably, will never be explained in a total erudite satisfied accuracy. We can speculate if John had at hand a LXX scroll for the OT quotations or all of them came to his mind by Holy Spirit inspiration? Kowalski (2004:11-222) reacts on this previous respect that although some of Revelation's allusions to Ezekiel can only be actualized through an LXX text and some only through Masoretic like text (ninety six texts of Revelation containing allusions that could be actualized through either text) it does not necessarily follow that John had both the LXX and the MT text in front of him as he was writing. It is not easy to respond these questions. The κοινὴ from Egypt is a dubious proposition to accept because as far as we know John never traveled or stood that far. The external evidence points Asia Minor most of his life and, according to Domitian theory, some years? in Rome and Patmos. With this complicated scenario, and the limited research evidence on this field, this thesis suggests that John wrote Revelation in Gk as his second language in a limited proficiency but, within a Hebrew background that controlled the book's structure. The visions and the constant past, present, future and vice versa it seems to promote this view.

We now turn to consider the presence of Babylon in the crypticism and the *continuum* simulated with Rome and fighting against God and His people in the context of Revelation 7:1-3. The analysis of Babylon under its crypticism and the various approaches for its functionality is important for Historicists because this name describes a message against God and His principles. Therefore, the recognition of such Babylonian symbolism in the Bible is useful due to its connection with 666 and its Historicist sealing counterpart in Revelation 7:1-3.

4.4 BABYLON AND REVELATION 7:1-3

4.4.1 Babylon and Rome crypticism

Because Revelation 7:1-3 was written in the first century CE it is important to understand why cryptic language was used in Revelation to describe Rome and its attitude toward Christianity. In 1 Peter 5:13 the apostle makes a cover reference when he says “she, who is Babylon” (βαβυλῶνι ἐκκλησίᾳ see Aland K and Aland B 2001: 8798). Here Peter uses the name Babylon in a cryptic manner. The term Babylon appears frequently as a secret code in the first centuries of Christianity. It appears in the Jewish literature to refer to the city of Rome and the Roman Empire. The *Sibylline Oracles* present a prophecy that has a parallel with the one of Revelation 18:5-8. It speaks about Rome as being a “wicked city” that loves “sorcery,” that delights in “adultery,” and has “a bloodthirsty heart and a wicked mind” (*Sibylline Oracles* Book 5). In the pseudepigraphic 2 Baruch the name of Babylon is used to refer to Rome as is in Revelation 11:1-3. Another example of the cryptographic method is found in Jeremiah 25:26, known as *atbash*, a code word for Babylon (Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:479-480). The *atbash*-system consists of the letters of a word that are replaced by the one that corresponds starting with the last letter of the alphabet. In Hebrew, the word *Babel* has twice the second consonant of the alphabet and one in the twelfth. Counting from the other extreme, the *sh* (*shin*) is the second letter while the *n* (*jeth*) is the twelfth; so *sheshaj* is obtained. (Nichols and Cottrell 1985a:479-480).

Another cryptogram appears in Jeremiah 51:41, where the Chaldeans are coded as *sheshach* (רשש; see Nichols and Cottrell 1985a:561). Tertullian and Ireneaus declare that the vocable Babylon, since its origins through Nimrod, demonstrated its ambition of conquest and dominion (Hislop 1959:23-25). Rome represented the mystic Babylon referred to by Peter, the capital of imperial Rome in the first-century CE (Tertullian iii: 13; Ireneaus 26.1, in Hislop 1959:23-25,615). The Jewish writers of early Christianity applied the name “Edom” as another designation for Rome (Midrash Rabbah 1:V, in <http://www.betemunah.org/edom.html>). In the Old Testament, the Babylon by the Euphrates of Isaiah 47:1,

9, 12-13 and Jeremiah 25:12; 50:1 have a correspondent parallelism with the Babylon by the Tiber in Revelation 14:8; 16:12-21; 17:1-7, 18 and 18:1-24.

The etymology for Rome is obscure and diverse. Besides the Romulus tradition, there are different opinions on the origin of the word “Rome.” Tucker considers that Rome comes from *urosma*, hill or high point. Michelet and Tucker suggest the Etruscan term *Rumon* or *Rumo*, formerly the word for Tiber (www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=Rome). Hislop, citing Aurelius, says that on the Capitoline hill, the famous great high place of Roman worship, the name of Rome was known as *Saturnia*, or the city of Saturn, the great Chaldean god. Virgil, referring to the remote age of Evander in Aeneid, called Rome *Saturnia* or *Janicula*. Other Latin writers such as Ovid, Pliny, and Aurelius Victor are included by Hislop as showing Rome and its etymology with *Saturnia* as well (Pliny, *Natural History*, lib 4. 55; Ovid. *Fasti*, lib. i.1. 238, vol. iii. 29; Aurel Vict *Origo Gent Roman*, iii, in Hislop 1959: 270). Aune (1998b:920-3), Rist (1957:345-613), and Smalley (2005:439) consider that behind the image of the Babylon harlot stands the goddess Roma (*Dea Roma*), the personification of the state. They do this on the basis of the *sestertius*, a Roman coin minted during the reign of the Emperor Vespasian (69-79 CE), which depicts on the reverse the goddess Rome in military dress seated on the seven hills of Rome. There are some Latin words for Rome that insinuate its power and influence: *Caput Mundi* (capital of the world); *la Cittq Eterna*; *Limen Apostolorum* (threshold of the apostles); *La Citta dei settte colti* (the city of the seven hills); *L’ Urbe*. (www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome). One of the most grotesque words to symbolize Rome/Babylon in Revelation is “πορνή” (Rv 17:1). It has its literary roots in Old Testament prophetic literature, where several corporate entities are represented in this way (Nah 3:4; Is 23; Ezk 26-27). Friesen (2006:208) associates this harlotry with the exploitation of international markets in the *pax Romana*. The verbs *πορνεύσαντες* and *στρηνιάσαντες* occur in Revelation 18:9, confirming that it is a central issue. The aggrandizement and self-gratification will be paid double by God for this sin. According to Friesen, the kings are not simply those who have committed

adultery with the prostitute, but also those who have lived lives of luxury, and wanted in excess στρηνιάσαντες (Friesen 2006:208).

Latin has a richer pornographic terminology for the concept of harlotry. Firebaugh (www.ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_prostitutionnotes2.htm) lists 33 terms used for prostitution in the Roman world of the first century CE. The prostitution places in the Roman world are as follows:

- *Fornix*: the arcades, under the theatres;
- *Pergulae*: *Balconies*: where the harlots were shown
- *Stabulae*: Inns, houses of prostitution
- *Diversiorum*: a lodging house, house of assignation
- *Tugurium*: a hut, low den
- *Turturilla*: a dove cote, frequently part;
- *Casuaria*: road houses, brothels;
- *Lupanaria*: wolf dens; and
- *Tabernae*: bakery shops.

Firebaugh also defines the terms for the work of the prostitute in the ancient Roman world. They are as follows:

Meretrix: (harlot) they worked by night, wages honor;

Proседа: sat at front cellar stall;

Nonariae: mime players;

Cymbalistræ: cymbal players;

Ambubiae: singing girls;

Cithraristae: harpists;

Scortum: strumpet, secrecy implied;

Scorta erratica: clandestine strumpets, streetwalkers;

Busturiae: tomb frequenters;

Copae: bar maids;

Delicatae: kept mistress;

Fanosae: soiled doves from respectable families;

Doris: harlots of great beauty, they wore no clothing;
Lupae: she wolves, they had wolf like cry and rapacity;
Aeliciae: baker's girl;
Noctiluae: nightwalkers;
Blitidae: lower class, sold by a cheap drink in dens;
Forariae: country girls who frequented the road;
Gallinae: thieving prostitutes;
Diobolars: two obol price girls;
Amasiae: devoted to Venus;
Amatrix: female lover, homosexual;
Amica: female friend; and
Quadrantariae: older prostitutes, the lowest class of all.
www.ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_prostitutionnotes2.htm

With such a grotesque and sad list Historicism understands why, among other Rome *in situ* characteristics, the apostles used adultery and fornication as a symbol of the spiritual contamination and teaching corruption (2 Cor 4:2). This adultery/false teaching would prevail, not only in the New Testament Roman world, but it would be crafted in paganistic men traditionally through history, as a *continuum*, through the sea-monster beast religious system (Rv 2:14, 22; 13:1-18; 17:2; 18:3; 22:15). Nussbaum and Sihvola (2002:319-320) adds the social political fact that many ancient prostitutes were slaves due to wars and different social limitations of the epoch. Slavery robbed the original idea of the craftsman on the human species, that is, in the beginning mankind was cut in two, and then made into two types of genitals, the one female and the other male. This made a strong desire (ἐπιθυμίαν ἰσχύραν) for the other, produced ὁμιλίας κοινωνία and mixed into both a strong longing (πάθον ἰσχύρον; Nussbaum & Sihvola 2002:319-320).

Smalley (2005:364) refers to Babylon in Revelation 14:8, as does Mounce (1998:21), and says that Babylon (Dn 4:28-31; Is 14:4; Jr 51:7; Rv 17:2-4; 18:3)

and Rome were renowned for their luxury and moral corruption, and oppressed Jews and Christians alike when they conquered Jerusalem in 587 BCE and Rome in 70 CE. The fall of Babylon is more than literal in the kind of oppression it inflicts. It symbolizes in John's visions the secular and unjust spirit of humanity which, in any age, forces others to compromise the truth and instead to worship idols rather than the Creator (Rv 13:15; 14:7) and to behave as followers of the devil rather than of Christ (Rv 13:16-17). Smalley (2005:364-366) also suggests that Babylon did not keep her idolatry and consequent immorality to herself, but forced them onto others like an intoxicating drink (Rv 17:4). Like the many Latin terms for prostitution cited above, Firebaugh add an additional external evidence for this devilish persecution system; it is also useful to use internal evidence from Revelation 14:8 as a counterpart of this Biblical corruption process that contaminates the world. Smalley (2005:364-366), citing Aune (1998b:920-925), points out that the final clause of Revelation 18:3 uses four types of genitives in the Greek: 1) τοῦ οἴνου of the wine, which is partitive; 2) τοῦ θυμοῦ of the passion, exegetical; 3) τῆς πορνείας, which is a descriptive; and 4) αὐτῆς 'of her, which is possessive. These four types of the genitive case are not only that Babylon has these evil characteristics, but that she also delights in infusing those by means of her system.

4.4.2 The internal continuum threat of spiritual Babylon within the Christian community and beyond

LaRondelle (in Holbrook 1992b:151), a Historicist scholar, says there is a continuous historical connection and perspective on the beasts describing Babylon in Revelation 13 and 17. These chapters provide the scriptural foundation for identifying the harlot/beast symbol. According to LaRondelle (in Holbrook 1992b:151-156), the Babylon of Revelation 17 is not merely a political but religious entity. He says this mystical Babylon will play a major role in the final events the lead up to the seven last plagues and Armageddon (in Holbrook 1992b:151-152). He also remarks that a popular view among both Roman Catholic and Protestant scholars is that the Babylonian harlot of Revelation 17

symbolizes exclusively that ancient city of Rome, situated on seven literal hills and ruled by seven selected dynasties of Roman emperors from Augustus to Domitian. Some have attempted to combine this Preterist position with a futurist fulfillment, so that the Babylonian/harlot/beast may have both a first century and an end-time application. Neither, however, he says, is in agreement with the prophetic data in the scriptural setting (LaRondelle, in Holbrook 1992b:151-155).

From LaRondelle's perspective, the book of Daniel is the main prophetic model for the book of Revelation (LaRondelle, in Holbrook 1992b:151). Daniel's unique style of a *continuum* of history – a *continuous* historical perspective that culminates in the end-time events – is embodied in the substructure of Revelation. There are no gaps portrayed in Christian history between its initial setting and its end-time culmination in the restoration of God's eternal kingdom. The author of Revelation demonstrates his argument by spelling out the strong links between the sea beast in Revelation 13 and the little horn in Daniel 7 (LaRondelle, in Holbrook 1992b:151-153). The two prophecies identify the same anti-Christian power. In turn, Revelation 12-13 provides the immediate contextual basis for identifying the Babylonian harlot. The typological links between the New Testament harlot of Revelation 17 and the Old Testament harlotry of ancient Israel indicate that the Babylonian harlot is not being used as a symbol of political Rome, but of a predicted Christian apostasy that would develop within the church, break covenant with God, become an oppressor of His true followers, and play a significant role in the events of the end time. Schüssler (1976:43, 51-59) argues it was during the Roman Empire that the book of Revelation had its only fulfillment with the claims of Christ as Lord and the Roman civil religion as an imperial cult present in the person of Caesar supposedly to be Lord and God.

Some scholars have considered at least three other approaches to the understanding of Babylonian in Revelation, especially its work on humanity. These approaches are the symbolic-universal, literalist, and Jerusalem-Babylon approach.

4.4.3 The symbolic-universal approach to Babylon

Some Christian exegetes like Minear have used the symbolic-universal approach for the apocalyptic Babylon. This method of interpretation is considered for a timeless and universal reality, which have many historical counterparts. Minear (1968:135-158) says, “Babylon embraces more than one empire or culture. It is defined rather by dominant idolatries than by geographical or temporal boundaries.”

Collins (1983:122, in Holbrook 1992b:156), cited by LaRondelle, states her opinion by pointing out: “John’s probable expectations (a revived Nero coming from the east to conquer Rome) with regard to historical events were not fulfilled.” Nevertheless, she discerns the climax of Revelation 17, which predicts the destruction of the harlot by the beast and the ten kings, a *moral lesson*, which is valid for similar historical situations: the will to power “does not unite; it divides.” LaRondelle, citing Johnson (in Holbrook 1992b:156), says that in this symbolic-universal approach Jerusalem and Rome are only some of the multiple manifestations of Babylon history. Sealing is a constant work of God throughout history and will have its climax usage during the end-time fulfillment of Revelation 13:18 and 17:1-18.

4.4.4 The literalist approach to Babylon

Thomas (1982:333-341) comes to an extreme conclusion known as the literalist approach on Babylon. According to this view, the Babylon of Revelation 17 and 18 does not signify any political or religious power, but is exclusively “an economic entity” which will oppress all men by an international commercial collapse. The seal/sealing concept is vague and not firmly defined by this approach.

Thomas (1982:340) further opines that the term “harlot” is not used in the Scripture to refer to an ecclesiastical system, but “to actual (purely commercial)

cities similar to that in Revelation 18. In this regard Thomas cites Isaiah 23:17 and Nahum 3:4. LaRondelle (in Holbrook 1992b:155) argues against the approach of Thomas saying it is reductionist exegesis. He says that the cities of Babylon, Tyre, Nineveh, and Jerusalem were not primarily commercial harlots, but religious apostates in their self exaltation, idolatry, and hostility against Yahweh, His truth, and His true covenant people (Nah 1:2; 7-11, 13-15 for Nineveh. Ezk 26:2; 28:2 for Tyre and, 2 Th 2:4 for Rome). Actually, the Scripture itself describes more than commercial or political power on the two Lucifer fall descriptions regarding his behavior and conduct as a demon against Go being associated with kings of Babylon and Tyre, to describe their spiritual symbolism with evil (Is 14: 1-14; Ezk 28:12-19).

4.4.5 Jerusalem-Babylonian approach to Babylon

This study points out that the harlot Babylon represents Jerusalem where the prophets were slain, and not Rome (Mt 23:29-39). In this regard, Massingberde (1978:3-4) assumes that Revelation 4-22 were written primarily as a Jewish-Christian apocalypse before the fall of Jerusalem in 70 CE. According to Massingberde “it is the covenant which makes the bride, the breaking of it which makes the adulteress (Massingberde 1978:3-4). Babylon, in Massingberde’s (1978:3-4) view of the harlot’s forehead, is a symbol of Jerusalem’s lewd priesthood, whose high priest wore the name Yahweh on his forehead (Ex 28:36-38), a priest harlot (Ezekiel 16:32-43). LaRondelle (in Holbrook 1992b:155-156) comments that Massingberde’s (1978:3-4) approach’s weakness is the implicit denial of the fundamental Christocentricity of John’s Apocalypse. The Jerusalem application remains oriented to the old covenant people of God, instead of to the new covenant people, the church of Jesus Christ, as stressed in Revelation 1-3. Furthermore, how can one conceive of this Jerusalem harlot as “sitting upon,” or “acquiring sovereignty” over imperial Rome (the beast) if Jerusalem was destroyed and enslaved by Romans in 70 and 135 CE. Sealing, under this Jerusalem-Babylonian posture would then be positioned in an unrealistic setting. Massingberde considers Revelation 1-3 and 22:16, 20, 21 as a later addition by a

Jewish-Christian disciple of John the Baptist (Massingberde 1978:3, 277) LaRondelle (in Holbrook 1992b:156) says that the attraction of this original interpretation is its continuation of the covenant framework of the Old Testament, in particular to its reference to the cultic Day of Judgment. It is appropriate to cite here that Beale (1999:86-94) established that the book of Revelation is structurally and thematically dependent specifically on Daniel and Ezekiel. In this respect, Historicists consider this aspect as a *continuum* of evidence, which is based on the same pattern of symbols to describe the unfolding of history.

4.5 Κοινή WORDS RELATED TO SEALING IN REVELATION

The occurrences of εἰκόν, σφραγίς and χάραγμα in Revelation are interdependent with the seal of God in Revelation 7:1-3 and the mark of the beast (Rv 13:16, 17, 18; 14:9). A theological study of these terms in the Apocalypse of John may provide an additional starting point in the general meaning of the χξς mark and the significance of the sealing of God.

4.5.1 εἰκόν (εἰκόνα)

This word may express an etymological link with ἕιοκα, “to be similar,” “to be like,” “to appear.” It means an image in various senses, for example, as an artistic representation like a painting, a statue or the impress of a coin (Mt 22:20), or the image of a god (Rv 13:14). According to Kittel (1964g:388), the phrase εἰκόνα τῷ θεῷ in Revelation 13:14; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 19:20, and 20:4 (which advocate the worship of the emperor) is one of the important themes in the second half of Revelation, a worship that was resisted by the early Christians. This clash between the cult of rulers and apostates, or enemies of the Roman state in this case, is not new. Obeisance to the divine image of the ruler is also present in Daniel 3:5. The erection of a statue of Caligula in the temple of Jerusalem that was prevented only by his death in 41 BCE is also well known (see Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.261, in Kittel 1964g:388). The worship of imperial images played a similar role in the persecution of Christians. The presumed life of images (e.g., they could speak; see Rv 13:15) reminds many of priestly devices

like images of a lion's head made to spit out fires by means of a concealed pipe ending in the lion's mouth. It was also said of Simon Magus that *ego statuas moveri feci et animani examina* (Cumont, in Kittel 1964g:388). The εἰκόνα τοῦ θηριοῦ is against the renewal of the image and likeness of Christ in the human kind (Richards 1985:351-2).

4.5.2 σφραγίς (σφραγίζω, κατασφραγίζω, κατεσφραγισμένον, σφραγίσιν, σφραγίδας)

Revelation makes frequent and distinctive use of the word seal in the framework of apocalyptic images. The divine does not seal the words of prophecy (Rv 22:10). This means that he is not to keeping them secret or concealing them (Kittel 1971b:950). Σφραγίζω occurs in Revelation 20:3 in the sense of inviolable sealing as in Matthew 27:66; the angel from heaven, who binds the devil and casts him into the abyss, closes and seals the abyss for a thousand years – as the record is closed and sealed (Kittel 1971b:950). On the other hand, the word is also used in a much weaker sense: “to close,” “to conceal,” not “to reveal” (see Rv 10:4). Elsewhere what is written is sealed against misuse and unauthorized knowledge (Kittel 1971b:950). A group of “seal” references makes mention of the “sealed book,” the book with seven seals.

It is a double document. The seven seals reminds of Roman law with its six *testes* for a will along with the testator and military signing (Kittel 1971b:941). The metaphor shows the opening of the seven seals successively carries events forward, whereas all the seals must be broken or loosened at once in the case of a deed (Kittel 1971b:950). In the only occasion on which the compound κατασφραγίζω is used in the New Testament in Revelation 5:1 it denotes the sealing of this heavenly document. Only the Lamb has the right and power to undo this seal (Rv 5:1, 2, 5, 9). One seal after the other is broken (Rv 6:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12; 8:1). Each enclosed the apocalyptic event, which then takes place. The legality of the seals depends also on those who posses them. The number of seals is significant only because of the difference in the contents, which for its

part determines the course of eschatological events. The choice of the number seven is not based on Roman law; the number seven is a religious symbol (Kittel 1971b:950). The last group of seal statements in Revelation refers to those who are sealed by God and for God. The second angel has "the seal of the living God" (Rv 7:2; 9:4). He restrains the four angels of destruction until "we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads" (Rv 7:3). From each of the 12 tribes 12 000 are sealed (Rv 7:4-8). From this standpoint of the divine, this sealing is a marking of all the members of the people, in its entirety, as belonging to God, as God's possession. Hence this seal keeps them through the terrible events of the end time. Revelation 7:2 and 9:4 certainly have a specific sign in view (Kittel 1971b:951). For Kittel this seal is the יהוה (YHWH) or standing form of X (ת), membership of God's people or fellowship is denoted by the seal of God. They are His property. Here is included the ancient custom of providing something with a sign of ownership which becomes an aspect of the *σφραγίς* and is normative here (Kittel 1971b:951). By specific technical development the sign became a seal and the seal again became a sign, taking on material significance theologically, serving both as literary image and also as a mode of speech among believers. Signs are indications and need interpretation. In the language of revelation, image and reality become a distinctive unity. The reality can take shape only in the metaphor, the transferred use, the figure, the non-literal. It can be expressed only in the impression of the seal. In these basic questions the metaphorical use of the word seal in the New Testament is also implicated (Kittel 1971b:951).

4.5.3 χάραγμα

Kittel (1974d:416-417) indicates that Revelation 13:11-18 describes the appearance of the second beast, which comes as the pseudo-prophet of the first beast, demanding religious recognition of its cultic image. The incident gains in dramatic force as this image itself comes to life and begins to speak (Rv 13:15). It demands of all men without exception ἵνα δώσιν αὐτοῖς χάραγμα ἐπὶ τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῶν τῆς δεξιᾶς ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ μέτωπον αὐτῶν, καὶ ἵνα μὴ τις δύνηται ἀγοράσαι ἢ πωλῆσαι

εἰ μὴ ὁ ἔχων τὸ χάραγμα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θηρίου ἢ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ (Rv 13:16). That the religious totalitarianism of emperor worship is indicated here is evident. Probably the choice of the word χάραγμα points to this if the reference is to the imperial stamp. Materially, however, the required acceptance of the χάραγμα means religious signing with the mark of the beast, which is branded on the right hand or the forehead. This marking as stigmatization was common in antiquity (Kittel 1974d:659).

In order to describe the holistic approach of sealing in Revelation 7:1-3 according to the Historicist method of interpretation, there are two other Greek terms that must also be considered: θηρίον and ἡλιος. In addition, the consideration of ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς) is also part of the next terms discussed.

4.5.4 θηρίον (θήρ, θηρία)

In the context of beasts, Mounce (2007:352) writes that ancient traditions alluded to two monsters that dwelt in the depths of the sea and dry land. According to 1 Enoch 60:7-10, it refers to Leviathan (feminine monster) who lived in the abyss of the sea. Behemoth (male monster) occupied instead, a desolate desert. Mounce (2007:352; see also 2 Baruch 29:4; 2 Esdras 6:19-52) argues that it is evident that ancients of the Old Testament world were aware of mythological monster imagery. Therefore it was no problem for John to reflect and transpose this same imagery upon evil and use it in his visions. He also cites Job 40:15, 41; 41: 34 in describing Leviathan and Behemoth. Mounce (2007:352) suggests that the social-political aspect of John's time must also be understood in the manifestation and function of such a monster. As Kittel (1965e:133) states, θηρίον is a diminutive of θήρ, originally meaning a "wild animal," or in Hellenistic Greek an "animal living wild." Plato (in *Menex* 237:d) uses θηρία with βοτᾶ a "pastured beast". Θηρίον is also occasionally including insects and birds (in Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* I 6, 39, in Kittel 1965e:133). The same word is employed later to describe any "animal" (in *Plat. Rep.*, IX. I (571). In the New Testament θηρία is depicting a snake (in Ac 28:4). The LXX is restricted to land animals,

usually those living wild, and must be distinguished from ἰχθύες, πετεινά, ἔρπετά and κτήνη in the LXX (Gn 7:14, 21; 8:1, 17, 19; 9:2; Hs 4:3). There is an exact equivalent in the Hebrew ה'ח (Can 2:15). When Apollonius of Tyana (*Philostr Vit Ap*, IV, 38, in Kittel 1965e:134) calls Nero a θηρίον, the context shows that he is thinking of a beast of prey with claws and teeth, a carnivorous animal. The occurrence of θηρίον in theological passages such as Revelation 13:2 links it to Daniel 7. For Rabbinic exegesis up to the first century CE the fourth beast of Daniel 7 is Edom=Rome (Kittel 1965e:134).

In the imagery of Revelation, satanic and demonic powers are consistently represented as beasts (Kittel 1965e:135). Linked with man and yet distinct from him, the animal world with its dominion of instincts seems to have in fallen creation the significance of a perversion of what man is called as the image of God. This fact is evident throughout the animal kingdom, but is particularly clear in wild animals. Hence individual animals, and especially the θηρία, can serve as a figure of the demonic power, which perverts the divine similitude of man into that of sub-human (Kittel 1965e:135).

4.6 HISTORICISM AND THE *CONTINUUM* IN θηρίον CONCEPT

The historicist thought views the concept of beasts-kingdoms as portrayed by the Bible itself (Dn 7:3, 4-8, 19-25, Rv 12:1-18; 13:1-18). Some authors apply that symbolism of the hybrid monster of Daniel 7 and the sea monster of Revelation 13 to the Roman Catholic system. They say that from the ruins and ashes of the Roman Empire would arise the power of the Roman Catholic Church (Von Harnack 1903:269; Flick 1900:150; Eckhardt 1937:1, Ford 1978:152). The concept of θηρίον is associated with sun worship and its theological implications. This is the study of the next sections.

4.6. ἥλιος

The sun has been worshipped with different names throughout the ANE and the Graeco-Roman world. With regards to the ANE, sun worship stood in Egypt

under the names of Ra and Osiris; in Phoenicia and the land of Canaan under the names of Baal, Melkarth, Adoni, Shamas, and Moloch; in Syria under the names Tammuz and Elagabalus; among the Moabites under the names Baal Peor and Chemosh; among the Babylonian and Assyrians under the name of Bel and Shamas; and among Medes and Persians and other kindred nations under the names of Ormuz and Mithras (Jones 1891:183). Jones (1891:184-198) explains that even Israel and Judah were not free from sun worship (1 Ki 11:1-8; 16:30-33; 2 Ki 10:26-29; 23:7-12; 2 Chr 33:3-7; 34:3-4; Ezk 8:14-16). The Graeco-Roman world also devoted itself to sun worship in Greece, under Adonis, Apollo, Bacchus, and Hercules; in Phrygia, under the term Atys; and in Rome under the names of Bacchus, Apollo and Hercules (Jones 1891:183). Some Roman emperors began to include the sun in their personal imperial adornment during the first century CE. Nero was the first emperor that wore a royal crown with rays that represented the sun, probably to indicate that he was protected by the sun god Apollo (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:1006). Jeffers (1999:93) also indicates that a popular Greek god for the Romans in the time of Paul and John was Apollo (son of Zeus). Its cult was based in Delphi. Here a priestess, acting as oracle or mouthpiece of the god, had long made prophecies (Turcan 2001:142). It is evident, according to Friesen, that sun worship was transposed to Rome in the form of new religions and by means of war slaves and soldiers, including personal requests from the East provinces (Friesen 2006:124). Gibbons (2008:22-3) describes how the “black conical stone” from the Emesa temple, the symbol of the function of the sun, was transferred to Rome in a solemn procession led by the Roman emperor Elagabalus all the way from the temple of the Sun in Emesa up to a sun temple on the Palatine Hill. Aurelian instituted the *Deos Sol Invictus* cult in 274 CE. The imperial sovereignty and sun worship among the late emperors, according to Turcan says (2001:142), “passed from hand to hand up to the fourth century. As in Plato (*Rep.* 6,508; in Turcan 2001:142), the Sun was the visible image of the invisible Good. The Emperor, the actual and personal incarnation of the life, was represented as the one who imparted the Day Star and who, by handing the glove of the world to him on the

reverse of coins, made him his Vicar and a kind of co-regent.” (Turcan 2001:142).

We now turn to briefly analyze how the Sunday worship sneaked into the Roman Christian church and later was ruled the worship day for Christendom. For this purpose the Bacchiocchianian Historicist position on the Sunday evolution is considered next.

4.6.2 The Sunday evolution in the Roman church from a partial Bacchiocchianian-historicist approach

Scholars in the Archaeological field have discussed the authenticity of the literal Genesian's weekly cycle and in consequence the reality of Sabbath observance. Greenberg² (2001:34-38) points that Sabbath was originated lately in Israel and it came from Babylon. Babylonians believed certain days of the month (7, 14, 19, 21, 28) were considered unlucky and no work should occur or sacrifice be performed on those days. Therefore, by extension, Sabbath was also based in Canaanite agriculture tradition. Greenberg (2001:40) says that one likely explanation for the Sabbath observance comes from *Enuma Elish*. This Babylonian Creation Epic shows a Near Eastern precedent for this believing that Sabbath and the day of rest are inextricably intertwined. Marduk defeated his enemies and became chief deity of Babylon. He destroys god Kingsu. From his blood mankind was created and Marduk imposed upon humanity the duty to serve the gods. Greenberg (2001:40) quotes one portion of such legend, of which we extracted just the following verse: “we remove the yoke imposed upon the gods. Marduk created humanity, the god were free to rest.” For Historicism the Sabbath is interweaved with the Creation of mankind and directly attached with the beginning of mankind through history. Even though, Historicists believe in the literal occurrences of Genesis Chapters 1-11, others erudite work proposes

²Gary Greenberg is the President of the Archaeological Society of New York. For this writer, scribes omitted the blessings from the end of the second day of Genesis creation but inserted one in the middle of the third and sixth days. Logical analysis showed that the omission of the blessing of the second and its insertion in the middle of the third day resulted from scribal error. Moving the events in the first half of Day three to the second half of Day two restored logical and textual consistency of Genesis.

Genesis 1-11 as folklore or mere aesthetic narrative (Weeks 1978:12-19). One historical issue for Prophetic Historicism to deal with is the debate between Sabbath and Sunday. Recently John Paul second said that Sabbath was the celebration of Creation on Sunday of Redemption (John Paul II 2007: 1-31). Prophetic Historicism observes an evolving *continuum* trend in that controversy which is moving through history and will climax in the context of Revelation 7:1-3. Historicism also believes pagan and papal Rome play a pivotal role on this Sabbath Sunday dilemma. Bacchiocchi (2000:164, 207-211) who comments that the church of the capital of the Roman empire, whose authority was already felt far and wide in the second century, appears to be the most likely birthplace of Sunday observance. He states that the predominance of Gentile converts had influenced the Sunday change issue. Paul's addresses in his letter to the Romans, particularly the last chapters, presuppose that the Christian community of Rome was composed primarily of a Gentile-Christian majority (Rm 11, 13) and a Judaeo-Christian minority (Bacchiocchi 2000:164). "I am speaking to you Gentiles" (Rm 11:13), the apostle explicitly affirms, and in Romans 16 he greets the majority of believers who carry a Greek or Latin name. Bacchiocchi continues by saying that this is not a conclusive argument, since archaeology inscriptions of ancient Rome give evidence that many Jews preferred Latin and Greek names. There are a compilation of 254 examples of Latin names and 175 examples of Greek names used by Jews in ancient Rome (Leon 1960:93-121, in Bacchiocchi 2000:188). The predominance of Gentile members and their conflict with the Jews, inside and outside the church, may have necessitated a differentiation between the two communities in Rome earlier than in the East. This situation could have added a reason for the future Sabbath-Sunday controversy within the church. With regard to the tension between Gentiles and Judaeo-Christians, Goppelt supports this view when he writes:

The Epistle presupposes in Rome, as one would expect, a Church with a Gentile-Christian majority (11, 13) and a Judaeo-Christian minority. This co-existence of the two parties provoked some difficulties comparable to those known at Corinth at the same time. The situation of the Church of Rome in relationship to Judaism, as far as the Epistle to the Romans allows us to

suspect, is similar to the one presented us by the post-Pauline texts of Western Christianity: a chasm between the Church and Synagogue is found everywhere, one unknown in the Eastern churches which we have

described above. Judaism does not play any other role than the one of being the ancestor of Christianity.

(Goppelt 1961:202-203, in Bacchiocchi 2000:188)

The fact that the Christians by 64 CE, as Bruce (1958:140, in Bacchiocchi 2000:166) comments, “were clearly differentiated at Rome ... while it took a little longer in Palestine (where practically all Christians were of Jewish birth),” denotes important data that Sunday approval developed faster in the West. This suggests the possibility that the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday as a new day of worship may have occurred first in Rome as part of this process of differentiation from Judaism. Possibly Rome recognized that Christians had no nationalistic aspirations and consequently posed no political threat (Bacchiocchi 2000:172). In the church of Rome Sunday worship was urged, but concrete measures were also taken to wean Christians away from any veneration of the Sabbath. Some Christian writers, such as Justin, described the Sabbath as a temporary ordinance, derived from Moses, which God did not intend to be kept literally, for He Himself “does not stop controlling the movement of the universe on that day.” One could argue that Justin’s position does not necessarily reflect the attitude of the whole church of Rome toward the Sabbath, especially since Rome was the crossroads of all ideas. While this caution deserves attention, it is well to note that Justin does not represent a solitary voice in Rome against the Sabbath (Justine, *Dial* 23.3; 29.3; 16;1; 21, 1, in Bacchiocchi 2000:174). Similar views regarding the Sabbath were expressed by the renowned heretic Marcion who in 144 CE established his headquarters in Rome (Bilmeyer & Tuechle 1969:186, in Bacchiocchi 2000:174). The transformation of the Sabbath from a day of feasting and joy to a day of fasting and mourning represents a measure taken by the church of Rome to degrade the Sabbath in order to enhance Sunday worship (Regan 1961:60, in Bacchiocchi 2000:175, 202). On the one side, bishop Victor of Rome (189-199 CE) championed the

Easter-Sunday custom (i.e., the celebration of the feast on the Sunday usually following the date of the Jewish Passover) and threatened to excommunicate the recalcitrant Christian communities of the province of Asia who refused to follow his instruction (Reagan 1961: 60, 202, in Bacchiocchi 2000:180). Bacchiocchi says that numerous patristic testimonies suggest that the weekly and annual Easter-Sunday is treated as basically the same feast commemorating the same event of the resurrection. In a document attributed to Irenaeus it is specifically enjoined not to kneel down on Sunday nor on Pentecost, that is, the seven weeks of the Easter period, “because it is of equal significance with the Lord’s day” (Bacchiocchi 2000:182). The reason given is that both feasts are a symbol of the resurrection. Tertullian confirms this custom but adds the prohibition of fasting as well: “On Sunday it is unlawful to fast or to kneel while worshipping. We enjoy the same liberty from Easter to Pentecost.” (Irenaeus, in Bacchiocchi 2000:182). Reagan (1961:97, in Bacchiocchi 2000:182) comments on this text saying: “In the season extending from Easter to Pentecost, the same custom was followed, thus showing the relation between the annual and weekly feasts” (Reagan 1961:97, in Bacchiocchi 2000:182). Origen explicitly unites the weekly with the yearly commemoration of the resurrection: “The resurrection of the Lord is celebrated not only once a year but constantly every eight days” (*Homil in Isaiarn* 5, 2, in Bacchiocchi 2000:110, 182). Eusebius similarly states: “While the Jews faithful to Moses, sacrificed the Passover lamb once a year . . . we men of the New Covenant celebrate every Sunday our Passover” (*Solemmitate Paschali* 7, 12, in Bacchiocchi 2000:182). Pope Innocent I, in a letter to bishop Decentius of Gubbio, confirms the unity existing between the two feasts: “We celebrate Sunday because of the venerable resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, not only at Easter but in actuality by the single weekly cycle (i.e., every Sunday)” (Bacchiocchi 2000:183). About the year 95 CE, Clement, bishop of Rome, wrote a letter to the church of Corinth (*Epistola I ad Corinthios* 47:1-2) to settle a discord which had broken out within the church and had resulted in the deposition of the presbyters. The prestige of the Roman church in this case is implied by the resolute and, in some cases, even threatening tone of the letter

that expects obedience (see *Epistola I ad Corinthios* 47:1-2; 59:1-2; Goodspeed 1950:78, in Bacchiocchi 2000:183-185). As Lebreton observes: “Rome was conscious of its authority and the responsibility which this involved; Corinth also recognized it and bowed to it.” Batiffol has described this intervention as “the Epiphany of the Roman Primacy” (Lebreton & Zeiller 1957:413, in Bacchiocchi 2000:185). The fact that the letter was highly respected and regularly read, not only in Corinth but in other churches as well, so much so that it came to be regarded by some as inspired, implies, as Baus notes, “the existence in the consciousness of non-Roman Christians of an esteem of the Roman Church as such which comes close to according it a precedence in rank” (Baus 1965:152, in Bacchiocchi 2000:185). Ignatius, a few years later (about 110-117 CE) in his *Letter to the Romans*, similarly attributes unusual honorific and fulsomely respectful epithets to the church of Rome (see his Prologue). While in his letters to the other churches Ignatius admonishes and warns the members, in his *Letter to the Romans* he expresses *only* respectful requests. The singular veneration of the bishop of Antioch for the Roman church is evident when he says: “You have never envied anyone; you have taught others. What I desire is that what you counsel and ordain may always be practiced” (*Romans* 3:1, in Bacchiocchi 2000:185).

In his prologue Ignatius describes the church of Rome as being “worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthily pure and preeminent in love.” In his final recommendation he requests: “Remember in your prayers the church of Syria, which has God for its pastor in my place. Jesus Christ alone will oversee it, together with your love” (*Letter to the Romans* 9:11). Though these statements do not define the actual jurisdictional power exerted by the church of Rome, nevertheless they do indicate that Ignatius, at the beginning of the second century, attributed to her a precedence of prestige and honor (Bacchiocchi 2000:185).

Ireneaus, bishop of Lyons (from circa 178 CE), in his book *Against Heresies*

(composed under the pontificate of Pope Eleutherus; 175-189 CE), describes the church of Rome as “the very great, the very ancient and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul.” He then states categorically: “For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority (*potentior principalitas*) that is, the faithful everywhere” (*Adv Haer* 3.3.1, in Bacchiocchi 2000:185).

Ireneaus’ high regard for the office and authority of the bishop of Rome is best exemplified in his embassy to bishop Eleutherus (175-189 CE) intended to solicit his intervention in the Montanist heresy which was disturbing the peace of the churches of Gaul, as well as in his letter to bishop Victor (189-199 CE) on the Quartodeciman problem (Bacchiocchi 2000:186). In the latter instance, it is worth noting that though Ireneaus protested against Victor’s excommunication of the Asiatics, as Batiffol aptly observes, “he did not dream of questioning Victor’s power to pronounce this excommunication” (Batiffol 1911:227, in Bacchiocchi 2000:186). The bishop of Rome demonstrated his unsurpassed authority when enforcing the Roman-Easter. Asian bishops, such as Polycarp and Polycrates, though they refused to accept the Roman custom, nevertheless took cognizance of the request of the Roman bishops. The former felt the compulsion in 154 CE to go personally to Anicetus of Rome to regulate the Passover question and other matters. The latter complied with the order of Victor to summon a council. “I could mention the bishops who are present,” Polycrates wrote to him in about 196 CE, “whom you required me to summon and I did so” (Eusebius, *Hist Ecc.* 5.24.8, in Bacchiocchi 2000:186).

When notified of the Asian bishops’ refusal to accept Easter-Sunday, Victor drastically “declared all the brethren there wholly excommunicated” (Eusebius, *Hist Eccl* 5.24.9, in Bacchiocchi 2000:186). This is perhaps the most explicit evidence of the authority of the Roman bishop to enforce a new custom, and even to cut off from the communion of the church an entire dissident community.

Batiffol aptly comments in this matter: “It is Rome alone that Ephesus answers and resists. We see the authority Rome exercises in this conflict. Renan has said

appropriately in reference to this case: ‘The Papacy was born and well born’” (Batiffol 1911:225, in Bacchiocchi 2000:186).

Other indications could be added, such as the designation of the church of Rome as the “Chair of *Peter – Cathedra Petri*” by the Muratorian fragment, by Cyprian and by Firmilian of Caesarea; the role played by the Pope in the question of the lapsed as well as of the heretical baptism (Bacchiocchi 2000:186); and the introduction and enforcement by the church of Rome of the date December 25 for the celebration of Christmas (Bacchiocchi 2000:186, 256-261).

4.6.3 The Constantine legacy on Sunday worship

According to Klaasen (1992:5), Constantine, after his alleged “conversion” to Christianity, contributed to the demise of the literal interpretation of Daniel and Revelation, favoring the Alexandrian allegorical method of interpretation. Thus favoring uniting the church with the interest of the state, Constantine applied Revelation 11:15 telling the kingdom this prophecy was fulfilled through him (Eusebius *Hist Eccl* X. 9; *Oration* XVI. 3-8, cited in Klaasen 1992:5). One interesting law related in a certain way with this allegorical postulate was the Constantine promulgation of the sun worship law on Sunday in 321 CE. The translated excerpts render:

On the venerable Day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in the cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits, because it often happens that another day is not so suitable for grain-sowing or for vine planting; lest by neglecting the proper moment for such operations the bounty of heaven should be lost.

(Constantine, *Codex Justinianus*, lib. 3, tit. 12, 3, in Schaff 1902a:380, see also Jones 1986: 81, 91-2, 552)

Hefele says the first Sunday law decree of a Christian council was given 16 years after Constantine's. The Council of Laodicea remarks the following:

Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honour, and as being Christians, shall, if possible, do not work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ.

(Council of Laodicea, 337 CE, Cannon 29, in Hefele 1883-96:316)

With the previous section in mind, we now turn to the Roman sun imperial cult from the time of John and its gradual growth process some years previous to Constantine's edict.

4.6.4 ἥλιος and the development of the Roman imperial cult

According to Fausset, sun worship was the earliest idolatry. Hatsberghe (1972:26) mentions that this practice was one of the oldest components of the Roman religion. However, sun worship and the imperial cult were something gradual, mainly developed at first in the East provinces of the Roman Empire (Paulien 2004:2). Paulien recognizes that the process began to build up from the Domitian reign, although he recognizes such evidence is mixed (Paulien 2004:2-3). The worship of kings and queens is attested in the Graeco-Roman world. Deissmann (1965:352) points out that Ptolemy XIII was called τοῦ κυριοῦ βασιλεία θεοῦ. Alexander the Great, Ptolemy XIV and Cleopatra were called, τοῖ κύριοι θεοῖ μαγεστίοιν, and Antiochus IV of Syria was the first to be represented as a god in his coins. As it was said of the Romans earlier, the Roman victories in faraway lands also transported new gods to Rome by way of the *evocatio* and the influx of slaves who brought their various forms of worship with them. Contact with Greek life and oriental luxury, the inevitable price of conquest, had a corresponding effect on the outlook of the conquerors, hence the xenophobic reactions of Livy and Juvenal for whom the Syrian Orontes overflowing into the Tiber is the image of an apocalyptic cataclysm (Friesen 2006:105-106). Scipio Africanus made out that he held private conversations with Jupiter Capitolinus, and let the rumors spread that he, like Alexander the Great, was a son of a divine serpent (*Liv* 26, 19.7, in Friesen 2006:105-106). Therefore, the development of

the imperial worship had its origins in Asia Minor with the provincial temple, approved in 29 BCE for Pergamon and their Hellenes population. Dio Cassius remembered this temple as the starting point for imperial cult practice spanning several centuries. This temple was built at Pergamon and dedicated by the whole province of Asia. Altogether with Cassius, Tacitus recounted that Augustus did not prohibited Asia to build it (Tacitus, *Ann* 4.37; *Dio* 51.10.27, in Friesen 2006:27).

One suggested evidence of the imperial worship in the East provinces is Pontius Pilate which, according to Taylor, was promoting Roman religion in Judaea. In that respect Taylor says:

While Pontius Pilate is often seen as agnostic, in modern terms, the material evidence of his coinage and the Pilate inscription from Caesarea indicate a prefect determined to promote a form of Roman religion Judaea. Unlike his predecessors, in the coinage Pilate used peculiarly Roman iconographic elements appropriate to the imperial cult. In the inscription Pilate was evidently responsible for dedicating a Tiberieum to the *Dis Augustis*. This material evidence may be placed alongside the report of Philo *Legatio ad Gaium* ... where Pilate sets up shields-likewise associated with the Roman Imperial cult-honoring Tiberius in Jerusalem.

(Taylor 2009)

It appears that the imperial worship system started in Rome with Julius Caesar, in terms of hero worship: the god like were appropriate for good rulers after death (Horn 1995:1006). Horn recounts that two years after the death of Augustus in 44 BCE Julius Caesar was deified. Augustus was allowed to be called “god” by the eastern provinces mainly. Tiberius refused such honors in his homeland, but he promoted it in the provinces. Shrines in this regard were called ἥρῶν (shrine for a hero), reserving the term τέμενος or “precincts” for imperial cult temples in the provinces. There is no archaeological evidence for the period of the last half of the first century BCE, except for Ephesus (Friesen 2006:26-27). Friesen also mentions a double altar and a double temple, which could be representing the starting point with the imperial worship (Friesen 2006:26-27). The argument for identifying these foundations with the cult of Rome and Julius Caesar, however, is circumstantial. The Ephesian temple ruins represent the correct historical

period – the last half of the first century BCE. The location, near the *πριτανεῖον* (civic religious center), and the *βουλευτερίον* (meeting place of the city council) would be appropriate for a cult with governmental implications (Friesen 2006:26-7). Moreover, the foundations and the modest courtyard are the earliest known example in Asia of a distinctive Italian design, in which a *podium* temple is set near the back wall of a peristyle courtyard. Although identification as the *τενμένος* of Rome and Julius is likely, definitive proof has not yet been found (Friesen 2006:26-7). Turcan says that in the reign of pathetic Claudius it is possible also to see the apotheosis and the farcical account Seneca gives in his *ἀποκολουντόσις*, in which he ridiculed the institution. Nero himself deconsecrated the site of the *templum divi Claudii* by turning it in to the *nymphaeum* of his Golden House (Turcan 2001:140; Vos 1982:370-1). Tacitus (55-120 CE) writes how Nero made scapegoats of the Christians when he provoked the fire of Rome that began on July 18, 64 CE, to build such a house (*Ann* lib 5, cited by Coloma 1944:262-63). This fire lasted for six days, destroyed three of the 14 districts of Rome, and damaged seriously another seven leaving only four districts undamaged (Tacitus, *Ann.* XV.40).

The development of imperial worship in Rome was presented in the calendar as well. The realignment of Asia's calendar, according to one proconsul, had been determined by the birth and achievements of Augustus. It was argued that Augustus was a cosmological deity. He had saved the world from itself, ending warfare and returning order to the world. The beginning of the year and the beginning of each month were to become a commemoration of his birth. Augustus would make a sense of time. This calendar realignment is one of the enormous symbolic resources of a solar calendar for imperial authority. The comparative regularity of the solar reflects nicely the imperial requirement for order and conformity (Turcan 2001:125-126). Another example referred to by Turcan (2001:125-126) shows how, with time, imperial cults molded the experience of time, using different kinds of festivals for that purpose: processions, sacrifices, athletics, gladiator battles, and musical competitions. All levels of society were affected. Elite families now had more opportunities and

more responsibilities for public celebrations. Average and poorer Asians now had more occasions to experience the benefactions of the elite to increase their moral responsibility to support the leadership of the elite. The logic of reciprocity within the dominant discourse required such responses (Turcan 2001:125-126).

People from all the Roman provinces, mainly from the East, and finally in the last half of the empire, many inhabitants in Rome, ascribed the attributes of the gods to both emperors and empresses. Seals were crafted to remember these events. Augustus and Septimus Severus were represented as Jupiter, Livia as Venus Genitrix or Cybele, Hadrian and Sabina as Mars and Venus, Julia Domna as Juno, Isis, or Demeter. In the third century CE the solar epiphany of the emperor became almost official (Turcan 2001:142-143).

Caracalla displayed himself in a chariot like the Sun, laying claim to that likeness. Later, Gallienus had his hair dusted with gold and often appeared *radiatus* (Turcan 2001:142-144). He is said to have considered having a statue of himself erected on the Esquiline as the Sun in his quadriga, in an idol twice the size of Nero's colossus.³ Because of this Aurelian called himself "*deus et dominus*", like Carus whose profile faces that of the Sun (as those of the emperor and empress of his son had formerly in the legend). Aurelian described himself as "*deo domino nato*" with a dative of homage as to a true predestined god *nato* (Turcan 2001:142-143).

Below, in the next page, there are two pictures of the cult of heroes promoted in Greece and in the Near East, which eventually influenced also the western part of the Empire, including Rome.

³ The testimony is unreliable but one gets the feeling that conditions at the time were favorable for institutionalizing a universal solar cult, consecrating the religious unity of the Roman world.



A hero-shrine of heron at Sagalassos, Turkey

(http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_hero_cult)



Offerings to deified hero and another deity, depicted on a Greek marble relief (300 BCE)

(http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_hero_cult)

The cult of the emperors was considered under a certain Roman eschatology presence in the death of the Caesars. This is going to be considered briefly in the following section

4.6.5 Roman eschatological presence in the death of the Caesars

Friesen (2006:129-130) points out that the discourse of imperial cults after an emperor death was committed to prevent the imagination from imaging the end of the world. This was a constant feature in the evolving imperial religious institution. The commitment to the longevity of Roman imperialism expressed in a damaged text of the imperial hymnody from 41 CE had the intention of preventing disorder and chaos in Rome and the empire (Friesen 2006:129-130). The hymnody begins: “[on behalf of the etern]al continuation of Tiber[rius Claudius Caesa]r Sebastos Germanic[us and of] his [who]le house.” Forty years later, an Ephesian inscription echoed the same sentiments: “On behalf of the health of our Lord Emperor Titus Caesar and [on behalf of] the permanence of the rule of the Romans, the damaged wall surrounding the *Ανγύστειον* was repaired.” There is also a text from a small marble altar that confirms the previously damaged hymnody’s veracity. It was found in Phrygia, and it says: “Euphrastos, slave of Caesar [prays] for the eternal continuation and victory of emperor Nerva Trajan Caesar Sebastos Germanicus Dacicus. Year 188 (= 104. CE) in the ninth month” (Friesen 2006:129-130).

The apotheosis of the Roman emperor after his death is another context in which personal Roman eschatology intersected with imperial cults. The ritual and concept of apotheosis were more important in the capital than in the provinces because divinization of living emperors was common outside Italy. The imagery of the emperor ascending to heaven in the chariot of the Sun was also well known in Asia; it affirmed a special geography of the afterlife for deserving emperors (Cannadine and Price 1993:56-104). Harrison (2002:71-96), commenting on the imperial cult at Thessaloniki, refers to the presence of “an aggressive imperial eschatology and the widespread circulation of Augustan apotheosis traditions competed with early Christian proclamation of the risen and returning heavenly *Κύριος*.” Harrison (2002:71-96) says the apostle responded by “injecting” heavily loaded Roman political terms into his presentation of Christ ... and overturned the absolutist claims of the imperial cult.”

We analyze now the presence of Domitian and the imperial worship and the persecution allegations on Jews and Christians.

4.6.6 Domitian and imperial worship

Jones (1993:1-3), writing about the early years of Domitian, explains that this emperor was born in Rome on October 24 of the year 54 CE. It was the eleventh year of Claudius's reign. According to Jones (1993:1-3), there is a myth on Domitian poverty, that is called a tradition by Suetonius, that due to poverty he sold himself to various senators including the future emperor Nerva. During Domitian's reign provinces were taxed rigorously beyond dispute. Suetonius (*Dom* 12.2, in Jones 1993:76, 118-119, 160) himself was present at a sitting of the procurator's court when a man of 90 years of age was examined to see if he was circumcised and so eligible for the Jewish tax. An Alexandrian Jew, more than a century after Domitian's death, referred to Domitian worship with the words: "all men worship and gladly obey." Domitian had concern for Greek culture. In Athens his cult was associated with that of Zeus Eleutherios (Jones 1993:1-3).

According to Fears (1981:233-245), Domitian's ideal seemed to have been a return to Augustan standards in money and religious matters. He was influenced by two factors: The Flavians needed to bolster the new dynasty with supernatural support, and his personal sincere belief in the traditional religion. Vespasian and Titus had stressed the family's connection with the more reputable Julio-Claudians and thus, indirectly, with Venus. In Flavian propaganda, Jupiter regularly appeared on Vespasian coinage; he was associated with the benefits of the new regimen provided – victory, peace, and food. Price (in Cannadien and Price 1993:79-95) and Jones (1993:11-112) deal with the idea that educated Romans, as expressed by Aelius Aristides in his *Cyzicus Speech*, were aware of the clear difference between old pagan gods (*dues*) and deified emperors (*divi*). No one ever prayed to a *divus*. Domitian and Trajan are portrayed on some of their coins with a thunderbolt.

It is correct to say that Domitian supported the state religion and promoted temple repairs such as *Divroum Fortuna*, *Ianus Quadrirons*, *Custos Minervas* and altars dedicated to Vulcan and other gods (Jones 1993:84-88). In external evidence Domitian is mentioned by Suetonius and Martial, referring to him as “*dominus et deus*” (Suetonius, *Dom* 13; Martial, *Epig* 9.56.3, cited by Hemer 1986:86-87). Jones (1993:148-150) also points out that there are no signs in the epigraphic or numismatic evidence from Asia that unusual divine titles were employed by Domitian, but the fact that when he died the Roman Senate ordered that his name be excised from inscriptions, and that his name would certainly have been removed from temples, could indicate the Domitian excess in being considered as a god (Jones 1993:148-150).

4.6.7 Domitian persecution

4.6.7.1 Against the Jews

According to Jones (1993:221), the only persecution accountability in Domitian texts was to tax Jews. Jews were far more numerous. There are hints of anti-Semitism in Latin literature at least 150 years before Cicero. Neither Martial nor Quintilian were free of it (Cicero, *Flacco* 167; Tacitus, *Hist* 5.5, cited by Jones 1993:117) In Talmudic and Midrashic sources reference is made to Jewish persecution. The reference is made to a Jewish proselyte named *Onkelos*. He is described as a son of *Kalonikos*, a nephew of Titus. On three occasions the emperor wanted to arrest him but failed to do so. Also, the *Midrash* and the Babylonian Talmud refer to a senator named Ketī' ah bar Shalom who converted with his wife to Judaism and was put to death by the state (Jones 1993:117).

4.6.7.2 Against the Christians

The evidence of Domitian persecution against Christians is diverse and not abundant beyond the Latin writers and practically not present in Roman archaeology thus far. It is certain that, from the time of Nero, Christians were charged with having Theyestan banquets (Fergusson 2001:333) and with

committing Oedipean incest and child murder (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2604; Suetonius 2006:213-249). Hislop (1959:232), however, describes sacred cannibalism that was present in the Baal cult, including the legend of Cyclopes. The words of Jesus in Luke 22:19b-20 and John 6:51-57 must have been misunderstood by Romans. These words of Jesus have to be interpreted in the symbolical context of receiving Him as a personal Savior, believing that He is the One that cleanses and forgives from sin (White 1955:353). Bible laws forbade the ingestion of human blood and flesh (Gn 9:4; Dt 12:16). Billings (2006:151-165) discusses the issue of the Roman allegation of Christian cannibalism in the Lyon persecution during 177 CE. It is probable those Romans, in slander and mocking, ascribed the cannibalistic rites of Baal and the legend of Cyclopes to the Christians' rites (Hislop 1959:232). There are evidences of jurisdiction of consuls and praetors in mass trials in other religions other than that of Christians. Such is the case of the Bacchanalian question in 186 CE (Bauman 2007:17).

In Roman law, the term *Obstinatio* describes Christians and their religion, who would be left undisturbed if they would only render formal obedience to the religion of the state. Later in the Empire, Aurelius refers to Christianity in the words *φιλή παρατάξις* – sheer obstinacy – and Aristides apparently refers to Christianity as *ἀὐθαδεία* – stubbornness (Bauman 2007:204).

Jones insists that the Christian tradition of the second Roman persecution, or so called Domitianian, began in the writings of cardinal Caesar Baronius 1 500 years after Domitian's death, and that no pagan literature refers to Christian persecution by Domitian (Bauman 2007:114). However, Jones (1993:116, in citing Suetonius) considers as external evidence the fact that Eusebius uses the first precise reference in saying that Melito was bishop of Sardis (170 CE) to the effect that Nero and Domitian were persecuted by evil advisers to slander Christians. Scullard (1982:319-332), commenting on this issue, says that the account for the original persecution of Christianity by Nero was not an intuition that Christianity did threaten the stability of the Roman Empire.

4.7 κύριος IN THE FIRST CENTURY CE

4.7.1 The Christian allegiance to κύριος

In the Johannine literature the statement of Thomas in John 20:28: Ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου, is the equivalent in the LXX of the Hebrew יהוה (Orr and Nuelsen 1974c:1267-1268; 1974e:1583-1584), the same word which is transliterated as “Jehová” in the Reina Valera Spanish Version and “Yahveh” in the Jerusalem Bible Version. By this confession Thomas related Jesus as the same Jehovah of the Old Testament. These words of Thomas evidently later became a faith confession using Κύριος Ἰησοῦς (1 Cor 12:3). Θεός appears in the Septuagint as a translation from the Hebrew אלהים *Elohim* (Orr and Nuelsen 1974c:1264-1270), which is used mostly for God the Father (Rm 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3), but in the Thomas declaration, these words are used in the same way as in John 1:1 θεός ἦν ὁ λόγος (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:1043). Notwithstanding the references from Latin writers such as Suetonius (*Dom* 13.) and Martial (*Epig.* 9.56.3) concerning the use of *dominus et dues* by Domitian, Kittel (1965e:1058) says the use of the word *dominus* at the beginning of the imperial period had another role. During the first century CE of the Roman Empire, Rome rejected the use of the term in the same way as the oriental-style monarchy was utilized. However, with the passing of time, κύριος, slowly but surely, established itself in Roman society. However, there is no passage in which κύριος, when used to describe a Roman emperor, establishes such usage during the first and second centuries. Kittel emphasizes, however, that there is no passage in which κύριος when used to talk about a Roman emperor, is sufficient in itself to describe the emperor as a god (Kittel 1965e:1056). The imperial priest, for example, is practically never called ἱερεὺς τοῦ κυρίου. Κύριος is not found on the private domestic altars of Hadrian, for instance, in Miletus, which apparently once stood in every citizen's house in Miletus. On coins, the term is rare and apparently not used before the second century CE. The difficulty lies elsewhere. If the emperor is not κύριος as a god, he can be god as κύριος (Kittel 1965e:1056). That is what the following epigram dedicated to Augustus shows:

Καίσαρι ποντομέδοντι καὶ ἀπειρῶν κρατέοντι
Ζανί, τῷ ἐκ Ζανός πατρός, Ἐλευθερίῳ
Δεσπότη Εὐρώπας τε καὶ Ἀσίδος, ἄστρῳ ἀπάσας
ἑλλάδος, [ὅς] σωτ [ῆ] ρ Ζεὺς ἀν [έ] τ [ει] λ [ε] μέγας.

It is not surprising that in the acts of Christian martyrs opposition to the absolute claim of the Roman state, with its implication of deity, is also found in the form of distinction between *dominus noster imperatur* and *dominus meus, rex regum e imperatur omnium gentium*. The use of *rex* and *imperator* along with *dominus* shows that the point at issue was not the mere title, but the religious claim of the state that Christians were forced to resist in demonstration of their loyalty to God and the state (Kittel 1965e:1058). Revelation shows the divine allegiance between the supreme risen God Κύριος and His dominion, which Christians thought Rome was part of (Rv 1:10; 16: 5; 17:14; 19:16). In Roman thought, neglect and rejection of the gods of Rome was seen as atheism.

4.7.2 The Roman concept of atheism

The “atheism” accusations by which Christians were persecuted could well be represented by their negative thought toward worship of the emperor or the gods to which the Roman state was established and protected. Because of this, Schüssler (1985:144) says that the plight of the Christian was even more difficult because their refusal to worship the emperors increased the threat of economic deprivation, imprisonment and execution. Gaddis (2005:19) reminds us that the Roman Empire will bequeath its persecution legacy to the Roman church when he says that the Roman system depended upon the glorified hierarchical authority, while remaining intensively aware of the danger of its abuse by the all too fallible men to whom that authority was entrusted; as it was with the emperor, so too it could be with the bishop. Gaddis (2005:19) adds a sense of necessary violence against “others,” including Christians to preserve its order.

Schüssler (1985:132-36) also adds that the imperialist setting gave Revelation its urgency. Also, it is possible that John’s rhetorical response in Revelation occurred because he had to confront groups of individuals in the synagogues

and churches in Asia that had a positive opinion about Roman power. One very important factor in Rome's persecution of Christians was the Christian's aggressiveness in witnessing Christ to the pagan world. Christians were not only happy with their uncompromising withdrawal from the practices of heathen worship; they also actively assailed the pagan cults. To the Christians, these cults became doctrines of demons (Orr and Nuelsen 1974a:2604). As it has been discussed previously, it is also known that the imperial cult and worship for the Genius of the emperor and the Roman state were very unholy in the Christians' eyes. Hence they fell under the charges of disloyalty to the emperor and could be proved guilty of *majestas* (Orr and Nuelsen 1974a:2605). This is what the Romans called *Odium generis humani* – “hatred by the human race” – by the populace and educated classes. Most of the early adherents to Christianity belonged to the slave, freedman, and artisan classes and were called *Asinariio*, “the sect that worshipped the ass's head” by the Romans (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a: 2605). Tacitus, instead, called them *atrocia aut pudenda* – atrocious and abominable thing. He also called them *superstitio exitiabilis* – baneful superstition (*Ann.* XV 44, in Orr and Nuelsen 1974a:2605). Suetonius called the Christians *novae ac maleficae* – novel and malefic (*Ner* 16, in Orr and Nuelsen 1964a:2605). It is evident that Christians found the difference between the γινώσκω and ἀναγινώσκω. In the Johannine literature, the first term means one that received and has the recognition and reception of love. The Son has been sent to make that possible because of His revelation to a sinful κόσμος (Kittel 1964a:711). The ἀναγινώσκω vocable interacts with exterior knowledge like to know exactly or to recognize. It is used for a person reading a letter (Ac 15:31; 23:34; 2 Cor 1:13; 3:2; Eph 3:4). In Revelation 1:3 the reference is to the reading of the prophecy presented (Kittel 1964a:343). In early Christianity both terms produced a deep impact in a system based on slavery, polytheism, and self-exaltation as happened with the Roman emperors and the state.

The consideration of the Roman emperor as *divi* or god is something supported mostly, thus far, by the internal evidence of Latin writers. Some archeological evidence is needed to back up the Roman writers.

Revelation 13:18 defines the beast as having a number, χξς. This identity and ghematric validity of the term has provoked different views on its meaning. To help in this study, there is a description of the usage of the words ἀριθμέω and ψηφίζω during the Graeco-Roman world. The next sections discuss the various postures on the beast number.

4.8 THE ἀριθμός OF THE BEAST

4.8.1 ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς)

Referring to the literal use of ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς), and its function in the Bible, nothing – either linguistically or grammatically – indicates that the mark of the beast of Revelation 13 is a literal mark on or in the skin (Abanes 1998:127). However, there has been a current of thought that tends to over emphasize its symbolic use. Seiss (1865:457) says that the mark, even being used as it appears in the Greek to demonstrate the middle letter (ξ), actually resembles a serpent. According to Seiss, the mark is both a name and a number. The number, as John gives it, is made up of two Greek characters, which also stand for the name of Christ (Χριστός) and, with a third, the figure of a crooked serpent put between them (χ [ξ] ς). To this Seiss add “is the name of God adulterated and transformed into a devil sacrament” (Seiss 1865:457). Luther (see Plass 2006:114), the German Reformer, said that the number of the beast was in a tonsured hair cut worn by Roman Catholic clergy. Since as early as Irenaeus, the number of the beast was used in the ghematric style. According to Sanders (1918:95-99), Irenaeus used, among others λαμπέτις (the illustrious one), Ἀμνός ἀδικός (unjust lamb), Τειταν Παλαιβασκανος (an ancient sorcerer), and Κακός ὁδεγός (bad guide). Regarding the translation of ἀριθμός ἀνθρώπου (see Rv 13:18), Minear (1968:258) suggests that the translation of this phrase can be rendered as “The brand, the name of the beast, or the number of its name ... is

an ordinary human number. His number is 666.” Before discussing the various ghematric issues relating to Revelation 13:18, it is first necessary to define and explain the terminology of the verbs ἀριθμέω and ψηφίζω.

4.8.2 ἀριθμέω (ἀριθμός)

In the New Testament these words are often used in the literal sense of “to count” or “to reckon a sum or number” (Mt 10:30; Ac 11:21; Rm 9:27, 5:11). According to Kittel (1964c:461), it is in Revelation 13:18 where this term has special theological significance in the study of sacred numbers. Before the abstract system of numbering was invented, man simply took as many pebbles as he had objects in view. The Latin *Calculus*, from which the word to calculate derives, points back to this primitive sphere. Man came to sense either a power or regularity behind numbers, perhaps because some of them recur in definite sequences. Because he could not properly grasp this regularity, that which he could not comprehend in numbers was a mystery to him. He read a potency into them, as in the case of the letters of the alphabet (Kittel 1964c:461). The task of changing the word and replacing it with a numerical value is not an easy task, since every number represents a variety of possibilities. For this reason, it was a favorite procedure in the ancient world to present numerically a name that one wished to keep secret. Kittel (1964c:462), citing Zahn, says the latter gives an excellent and instructive example from excavations at Pompeii. There is a wall inscription with the declaration of love: φιλω ἥς ἀριθμός φμε – the name of the lover is concealed; the lover will know it when she recognizes her name in the sum of the numbers of the 3 letters φμε (f= 500 + m= 40 + e=5 = 545). But the passing stranger does not know in the least who the beloved is, nor does the nineteenth century investigator know how many letters there are in the name, which gives us the total of 545 when added numerically. Kittel (1964c:462) continues by saying that it also needs to be recalled that the number 888 appears as a symbol for Jesus (I = 10 + h = 8 + s = 200 + 0 = 70 + u = 400 + ~ = 200 = 888). In ghematria a good deal depends on correct guessing (*Sib.* 1, 326-330 in Kittel 1964c:462). In regard to the concept of epigrams, these are attested

to in their presence in the Greek anthologies and other Hellenistic sources (Nisbet 2004:200-210), where the isopsephic epigrams of Leonides of Alexandria are a case in point: the letters of the first distich of a four-line poem add up to exactly the same as the letters of the second distich.

With the previous ghematric function in mind, it is good to anticipate that Historicism does not attach exclusively to the ghematric view of the number 666 in Revelation 13:18 as the only Biblical clue to decipher the sea monster beast identity. The $\chi\xi\varsigma$ interpretation complexity based on the data source that follows in § 4.10.1.2.3 and 4.17.1.2, requires a more comprehensive study of characteristics in order to identify the sea/monster of Revelation 13 and relate it to the sealing scenario of Revelation 7:1-3. The word $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ is another term that depicts a little more descriptive function of this ghematric complexity in Revelation.

4.8.3 $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ ($\Psi\eta\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$, $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, $\sigma\upsilon\mu\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota\nu$)

Kittel (1974d:604) mentions that the normal $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{o}\varsigma$ usage in the normal Greek denoted small stones that were used in board games, counting, or numbers. They were used in votes. $\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, $\sigma\upsilon\mu\Psi\eta\phi\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ are used in terms of to vote, to reach a decision, to be condemned. $\gamma\chi\eta$ is used for a little stone or pebble (Lm 3:16). Philo uses the term in the sense of pronouncements, verdict, or judicial verdict. In the New Testament, the term is employed in the Lukan corpus (Ac 26:10). Paul says that he had part in sentencing Christians to death by giving his voice against them. The white of Revelation 2:17, on which the new name is written, reminds one of the magical formula; in this case the new name mediates supernatural powers and offers protection against demons and evil forces. This idea gives an indication of the supernatural, the distinctive (Kittel 1974d:605). In Revelation 13:18 the number of the beast, which is also the number of a man, is to be counted. This counting, according to Kittel (1974d:607), can only mean putting the number in the correspondent Greek or Latin letters and thus arriving at the mysterious number.

Next, there are various ghematric possibilities for the 666 and its identity characteristic with the sea/monster beast. However, this study considers only the code number hypothesis associated with other Apocalypse passages that produce the Historicist exegetical approach on the identification of the beast in Revelation 13:18. This code number hypothesis will be discussed in § 14.1.2.

4.8.4 ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς) and its ghematric application to Nero in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin

Cory (2006:61) repeats the idea that χξς was a codex language to disguise the real character of the Roman Empire in the person of Nero.

The Greek spelling, “Nerōn Kaisar,” transliterates into Hebrew as “קסר נרון” or “nrvn qsr,” and adding the corresponding values yields 666, as shown:

Resh (ר)	Samech (ס)	Qof (ק)	Noon (נ)	Vav (ו)	Resh (ר)	Noon (נ)	TOTAL
200	60	100	50	6	200	50	666

Commenting on the intent of justifying Nero and the Preterist ghematric approach by some scholars, Strand, by citing Sanders (1918:97 in Holbrook 1992b:203), says that adding an *n* to Nero appears to be an unjustifiable device in spite of a so-called illustration from Murabba’t proposed by Hillers (1963:65, in Holbrook 1992b:203) who called attention to an Aramaic document published, discussed, and given in a partially reconstructed text in the *Textes* volume (part 1) in Benoit and Vaux (1962:18, Pl 29) and given in photographic reproduction in the *Planches* volume (part 2) of the same work in Pl 29. Looking at the photograph of this rather fragmentary document as it is pieced together, Sanders (1918:97) did not have the same confidence as Hillers. Sanders explains that there is no room for a *’* (*yodh*) after *ק* (*qoph*). He continues by saying that working from photographs is hazardous, in any event. Nevertheless, in this text as it appears in the photograph, a small part of the *ק* is missing (this letter can nevertheless be

identified), but lacking too is the rest of the word – indeed also the rest of the line. The assumption is that the spelling is *qsr* on the basis of estimated space for the letters, but throughout the text the scribe was not consistent in his spacing of letters, sometimes even running them together. In any case, even if קִסְר (*qsr*) does occur occasionally in texts, why should we give priority to an uncommon form of the word rather than to the usual form קִסְר? Sanders also mentions that the translation of Caesar into קִסְר is quite atypical. In numerous examples he found קִסְר to be the form consistently used. He recognized that translation is a Preterist approach problem (Sanders 1918:97).

4.8.5 ἐξακόσιοι ἐξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς) and its ghematric Domitian application

Another Preterist assumption for χξς is applied also to Domitian (Stauffer 1955:170-190), arguing that ghematria had been the most popular form of numerology, not only among Jews, but also in the Graeco-Roman world. The Greek terminus technicus is once again ψηφίζεῖν which literally means counting or calculating with stones. This Greek ghematric procedure was intended to explain the number χξς for Domitian, because he reigned in the time of the Apocalypse writing ΑΚΑΙΔΟΜΕΤΣΕΒΕΓΓΕ, as derived from the abbreviations on coins and inscriptions. The following ghematric diagram explanation on the Greek language gives one example of this approach:

Α	Κ	Α	Ι	Δ	Ο	Μ	Ε	Τ	Σ	Ε	Β	Γ	Ε	TOTAL
1	20	1	10	4	70	40	5	300	200	5	2	3	5	666

4.8.6 ἐξακόσιοι ἐξήκοντα ἕξ (χξς) and its ghematric *Vicarivs Filii Dei* application

Considering some other ghematric possibilities for χξς, one must say that some Protestant Bible commentators shortly after the Reformation paired and equated the “beast” of Revelation 13 with the Papacy (Halley 1978:726). To this end, the letters of an alleged title of the Pope, *Vicarivs Filii Dei* (Vicar of the Son of God),

are summed to total 666 in Roman numerals. One of the earliest extant records of a Protestant writer on this subject is that of Andreas Helwig (1572-1643), who wrote under the pseudonym of *Irenechoreaus* in 1612 in his work *Antichristus Romanus*. Actually, he computed 15 titles in three languages for such a purpose, and among these was: *Dux Cleri, Dic Lux* (Froom 1948a:605-608). The title *Vicarius Filii Dei* was contained in the *Donation of Constantine*, a forged document from 752 CE falsely claiming to come from the emperor Constantine the Great, by which large privileges and rich possessions were conferred to the pope and the Roman church (Hutchinson et al 1959:71). This earliest collection of Catholic canon law reads: *Beatus Petrus in terries Vicarivs Filii Dei esse videtur constitus* (*Decretum of Gratian*, part 1, div. 96, in Coleman 1922:13). However, this title was never an official title used for the Pope. This interpretation also requires the disregarding of letters that had no numerical value for the Romans (such as the AR and S in *Vicarivs*).

Following, there is one Latin ghematric explanation on 666 as the Papacy:

V	I	C	A	R	I	V	S	F	I	L	I	I	D	E	I	TOTAL
5	1	100	0	0	1	5	0	0	1	50	1	1	500	0	1	666

4.8.7 Veracity tension accuracy of *Vicarivs Filii Dei*

The tension to find *Vicarius Filii Dei* outside the *Donation of Constantine* or in later affirmation of any papal mitra has been a complex one. The fact that the *Donation of Constantine* document was a forgery attaches a dubious credibility to this particular ghematric postulate (Fried 2007:1, 3, 4, 15-18, 22-28, 30-40, 108, 115, 116). The shortest evidence for this is the well-known term *Vicarius Cristi* (Froom 1948a:607). Pope titles became increasingly common after the French Revolution (Froom 1948a:607-608). Froom does not quote any official Roman Catholic document beyond *Antichristus Romanus*, where the title is applied. However, some other research (www.biblelight.net/666.htm#official) adds to this

discussion more earlier dated material to explore on the antiquity of *Vicarius Filii Dei* existence.

Wilks (2008:2) mentions Agostino Trionfo (1243-1328), a fourteenth century Canon Lawyer who applies *Vicarius Filii Dei* to the Pope. The same *Vicarius Filii Dei* is the phrase supported by Leland Saak (<http://www.hol.com/~mikesch/666.htm>). Another discussion in the search for a document to authenticate *Vicarius Filii Dei* under the $\chi\xi\varsigma$ ghematric possibility is that by Correia (www.biblelight.net/666.htm#offical).

One interesting archaeological finding during the nineteenth century was the discovery of the *Oxyrhynchus papyri* or p^{115} in southern Egypt. This unearthing of evidence lead to a turnabout from the traditional occurrence ghematric interpretation for the $\chi\xi\varsigma$ number writing.

4.9 THE $\chi\iota\varsigma$ IN THE OXYRHYNCHUS MANUSCRIPT

4.9.1 p^{115}

The place where this papyrus was found is $O\xi\upsilon\rho\rho\upsilon\gamma\xi o\varsigma$, which means sharp-snouted or sharp-nosed fish. It seems that this particular fish was linked to Egyptian mythology (www.papyrology.ox.ac.uk/). The Greek settlers after Alexander's conquest adopted Egypt's sacred animals alongside their own gods. The descendants of these settlers ran Egypt for a thousand years, right down to the Arab conquest. In their towns they spoke, wrote, and read Greek; worshipped their fish; and learned their Homer.

Below, in the next page, there is a bronze sitatnette of the *oxyrhynchus* fish from which the locality that bears its name and from where the $\chi\iota\varsigma$ was found.



Bronze statuette of the fish ὀξύρρον at the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin

(www.nationalgeographic.com)

Classical Greek and Roman literature is being read for the first time in 2 000 years thanks to new technology especially for illegible texts of the ancient world. The new technique consists in using multi-spectral imaging.

This new technique was used to work with the findings of two Oxford scholars, Grenfell and Hunt, who in 1890 found a lot of information about the rise of Christianity during the Roman period with their discovery of a collection of papyri, known as *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, which they found in an ancient garbage dump in Egypt. These papyri contain writings of Homer, Sophocles, and Euripides. They say Christians started out as a small social phenomenon, and then took over everything.

Obbink (in Owen 2005:1-2), a lecturer in papyrology and Greek literature at Oxford and research director of this technology study, says the digital imaging process was first developed for researchers who studied Roman texts buried during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Italy in the first century. They exposed the documents to either ultraviolet or infrared range. The Oxyrhynchus papyri finding also presented p¹¹⁵, which to some estimate is the oldest Revelation fragment so far. In this papyrus the internal evidence for the ἀριθμός θηρίων is χις instead of χξς. Favoring χξς for Revelation 13:18, Irenaeus talks of 600 tens plus 6 units which indicates a fullness of apostasy (*Adv Haer* 5 30.3).

Kepler (1957:148) points to another method used by some Preterist interpreters which is to give to the letters in the Latin word *Neron* numerical equivalents which total $\chi\xi\varsigma$ or $\chi\iota\varsigma$ if the same name were given simply as *Nero*. According to Strand (in Holbrook 1992b:202), this ghematric point of view is not representative of mainstream Preterist tradition.

The p¹¹⁵ found, according to Comfort and Barret (2001:664-677), covers various portions of Revelation, from Revelation 13:18 to 14:7, also including Revelation 15:1, 4-7. It also contains Revelation 2:1-3, 3-15, 27-29; 3:10-12; 5:8-9; 6:5-6; 8:3-8, 11-13; 9:1-5, 7-16, 18-21; 10:1-4 8-11; 11:1-5 8-15, 18-19; 12:1-5, 8-10, 12-17; 13:1-3; 16:1-16, 18; 14:1-3, 5-7, 10-11, 14-15, 18-20 and 15:1, 4-7. It has 12 codex fragments. Each sheet measures 15.5 cm x 23.5 cm with 33-36 lines. It is likely that the scribe used a codex that was already bound before he began his work, inasmuch as the width of the writing of the pages with binding to the right-hand side. (i e, the odd-numbered pages, see Comfort & Barret 2001:664-677; Jay 2004:5-55). The possibility exists that if the particular papyri was bound first, there could be a scribe mistake on the proper number $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\alpha\kappa\omicron\varsigma\iota\omicron\iota$ $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\eta\kappa\omicron\tau\alpha$ $\epsilon\acute{\xi}$ ($\chi\xi\varsigma$) for Revelation 13:18, because of the handwriting angle of the copyist, or as we explain later as a possible unintentional actuary mistake.

According to Michael (2000:79-80) the veracity for $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\alpha\kappa\omicron\varsigma\iota\omicron\iota$ $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\eta\kappa\omicron\tau\alpha$ $\epsilon\acute{\xi}$ is attested by A, κ , p⁴⁷ and Vulgate, among other manuscripts. Michael also cites Hoskier (1929:xi), who says that in order to have an impartial accuracy it is better to follow the manuscripts that are independent of church use and which contain the $\chi\xi\varsigma$ number. To that end, Hoskier emphasizes that:

[t]he documents to which attention should particularly be directed are those which have a history independent of Church "use", and which owe their freedom from Ecclesiastical standardization to their transmission apart from the documents collected as our "New Testament." They are found in collections of treatises on mystical subjects and are listed under many numbers, and include no less than forty of our manuscripts, among which are 35, 36, 38, 58, 81, 122, 140, 143, 148, 152, 170, 174, 176, 200, 222, 233, 240, 251, all documents meriting attention."

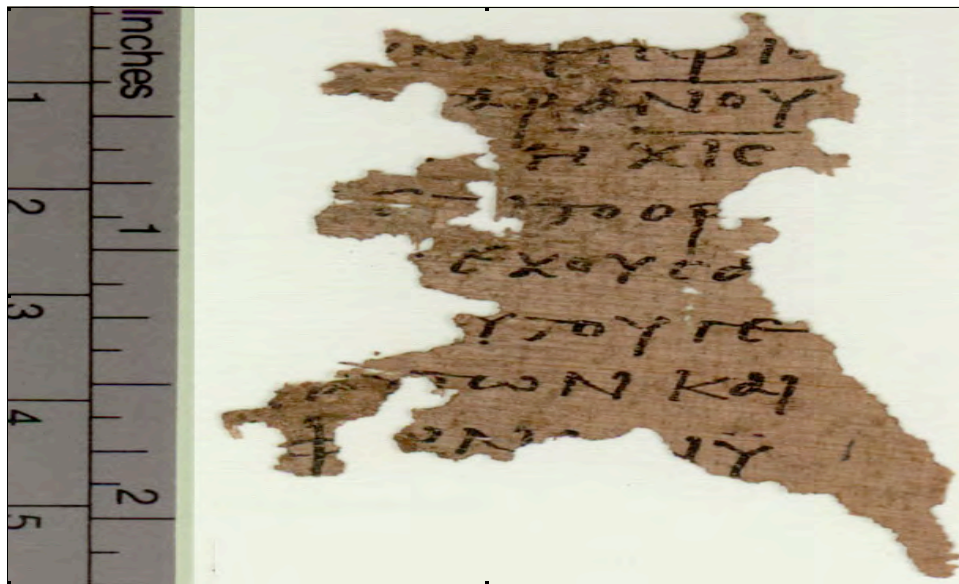
(Hoskier 1929:xi, in Michael 2000:81)

Michael (2000:82), citing Metzger (1975:749-750), who for his part refers to Tischendorf on the 616 instead of 666, refers to one possible intentional change on some manuscripts. In this regard Michale and Metzger say:

It should be mentioned that Metzger notes that according to Tischendorf's 8th ed., the number 616 was also read by two minuscule manuscripts which are no longer extant (nos. 5 and 11). Metzger himself is inclined to think that the change was intentional, seeing that the Greek form Neron Caesar written in Hebrew characters is equivalent to 666, whereas the Latin form Nero Caesar is equivalent to 616.

(Michale & Metzger 1975:749-750)

In the following photo, there is a photocopy of the p¹¹⁵ found at Oxyrhynchus, showing the particular number $\chi\iota\varsigma$ instead of the traditional $\chi\zeta\varsigma$ in Revelation 13:18. This papyrus fragment is currently located at the Museum of Oxford.



Papyrus 115, with $\chi\iota\varsigma$ at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

(www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Number_of_the_Beast)

Irenaeus, referring to the $\chi\zeta\varsigma$ issue, also cautioned that is better to wait for the fulfillment of the prophecy rather than to make conjectures because there are many manes that can play that number. Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer* 5.30.1) also comments that $\chi\iota\varsigma$ was indeed a faulty number which “he is inclined to think”

happened as a slip on the part of copyists (*Anti Nicene Fathers*, in Holbrook 1992b:202, see also Metzger 1975:676).

After considering the complexities and limitations of ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοτα ἕξ and χξς in their different ghematric and manuscript scenarios, we now turn to the Historicist approach on the two beasts of Revelation 13 and their relation to the sealing of Revelation 7:1-3.

4.10 HISTORICIST APPROACH ON τὸ χάραγμα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θηρίου

4.10.1 The first beast and its mark

The presence of animals in seals, such as lions and bulls, could well represent, as Collon says, the most ancient emblems of two tribes (Collon 1987:853-858). Later in history, the symbolism of kingdoms through hybrid animals was also present in ANE motifs. One of those earliest animal motifs depicted is the winged beast. This hybrid animal is shown beside Marduk, patron god of Babylon (Langdon 1964:116, 117, 118, 227-282). This sealing hybrid symbolism was transposed later and attested in Scripture prophecy as part of the apocalyptic literature in the Old Testament, mainly in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, to depict world kingdoms (Jr 4; 50; Lm 4; Ezk 17; Dn 7; see also Langdon 1964:116,117, 227-282). This symbolical hybrid prophetic beast shape pattern is also found in Revelation (chap 13) and in some extra-biblical sources such as 2 Baruch 29:8 (in Charles 2004:378); 4 Ezra 12:10 (in Box 1912:250). In the Apocalypse of Abraham (13:4-9), commenting on Genesis 15:11, Azazel is shown as a bird of prey. Another extra biblical source where winged beasts are depicted is located in the Sybiline Oracles (1973: *Books I-VIII*. 9-55; IX-XIV. 52-78).

It must be remembered that the Historicist Protestant Reformation brought the insight that certain Bible passages (such as Dn 7:8, 25; 2 Th 2:1-8; Rv 13:1-18) portray not an individual, but an ecclesiastical *system*, long present in the church, namely the papacy (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:41). There have been many

commentators since the fourteenth century CE. Some well-known Reformers included John Purvey (Wycliffe's associate), Andreas Osiander, Nikolas Von Amsdorf, Herinrich Bullinger, and Nikolas Ridley. Also included were other well-known scientists such as sir Isaac Newton, mathematicians such as the Scottish sir John Napier, John Cotton (the early American preacher) and Timothy Dwight (president of Yale; see Knight 2003:168).

According to Maxwell (in Holbrook 1992b:67), Seventh-day Adventists consider that no commentator prior to the rise of Adventism applied the mark of the beast to the Sabbath-Sunday issue. Because of this, Historicists look to the Roman Catholic writings and historic statements to justify and sustain that posture. On this topic, Tuberville (in 1649:58) presents two Roman Catholic declarations concerning the Sabbath-Sunday confrontation evolution with its posterior change. These historical statements are as follows:

Q. How prove you that the Church hath power to command feasts and holidays?

A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her, -she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.

(Keenan 1876:174; Knight 2003:155)

Q. Why did the Catholic Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday, because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, and the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on a Sunday.

Q. By what authority did the Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday by the plenitude of that divine power which Jesus Christ bestowed upon her.

(Geierman 1946:50; Knight 2003:155)

Speaking about the pope's power to modify and change the Decalogue, it is quoted: "The pope can modify divine law." (Petrus de Ancharano, in Ferraris 1772; Art Papa II).

Here is another interesting statement from the Council of Trent: "The Sabbath, the most glorious day in the law, has been changed into the Lord's day ... by the authority of the church" (Archbishop of Reggio, Council of Trent, in Mansi 1960-1961:529-530).

These Historicist conclusions must be discussed in the context of the Roman papacy and the posterior Constantine law favoring Sunday. Because Biblical Historicism believes that prophecy is unfulfilled history and, of course, that history, in some important and particular instances, when it refers to the *continuum*, history is fulfilled prophecy. One of the prophecies in historicism that links the Sabbath-Sunday controversy is found in Revelation 12:1-17. This prophecy narrative has been called the 1260 years. The next section focuses on a brief study on this vision and its implications, as a historical *continuum* preamble for Revelation 7:1-3.

4.10.2 The 1 260 years of τῆς θαλάσσης θηρίων (τὸ θηρίον τὸ πρῶτον) in Revelation 13:1-10

Historicist believes that prophecy is unfulfilled history and history is a *continuum*. On this respect the *continuum* is "evolving" up to the ἔσχατον, which is not isolated but including the message of sealing. The 1 260 years prophecy depending on Historicism is part of the *continuum* core of events. The background of this prophecy is a controversy between God and Satan, with the characteristic Semitic language tension past-future-past-present-past-future. Historicists talk about the 1 260 days/years in terms of a 360-day year (Nm 14:34; Ezk 4:6, Dn 7:25; Rv 11:2; 12:7; 13:1-5; Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:41-80). This principle is based on a symbol approach, not a literal year of 365 days. Even though the amount of days of each year was variable, the Jewish calendar was

corrected with the occasional addition of an extra month (Nichol & Cottrell 1980d:106-107). Historicists consider the beast of Daniel 7 and 8 and Revelation 13 and 17 as powers that have a crescendo in the religious conflict against God. Because of this, the beast of Revelation 13 and its hybrid indicate a paganistic-religious compromise. This sea-leopard hybrid beast denotes a gathering process of the pagan rites and the fight and rebellion of past prophecy kingdoms against God and His people (Dn 2:31-44; 7:3-25; 8:3-12). According to this approach, non-Biblical teachings, such as Sunday keeping, were introduced into the modern world through the Roman Catholic system. Historicism considers that the political function which was kicked into the process of this hybrid beast power had its starting point in the year 538 CE when the Catholic army of the Roman Empire commanded by Belisarius drove the fatally enfeebled Arian Ostrogoths away from Rome. These Ostrogoths were the last of three horns to fall according to the prophecy of Daniel 7:24 (Holbrook 1992b:76). The other two Arian powers that were plucked out earlier were the Herules and Vandals. Emperor Justinian, with his famous Decree of Justinian, called the bishop of Rome the head of all the holy churches and head of the holy priests of God. In an additional letter, he pronounced the bishop of Rome as heresy corrector (*Justinian Codex*, Book 1. Title 1, in Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:854). The end of the papal supremacy in terms of state and religious worldwide control in Historicism thought ended in 1798. Historicists apply Revelation 13:3 to the end of the 1260 years on February 15, 1798. The terms *μαχαίρη* and *ἀιχμαλωσίαν* from Revelation 13:10 imply military action (Holbrook 1992b:77). During the French Revolution, under orders from the revolutionary French government, general Alexander Berthier issued a proclamation in Rome on February 15, 1798, informing Pius VI and the people of Rome that the pope should no longer exercise any function (Adolphus 1803:365, cited in Holbrook 1992b:77). Aulard (1927:151, in Holbrook 1992b:77) explains that general Berthier was carrying out an order issued by the central French government. When the armies of France were enjoying victories in Italy in 1797, Napoleon received a communication from the Directory dated 13 *Pluviôse* of the year V, signed by *La Revellière-Lépeaux*, *Barras*, and *Reubell* saying that “the

Roman religion would always be an irreconcilable enemy of the Republic, it must be struck in France; but there is one thing more essential, to the attainment of the end desired, and that is to destroy, if possible, the centre of unity of the Roman Church; and it is for you [Napoleon] ... to realize this aim if you consider it practicable” (Aulard 1927:151). Historicists claim, even though the papacy had experienced other military defeats and even captivities during its long 1260 years of supremacy domain, the 1798 captivity was unique in at least two significant aspects: 1) It came at the climax of several centuries of decline in the influence of Catholicism in the minds of Europeans, and 2) it was not merely a military power or political coup, but a stroke deliberately intended to terminate the papacy forever. Spain was for long more loyal to the pope than Italy, but when the exiled Pius VI sought asylum in Spain, it was denied to him, except on such conditions as could not in reason be complied with (Duppa 1799:53). When the pope died in 1799 in France “half [of] Europe thought ... with the Pope the Papacy was dead” (Trevor 1997:441). According to McNeill, 1798 was set in a major transitional era which began with the French Revolution. The author indicates three major aspects: territorial expansion, industrialism and democratic revolution (McNeill 1963:730-762).

In order to unify the historical *continuum* in the prophecy connection between Daniel 7 and Revelation 12 and 13, we must explain the reasons why Historicists deny Antiochus Epiphanes IV as the little horn in Daniel 7:25 and 8:10-12. This next section discusses these adverse points toward the Preterist and futurist approaches on this Seleucid-Syrian king.

4.10.3 Antiochus Epiphanes IV as the little horn

Preterist and Futurist writers have considered Daniel 7:25 and 8:10-12 as being fulfilled not in Rome as Historicism teaches, but in the person of Antiochus Epiphanes IV who conducted military campaigns between 169-163 BCE in Egypt, Syria, and Palestine (Walvoord 1989:185, 264, 257-266; Wallace 1973:138; Russell 1981:3; Strauss 1969:244-245). He desecrated the Jewish

temple, offering swine sacrifices on the temple altar in 168 BCE. (1 Macc 1-6; 1 Macc 3:57; 4:29; 5:52; 6:15). He died in 163 BCE. The military conquests were temporary and local and he had to renounce them when the Romans sided with Ptolemy and, through Marco Popilio Laenas, a Roman legate sent by the Senate, commanded Antiochus to desist and abandon that territory (Smith 1977:126). The little horn must be opposing to the Prince of princes, an expression which denotes Jesus Christ (Dn 9:25; Ac 3:15; Rv 1:5). But Antiochus died 164 years before Christ was born (Smith 1977:126). Antiochus was simply the octave of the 26 Syrian kings that reigned in succession over that territory. He did not have the *continuum* prophetic cosmic power implicated in Daniel 8. He took the nickname of ἐπίφανες “illustrious,” but because of his vile folly and oddness, some called him mad and changed his name to ἐπίμανες “crazy” (Prideaux 1749:106-107). According to Newton (1922:222), a horn of a beast never is interpreted as being one person alone (with the exception of Jesus in Lk 1:69 καὶ ἤγειρεν κέρας σωτηρίας ἡμῖν....), but it is always representative of a new kingdom. However, the kingdom of Antiochus already existed. He did not represent a new kingdom.

Historicism suggests that in order for the sea/monster or hybrid beast of Revelation 13 to reach and achieve a worldwide power again with a χάραγμα obedience in all human population, there is another land/beast in Revelation 13 that will be helping it in one global dominion proposition favoring the sea/monster beast attempt. This is the purpose of the explanation in the following subdivision.

4.10.4 The ἄλλο θηρίον ἀναβαῖνον ἐκ τῆς γῆς in Revelation 13:11

Historicists indicate that, even though the power of the beast was undermined and ceased in 1798, Revelation 13:3 points out that καὶ ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ ἐθεραπεύθη καὶ ἐθαυμάσθη ὅλη ἡ γῆ ὅπισω τοῦ θηρίου. Technically, the wound of the beast in the Historicist's postulate means the sea/monster beast would no longer have a world religious dominion. But, this Recapitulist approach has the same power rising again with the help of another land/beast in the historical scenario that in the end process will help the first beast of Revelation

13 to re-obtain the same power it imposed during 1260 years of worldwide supremacy. This second beast in this Historicist narrative portrays the United States of America. Lickey (1952:550-552) indicates that this country was born shortly before 1798. There is also a difference between the ways in which both beasts rise up. The first comes out the sea (Rv 13:1). The second beast comes from the earth (Rv 13:11). However, the Greek in the verse shows that both beasts share some characteristics and the second beast collaborates to restore the power of the first one. The term ἀναβαῖνον, which is in the present, active, participle, neuter sing, accusative, could be indicating a process of growing. From this perspective the idea is similar to a plant growing process (Mt 13:7). The prophet watches the action in his gradual development (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:834). This kind of scenario sees a nation that grew up, not in the Old World, witnessed by multitudes, but in the New World, with their relative few inhabitants. Wesley, writing 22 years before the American Declaration of Independence, said about the land/two-horn beast: “He is not yet to come: though he cannot be far off. For he is to appear at the end of the forty months of the first beast” (Lickey 1952:550-551).

4.10.5 The ἄλλο θηρίον ... εἶχεν κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίῳ καὶ ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων (Rv 13:11)

The attempts made in the Middle Ages to understand the κέρατα δύο ἀρνίον θηρίον were doomed to failure (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:97). This beast has two horns that are like a lamb. Twenty-eight times in the Apocalypse (29 times in the RSV) lamb refers to Jesus Christ. Horns are a symbol of power and dominion. In Luke 1:69, when referring to Jesus and salvation kingdom, uses κέρασ σωτηρίας. In terms of horns (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:98) comments that many breeds of sheep have no horns on either the males (rams) or the females (ewes). However, the rams of the most common sheep in Biblical Palestine, like the broad-tailed sheep (*Ovis laticaudata*) did have horns, prominently curled ones. The main application for two horns in the Historicism

view is summarized in the separation of church and state in the Declaration of Independence issued on July 4, 1776. The statement reads:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.... Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

(First Amendment of the Bill of Rights [1791], in Holbrook 1992b:99)

The grandest achievement of the American Constitution was the creation with a friendly separation of church and state. The world has never seen such a thing. Every other nation since ancient times had taxed its people to support a state religion, and most had oppressed religious dissidents. The French Revolution, a little later than American Revolution, experimented with a hostile separation of church and state. In time, Marxist countries exceeded France's temporary example.

(Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:99)

This particular Historicism view point considers κέρατα δύο ὅμοια ἀρνίω...ἐλάλει ὡς δράκων in the sense that this kind of dragon's speech (Rv 12:9) is similar to τὸ θηρίον τὸ πρῶτον in Revelation 13:5-7 and to θηρίου (Dn 7:23-25; LXX). In this scenario, the dividing of imperial Rome into ten kingdoms in 476 CE (see the map in Shea 1996:135) made way for the rise of yet another power: the little horn in Daniel 7:25 is the Roman Church. The consideration juxtapositioned here is that the United States of America will become a Roman Catholic nation in terms of uniting church and state (Shea 1996:137-145).

According to White (1977:515-530), a national Sunday law will be promulgated, first in the United States of America with subsequent worldwide impact (White 1977:630, 502-503, 636, 650). The argument that the Bill of Rights is secured and unchanged is not consistent with this approach. Evans, who was Supreme Chief Justice in 1930, said that for practical purposes the Constitution is what the Supreme Court says it is (Kelly, Harbison & Beiz 1991:4, 142, 732-733). There have been cases in which the Bill of Rights was violated (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:105-108). The most pathetic was during the Second World War when 70,000 Japanese Americans were suddenly placed in "relocation camps" under

orders issued by an army general at the request of the President and with the approval of Congress.

The following sections will analyse the growing tension of Sunday-keeping acceptance in the United States in the context of the wounded blow being healed in Revelation 13:3.

4.10.6 Revelation 13:3 and ἄλλο θηρίον ἀναβαῖνον ἐκ τῆς γῆς

Napoleon intended that there would never be another pope. However, in 1801, he signed a church-state treaty or concordat with a new pope. Historicists saw this event as the beginning of the wounded-blow healing process. In 1870 the new emergence of Italy deepened the church's woes by taking away the Papal States. They constituted an independent country, which occupied 16 000 square miles in the center of the Italian peninsula, counted a population of 3 000 000, and had been owned by the papacy for centuries. In 1929, Benito Mussolini signed a concordat granting the pope full authority over the State of Vatican City, 108.7 acres inside the city of Rome, which included the St Peter's Cathedral (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992b:109).

Historicists believe there has been a change in the attitude of the United States, a country which was mostly Protestant, toward the Roman Church. For example, in 1852, when Pope Pius IX sent a block of granite to be included in the Washington monument, then under construction, mass protest took place. So intense was American outrage that the masons did not dare hoist the stone into place. Two years later feelings were still running so high that irate Americans found where the stone lay in a storage shed, fitted a chain around it, and dragged it into the Potomac River (Stokes 1964:833). In 1951, when President Harry S Truman asked the Senate to approve his nomination of an ambassador to the State of Vatican City, America was plunged into a vortex of protest. Truman pointed out that hardly a Protestant church group in the country failed to express its opposition formally and often acrimoniously (Pfeffer 1989:302, in Holbrook 1992b:110). But 33 years later, in March 1984, the religious Senate panorama

changed in the United States of America when President Ronald Reagan's nomination of William A Wilson as ambassador to Vatican City was quickly approved and passed by the Senate 81 to 13. Only a few voices worried about church and state (Maxwell, in Holbrook 1992:110). Reid (2005:105-115) gives an explanation for this healing diplomatic relationship process between the United States and the Vatican. It is interesting that on this global and uniting process, Martin (in Scarone 2000:151), who wrote about the global philosophy of Roman Catholicism, distinguished between two groups of people (the approach Historicists recognized, that is to say two groups sealed either by: *θηρίον χάραγμα* and *θεοῦ σφραγίς*): globalists, the ones who accept a geo-religion, and the minimumlists, the ones that assumed an exclusion world (Martin 1992:286-287, in Scarone 2000:151). An amplifying explanation of the Roman Catholicism growth in this Historicist consideration of Revelation 13 and 17 is to be found in Scarone (2000:60-126).

In the Historicism approach, the Sunday-sealing political and religion enforcement observance is still in the future. In that future perspective, worship, in this Apocalypse school of interpretation, is dependent on loyalty and obedience (Ex 20:1-5; 8-11; Mt 4:9-11; Ac 5:32; Rv 12:17). Therefore, this context sees Paul's expressions such as *ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας; ἀποδεικνύοντα ἑαυτὸν ὅτι ἔστιν θεός, τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἧδὲν ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας* (2 Th 2: 3, 4, 7; in the NKJV *ἀνομίας* = lawlessness) as a continuum development against God's kingdom and His people throughout history that culminates with a worldwide apostasy prior to the Coming of Christ. Historicism sees Sunday observance as a submission to beast power and an extension of the dragon (Rv 13:4). The external reason that would cause deployment and impose such a law in the future remains a guess. The clue lies under some possible future combined world threat factors in the near future, climaxing first in the United States and then throughout the rest of the world: economic issues in terms of collapse, devastating climatic changes, major natural calamities and disasters (White 1977:648).

Although God's people through the ages have been sealed (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 4:30), He has had special seals for special crises. For example, the blood on the doorposts of the Israelite homes at the time of the Exodus was, in a sense, a special sealing. In a similar way, the angel from the sun rising in Revelation 7:1 seals the servants of God to prepare them for the greatest tribulation in world history. It must be recognized here that the sealing is happening now and also during the end-time crisis. The eschatological seal is a special protection for God's children during the final crisis. The mark-sealing controversy in the last days has to do with a conflict between the powers of Christ and the antichrist (Paulien, in Holbrook 1992a:259).

The next section contains the concluding methodological steps of this study. It includes an exegesis for Revelation 7:1-3 and a hypothesis which introduces the holistic meaning of the sealing.

4.11 REVELATION 7: 1-3: EXEGESIS AND THE HOLISTIC SABBATH

4.11.1 Exegetical guidance for Revelation 7:1-3

In order to study Historicism through exegesis as a tool, various points to guide its hermeneutics must be considered. Some of these guidance points have been referred to in this Chapter. The exegesis to follow will continue to use these and other Historicist tools in order to assist the development of hermeneutics in Revelation 7:1-3. These guidance points are as follows:

- The apocalyptic text of Revelation is full of symbols, mostly hybrid beasts;
- Most of these beasts come out of the sea;
- The same periods of time are presented in different numeric formulas;
- The use of symbolic numbers;
- A cosmic controversy between good and evil;
- A constant participation of angels;

- A prophetic structure that has a relationship with the book of Daniel;
- The Apocalyptic prophecies are based in Old Testament narratives (e g, Ex 12:7, 12-13 and Ezk I 9:1-4 that correspond with Rv 7:1-3);
- The final establishment of Christ's kingdom;
- There is a *continuum* correlation to the "micro apocalypses" found in the New Testament (Mt 24:4-44; Lk 21:7-36; Mk 13:1-37; 2 Th 2:1-8; 2 Tm 3:1-5; 2 Pt 3:1-14); and
- The apocalyptic symbols must be interpreted in the context of Scripture.

These eleven Historicist guidelines will be used in the remaining sections of this Chapter.

4.11.2 The theological concept of Revelation in the New Testament

In Vila & Esquain (1985:64) the characteristic theme of Revelation is the public government of God in how he confronts evil and the manifestation of righteousness. Historicists view the purpose of the Apocalypse as an outline of human history and of church and the fight between good and evil until the time of the end. In this historicist scenario, the book's purpose is to keep alive the hope and love the central message of the book, which is the promise of Lord's coming and his victory against evil (Vila & Esquain 1985:65).

Apocalypse scholars from the seventeen and eighteen century such as Edward Bickersteth (1786-1850) considered Joseph Mede (1586-1638), a pre-millennialist is considered the Father of modern prophetic interpretation. He is known for his interpretation works in Revelation (Jue 2006: 77-171; Clark 1968:16).

The constant symbology in this book is an evidence for some authors that Revelation paralleled those symbols to Old Testament narrative. Lestringrant (1942:148) for example, suggests that one seventh of the substance of the Apocalypse it is drawn from the OT. Mulholland (1959b:376-379) enumerates

thirty two symbolical descriptions from Revelation that are also found in almost any OT books, including the book of Ezekiel. Boxall (2006:255) finds eighteen symbol correspondences in Revelation extracted from Ezekiel including Revelation 7:1-2 [Ezk 7:2-3] and chapters 7-8 [Ezk 9-10]. The influence of the book of Ezekiel on Revelation is indisputable. It can be detected most obviously in the many allusions to virtually in every chapter of Revelation (Boxall 2006:147).⁴ Kowalski (2004:11-400) points also an extraordinary and comprehensive explanation for the structure's similarity between the two books in terms of exile, Patmos, desert, the Jerusalem temple, kingdoms, periods, symbols etc.

There are other authors, as de Villiers (2009:17-39) and Rowland (1996:409) that includes a mystical natural Christophany presence in Revelation, especially in Chapters 1-3. Rowland (in de Villiers 2009:17-39) regarded apocalyptic as the knowledge of divine mystery through Revelation is deeply indebt for him. Depending on Rowland, apocalyptic mysticism is decisively determined by the person and life of Christ who reveals the divine secrets.

Historicists see in the Old Testament passages a connection in the sense that there is a *continuum* prophetic chain throughout the Bible. They justify this *continuum* connection aspect saying Bible prophets were inspired by the same Spirit (1 Cor 14:32; 2 Pt 1:19-21; Rv 22:8,9,10,17), therefore this unity reflects also a *continuum* in the prophetic message. In order to elaborate an exegesis on Revelation 7:1-3 it is necessary to remember the various usages in which the word revelation is discussed in the New Testament. Richards (1985:530-531) observes there is a two group of words related to Revelation: ἀποκαλύπτω and ἀποκάλυψις. The first group is constructed on a stem that suggests “bringing to light” or “making manifest.” The words for this group are φανερώ (“to reveal,”

⁴ The 4th edition of the *UBS Gk New Testament* for example, lists no less than eighty-four allusions and verbal parallels to Ezekiel in the Apocalypse spread on every chapter except 12-13 (B Aland K Aland, Karavidopoulos, Martini & Metzger 1983:857-862; see also Vanhoye 1962:436-476).

“show,” “make known”); ἐπιφαίνω (“to show” or “appear”); ἐπιφάνεια (“an appearance” or “revelation”); and φανέρωσις (“a disclosure” or “revelation”). In Gk culture this words had an ordinary meaning but also the religious of intervention by, or the personal appearance of a deity (Lk 2:26; Jn 1:31; 2:11; 17:6; Rm 10:20; 16:26; 1 Cor 4:10-11; 2 Tm 1:10; 1 Pt 1:7,13; 4:13; Rv 1:1). The second word group is more significant, for it provides us with the noun ἀποκάλυψις that is nearly always used with theological significance. As a verb (Mt 10:26; 11:25,27; 16:17; Lk 2:35; 10:21,22; 12:2; 17:30; Jn 12:38; Rm 1:17,18; 8:18; 1 Cor 2:10; 3:13; 14:30; Gl 1:16; 3:23; Eph 3:5; Phlp 3:15; 2 Th 2:3, 6, 8; 1 Pt 1:5, 12; 5:1); as a noun (Lk 2:32; Rm 2:5; 8:19; 16:25; 1 Cor 1:7; 14:6, 26; 2 Cor 12:1, 7; Gl 1:12; 2:2; Eph 1:7; 3:3; 2 Th 1:7; 1 Pt 1:7, 13, 14; 4:13; Rv 1:1). For Richards (1985:530,531) ἀποκάλυψις and ἀποκαλύπτω had little religious neutral words and infuse them with distinctive meaning. Five concepts of revelation appear in the NT: four in the Epistles and one in the Gospels. First, revelation is a future, visible unveiling at history’s end (Rm 2:5; 8:18,19; 1 Cor 2:7; 3:13; 2 Th 1:7; 1 Pt 1:5, 7, 13; 4:13 5:1; Rv 1:1). Second, revelation is our current knowledge in Christ of God’s plans, previously hidden even to Old Testament people (Rm 1:17,18; 16:26; 1 Cor 2:10; 14:6; Gl 1:12; 3:23; Eph 3:3, 5). Third, the term is applied to Jesus as an expression of himself through of a believer (Gl 1:16). Fourth, revelation is the Holy Spirit’s work of shaping the believer’s understanding and attitudes to bring them into harmony with the truth (Eph 1:17). Fourth, revelation is applied in the sense that Jesus reveals the Father in a sense of inner enlightening (Mt 11:27; 16:17; Lk 10:22). It is good to maintain the concept that Revelation preserves a great sense of Christology (Rv 1:8, 12-20; 22:13; Carson et al 2008:643). This Christological sense is not in an isolated sphere but it is related to all historical events, including creation and Sabbath.

4.11.3 The interlude of Revelation 7 in the exegesis

With regards to Revelation 7, some authors esteem the interlude and parenthetical system present in Revelation 7. Thomas and Barker (1992:463) points out that “Rev 7 is an interlude between the sixth and seventh seals.”

According to him, this is proven by the change in tone from the subject matter of the sixth seal and by the delay until Revelation 8:1 in the opening of the seventh seal. Moffat (1961:394) remarks, that “the description is provided to answer the question of 6:17 by way of showing that some will survive and even prosper spiritually under the blessing of God during earth’s terror.” To introduce the scenario of Revelation 7:1-3, Stefanovic (2002:253) also suggests that the “scene of Rev 7 is inserted parenthetically between the opening of the sixth seal and that of the seventh.” The conclusion of the sixth seal brings us to the final events of earth’s history which lead up to the second coming of Christ.

It is appropriate to cite here, before this exegetical study, that apocalyptic historicism must consider the original time, place, and circumstances in which the prophet received the vision in order to have a proper historical-grammatical contextual understanding. The apocalyptic study does not fulfill its purpose unless a Christ-centered study is pursued. In this regard Paulien says:

God speaks to prophets in the context of their own time, place, and circumstances. He communicates in language they can understand and appreciate, even when He employs apocalyptic terms. It is imperative that we seek to understand them in terms of the original time, place, language, and circumstances, as well as the content of the whole Scripture. Thus God’s meaning for today will not contradict the message that He placed in the vision in the first place. The purpose of apocalyptic visions is not simply to satisfy human curiosity about the future.... They are a message about divine character and workings. God is not only communicating something about the future course of history—He is revealing Himself as the one who is in control of that history. To study apocalyptic only as a key to unlock details of the future is to miss its message about a Deity who seeks to be known by His people. From a Christian perspective, apocalyptic is never rightly understood unless its central focus is on the “son of man” Jesus Christ.

(Paulien 2008: 214)

According to historicists, the sealing in Revelation 7:1-3 is anticipated by the events that unfold after the death and enthronization of the Lamb (Rv 5:1-14). This sealing imagery echoes the common ancient practice where in order to prevent tampering with or the unwanted reading of scrolls, scrolls were often

sealed with clay impressed with the owner's mark. John may have in mind Roman wills which were sometimes witnessed (and sealed) by seven witnesses and put into effect only upon the death of the testator. It is also possible, however, that the number seven ("seven seals," Rv 5:1) in his context may simply have allowed for a dramatic unfolding of events as historicists recall (Rv 6:1-17; Smith 1944:85-107; Nichols & Cottrell 1990b:790-796; see also NIV, Archaeological Bible Notes 2005:2053).

From this perspective, the exegesis shall now be divided into verses for its study.

4.12 REVELATION 7:1

4.12.1 Μετά τοῦτο

According to Charles (1920:191) the three precedent chapters of Revelation reflect a continuous movement. The seer had a progressive vision. But Revelation 7 is parenthetical. Charles (1920:106), referring to the clause of Revelation 4:1, *μετά ταῦτα εἶδον καὶ ἰδοῦ*, explains that this phrase, with or without the *καὶ ἰδοῦ* (Rv 7:1 *τοῦτο*), always introduces a new and important vision in the Apocalypse. The same note of emphasis and unexpectedness is also conveyed by the clause *καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἰδοῦ* (P 6:2, 5, 8; 14:1, 14), or by *καὶ εἶδον καὶ ἤκουσα* (Rv 8:3). Lockyer (1982:97) also calls this section "a parenthesis of grace." Smalley (2005:178) explains the *μετά τοῦτο εἶδον* as an interval in the unfolding process of salvation history, completed by the breaking of the seventh seal in Revelation 8:1. A cosmic disaster has been unleashed by the opening of the sixth seal. Smalley, citing Aune, talks about a stylistic modification, "since John uses the neuter singular of the demonstrative pronoun *τοῦτο* (this) rather than *ὧς*, elsewhere in the Apocalypse, the plural form is introduced *ταῦτα* (these things)". In Revelation 7, Smalley (2005:178) continues: "as so often in the drama of the Apocalypse, heaven and earth are intersected." This parenthetical interval does not identify the elapsed time between the two visions (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b: 782). In the Historicist approach, each of the six seals of the previous vision (Rv 6:1-17) that have been unsealed and unfolded have shown a different

phase of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and each of those seals helps to demonstrate the justice and the righteousness of God before the universe that observes (Rv 5:13). Now, there is a pause in the work of opening the seal because there is one question that must be answered. The dramatic question is “who is able to stand?” (Rv 6:17). This solemn question comes because of the terrible descriptions of the events that precede Christ’s second coming (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:796). Revelation 7 interrupts the sequence of the seals with the purpose of giving a proper answer to this question (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:796).

4.12.2 εἶδον (ὁράω, εἶδεν)

Aune (1998a:439) finds in Revelation 7:1-8 nine aorist verbs interrupted only by the present subjunctive πνέη “might blow” in the ἵνα clause in verse one. Aune (1998a:439) adds that Revelation 7:1-8 is affirming the indissoluble connection between Israel and the church. Smalley (2005:178) opines that the view of the church is included in the term εἶδον. Smalley insists this view presents God and the Lamb (7:9-12; 15-17). The term εἶδον refers to what is visible (in a man or object; Kittel 1967a:316). In the New Testament revelations by dreams are not very frequent. The term φαίνεσθαι, which is applied to Joseph’s circumstances (Mt 2:12, 13, 22; 27:19), is used mostly to give him instructions. These are not true dreams of visual kind but a variation of revelation by word (Kittel 1967a:350). Angelophanies are much more frequent instead (Kittel 1967a:351). That is the typical vision in Revelation (Rv 5:2, 11; 7:1, 2, 11; 8:2; 10:1; 15:6; 15:1,6; 16:5; 18:1, 21; 19:17; 20:1; 22:8). For Nichol, John uses this expression when he introduces new scenes and important new symbols (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:782-783). This vocable is described in Revelation 1:2 parsed with ὅσα, a pronoun correlative, neuter, plural, accusative. Εἶδεν, a third, singular, aorist, active, indicative to form what the NKJV translates as “and to all things that he saw.” Depending on Nichols and Cottrell (1990b:747), vocables that signify communication and visual perception, appear 73 times in Apocalypse, and words that denote communication and auditory perception, 38 times. Kittel (1967a:370,

371, 372) associates εἶδον with ὄπτασία, ὄραμα and ὄρασις. ὄπτασία, is a vision (Lk 1:22 where is an angelophanic “visionary appearance”; Ac 26:19; where the appearance outside Damascus is called οὐράνιος ὄπτασία; 2 Cor 12:1). The term is a noun deriving from ὀπτάνομαι or ὀπτάζομαι. It occurs six times in the LXX. Except for Daniel where it means vision, the rest of occurrences is “appearing.” The word ὄραμα is “that which is to be seen.” There are thirty-three instances on the LXX, seven in Isaiah and twenty-five in Daniel. In the N.T. ὄραμα (always singular) occurs outside Acts only in Matthew 17:9. Here the verb is in the participle. In the pos-apostolic fathers the τὰς ἀποσκαλύψεις καὶ τὰ ὀράματα of Herm. v. , 4, 1, 3 reminds of 2 Corinthians 12:1 (Kittel 1967a: 371-372). The term ὄρασις (Kittel 1967a:370-371, which is syno. To ὄψις the same sense of “seeing,” “sight,” “eyes.” In the LXX ὄρασις is used 110 times (38 in Ezekiel and 18 in Daniel). In the New Testament, the word is used twice in the sense of “appearance.” In Revelation 4:3 (cf. Ezk 1:27), and also in the sense of “vision” in Revelation 9:17 (cf. Dn 9:21Θ; 8:1 LXX) and Acts 2:17 (Jl 2:28 LXX). In the post-apostolic fathers ὄρασις means “eyesight” in 2 Cl., 1.6 (transf), “sight,” “spectacle.” In 2 Cl., 6, 6; 17, 5, also “vision” 13 times in Herm. v., 2-4 (Kittel 1967a:371).

4.12.3 τέσσαρας ἀγγέλους (ἀρχάγγελος, ἰσάγγελος)

This term means one who brings a message, a messenger. In the Bible messengers are presented as created beings with individuality and personal identity that exist in a spiritual dimension that touches, but not the same as our material universe (Richards 1985:43). They cover various types of work like defending God’s children (Gn 19:10-22; 2 Ki 6:13-9; Ac 5:19; 27:23). They also communicate messages and help others to understand God’s purpose (Dn 8:16; 9: 21, 22; Mt 1:20; Lk 2:9; Ac 7:53; Rv 1:1). They collaborate in men’s salvation (Ac 8:26; Heb 1:14; Rv 7:1; 22:16). According to cosmology, probably derived from Babylonians, the earth was considered to be a square, with an angelic watcher of each of the four winds stationed at each corner (Gaebelien 1982: 417). Mounce (1998:179) comments that the term γωνίας (corners) is present in

Job 11:12 and 37:3. The LXX speaks of four τέσσαρας ἀνέμους (four winds) and four τεσσάρων ἄκρων (four extremes or points) of the earth (Jr 25:16; Ezk 7:2 defines πτέρυγας -corners-). The New Jerusalem is described with the term τετράγωνος (Rv 21:16). It is useful, then, to consider a symbolic number of universality and creation that includes the whole earth (Jr 49:36; Mt 24:31). The angels of the winds are mentioned as the angel that has power over fire (Rv 14:18), and the angel of the waters (Rv 16:5; see Mounce 1998:179). The only term for ἰσάγγελος in the New Testament, where ἰσάγγελος takes place, is in Luke 20:36 (Kittel 1964c:74, 84-86, 87). The term ἀρχάγγελος, on the other hand, is found in different books (Jos 5:14; Dn 10:13; 12:1). In the New Testament that same term is found in 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Jude 9. The first reference to seven special angels is found in Ezekiel 9:2. Later in the New Testament the phrase ἐπὶ ἄγγελοις is found in Revelation 8:2, 6 and 16:1. Another exegetical question is posed in Revelation 1:20, where the phrase reads οἱ ἐπὶ ἀστέρες ἄγγελοι τῶν ἐπὶ ἐκκλησιῶν. In Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18 and 3:1, 7, 14 the phrase is τῷ ἄγγέλῳ τῆς ἐν (place) ἐκκλησίας γράψον. (Kittel 1964c:87). Kittel (1964c:86) remarks that the only explanations which demand serious consideration are those which have a reference to bishops.

The Bible uses ἄγγελος for human beings (Mt 11:10; Mk 1:2; Lk 7:24, 27; 9:52; 2 Cor 12:7). In the time of John, the term was used for the πρεσβύτερος (the local church elder). With the possible exception of the angels of the seven churches, the word ἄγγελος, which appears 75 times in Revelation, John use it in a literal sense (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:757). Aune (1998a:434-435) refers to an angelic speech in Revelation that exhibits the following action present also in Revelation 7:2-3:

- Introductory phrase: καὶ εἶδον (Rv 7:2; 10:1; 14:6; 18:1; 19:17).
- Object of vision: ἄλλον ἄγγελον (Rv 7:2; 10:1; 14:6, 8, 9; 18:1; 19:17).
- Movement of the angel: ascend, descend, fly, emerge, follow; to the center of the action (Rv 7:2; 10:1; 14:6, 8, 9, 15; 18:1; 19:17).

- A statement that the angel cries with a loud voice (Rv 7:2; 10:3; 14:7, 9, 15; 18:2; 19:17).
- A brief statement uttered by the angel (Rv 7:3; 14:7,8, 11, 15, 18; 18:2, 3; 19:17-18 and Rv 10:3 (What he says is not mentioned; only that he cried with a loud voice as a lion roars)

4.12.4 ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ τὰς τέσσαρας γωνίας τῆς γῆς

Various authors are of the opinion that a new scenario is introduced in Revelation 7:1. Smalley (2005:178) says that a change of subject is indicated and a new text unit is introduced. Gaebelien (1982:397-608) and Stefanovic (2002:254) mention that the phrase was used in the ANE, much as westerns use the four points of the compass to describe a globally significant event. Thus Isaiah speaks of gathering the outcasts of Israel and of those dispersed from Judah from the four corners of the earth (Is 11:12). Ezekiel envisioned the end coming from the four corners of the earth (Ezk 7:2). Smalley (2005:175) refers to an interval in which the church is protected in Revelation 7:1-3. He says that instead of τέσσαρας being read by the major witnesses as three appearances of the number Revelation 7:1, the variant τέσσαρες is attested by A. The accusative ending ες is likely to be an earlier form used in Doric dialects. "Four" in Greek is the only cardinal number with a separate firmly accusative case (Smalley 2005:181). Four is also a number related to universality (Rv 4:6, 8; 6:1; 7:4; 9:13-14; 20:8), and is associated in Revelation 7:1-3 with devastation (Rv 7:2-3); hunger, thirst, and scorching heat (Rv 7:16); drought and sorrow (Rv 7:17); and conflagration (Rv 8:17; Smalley 2005:210). Another vocable to analyse in this exegetic section of 7:1 is the word γῆ. It is also used in relation with the redemptive work of Christ and the erroneous Persian mythological concept of dualism. Kittel (1964a:679-680), The vocable γῆ -the Land as a dwelling place of man can be explained in a geographical way but also to the Creation that groans for Redemption. The vocable γῆς is related also to the mythological sense of Christ descending to Hades. Christ is the Redeemer because He is not ἐκ τῆς γῆς but ἄνωθεν, ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (Jn 3:31), not ἐκ γῆς but ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (1 Cor 15:47). He is ὁ καταβάς who

has come down from heaven εἰς τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς (Eph 4:9) and who has ascended far above, lifted up ἐκ τῆς γῆς (Jn 12:32). Kittel (1964a:680) says that at this point, the NT conception and terminology are apparently influenced by an oriental myth, based on Persian dualism, of the redeemer who descends from the upper world to the depths of the world of darkness. But the ambiguity of τὰ κατώτερα μέρη τῆς γῆς (Eph 4:9) which can mean either “the lowest parts of the earth,” i.e., “the underworld,” or (γῆς as gen. epexeget.) “the spheres of the deep, namely, the earth,” means that καταβαίνειν might refer either to the descent into Hades or to the incarnation in the sense of Philippians 2:7. We thus see the difficulty of applying the terminology of this dualistic redeemer myth to the biblical Christian faith (Kittel 1964a:680). This previous insight from Kittel provides a reference of the work of Christ, which is intending to reach humanity....ἡγάθησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν.... (Jn 3:16). The redemptive description is also hidden in the sentence ἐστῶτας ἐπὶ τὰς τέσσαρας γωνίας τῆς γῆς (7:1). This redemptive ministry from Jesus in the γῆ is viewed by John. The angelic forces are ministering and κρατοῦντας τοὺς τέσσαρας ἀνέμους τῆς γῆς ἵνα μὴ πνέῃ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς...(7:1). Angels are commissioned to protect and to minister for those who will inherit salvation (Heb 1:14). Horn (1995:1205) explains ἄνεμος in the context of its effect on the inhabitants of Bible lands. It could signify the heat torture, drought and sand storms (Gn 41:6; Is. 21:1; Jr 4:11; Hs 13:5; Lc 12:55 etc). For Historicists, ἄνεμος in apocalyptic context means beyond the four cardinal points of earth (Dn 8:8; Mk 13:27). They do represent destruction produced by wars (Jr 18:17); uncertainty of life (Job 7:7; Ps 78:39); the inexorable judgments that come upon wicked (Job 21:18; Spr 10:25). In the figurative sense means the vanity of things (Jr 5:13). Horn (1995:1206) uses the wind as a symbol of God’s power. Some of those comparative applications are: the interpersonal and visible intervention of God in human matters (Is 66:15); the manifestation of the Holy Spirit (Ac 2:2); the work of the Holy Spirit (Jn 3:8). Besides the previous symbolism, Revelation offers more of that realm when it comes to the ecological aspect 7:1, namely the terms γῆς, ἄνεμος, θαλάσσης and δένδρον. They are part of the natural complexity that

will have an effect on the planet's deterioration, including human activity (Rv 11:18). The vocable γῆ is a generic term that involves Nature. The double emphatic of διαφέρω, [διαφθεῖραι, an aorist, active, infinitive] and [διαφθείροντας, participle, present, active, plural accusative] could be suggesting a continuous human attitude that will reach eventually mammoth and uncontrollable proportions. The term involves various meanings: "ruin," "pass," "decay," "destroy" and, "depraved" (1 Tm 6:5). The term Θάλασσα is part on this ecologic discussion in Revelation 7:1-3. In Acts 27:5 the term is circumscribed to πέλαγος (depth or sea). In the apocalyptic symbology θάλασσα is attached to τὰ ὕδατα from 17:15. This πόρνη called Βαβυλὼν ἡ μεγάλη, ἡ μήτηρ τῶν πορνῶν καὶ τῶν βδελυγμάτων τῆς γῆς. She is seated on many waters and the word βδελυγμάτων implies her spiritual behavior and attitude toward religion (17:5, 15). Walvoord (1971:20-252) views the term βδέλυγμα from LXX (in Dn 11:31; 12:11) through a Preterist lense, depicting in Daniel 11:31 to Antiochu's intrigues, through which he robbed the richest places under his control (Syria and Egypt). For Stefanovic (2007:426-427) "the literalist application of this passage is not limited to the time prior to the first coming of Christ. In Matthew 24:15, Christ linked this type of desecration with to the beginning of the great tribulation at the end of times." The same Stefanovic (2007:444-445) suggests Historicists propose Daniel 12:11 as an expression to the history of the church which stretches between 508 and 1798 C.E.⁵ Commenting Daniel 11:31 and 12:11 with Mathew 24:15 and Mark 13:14; is possible to consider a *continuum* historical-parallel indication of a global religious conflict at the end of the time. Historicists points Daniel 11:21 and 12:11 as an inclusion of the Roman Catholic system persecuting the people of God during 1 260 years. In Matthew 24:15, at the same time, Historicists see the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. but also find a *continuum* parallel which

⁵ Prophetic Historicism (in Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:904) understands Daniel 11:11 as forming part of 1 260 years which begins in 538 C.E. and ends in 1 798, with the exception that 1 290 years got started not in 538 C.E. but in 508 C.E., with Clodoveus (king of the Franks) and his conversion to Catholicism. His victory over the Godos signified an important step in the establishment of Roman Catholic supremacy. Examining Daniel 12:12, Historicism say the 1 335 period ending not in 1798 but in 1843, an important date in relation with the great Adventist Millerite awakening in North America (see Clark 1968:15-83).

illustrates end time issues (Nidhol & Cottrell 1985a:898-899; White 1977:19-43). The crescendo of τὰ ὕδατα is first anticipated by the literal Babylon that had the literal Euphrates (jr 50:12, 38) controlling the ancient world from 605 to 538 B.C.E., but by the time of Pliny a new Empire seized the world. This author speaks (Pliny1960:291-297) that Babylon was part of the grain of Rome. It produced a vast and rich abundance of food supplies for the Empire. Historicists based in Jeremiah 50:12, 38 (in Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:556-557) comment the destruction of Babylon that dwelt among many waters and that it will be converted in a vast amount of ruins covered by the desert (Is 13:19). The reference of Babylon in Chapter 17 of Revelation depicts now, nor a geographical limited prophecy scenario but a worldwide power, coming out from the sea (13:1-2; 17:3,15) and a πόρνη....γυναῖκα καθημένην ἐπὶ θηρίον κόκκινον....(17:3) governing the waters of the earth (Is 8:7-8: 14:6; Jr 51:12-13; 14:6). The flexure of the verb καθημένης (a present middle, participle, singular, feminine, genitive) shows to τῆς πόρνης τῆς μεγάλης (17:1) exerting its power in a continued form (Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:863). For prophetic Historicism this is an emphatic resurgence of this power in the last days. The εἶδον in which John is involved describes the destruction of the environment and the judgment for this wicked and destructive behavior. The angel is uttering a judgment because of the irresponsibility of human beings, which has resulted in worldwide contamination. Keys (2001:1-4, in www.findarticles.com) states that just as the people of this postmodern world are precocious polluters, so were also the Romans. Scientists analyzing copper isotopes and trace metals present in Roman copper coins have determined that Rio Tinto, Spain, Cyprus, and to a lesser extent Tuscany, Sicily, Britain, France, Germany, and other parts of Europe and the Middle East, were sources of copper for the Empire. The Romans in their heyday produced nearly 17 000 tons of copper annually, more than would be produced again until the Industrial Revolution in Europe (Keys 2003:1-4, in www.findarticles.com). In fact, the copper and brass contamination found in ancient Rome is still haunting the world today. One former Roman copper mine and smelting site in Wadi Faynan, Jordan, is still, after ceasing operations 2 000 years ago, a toxic wasteland

littered with slag from copper smelting. Researchers have discovered that vegetation and livestock in Wadi Faynan today have high copper levels in their tissue (Monastersky 1996:1-4, in www.findarticles.com). Rome also contributed to the endangerment of animal species when they sacrificed an innumerable amount of animals in their games. *Naumakias* and *venatios* in ancient Rome, for example, consumed a lot of animal lives during Roman festivities. During one single occasion of 117 days of Trajan's game in 108 CE 10 000 gladiators fought and 11 000 animals were killed (Carcopino 1940:201-210). In terms of ecological deterioration Chew (2001:92-95), citing Revelation 11:18, explains that the ancient Romans deforested with no scruples for 400 years. They continued the smelting of silver in Iberia to meet the growth of Rome and 500 000 000 trees were cut (Perlin 1989:125). The Roman legions also were constantly deforesting. During the empire period a legion had 6 000 soldiers. They deforested when camping, marching, and seizing cities. When Caesar was fighting the Gauls he sent orders to cut down an immense forest to prevent sneak attacks. Morocco lost 12.5 million acres of forests during the Roman period (Chew 2001:92-93). A similar trend runs in the world today. The world continues to escalate the same *continuum* pattern in terms of environmental destruction. Ross, Coquereaumont and Trott (2008:28-36, 134-171) reports a water crisis which will develop by 2025. According to this report by it is estimated that 1 billion people in 43 countries will live below the water stress threshold of 1 700 cubic meters per person. Wise, Abegg & Cook (2005:462, 463), mentioning to Allison (1986:409-414) say this author has noted the number four as associated to an animate temple. For this writer, the presence of number four in the Gk sentence of Revelation 9:13 ἐκ τῶν [τεσσάρων] κεράτων τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου τοῦ χρυσοῦ τοῦ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ Is animated in the sense that is connected to a certain Sabbath singing liturgy associated to accompany the sacrifice and the burnt offering. This data was discovered in the Dead Sea Scrolls in the 4Q (Wise, Abegg & Cook 2005: 400-407, 462). Another reference to the τέσσαρες number is by Kittel (1972i:128-129). This author says the word in the Gk sphere is "the gen. meaning of four in religious history has its origin in the orientation to four sides

which, as before, behind and to right and left, are suggested by man's physical constitution. The four corners of heaven or the world embrace the whole of man's horizon." In the Roman mythological literature, Ovidius (1986:1-15) relates the Latin number quattuor with the four Ages of mankind. The Golden Age is of justice and peace, where man did not know the art of navigation. The Silver Age took place when Jupiter introduced the seasons and man consequently learned the art of agriculture and architecture. The Bronze Age indicated when men were prone to warfare but not to impiety. The Iron Age men demarcated nations with boundaries and, warlike, greediness and impiety take place. Man learn the art of navigation, mining.

4.12.5 κρατοῦντας τοὺς τέσσαρας ἀνέμους τῆς γῆς ἵνα μὴ τνέῃ ἄνεμος ἐπὶ τῆς μήτε ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης μήτε ἐπὶ πᾶν δένδρον

The angels in this apocalyptic scenario have control over the wind. This element of symbolism represents warfare and strife. Jeremiah uses the same symbol application when he refers to the unleashing Nebuchadnezzar in destroying the nations (Jr 39:35-37). The prophet Daniel observes this same symbol panorama when he describes the four kingdoms (Dn 7:2).

In the Syriac Apocalypse of Peter, God warns that when he loses the four winds, brimstone will go before the sea wind, a flaming fire before the south wind, and mountains and rocks will be broken into two by the west wind (Gaebelein 1982:417). In the Apocalypse of Pseudo-John 15 God promises that He will permit four great winds to sweep the face of the earth from one end to the other so as to cleanse one from sin (Gaebelein 1982:417). In the book of Bartholomew 4:31-34 four angels are set over the four winds to restrain them, lest they destroy the earth (Gaebelein 1982:417). A similar scene is to be found in 2 Baruch 6:4-8, where four angels are about to set fire to the city of Jerusalem to keep it from falling into the idolatrous hands of Babylonians (i e, Romans) when a fifth angel appeared and tied their hands until the sacred objects of the temple were removed and safely hidden (Gaebelein 1982:417). Henry (1961:1976-1977) adds

another dimension to Revelation 7:1 from the perspective of the Pauline and Johannine eschatological world conditions (2 Tm 3:1-5; 1 Jn 2:18-27), considering these winds as errors. He explains “errors are the wind that cause much trouble to the Church of God. All of those who are unstable are shaken.”

According to Thomas and Barker (1992:466), citing Swete (1907:96) and Beckwith (1979:41), the preposition ἐπί occurs three times in this series of Revelation 7. In the first two instances it governs the genitive case (i.e., τῆς γῆς τῆς θάλασσαν), and in the last the accusative (i.e., πᾶν δένδρον). The reason for this difference is that the wind is thought of as blowing upon the surface of the earth and sea, against every tree. Robertson (1934: 348, 889-890) and Abbott (1906:338, 369) say that the present subjunctive πνέη (blow) focuses on the durative aspect of verbal action. The relative rarity of the present subjunctive indicates that, whenever it is used, to indicate continuity and particularity in John’s writing.

Considering the Apocalypse as cosmic literature that reflects a war between good and evil forces is necessary to view the angelology function here, as Hebrews 1:14 describes the angels’ ministry, which says that they are “sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation.” These angels also represent the restriction of God’s power in order to limit the operation of the evil forces until His providence and wisdom order the angels to let the winds of destruction loose or to unleash them. The evil forces represented in the winds can also experiment with the atmosphere to produce destruction and devastation and as God permits the evil will continue unfolding its rebellion until the climax of the ages with destruction throughout the entire world, morally and physically. He also presents the atmosphere as an engine of destruction (Morris 1983:126-127, 206). According to Vincent (2009:500), the process of keeping back the winds κρατοῦντας means holding fast or firmly.

Γῆς, could indicate a relation with θαλάσσης in the LXX term ἄβυσσος which became the embodiment of the sphere of disaster, since it is connected with it. The sea is the habitat of the dragon (Is 27:1; 51:9; Ps 74:12-14) and predatory beasts rise from it (Dn 7:2-3; Rv 13:1; Böcher 1978:982-985). It is connected to waters, multitudes, nations and tongues where the harlot reigns (Rv 17:15). The roaring of the sea and waves means the tumult and the anguish of nations (Ps 65:7; Lk 21:25). The term δένδρον, in the Bible is used to mean parables of people. Israel is a tree of God's planting (Ezk 17:15; Is 65:22; Hs 14:5-6; Lk 13:6-9; Mt 21:19; Rm 11:16). Egypt was a flourishing tree to be cut down (Ezk 31:2-11), and Nebuchadnezzar was admonished by God with a vision of a tree (Dn 4:4-28). The wicked and righteous both flourish like trees (Ps 1:3; 37:35-36). This element of tree symbolism is also present in the parable of the trees (Jdg 9:7-15; see Embry 1978:865-870). Also, human life is as transient as grass (2 Ki 19:26; Ps 90:5-6; 103:15-16; Mt 6:30; Ja 1:10-11; 1 Pt 1:24). The green grass of Revelation 9:4 refers to those who have the seal of God (Hilleyer 1976:210-211). Maxwell (1989:234-235) describes what he calls an impressionist language for Revelation 9:4, saying Isaiah 7:18-19 for instance was not thinking of literal insects for some prophetic vision narratives. This figurative and highly symbolical usage expressed in Revelation 9:4 expresses punishments, wars and scourge (Maxwell 1989:236). In this way humanity and the world itself will be convulsed with the plagues described in Revelation 16:1-21. The fact that the vision of Revelation 7:1-3 mentions γῆς, θαλάσσης and δένδρον implies also the oncoming suffering of the natural environment. It may also imply the Creationist implications of the conflict between good and evil in terms of, according to Historicists, the Sabbath being a decisive matter in the world's last events. This will be explained when Revelation 7:3 is looked at. The disguised mentioning of the Sabbath creation is described in Revelation 7:2-3 and 14:7 as the connection reference between the Genesis record of Genesis 2:2-3 and Exodus 20:11.

4.13 REVELATION 7:2

4.13.1 ἄλλον ἄγγελον ἀναβαίνοντα ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου

Among the Jews there was the idea that directions were calculated from the person's viewpoint to which that person was looking. From this direction it was where Ezekiel saw the glory of God that entered the Temple (Ezk 43:2-5). The sign of the Son of Man shall appear from the East (Mt 24:30; Nichol & Cottrell 1990b: 798). The Garden of Eden was in the East (Gn 2:8). It associates Christ with the star (Mt 2:2, 9), and the morning star (Rv 22:16). The text must emphasize the cardinal position where the angel comes, and also that the appearance of the angel is similar to the brightness of the sun (Stefanovic 2002:254-258). The ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου, describes one interesting double insight in John's days. As it was mentioned in Chapter 3, the Sol Invictus was part of the imperial cult of Rome. In the time of John's vision (the first century CE), the process of sun worship was still in the future and it was just beginning to be welcomed by the inhabitants of Rome. This ascending of the sun also reminds John that, besides God's character represented in the angel's sealing with the protection of the real and eternal Κύριος, and the promise of His second advent, there is another power to come.

The concept of multi symbols being used for the same word must be subjected and refrained by the context. This is the case with the term yeast (Mt 13:33; Lk 13:21; Mk 8:15; Lk 12:1; 1 Cor 5:8). The arising and growing of the evil power represented by Rome was announced first in Daniel 7 in the form of the ten-horn beast that, at first, represents the Roman Empire, an earthly power which is imitating and preparing a process of rebellion against God's kingdom. This fourth kingdom, describing Rome (Dn 2:40-43; 7:7), would advance and will cede its place to that hybrid beast of Revelation 13 that will participate in the *continuum* of the controversy against the Creator throughout the 1 260 years and also at the end of the world crisis.

The intensity of the process grows when in Revelation 7:3 the apostle refers to the σφραγίζω concept. An Aramaic inscription, commenting on Revelation 7:3, refers to an inscribed incantation bowl. The painted writing on this incantation

bowl reads that Adam sealed his son to protect him from demons (Isbell incantation, text 1.3, page 54, in Aune 1998a:453, see also Klutz 2004:71).

4.14 REVELATION 7:3

4.14.1 λέγων, Μὴ ἀδικήσητε τὴν γῆν μήτε τὴν θάλασσαν μήτε τὰ δένδρα Ἄχρι σφραγίσωμεν τοὺς δούλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τῶν μετώπων αὐτῶν

The clause μὴ ἀδικήσητε, according to Charles (1920:191), is unique in the Apocalypse (Rv 6:6; 9:4, 10, 9; 11:6). Outside Revelation ἀδικεῖν is not found in the New Testament, except for Luke 10:19. There is one analogy in the Jewish Apocalypse of 1 Enoch 66:1-2, where a pause is taking place before the deluge for the preservation of Noah and his family (Charles 1920:192).

The four major approaches of interpretation toward Revelation propose different postures for 7:3. Preterists analyze and conclude that Revelation 7:3 was fulfilled entirely from 66 C.E. to 70 C.E. Upon the Preterist view, when Vespasian and Titus were “informed that Nero was dead (*Jewish Wars* 4.9.2) they did not go with their expedition against Jews (*Jewish Wars* 4.9.2, cf *Jewish Wars* 4.10.2) until after Vespasian became emperor in 69 CE. Then “Vespasian turned his thoughts to what remained unsubdued in Judea (*Jewish Wars* 4.10.15). With this approach the ones that escaped to the city of Pella in the year 66 CE would have been the “sealed ones” before the horrors and destruction of 70 CE took place (Lk 21:20, 21, 22; Mt 24:16). One similar Preterist approach for this particular in Revelation 7:3 is described by Gentry (1989:15-19). For Futurism, instead, the sealing in Apocalypse 7:3 has to deal when the multitudes will turn back to God during the first years of the Tribulation period. Especially this will be true in Israel, where the remarkable deliverance from Gog (Russia) will have had a traumatic effect on the whole nation even before the period of judgment begins. Many Jews will believe in Christ. The 144 000 will promote Christ kingdom (Morris 1983:129-130).⁶ Dispensationalists see also a literal Israel at the end of the time with 144

⁶Futurism (Ice & Gentry 1999:11-165), points the Tribulation period occurring during seven years after the Church's Rapt. These seven years are “detached” from Daniel 9:27. Historicism,

000 Jews sealed in their foreheads (Pate and Grundy 1998:227). These same authors declare that because Idealism does not have any specific historical reference, the application may be limitless (Pate and Grundy 1998:24). In this case Schüssler (1991:24-28) the meaning of Revelation is not to be sought in the first century, nor in the remote future events, but rather in the ongoing struggle between those disadvantaged socio-politically and their oppressors.

For Historicists, the loosing of the winds is preceded by a great false globalization that engulfs religion, politics and socio-economical in the whole planet. Treiyr, uses the Jubilee Old Testament phraseology in describing the longing of humanity for finding peace to the global calamities devastating earth. This author cites the “mega-corporations” as part of this ecumenical movement in promoting this false Jubilee globalization (A Treiyr 2000:188-192). For Treiyr, the true globalization will occur only when Jesus comes (A Treiyr 2000:221-239). Prophetic-Historicism considers μή ἀδικήσετε τὴν γῆν μήτε τὴν θάλασσαν μήτε τὰ δένδρα, ἄχρι in Revelation 7:3 as a crescendo process of calamities in the world that finally will result in the last plagues of 16:1-21 when the winds are finally loose (in Mansell 1998:15-29, 30-80). Therefore, the angel coming the East urges the other four angels to hold the winds until the sealing process is completed.

It is imperative to remember here that God’s children have had His seal throughout history. That was explicit in Paul’s teachings (2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:22). Jesus had the seal of God (Jn 6:27). The admonishing is not grieving away the Spirit (Eph 4:30) who is the One that seals the believer (Neall, in Holbrook 1992a:258). The purpose of sealing is not to protect God’s servants from danger of death, since many die under the persecution of the antichrist (Rv 14:13; 17:6).

commenting Daniel Chapters 8 and 9 situate this last week from Daniel 9:27 as being attached only to the seventy weeks. This approach situates such last week including important events about the Messiah (Christ): his baptism, his ministry and his death that took place “in the middle of the week.” Depending on Prophetic-Historicism this week concludes with Esteban’s stoning. Historicist view this last week within the 2 300 years of Daniel 8:14 context, which got started from the Babylonian Jewish Exile’s return in 457 B.C.E. till the Esteban’s stoning in 34 C.E (Nichol & Cottrell 1985a:876-881).

It is rather to secure them from the destructive force of the seven last plagues (Rv 16:1-2). They are sealed in the sense that they are δούλος τοῦ θεοῦ. They do not want to compromise with the beast of Revelation (13:15-17; 14:1; (Neall, in Holbrook 1992a:261).

In the sign language of the Bible the forehead is the seat of the intellect, the center of reasoning, that power of the brain that makes man akin to the Creator and different from creatures (Hardinge 2005:129). This is confirmed by Marshall (1998:81, 91-93, 106-108, 112-114), when she says that the frontal lobe, which is situated behind the forehead, is associated with reasoning, planning, emotions, problem solving, and also with parts of speech and movement. The concept of μετώπων, and its stubborn rebellious reasoning and planning against the Creator, is observed also in the wicked woman of Revelation 17:1-5 and Jr 3:3. The phrase ἐπὶ των μετώπων is characteristic. John uses ἐπὶ in this phrase with the genitive if the noun is in the plural (Rv 9:4; 14:1; 22:4), but with the accusative if the noun is in the singular (Rv 13:5; 20:4; except in 14:9; Charles 1920:191).

In the analysis of the concept of sealing, Doukhan (2002:68) explains that Revelation 7:1-3 reminds one of events in Egypt when the children of Israel were spared by the sign of the blood sprinkled on their door frames (Ex 12:23). He refers to a chiastic structure (ABA') in the passage of the announcement to the angels, which identifies the protected ones. The first action (A) spares the earth, sea, and trees (Rv 7:1). The second action (B) threatens the earth, and the sea (Rv 7:2), and the third action (A') spares again the earth, sea, and trees (Rv 7:3; (Doukhan 2002:69).

Following is the chiastic structure according to Doukhan (2002:69):

A (7:1)	B (7:2)	A' (7:3)
spares	threatens	spares
the earth, sea, trees	earth and sea	earth, sea, trees

In the Doukhan concept the center of the previous chiasm reveals the element of nature spared by the winds. The trees are the sole survivors of the disaster. He continues by saying that the syntactic level reflects the importance of the case:

[I]n the first action that introduces the other two, the Greek word for “tree” receives a different declination from the other two words “earth” and “sea,” although each is preceded by the same Greek preposition. “Tree” is in the accusative, whereas the words “earth” and “sea” are in the genitive. This difference suggests that the winds relate differently to the earth and the sea than they do to the tree.

(Doukhan 2002:69)

4.14.2 τοὺς δούλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν

As was previously discussed, the δένδρον are those believers that follow the same pattern of Exodus 12 and Ezekiel 9. Revelation 7:1-3 is a highly symbolic drama. The friends of the Lamb are described by two terms: trees and servants. They accept the blood of the Lamb as their warranty of the benefits of sealing. Because the ἄρνιον was the only one worthy to open the scroll, He is also the only one to assure the sealing blessing (Rv 5:6-13). In this regard, it is necessary to analyze briefly the concept of δούλος in this Apocalypse imagery.

The Hebrew word עֶבֶד (*‘ebhedh*) and δούλος are more properly translated as slave rather than servant (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2815). Orr explains that the origin of the term can be traced to the Germanic term sklave, meaning a captive of a Slavonic race. This constitutes the first way a person to become a slave. The other two were being born of a slave mother, or through sale (Richards 1985:552). The formula δούλος θεοῦ is not used often in the New Testament, and the same is true of the phrase τῷ θεῷ δοῦλεύειν. Most of the δοῦλεύειν of Christians speak of it in relation to Christ, on the solid basis of New Testament Christology (Kittel 1964f:273).

The use of δοῦλος θεοῦ is almost always in connection with the usage of the righteous of the Old Testament in relation to God, or in quotations, especially in Revelation (Rv 1:1; 2:20; 7:3; 10:7; 19:2, 5; 22:3, 6), where Moses is given the title of δοῦλος τοῦ θεοῦ in Revelation 15:3 (Kittel 1964f:273). Sin establishes slavery (Jn 8:34). It is only through Christ that man is bought from slavery of sin (Jn 8:36). Paul speaks about this when he uses ἐδουλώθητε [δουλεόω] (which is parsed here as second plural aorist passive indicative, i.e., τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ; Rm 6:17-18). According to Richards (1985:554) this is an important New Testament concept. The believer finds freedom, not in recovering an independent will, but in submitting his will freely and joyfully to God (Rm 1:1; 1 Cor 7:19-20, 23; Gl 1:10; 2:20; Phlp 1:1, 21; Tt 1:1; 1 Pt 4:2).

Kittel (1964f:280), referring to Ephesians 6:6 with relation to the term ὀφθαλμοδουλία, says there are no examples of this word outside the New Testament. It is only found in post-Christian literature (Const. Ap IV, 12-13; in Kittel 1964f:280). Ephesians 6:6 refers to a δουλεία of Christian slaves to their masters which is outwardly correct, but which is rendered without dedication and with no sense of inner obligation to the master for the sake of God and of Christ (the deceived ὀφθαλμοί of the master being contrasted with the deceitful ψυχὴ of the slave). In Colossians 3:22 it is used in the plural for all actions, which originate in this dishonest attitude (Kittel 1964h:280). The incredible catastrophes and disasters that will occur in the scenario of Revelation 7:1-3 require a trusting, relational sealing dependence process from the Christian slave to His kind and all knowing Master.

Among the characteristics of the ones that are sealed in Ezekiel is the idea that they react against detestable things (Ezk 9:4). Christians throughout the ages have faced the challenge of fighting against evil through entertainment and the dubious moral standards that come with it. According to Soule (2004:3-4), quoting ancient Latin writers, there are five reasons why Christians confronted

Roman society in the sense of the games, entertainment, and religious practices of the age. These reasons are:

1. They represented idolatry: “For the celebrations of the games are festivals in honor of the gods, inasmuch as they were instituted on account of their birthdays, or the dedication of new temples. Therefore, if anyone is present at the spectacles to which men assemble for the sake of religion, he has departed from the worship of God, and has betaken himself to those deities whose birthdays and festivals he has celebrated” (Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes*, 6.20, in Soule 2004:3-4).
2. They taught immoral behavior: “They utter ribaldry in affected tones, and go through indecent movements; your daughters and your sons behold them giving lessons in adultery on the stage” (Tatian, *Address to the Greeks*). The father who carefully protects and guards his virgin daughter’s ears from every polluting word takes her to the theatre himself, exposing her to all its vile words and attitudes (Soule 2004:3-4).
3. They renounced Christ: “He is shameless who in the church exorcises demons while he praises their delights in public shows; and although, once for all renouncing him, he has put away everything in baptism, when he goes to the devil’s exhibition after (receiving) Christ, he renounces Christ the fruits of the sinful nature” (see also Gl 5:19-21). “We are debarred from every kind of spectacle, and especially from the circus, where such excitement presides as in its proper element. See the people coming to it already under strong emotion, already tumultuous, already passion-blind already agitated about their bets. And the result accordingly is, that they fly into rages, and passions, and discords, and all that they who are consecrated to peace ought never to indulge in” (Tertullian, *Apology* 3.16). “The Instructor will not then bring us to public spectacles; nor inappropriately might one call the racecourse and the theatre ‘the seat of plagues.’ These assemblies, indeed, are full of confusion and iniquity; and these pretexts for assembling are the cause of disorder – men and women

assembling promiscuously for the sight of one another. In this respect the assembly has already shown itself bad: for when the eye is lascivious, the desires grow warm; and the eyes that are accustomed to look impudently at one's neighbors during the leisure granted to them, inflame the amatory desires. Let spectacles, therefore, and plays that are full of scurrility and of abundant gossip, be forbidden" (Clement of Alexandria, *The instructor*, in Soule 2004:3-4).

4. They celebrated immorality: "We are forbidden so much as to witness shows of gladiators, lest we become partakers and abettors of murders. But neither may we see the other spectacles (theater), lest our eyes and ears be defiled, participating in the utterances there sung. For if one should speak of cannibalism, in these spectacles the children of Thyestes and Tereus (a popular play) are eaten; and as for adultery, both in the case of men and of gods, whom they celebrate in elegant language for honors and prizes, this is made the subject of their dramas." (Theophilus of Antioch, *To Autolycus*, in Soule 2004:3-4).
5. They represented murder: "You purchase men to supply a cannibal banquet for the soul, nourishing it by the most impious blood shedding. The robber commits murder for the sake of plunder, but the rich man purchases gladiators for the sake of their being killed" (Tatian, *Address to the Greeks*). "For he who reckons it a pleasure, that a man, though justly condemned, should be slain in his sight, pollutes his conscience as much as if he should become a spectator and a sharer of a homicide which is secretly committed" (Lactantius, *The Divine Institutes*, 6.20, in Soule 2004:3-4).

The most important reason why Christians objected to the entertainment of the society of the Roman Empire was the Christian spiritual allegiance to Κύριος. This term was also employed on epigrams dedicated to Augustus (Kittel 1965e:1056). He could be a god being κύριος. For Caesar, this term signified majesty and sovereignty, domain and power. He was considered the beneficent god and Roman savior who dominated the whole world. Oaths were given to him

in *genium Caesaris*. The LXX aids in understanding why Christians did not call Caesar κύριος. The Septuagint translates the tetragrammaton יהוה (YHWH) as Κύριος. The term is found in the fourth Gospel (Jn 20:28) as the equivalent of Θεός (Jn 20:28; see Spicq 2008:346-347). As servants of the living God, Christians did not pay an allegiance to Caesar honoring him as κύριος. This was a term strictly employed by the Christians in referring to the real κύριος: Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. This allegiance of faith and loyalty to Christ embraced by ancient Christians during the Roman Empire denotes an incarnation sealing practice in all Christ believers that stood by the principles He lived and died for.

The sealing involves not only a mere verbal assumption of acceptance. Its characteristics of protection, ownership, authenticity, and property illustrate the concept of slave-master in the Biblical concept of friendship, loyalty, and obedience. That is how the Old Testament narratives depict the various dramas in which God's children are protected and sealed from disaster: the flood, the Passover, and the Jerusalem sealing experience in Ezekiel. These episodes find their parallelism in Revelation 7:1-3.

Historicism considers the Sabbath as part of this sealing process. The next section discusses the meaning of the holistic Sabbath and its relationship to sealing.

4.15 THE HOLISTIC SABBATH

4.15.1 Creation covenant

As the Christians in the Roman Empire distinguished between the pervert world and the exemplary life of Christ, the concept of τὴν σφραγίδα of Revelation 7:2 is intimately related to ἀδικία (2 Tm 2:19) and ἀνομία (2 Th 2:3) when it comes to defining the meaning of sealing in Revelation 7. For the Historicist approach of interpretation, sealing in Revelation 7:3 has to deal with the Sabbath as a lordship friendship and obedient response to the restless world which is captive in anxiety and depression. Kline states the following in this regard:

If the Sabbath ordinance serves a creation symbolic sign of God's covenantal lordship in the holy kingdom of Israel, it is surely because the original divine Sabbath represented the Creator's covenant lordship over the world. The meaning of the original Sabbath (Gn 2:2) is mirrored in the Sabbath ordinance (Gn 2:3), the record of which emphasizes that the Sabbath is set apart as sacred to the Creator. Observance of the Sabbath by man is thus a confession that Yahweh is his Lord of all lords. Sabbath keeping expresses man's commitment to the service of the Lord.

(Kline 2006:19, 39, 180)

In Revelation 7:1-3, according to the Historicist concept, the response of Christians to ἀδικία and ἀνομία is not circumscribed only to respect for the Sabbath. This term also gives the connotation of a holistic approach related to the whole Sabbath. White (1958:287) points out that, as the wax receives the seal impression, so the soul must receive the Spirit of God and conserves the image of Christ. It means to recognize God as the owner of everything amounts to acknowledging Him as Creator. His seal alludes to a whole way of thinking and living holistically. To this end Doukhan explains:

To be sealed is to show that we owe everything to God, a theme that permeates the entire Bible. The tithe represents our giving back to God what is already His, a point already understood by Melchizedek, who justified Abram's giving his tithe with the proclamation of God as "Creator of heaven and earth" (Gn 4:19). The book of Leviticus makes the same association. Before they entered the Promise Land, God told the people of Israel that they must remember that the land belonged to Him: "The land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants (Lv 25:23). Because of this fact "a tithe . . . belongs to the Lord" and is "holy to the Lord" (Lv 27:30). It is not coincidence that the Sabbath occupies the central place in the Decalogue, normally reserved for the seal in the ancient documents (Kline 1963:18-10 and 1972:120). The Sabbath celebrates the Creator and His work—it is God's seal on Creation. We distinguish again the seal of God in the dietary choices of Daniel and his companions as they sought to show their dependence on the Creator rather than on the king (Dn 1). The seal on the forehead represents God's mark on the whole person, the sign that we belong to Him. The image of God, if reflected to God, is to live with Him. Through this image the Apocalypse designates those who confess the God of Creation in every facet of their lives. The Sabbath, the tithe, dietary choices, and respect for the law of God—all could indicate the presence of God's seal, but they do not magically produce it. The seal of God is both invisible and visible and alive, just as the Creator God it represents.

(Doukhan 2002:70-1)

The holistic Sabbath was also recognized in adoration (Wise, Abegg & Cook 2005:500-462;463-558). These authors mention that in the Dead Sea Scrolls were found passages from the book of Revelation (1Q 19:6-9; 4Q: 9:13; 12:7; 2:4-6; 21:12-13; 21:9:-27). The scrolls showed evidence on Sabbath songs intended to unite the worshiper with the angels worshipping in Heaven. The context favors the idea that Earth is a pale reflection of Heaven, a reality mystic fashion. One of those Sabbaths song copies was discovered at Masada (designated *Masik*), the site of the last stand made by Jewish freedom against Rome from 66 through 74 C.E (Wise, Martin & Abegg, Cook 2005:463).

4.15.2 The holistic Sabbath and the restlessness of man

The fourth commandment of the Decalogue intends to restrict the continuity of human restlessness. Bacchiocchi says that

by restricting temporarily our productivity, the Sabbath teaches us not to compete but to commune with one another. It teaches us to view fellow beings not quantitatively but qualitatively, that is, not in terms of their income but in terms of their human values.

(Bacchiocchi 1997:221)

The Sabbath is holistic also in the sense that it was designed to include humanity without any racial prejudice, because it

helps to break down social, racial and cultural barriers. The inability or unwillingness to appreciate and accept another person's skin color, cultural language or social status, is a major cause of much unrest, hate and tension in our contemporary society.

(Bacchiocchi 1997:223)

14.5.3 The Sabbaths and their holistic equality function in Hebrew society

Another aspect of the Sabbath to consider is the holistic rest of the earth. This includes the seventh day (Lv 23:3; Ezk 20:12, 20), the ceremonial Sabbaths (Lv 23:5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 27, 28, 34, 35), the seven years Sabbaths and the Jubilee Sabbath (Lv 25:11; 25:50; Ezk 46:17). All persons, beasts, and property

were to become free before God. Genuine freedom leads to equality. The uneven divisions of the Hebrew society leveled out as the Sabbath (Bacchiocchi 1997:223). Dresner (1970:43, in Bacchiocchi 1997:223) says that this equalizing function of the Sabbath has seldom been recognized.

Although one Jew may have peddled onions and another may have owned great forests of lumber, on the Sabbath all were equal, all were kings: all welcomed the Sabbath Queen, all chanted the *Kiddush*, all basked in the glory of the seventh day. On the Sabbath there were neither banker nor clerk, neither farmer nor hired-hand, neither rich nor poor. There were only Jews hallowing the Sabbath.

(Dresner 1970:43)

4.15.4 The holistic Sabbath in spiritual Israelites

The ones that are sealed belong to spiritual Israel, which is the Christian church (Rm 2:28-29; 9:6-7; Gl 3:28-29; 6:16; 1 Pt 2: 9; Nichol & Cottrell 1990b:799). The work of the Spirit is to reproduce the character of Christ in the believer. Israel is absorbed in the cross of Christ (Gl 3:26-29). When Paul enumerates the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit, he also refers to the Decalogue (Gl 5:19-26). The works of the flesh are against the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:2-17), while the fruits of the Spirit promote them (Jn 14:15; Rm 13:10; 1 Cor 13:5-8). In terms of a covenant, the one at Sinai did not overwrite the gospel taught in His previous covenant with Abraham, but incorporated it (Gl 3:17; Heb 9:15-18, 26). Beagley (in Carson 2008:641) indicates that in the context of Revelation, this book must be understood also in the context of Jews versus Gentiles. Antipathy is also a key factor in the book.

The presence of the holistic Sabbath in Revelation 7:1-3 comprises the sealing of Christians throughout history and also, during the last scenes of earth. Sealing includes six quality attributes (see Hoeksema 1969:259):

1. Ownership: According to Revelation $\delta\omicron\upsilon\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ indicates ownership to God (Ex 28:36-38; Is 43:1; Rv 3:12).

2. Protection: God promises protection His people not from being harmed, but so they can remain faithful and loyal to Him (Ezk 9:6).
3. Inviolability: The value of the seal remains in its inviolability. As occurred with Joseph, God can preserve the loyal from sin (Gn 41:9). This aspect of the life of Joseph shows how practical is the concept of the presence of God.
4. Genuineness: When the jar or document was unsealed and opened it was expected that one would find the same content that originally was in the sealed deposit. God admonishes His people to preserve His truth (2 Cor 4:2).
5. Property: This fifth attribute is intrinsic and extrinsic. Paul reminds his readers that property shows who the owner is (Rm 12:1-2).
6. Preservation: As Noah's ark floated upon the surface of the galling waters, the capacity of God when He shut the ark's door (Gn 7:18) was the same capacity and power He had to keep the ark's content safe and secured (Rv 7:17). God promises His spiritual preservation upon the sealed fragile human pottery. God promises security to the sealed in their spiritual fight against evil powers (Rv 12:17; 14:12; 17:14).

The holistic Sabbath is viewed also in the sense of Mk 2:27. Τὸν ἄνθρωπον is in the accusative indicating a generic term, where all of humanity is included and not only the Jewish nation. Wuest (1973:59-61) points out that the word for man is not ἀνὴρ but ἄνθρωπος which is a racial, generic term, and, in a sense, mankind. The word ἐγένετο related to the concept of Sabbath is an imperfect and means literally came to existence. In this sense, Wuest (1973:61) says the Sabbath is only a means to an end, the good of man. In connecting the Sabbath with the term κύριος the lordship and the ownership of the Godhead is suggested. The owner is the possessor and disposer of a thing. In this sense the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath. The word is used in the LXX as a translation of the august title of God, which we know as Jehovah and thus it implies deity. The Creator is Lord of creation, and Lord of the Sabbath. He brought these into

being for the sake of mankind (Wuest 1973:60-61). In terms of man and Sabbath, it is good to remember that Sabbath points to a Creator of the world and man (Mk 2:10; Col 1:16; Rv 4:11; 10:6). Τὸ σάββατον διὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐγένετο (Mk 2:27) also indicates that Sabbath is a permanent admonishing against xenophobia (Ac 17:26). Referring to the Exodus experience and discussing the Egyptian xenophobic regard, some authors such as Magnusson (citing Habachi 1997:59-61) find it surprising that there is no mention of bondage or the Exodus in the Egyptian records. They continue by saying Hebrews were a minority people, and the Egyptians did not like to record anything that smacked of defeat or humiliation (Magnusson 1977:59-61). The Egyptian version of the story, a piece of counter folklore from the Egyptian side, was ascribed to the Egyptian historian Manetho in the third century BCE, a thousand years after the assumed data of Exodus. It tells of a gang of Asiatic lepers and plague-bearers who had once been expelled from Egypt by force and driven back to Palestine where they founded Jerusalem and became the ancestors of the Jews. Redford (in Magnusson 1977:59-61) sees in this anti-Semitism story an Egyptian plot to expel the hated Hyksos, but which was reinforced by the waves of invasions, which were to break over Egypt in the first millennium BCE. These invaders (the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Persians) were from Asia and they always wrought appalling destruction. Redford (in Magnusson 1977:60-61), concludes by saying this Egyptian conception of the Exodus was a timeless piece of patriotic xenophobia. It is evident also that the sealing concept is present in the Exodus 12:13 of the LXX (καὶ ἔσται τὸ αἷμα ὑμῶν ἐν σημείῳ ἐπὶ τῶν οἰκῶν ἐν αἷς ὑμεῖς ἐστέ), including not only the Israelites but also the Egyptians who wanted to be protected from the plagues announced by Moses (Ex 9: 20, 21).

The holistic Sabbath is a historicism call to remind people that Christ is the center of the earth's Creation as much as spiritual transformation. Against this respect, some ancient Greek Bible versions of the Old Testament, such as Aquila, intended to denigrate prophecy regarding Christ and His participation in the salvation and restoration of humanity. On this point, Danker (1970:68) says that

the Aquila version, aiding in the controversies with the Christians, published an extreme literal Greek version of the Hebrew Bible. His anti-Christian bias is apparent from such renderings as ἡλεμμένος, instead of χριστός in Daniel 9:26 and νεάνις instead of ἡ παρθένος in Isaiah 7:14. On the contrary, historicism considers Christ as the center of the whole prophetic scenario. He is the center of them all. Referring to the work of Bengel, Froom (1948a:710) states that historicism not only values “computations for measuring time, the Bible should be considered as the revelation of God’s plan in which Christ is the supreme, all overshadowing center.”

4.15.5 The holistic Sabbath in contraposition with evolution

The Bible reminds men by the concept of the Holistic Sabbath that God is ruler of the earth, but not the same as if He was dependent on its existence to be God and King (Is 40:18, 22, 25, 26). Also, the Sabbath evidences that God, because of His Creationist power, is perfect and not an evolving, fallible or non-existent being in controlling all supernatural matters. He is an Almighty Person, autonomous and self-sufficient (Dt 33:27; Ps 50:12; 135:13; Is 40:28). However, human beings have developed six worldviews that not only oppose Christianity and their beliefs, but also because of the content of these teachings, the Sabbath and other Bible teachings are seen as not dependent and important in the sense of Creator ⇒ creation ⇒ human being ⇒ Sabbath ⇒ relationship Creator with human being ⇒ holistic respect relationship between human beings and creation. These six philosophies that are against Biblical principles are atheism, deism, pantheism, panatheism (the view that God is developing along with the world), finite godism (which considers God as limited and/or imperfect) and polytheism (Geisler and Brooks 1990:16-18, 31-32, 35-36, 36-51, 212, 213-219, 221, 222-225, 226-230). The Bible teaches rejection of atheism (Ps 14:1; 53:1; 103:17; 113:2). God rejects deism because God Himself performs miracles (Is 46:10; Lk 1:37). God is perfect and He does not evolve, showing imperfection. He is always the same (Dt 32:4; 2 Sm 22:31, 32; Ps 18:30; Heb 13:8). Scripture also clearly depicts one God and Savior and not a polytheistic vision. God

transcends the world and does not go along with its habits and perverse ways (Ex 20:2-5; Jn 1:10; 17:16; Ja 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15-17).

These six philosophies concerning the perfection of God are also reflected in a certain way, in the concept of earth creation/Creator. It is important to add here that Genesis considers a fiat creation. This special creation, or Young Earth Creation as it is also known, reflects a direct model of Scripture (Roth 1998:340). According to Roth there are, besides the recent Creation, seven other conceptions that are intended to explain world origins and that at the same time influence negatively on the concept of Sabbath. These world origin theories are:

1. The gap theory, which is supported by the Scofield Bible and believes that there was a Creation prior to the one of Genesis in which Satan was involved and after judged for it.
2. The progressive creation, which considers the earth and life formation as a process of long ages.
3. Theistic evolution, that considers that God's creation evolved throughout long ages.
4. Deistic evolution, a position that assumes a naturalistic evolution with long ages of creation processing.
5. Pantheistic evolution which considers an evolving through many ages, including creation.
6. Space ancestry, which advocates that life on earth was possible through an extraterrestrial organism within long ages of an evolving process.
7. Evolution which supports the Darwinian concept with no God and long ages of an evolving process. This sealing research assumes a fiat creation in a week process developed by the Godhead in *ex nihilo*, with no pre-existent material (Ps 33:6, 7, 9).

Baldwin, Brand, Chadwick and Younker (2009: 37) indicate the Sabbath "serves as an unchangeable Saturday memorial of completed Creation in six days, and

as sign of the sanctifying relationship existing between the Creator and the beings created in His image.” Hutchinson Ury (in Baldwin et al 2009:37) says “the alternative world view of theistic evolution and progressive creation produces intractable problems involving the biblical teaching of the loving character of the Creator (1 Jn 4:8).” He also says that “if one would accept theistic evolution as the supposed intentional divine method of creation, one would have to harmonize more than 3.8 billion years of trauma (predation), disease, death, mass extinctions, suffering, countless regional geologic catastrophes of all sorts, and other natural evils with the biblical image of a loving and caring God” (Hutchinson Ury, in Baldwin et al 2009:37). Hull (1991:486) agrees by saying that the God implied by evolutionary theory is neither loving, nor a God to whom one would be inclined to pray, but is nearly diabolical (Baldwin et al 2009: 37). Another interesting statement from Baldwin, Brand, Chadwick and Younker, regarding the theistic evolution or progressive creation is the following:

The millions of years creation worldview necessarily requires the denial of a historical, literal Fall, a global flood, and a historical Adam through whom sin and death passed to all humanity, and ultimately involves the denial of the need to accept Jesus as Saviour through His life and death on the Cross (Gn 2:9, 17; Rm 5:12, 14; 6:23; 8:20, 21; 1 Cor 15:26). In this view death in the animal realm, including proto humans, appears millions of years before sin, thereby undermining the atonement and redemption.

(Baldwin et al 2009: 37)

In the next subdivision there will be a consideration of the three verbs linked to Sabbath in Genesis 2:2, 3 and Exodus 20:9-11.

4.16 BIBLICAL TERMS FOR RESTING, BLESSING AND SANCTIFYING IN GENESIS 2:2-3 AND IN EXODUS 20:11

4.16.1 Hebrew and Greek terms

These three terms, as much in the Old as in the New Testament, show the attributes of the Godhead. These attributes were also part of the Trinity during the work of man's creation עָשָׂה ('āś āh). In Genesis 1:26 the Hebrew צִלַּם

(*celem*) means image. The French version (FJBV) present such verse in the first plural form – *faisons l' homme à notre image – comme notre ressemblance*.

According to theologians of the primitive church, the term was designated for the three Persons of the Trinity (Nichol & Cottrell 1990a:227). Only in Genesis 1:26 are image and likeness used together (Orr & Nuelsen 1974e:1450). In the figurative sense, when the Sabbath was made, it was designated also to transmit to man the blessing, resting, and sanctifying message that comes from the image of God, and to remind him that humankind came through a divine creation. That likeness can only now be preserved by faith and submission to Christ's message.

The manifestation of the Holy Trinity is only present later in two other New Testament figurative stances: in the baptism of Jesus (Mt 3:16-17) and when Paul resumes the three kenotic attributes of the Trinity within the Christian church (2 Cor 13:13). Due to the oneness, and at the same time Trinity personality within their three divine persons, it is obvious that *εὐλογέω*, *καταπαύω* and *ἀγιάζω*, which are used in the LXX are also interchangeable terms used for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (Lv 21:8; Is 41:14; Mt 14:19:22; Ac 3:14; 1 Th 5:23; Heb 2:11; 13:12; Rv 6:10).

According to Kittel (1964f:754), the word *εὐλογέω* does not take its meaning from the secular Greek but from the fact that it is the rendering of Hebrew words which acquired their religious significance in the Old Testament and in the Jewish writings. This same reasoning could be applied for *ἀγιάζω* and *καταπαύω*, which are intrinsically connected with Old Testament narratives and Jewish tradition in their significance. We now turn to discuss the Hebrew and Greek terms for bless, rest and sanctify.

4.16.2 בִּרְךָ (ברכה)

The term (*b ārah*) implies speaking well either in the sense of speaking finely or speaking well of someone; that blessing, like a cursing, is an object of belief in primitive religion. Some material items come with the blessing. Men and things,

which are blessed are as it were endowed with this power and can transmit, affecting, everything which they come in contact with. The term indicates being filled with blessing, as well as a concrete blessing which ensues, good fortune, power, et cetera (Kittel 1964g:754-775). It is in this context that God's blessing rules creation (Gn 1:22) so man and the Sabbath are blessed. The Hebrew word in Genesis 2:2-3 contrasts notably with the cursing words against God by the little horn in Daniel 7:25 and 8:10-12. Εὐλογέω is an abundant word in the LXX where it appears 400 times. Blessing is one attribute of God the Father that He gave to man (Rv 9:1; 12:2; 17:16; 25; 11; 49:25; Ps 29:11; 45:2; 107:38; Is 65:16).

4.16.3 εὐλογέω (εὐλογία)

In the New Testament, there is a technical term from the Jewish liturgy for τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας (1 Cor 10:16). This technicality was transferred into the Lord's Supper, and signifies the cup of wine upon which a blessing was pronounced. The suggestion that it carries with it a higher significance, as a cup that brings blessing is not without force. The succeeding words "we bless," are equivalent to "for which we give thanks" (Kittel 1964f:763). This is also a contrasting parallel when we see that the other cup in Revelation 17:4 where the mystic Babylon has a ποτήριον χρυσοῦν...γέμον βδελυγμάτων καὶ τὰ ἀκάθαρτα τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς. The fornications and abominations contrast notably with the original plan of the Creator in having the blessing and passing it unto others. The author of Revelation realizes that the eternal world of the last days includes the praising and glorifying of Him, who sits on the throne and of the Lamb (Rv 5:12, 12; 7:12). The εὐλογία in Revelation is not applied to the beast, the dragon, or Babylon. God is the only one who deserves it. The term is also present in the New Testament as an attribute of God the Father from Himself to mankind (Mt 25:34; Lk 1:68; 12:32; Eph 1:3; 1 Tm 1:11; 1 Pt 1:3). The Creator passes the blessing as thanks from one generation to another.

4.16.4 נוח (מנוחה)

The words נוח (*n ūah*) and מנוחה (*mēn ūh āh*) mean cessation, peace, quiet, and to cease a motion (Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:2561). Kittel (1974e:627), in relating the term to a person, says it means to bring someone to where he breaks off what he is doing. The vocable also means to restrain or to dismiss. It is applied to God in that He ceased from the work of creating on the seventh day (Gn 2:2). The LXX renders: κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἐβδόμῃ (Ex 20:11; Kittel 1974e:627). The resting also included that God was in the midst of His people in His Temple (1 Chr 28:2; Ps 132:8, 14; Zph 3:17; Ex 16:22, 23; 31:15; Is 58:13-14). Sometimes rest is also used in the context of relay (2 Chr 14:11; Ps 37:7). God's ideal for the Sabbath was to communicate a sense of peace and comfort (Is 48:17-22). The term rest also means freedom of oppression by the enemy and peace of the spirit (Crudens 1965:542). Only the Messiah could bring this rest (Is 61:1-11).

4.16.5 καταπαύω (κατάπαυσις, ἀνάπαυσις)

In the New Testament the word has two distinctive applications. One is interrelated with the Old Testament. First, it refers to the rest of God or κατέπαυσεν on the seventh day (Gn 2:3). Kittel (1974e:627-28) says Joshua had the task of bringing the people to rest in the promised land (Heb 4:8). The rest is still in the realm of a promise (Heb 3:15). It is set in a state of rest. The movement from which flowed the life of creation in the first week will lead to the sacred rest of the Creator on the seventh day. The people of God wait for this. The resting blessing of the Sabbath describes a restless experience for all of those that follow the teachings of the beast (Rv 14:11). The concept of rest that was bestowed on the Sabbath is also shown in Jesus. He is the divine Joshua, who will give eternal rest leading the people out from Babylon and introducing His children into the Holy Land (Rv 18:4, Jn 13:1-3). The concept of rest in Jesus is present in the New Testament (Mt 11:28-30; 2 Cor 12:9). According to Isaiah 61:1-11, the message of freedom and rest began being fulfilled in Jesus when He began His ministry on the Sabbath reading the prophecy about Himself in the synagogue

(Lk 4:16-21). The figurative presence of rest is attested also when the Son rested on Sabbath in the grave (Lk 23:56; 24:1).

4.16.6 קרש (קרוש)

The definition of קרש (*k oresh*) is holiness and קרוש (*k adh osh*) means holy, consecrate, hallow (Orr and Nuelsen 1974a:2681). This word denotes a cultic state in different ways. Sanctifying can be achieved by cultic practices (Ex 19:10, 14; Jos 7:13). It is obtained also by celebrating, in this case the Sabbath (Ex 20:8; Dt 5:12; Is 30:29). With a divine subject and object in mind, it can also be a thought of declaration (Gn 2:3; Ex 19:33; Nm 20:12). To sanctify may denote to set apart for a special use (Ex 20:9-11; Kittel 1974e:111). In that case, the Sabbath, within the divine weekly Creation process is different from any other astronomical measurement of time such as the month or the year. In the Old Testament, sanctification is also performed by the Holy Spirit (Ps 51:10-12; Ezk 36:25-27).

4.16.7 ἁγιάζω (ἅγιος, ἁγιασμός ἁγιασμοῦ, ἅγια, ἁγιότης, ἁγιόντος, ἁγιοσύνη, ἁγιοσύνης)

The term means strictly to sanctify, but also is associated with to set apart for a special use when the term is applied to Christians (1 Pt 2:9; Col 3:12; 1 Cor 1:2, 14; 5:1; Orr & Nuelsen 1974a:1404). Related to the Sabbath, Christ expresses one relation between it and with the expression ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομα σου (Mt 6:9; Lk 11:2). The name of God represents His character, which is written in the forehead of His followers (Rv 22:3). That character is expressed in his Decalogue (Rv 7:3; 22:3). It is in contrast with the name of Babylon (Rv 17:5). According to Smith (1977b:257), the fourth commandment is the only precept that contains the descriptive title by which the true God can be distinguished from the false gods. Wherever this commandment was present there was the name of God. Kittel (1964c:111) also emphasizes that sanctifying power rests exclusively on the holiness of God. The attitude of the beast and Babylon are the opposite of God's purity. They are defined as dispossessed from the book of life (Rv 13:8; 17:3,

14). As it was said regarding the Holy Ghost's work in the Old Testament, the sanctifying is also related to the work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (Rm 8:5; 2 Cor 3:1-5; Gl 4:6; 5:22; 2 Th 2:13; Heb 10:15-17; Ja 4:5; 1 Pt 1:2). These previous figurative conclusions in adjudicating the three verbs of Genesis 2:2-3 to the Trinity and their presence in the Sabbath lead us now to the hypothesis of the evil spiritual triumvirate and their relation with the $\chi\xi\varsigma$ and $\alpha\pi\omicron\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\lambda\eta\varsigma\ \eta\lambda\iota\omicron\upsilon$ concept (Rv 7:3; 13:18; 16:12-14).

4.17 HYPOTHESIS FOR $\epsilon\acute{\xi}\alpha\kappa\omicron\sigma\iota\omicron\iota\ \epsilon\acute{\xi}\eta\kappa\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\ \epsilon\acute{\xi}$ ($\chi\xi\varsigma$) USING $\alpha\pi\omicron\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\omicron\lambda\eta\varsigma\ \eta\lambda\iota\omicron\upsilon$ AND THE CONTEXT OF REVELATION 7:3, 16:12-14 AND 13:18

4.17.1 The code number hypothesis

Another possible approach hypothesis for the number $\chi\xi\varsigma$ is associated as being a code number for the beast/sea monster, which is blasphemy. It points to a parody of perfection: imperfection upon imperfection, despite the beast's monstrous claims (Johnson, in Holbrook 1992b:31). This possibility is supported by the fact that the number 6 is associated with humanity and therefore imperfection and limitation. Also, there are some references to the number 6 that clearly point to man. He was created on the sixth day (Gn 1:27, 31), and six days were appointed for his labor (Ex 20:9). The serpent was also created on the sixth day (Gn 1:24, 25, 31).

Some author discrepancies have taken place in regard to the usage and certainty of the number 6 as a single digit and its writing procedure in the ancient world. There have been some differences in provincial Roman numismatica as far as the Greek letter stigma is concerned.

Hopkins (www.parthia.com/fonts/stigma.htm) argues that Butcher (1988:114) shows a V=sigma for number 6, instead of ζ (stigma = 6). He considers Butcher (1988:114) in error because he confused the final sigma with stigma. While these two letter forms are very similar, lower cases in Greek were not developed until the Middle Ages. Hopkins says that scholars on ancient Roman and Greek coins

refer to this issue and prefer ζ for number 6 (Hill 1964:215; Sear 1979:xxxvii; 1982:xxv; Jones 1986:158; Flegg 1989:88; Menninger 1970:270, in www.parthia.com/fonts/stigma.htm).

After this proposition and its solving limitation problem on this particular numeric issue, we turn now to the concept of ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου and its relationship to χξς.

4.17.2 ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου: Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11 and Revelation 16:12-14

For this coded number approach, the ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου hypothesis is between two periods of time. John, in this genitive phrase of Revelation 7:2, observes the growing, not only of the Roman sun-worship process, but also the gradual power instauration of the sea-beast, Babylon promotion and the enforcing of a Sunday law in the world. Later in the book of Revelation, John shows another related prophetic narrative phrase in Revelation 16:12: τῶν βασιλέων ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου. This double genitive phrase indicates both kings of the East are in the same scenario. This approach considers that the previous genitive phrase is derived from Is 44:28-45:21 where Cyrus the Great is announced, along with his Mede allies, 150 years prior to his birth as a type of Christ. He destroyed Babylon by diverting the Euphrates from its bed into a marshy lake. His armies entered the city over the dry riverbed (Herodotus 1.191, in Konroff 1954:593). Jeremiah also prophesied this fact (Jr 50:38; 51:36, in Wiseman 1979:849). Cyrus was known also for liberating the Jews from Babylonian captivity. He began facilitating other successor Persian kings as they helped the Jews in rebuilding their temple and their city (2 Chr 36:22, 23; Es 1:1-11; 6:2-5 (Horn 1995:233). In large cuneiform inscriptions contained in the famous Cyrus cylinder, it is stated that he also allowed people from many other nations to return to their own lands (Horn 1995:233). In this archaeological and historicist parallelism, we see Christ and His heavenly hosts coming from the East to liberate the captives from all the nations, tribes, and tongues from Babylonian power (Mt 24:27; 2:9; Lk 17:23-24; 13; 29; 2 Pt 1:19; Rv 18:1-4). The drought of the Euphrates River (Rv 16:12), in this context, echoes the way in which Babylon was captured by Cyrus and his allies. In this historicist parallelism, the Euphrates means the lack of human support and ability to detain the world plagues and the sins of Babylon (Maxwell

1989:428-434). According to this hypothesis the three unclean spirits of Revelation 16:13 – δράκοντος, θηρίον, and the ψευδοπροφήτου – would conform to the triple six number of Revelation 13:18. This triple alliance alludes to the ancient Roman custom of *triumvirates*. *Triumvirates* were common in the Roman republic. They were created by political reason, mostly to exert power in the interest of the state, especially for the public welfare. The first one was constituted in 60 BCE. Julius Caesar, Pompey and Crassus were the ones that constituted it (Mellor and McGee 2004:70-75). The second *triumvirate* was formed with Octavian (Augustus), Marc Anthony, and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus in 43 BCE (Mellor and McGee 2004:89-92). The maligned Trinity of Revelation 16:13 are in one united genitive, which demonstrates not only a union but that the three have the same spirit for the original purpose, that being to fight against the Lamb (Rv 17:14). The Holy Trinity in Genesis 2:1-3 spoke about blessing, resting, and sanctifying in the visual cryptogram of Revelation 7:1-3, disguising the Holistic Sabbath presence. These three powers have στόματος which speak against God, His Word, and His kingdom. According to Chaij (1966:98-114), the identity of these three unclean spirits represent religious movements. The dragon indicates spiritualism. According to Chaij, the primarily symbol of the dragon in Revelation 12:9 is Satan, and is depicted in Revelation 16:13 as working through spiritualism which utilizes different channels or manifestations, such as paganism and Christian spiritualism, which is practiced in the form of laboratory investigations, under the name of parapsychology or other modern designations (Chaij 1966:98). In reference to violence and spiritualism in the world and the United States of America, according to Roy Brown (2006:277), “our world is experiencing a similar situation. There is no reverence for life. In cartoons, music and movies, violence is glorified. Witchcraft, the worship of Satan, psychic-phenomena, practicing witches spiritualism and demonology are practiced between our borders.” Because of this Clouzet (2009:10), in citing Lynn (2009:1A, 6A), mentions that the United States of America is turning into a secular nation even though many people still say they are Christian. The nation is going down the path that will lead to becoming a postmodern and a spiritualist nation. Eastern religions have grown 125 percent in this nation since 1990. New religions such as Wiccan, pagans, or spiritualists have increased 50 percent (although all these remain a relatively small percentage of the total US population, i e, about 1.2 percent). As another part of that same evil Trinity

postulated in Revelation 16:13, the beast indicates the Papacy system and, the false prophet is that sector of Christianity which unites with the state to summon support to it against the Sabbath (Chaij 1966:98-9). It is interesting that Revelation 16:13 refers to βατράχοι. The Hebrew term צפררע (*cephard ēā'*) describes the infestation of such amphibians that took place during the second plague that infested Egypt (Ex 8:1-15; Ps 78:45; 105:30). In Revelation this infestation narrative could reflect a worldwide manifestation in favor of such a spiritualist Trinity. Douglas suggests U.S.A as the great enabler for this process (Douglas 2006:67-104). The Hebrew term for such amphibians allows the probability for both frogs and toads (Day, in Orr & Nuelsen 1974c:1147). Horn (1995:974) and Wilkinson (1999:247) say that in ancient Egypt frogs were a symbol of life and origin and an emblem of the goddess Heqet, the benevolent patron of birth and the consort of Khnum, the god that was represented as a potter given form to a man on a pottery wheel (see also Pinch 2002:153-54).

From the British Museum it is possible to observe an Egyptian representation of a woman during the Graeco-Roman period from 332 BCE to 305 CE. The woman is giving birth while kneeling on two bricks. Heket, who was also a personification of the bricks on which the mother knelt, helped the woman deliver the baby:



Heket personified in the bricks in the British Museum (trial piece with a birth scene)

Horn (1995:974) says that in Revelation 16:13 frogs are also a symbol of impurity. The parallel with Revelation 16:13 resides in one antipode of extension. In Egypt they were local, but in Revelation 16:13-14 it says they have a worldwide extension and a demonic power: εἰσὶν γὰρ πνεύματα δαιμονίων ποιοῦντα σημεῖα, ἃ ἐκπορεύεται ἐπὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης συναγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς (Rv 16:14). This phraseology suggests a worldwide deception. As in Egyptian polytheism, where the inscriptions presented Heqet and Khnum giving life, so demonic powers through spiritualism at the end of time will pretend to give life (2 Cor 11:14). The transcendence of this world deception is *in pectore* but the Bible depicts that only God is able to create, sustain, concede immortality and give life (Gn 2:7; Job 10:12; 12:40; Jn 5:21, 26; 11:25; 1 Cor 15:53; 1 Th 4:13-17; 1 Tm 1:16-17; 2 Tm 1:10; 1 Jn 5:11). The fact that Lucifer is a created being (Ezk 28:15) enhances the grotesqueness and coarseness of frogs in Revelation 16:13, 14. They can only hop, leaping in their efforts to reproduce life through spiritualism. It is a contraposition with the angels' messages of Revelation 14: 6-13. They do not leap or hop. Those angelic messages, because they come from God, are described as majestic, flying throughout the earth to counterattack the deceiving work of the evil Trinity. Some authors, such as Paulien, see this evil Trinity in the future, uniting the world because of its ecological calamities produced by the plagues predicted in Revelation 16. In this setting the call from Babylon is a mandatory call to allegiance to this evil power.

“[It] will certainly need to wield supernatural power in order to blend Eastern religions with Western mind-sets. Some possibilities are already evident in the development of New Age thinking in the West. New Age thinking, a subcategory of postmodernism, seems as attractive to secular people as it to those of Eastern backgrounds. Since the “flower children” of the sixties, secular people who were formerly uninterested in religion of any kind find the open-ended spirituality of today’s world quite comfortable. In fact, the one spiritual place in which postmoderns do not seem comfortable is anything associated with the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. They decry the ‘bashing’ of other religions so common in the Christian-Muslim debate, for example, but are much more at home in

the defused spirituality of southern and eastern Asia. It may not require a great deal of supernatural power (Mount Carmel type experiences) to convince the average Westerner of God's presence today. Today, more than ever, the idea that the vast majority of earth's peoples and governments could be persuaded toward a common religious agenda is plausible. Ecological reasons may also compel political powers to choose to join the religion confederacy. If many of the seven last plagues of Revelation 16 are taken literally (particularly the first four and the last), the world may have a total ecological breakdown at some point in the future, requiring drastic measures to maintain law and order. In the context of a revival of religious institutions, people could easily interpret such disasters as a divine judgment (which they will in fact be). In such setting, anyone who bucks the religion confederacy might be seen as the cause of the environmental calamities. In order to save the planet, the call might go out to join Babylon and conform to its wishes."

(Paulien 2008:173-74)

After considering the identity and attempts of the evil Trinity and its anti-Sabbath posture, and in an effort to look for harmony between marriage, Sabbath and Trinity, the next section will explain the interdependency between these three terms as far as creation/Creator/marriage is concerned.

4.17.3 Marriage, holistic Sabbath and Trinity

The concept of Trinity is attested in Revelation when it is described by the equality in the terminology applied to the Father and the Son (Rv 1:4, 8; 22:1-3, 12, 13). The throne of God is shared in equality with the Son. In this thronic view the Son is no longer depicted as a sacrificial Lamb but in equality with the Father (Whidden, Moon and Reeve 2002:27-28). The purpose of this section is to justify the functionality of this *MST* triad (Marriage, Sabbath, and Trinity) under a parallel of Biblical references.

The institution of marriage forms a triangle of dependency, functionality, and identity (Froom 1966b:17-41). Because creation came into existence before man, this settled the platform in which humankind moves to execute its purpose and keep balanced its and nature's existence. Sabbath became a moderator and reminder of the sealing designing identity, which is authorship, ownership, and

kingdom. Thus, marriage, Sabbath and creation are opposed to the actual perversion in same sex marriage (Gn 19:1-13; Lv 18:22; 20:13; Rm 1:18-32; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tm 1:8-11) for instance (http://www.oneby1.org/same_sex_partnerships.html) which is prevailing in the modern Babylonian religious realm and that opposes the relationship of man/woman established by God since the creation (Adamson 2000:15-191). In this scenario, Sabbath is a link of authenticity and acceptance of God's principles originally designed for man and woman in the creation marriage scenario (Stott 1998:24, 28, 33-35). The three sides of the Creationist triangle (man, woman and Creator) contains within it the presence of the triple gift for marriage which offers God's principles in a postmodern world of restlessness and wavering morality. These gifts connected in marriage, Sabbath and Trinity are resting, blessing, and sanctification (Gn 2: 2-3). The concept of Sabbath in this stance is a refuge against the anxiety and stress of the hectic society of the present world. In this way, Sabbath gives us a sense of belonging to the Creator (Bacchiocchi 1997:222). The concept of biblical marriage invites one to consider that Sabbath is service to others and to the ecological habitat. Man must act as a curator rather than predator of the earth. Sabbath was designed also to take time to admire the earth rather than to exploit God's creation (Bacchiocchi 1997:225-226). In the same way that the Godhead is united in preserving the balance of the universe and the earth, human beings are invited to reproduce this attitude throughout the holistic Sabbath in their marriage experience. Next, there is a parallel between marriage and Sabbath, and Trinity and Sabbath.

Marriage and Sabbath Trinity and Sabbath

Ownership to teach human beings their origin and Creator of weekly Sabbath (Gn 2:2-3; 22-24; Ex 12:4).	Ownership to God and preservation through recognition of Trinity gifts (2 Cor 13:13; Rv 14:7).
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For preserving the <i>οἰκονομία</i> of the earth (Gn 1:28; 2:15)	Inviting man to cease from routine of life and renew family. Escapes from the anxiety and restlessness of Babylon (Ex 20:8-11; Rv 14:4)
As a symbol of protection, corporative ownership, authenticity, and preservation of marriage (Gn 1:26-28; 2:1-3)	σφραγίσωμεν of Revelation 7:3 indicates an aorist, subjunctive, first plural indicative which also includes the Godhead working in people, including marriage
Sabbath respects the creation of family in the only sense of male and female couple (Gn 1:26, 31; 2:1-3).	Sabbath suggests avoiding the wickedness of Babylon, which destroys the meaning of marriage and the holistic Sabbath relationship with the Creator (Mt 19:4-6; Gn 1:26, 28; Rm 1:23-27).

4.18 A SEALING LESSON FROM EXODUS 12:7

4.18.1 The blood, sealing, and the ordinance

Because the holistic Sabbath is not an end in itself, it is appropriate, through the experience of the Exodic blood painting of the lintel and two doorposts of the doors to their houses during the Passover, to discuss the faith and obedience meaning related in keeping some other Bible ordinances, including the Decalogue. Baker (2009:6-7) points out that the Israelites, by the time of the Exodus, were no longer nomadic but were dwelling in houses (Ex 12:22). Four generations in Egypt made the Israelites like the Egyptians, including culturally, and affected by the Egyptian religion. Houses were built of mud. Rich and poor people lived in this home structural setting. Only temples were built of stone to indicate eternity. In citing Allen (2001:79-81), Baker (2009:6-7) says the only stone structures in homes were precisely the lintel and doorposts. Related to

doorposts and lintels, Baker (2009:7) explains that Egyptians considered the human body was divided into five parts:

1. Mummification: The body had to survive death if the person wanted to live in the afterlife.
2. The shadow was the second part that according to Egyptians was a real part of the person.
3. The *Ka* or life force: Christians call it the breath of life (Gn 2:7).
4. The *ba* or the person's character.
5. The name was the last part of humanity. The name was engraved on the stone doorposts and lintels of homes.

According to Habachi (2001:40-43, 53-55, in Baker 2009:7)

Egyptologists excavating the Delta region have found stone doorposts and lintel with the owner's name practically intact ... because the children of Israel had to learn the superiority of Jehovah over the gods of Egypt. Through the plagues, Israelites slowly learn to trust in God.

(Baker 2009:7)

Because of this

when God required the Israelites to paint the blood they collected from the Passover lamb on the door posts and lintels, He was asking them to cover their names with blood of the lamb. By doing this they were taught the rudiments of salvation. Their names on stone did not ensure life in the hereafter; only the blood of the Lamb could do that. In fact, at least one member of their family would not survive the night without it.

(Baker 2009:7)

This archaeological finding helps one understand the fact that sealing is not applied mechanically or as a mere liturgical form. It has to do with the heart and mind of the person, all surrounding the Creator in humble and joyful acceptance.

We conclude this study by pointing out that sealing in Revelation 7:1-3 has a holistic meaning only when the blood of the Lamb through faith in Christ has

been accepted by the believer and the acceptance of His character is then chiseling and carving in the form of a name, which is Christ's character (Gl 4:19, 2 Cor 3:1-5; 2 Tm 1:19; Rv 7:3; 22:4; 1 Pt 2:5). The holistic Sabbath, under this exegetic and historicist approach was designated as the memorial of Creation, to remind man that God's children were deliberated from the idolatry, for worshipping not false gods, but the true God who was distinguished among them because He is the only One who has the power to create (Bunch 1997:23). But Sabbath in itself does not constitute an omen of protection and ownership from God. White says that not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed (White 1948:213). This author also emphasizes that it is through faith that the Christian must become a partaker of the righteousness of Christ (White 1893:3).

Historicists believe God is leading his people in a *continuum* astir throughout history. Wade (2010:13) says "we are not afraid to the future because we look back, to one past led by God who gives us certainty."

4.19 SUMMARY

Historicism claims a *continuum* of historic events progress that culminates with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This historicist *continuum* is supported by the narrative and prophecies from the Old Testament. Such a prophecy narrative works in historic parallelism through time as a part of a final world drama. In interpreting scriptures, Historicism neglects the postmodern "fusion of horizons" school because it undermines the historical-grammatical approach, which is the core of Historicism hermeneutics and exegesis. Historicism neglects the Idealistic school of interpretation as a whole. It admits, however, within the proper historical-grammatical context, the devotional and spiritual response in each history *continuum*; that is to say, that if Revelation speaks about a great and worldwide Armageddon crisis, it is also possible to think in terms of a personal Armageddon in the personal Christian life when the believer fights against himself, sin, the devil and the world. Certain teachings in Revelation related to

the seven churches, for instance, also have a devotional connection with the lives of Christians in every generation.

Regarding the writing date of Revelation, the Historicist evidence favors the Domitian theory, even though there is no conclusive archaeological evidence or any writings beyond Latin that give evidence of John's banishment to Patmos. Of this issue it must be said that much written information regarding banishment or penal islands lists from the past have been lost, probably forever. However, the possibility of a double word meaning for *metallum* quarry referred to by Victor of Pattau could have shown that John actually worked not within a mine but in a quarry. Besides, the fact that Domitian incorporates the characteristics and anti-Christian behavior of the period, this study favors 96 CE for the composing of Revelation. The Nero theory has some anachronisms, not mentioning the *redivivus* myth and the fact that that does not reflect the whole period of John's life. The position of *relegatio* for John, instead of *deportation*, seems to be suitable for the apostle in the Domitian theory. This study also neglects the composite Babylonian hypotheses and the Papias theory, because they consider the Apocalypse from a Preterist view and a different authorship than John's. Also, the Babylonian and Papias theories detach Revelation from a divine source and neglect the idea that Revelation still has a message for the world today.

In terms of writing style, when the fourth Gospel and Revelation are compared, even though the Greek language style of Revelation does not reflect the same style as the Gospel of John, there is a linguistic parallelism in both works that influences the idea of one writer. Moreover, the fact that the apostle was Hebrew-mind oriented and not Greek can be understood and can justify the Patmos absence possibility of an actuary or scribe on Revelation's writing. Also, the transliterated Hebraisms for Abaddon, Armageddon, for instance, and the grammar of the book explained by Thompson, Mussies, and Smiley are tools that indicate the isolation of John in Patmos exile.

The presence of the cryptic in Babylon related to Rome in the time of John is also present in a Petrine description (1 Pt 5:13). It was a codex language technique to avoid persecution and to distinguish Christian followers amongst each other. This cryptic writing style is also seen in the early fathers of the Church when they used the term Edom in mentioning Rome. The fact that Babylon appears in Revelation 17 as a harlot is accentuated if we consider the many pornographic Latin terms employed in ancient Rome for prostitution. Regarding the beasts symbols of Daniel and Revelation, Historicism considers a *continuum* historical connection when those beasts are described in Daniel 7 and 8, and Revelation 13 and 17. Historicists see a connection between the little horn of Daniel 7 and 8 with the sea monster of Revelation 13 and the harlot of Revelation 17. According to Historicism, when considering this prophetic panorama caution must be taken in the approaches for the Jerusalem-Babylon hypothesis where the prophets were killed. Historicism rejects this position because Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 and 135 CE without fulfilling any of the pretended Jerusalem-Babylon hypothesis. Besides this previous conception, some authors describe Babylon as a multiple manifestation with more than one empire or culture. Others see it as one economic entity, which will oppress men by worldwide financial collapse. However, Historicism considers Babylon and Rome as a part of the *continuum* progress in history that intends to destroy God's people and are against God's principles but are not the prophecy fulfillment itself. The consummation of the Historicist drama will take place when papal Rome will gain world power and the entire religious world called Babylon will fight against Christ's people. It is for that reason that the terms εἰκὼν, σφραγίς, χάραγμα, θηρίον, ἥλιος are used in Historicism in a symbolic way to describe a spiritual battle against God's sealing and man and its religious traditions.

Under such religious traditions, the description of the sun worship evolution within the Roman Empire developed, among other historical circumstances, with the Sunday law promulgated by Constantine the Great. For that purpose, Historicists such as Bacchiocchi and Paulien, among others, believe in a

historical change evolution from Sabbath to Sunday controversy that will culminate in a worldwide political and religious impact. In the time of John the controversy was just rising with the Domitian worship and the uprising of sun worship by subsequent Roman Caesars, but will grow until the historicist drama will reach the whole earth. The ἀριθμός of the beast which is χξς or 666, open a discussion on the identification of this mysterious number. The special theological significance of this number is not an easy task to solve since every number presents a variety of possible meanings. Irenaeus proposed a variety of ghematric names for this number. Preterism applies the number to Nero with some variations. The various ghematric possibilities such as the Hebrew, Latin, and Greek names are not conclusive. Even the Latin *Vicarivs Filii Dei* has an aura of distrust in its usage because it showed up during the French Revolution and was taken from a forgery work entitled *Donation of Constantine*. The Roman Catholic Church refuses to accept the existence of a Tiara with that particular engraved Latin title for the Pope. However, some authors suggest there is recent historical proposed evidence that dates back to the first millennium CE in showing the tiara's mysterious and elusive number-name that the Roman Catholic Church says does not exist.

Since the archaeological findings at Oxyrhynchus, Preterism favors the "evidence" in the papyrus p¹¹⁵'s fragment which contains Revelation 13:18 not with ἑξακόσιοι ἑξήκοντα ἕξ [χξς] but χις. However, Irenaeus and other Historicists defend the 666 saying the best evidence proposes 666 with the possibility of a copyist or scribe mistake. The presence of 666 in well trusted codex and documents such as κ, A, the Vulgate, and many other manuscripts, favors the evidence of the 666 number.

Historicists also favor the presence of the Roman Catholic system in the sea monster of Revelation 13 and 17. They deny the little horn as being Antiochus Epiphanes IV in Daniel 7 and 8 because he did not fulfill the cosmic and *continuum* progression of such religious-political power. He was just a local

power that did not last and disappeared without any major repercussion in the historical realm of prophecy. Historicists, instead follow the idea that the first beast or land beast of Revelation 13 is the one that will reconstruct the εἰκὼν of the beast and will unite with the sea monster of Revelation 13. This process took a starting point during the 1 260 years of papal supremacy, which Historicists put from 538 CE to 1798 (Dn 7:25; Rv 12:6; 13:5). Historicism views the land beast of Revelation 13:11 as the United States of America.

In the exegetical approach of Revelation 7:1-3 there are three usage descriptions for the term ἀποκάλυψις which comprises the tension existent in the book: The unveiling of something hidden, which gives light and knowledge to Gentiles that become Christians and give them knowledge in the new covenant and that spiritual truth was made known by revelation and will be totally fulfilled in the occasion of Christ's second coming.

The exegetical study of Revelation 7:1-3 is said to be a parenthesis of grace. It is an interlude between the sixth and seventh seals. The question of 6:17 "who is able to stand?" opens its explanation in Revelation 7:1-3. The holding of the four winds by the four angels indicates a worldwide event that involves the number four, which is the number for total comprehension and world covering according to ancient understanding. The presence of the angel coming from the East implies the evolving process of sun worship but also, the promise of Christ's return, using the East as the pointing signal referred to in the Scripture (Mt 2:9; 8:11; 24:27; Lk 13:29; 16:12).

The hypothetical presence of a code number for 666 as the false Trinity is one approach to consider. There are three powers confirming this triumvirate: Papacy, spiritualism, and the religious system affiliated with papal Rome will form a global tyrant power before the end of time. This Trinity is explained under the code number hypothesis as being the explanation for Revelation 13:18 χξς. Because the number 6 defines man and all that is imperfect so this evil

triumvirate conspires imperfectly, within human traditions against God and His people. This coming of the Lord is anticipated by the sealing. Σφραγίς in Revelation 7:1-3 is not a physical or bodily signet but a relationship based on the attributes of seal, which are ownership, property, authenticity, and protection. According to Historicism, this sealing is the formation of Christ in the life of the believer (Gl 4:18, 19). The ancient Roman society described by Tertullian and others, illustrates the kind of Christian view believers had towards Rome and their moral practices. Sealing is not merely related only to a specific day but to a genuine relationship in faith through Christ that leads the Christian to respect and honor God's Decalogue. On the other hand, χάραγμα is used in Revelation for the adherence to beast worship. Therefore, according to Historicism, the function of sealing as expressed in Revelation 7:1-3 is viewed also within the relationship of respect to the Decalogue, the human body, and world environment.

The description of the holistic Sabbath as the seal is actually a relationship in faith that is procured to remind man that its origin is based on the Godhead. The Trinity is represented in the three verbs of Genesis 2:2-3 and Exodus 20:11. These verbs are rested (Christ the Son), blessed (God the Father) and sanctified (Holy Spirit). These three verbs indicate the creation participation of the divine Trinity in Genesis 1. The Godhead created marriage for perpetuating the creation relationship in the sealing covenant expressed in the οἰκονομία of the world and to remember they rest in the Sabbath because it is a memorial of creation and Christ's salvation. This is why Mk 2:27 uses the word ἄνθρωπος instead of ἀνὴρ. Man is a steward of God's creation, and the Greek generic term described here implies humanity and not only the Jewish population. The parallelism between the Sabbath, marriage and Creator, establishes and indicates that the process of resting, blessing, and sanctifying is against any other marriage intention rather than male/female.

In the Historicism concept of sealing, Christian is the process of being apart from ἀδικία (2 Tm 2:19) that includes respect for God's creation. The description of

protection and property applied to sealing also implies a respect for God's creation, a counterpart of the admonishing to Babylon that destroys the earth (Rv 11:18). The Roman Empire produced a pale description of this pollutant attitude manifested in the copper production, wood deforestation and the killing of livestock for mob circus entertainment. A similar description is viewed in the current earth ecology condition. The holistic Sabbath reminds man that on the seventh day humanity is equal, despising social class, economic power, or even race. They find rest out of the restless Babylonian world. The similarity of Exodus 12 and Revelation 7:1-3 with regard to sealing shows a respect for human life. Sealing is for everyone who follows Jesus Christ. The sealing is against any xenophobic or racism intent as the Egyptian traditions intended to describe the Exodus experience. The holistic Sabbath is also a response against the evolution thought in the modern world that includes theories such as the Gap theory, theistic evolution, progressive creation, pantheistic evolution, and evolution. The holistic Sabbath is against the new kind of sex oriented marriages that neglects and rejects God's creation of a couple formed by one man and a woman (Gn 1:26-28, 31). The fact that Egyptologists have found some stone doorposts and lintels in the Delta region with their homeowners on them, helps one to understand the fact that sealing is not something applied to a mere ordinance or rite. It must be centered and cored in the blood of the apocalyptic Lamb (Rv 5 and 6) which preserves, protects and gives meaning to the Holistic sealing way in which Historicism looks at the Sabbath.