

The Seven Trumpets

with Attention to God's Symbolism
Vern Sheridan Poythress



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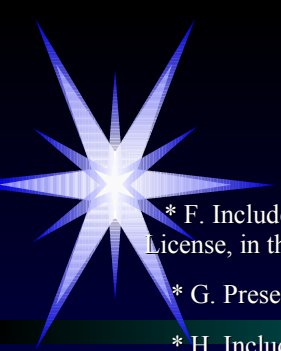
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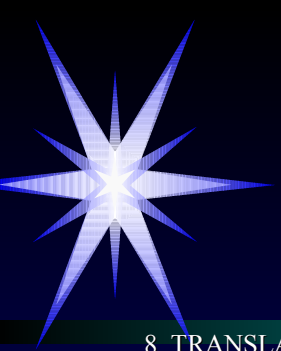
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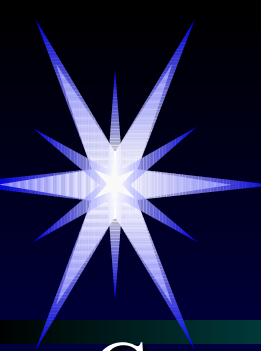
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Progression of 7 Cycles

→ Commission

1. 7 seals: **scouts**

→ Prosecution of war

2. 7 trumpets: **effects on earth**

3. 7 symbolic accounts. **characters**

4. 7 bowls: **more effects on earth**

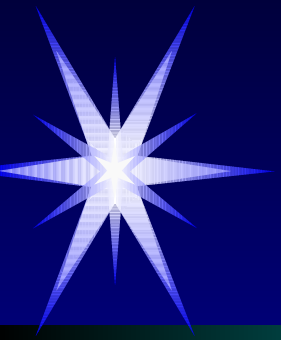
→ Elimination of evil

5. 7 messages about Babylon:

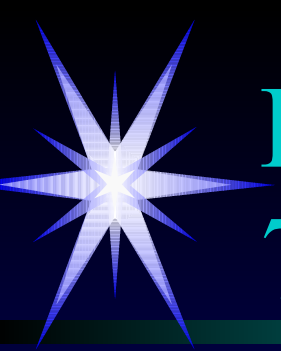
6. white horse: **seductress**

7. white throne: **power source**
all evil

culmination

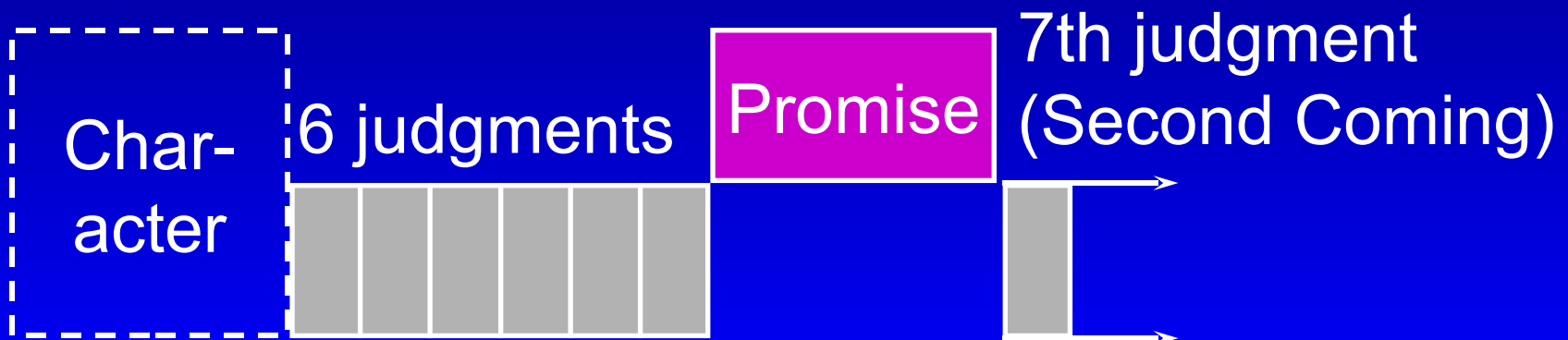


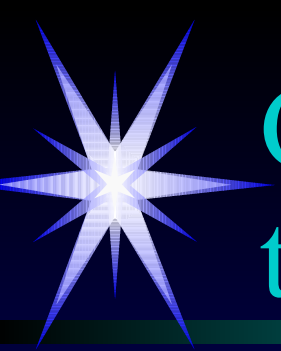
A. Structure of Trumpet Cycle



Detail of Cycle 2: 7 Trumpets

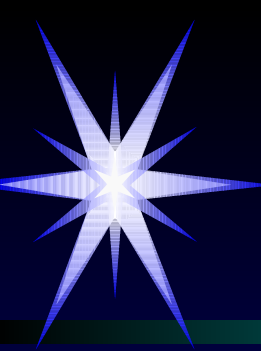
- ➔ Cycle 2: 7 trumpets 8:2-11:19
 - ❖ a. Characters: 7 angels 8:2-6
 - ❖ **b. 6 judgments 8:7-9:21**
 - ❖ a'. Promise for the church 10:1-11:14
 - ❖ **bb. 7th and final judgment 11:15-19**





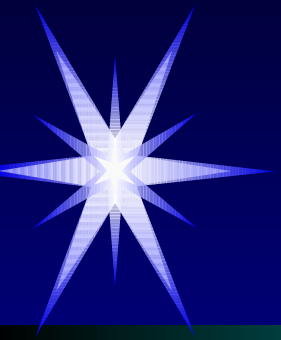
Characters Controlling the Trumpets (8:2-5)

- Angelic agents control the effects.
 - God sends them.
 - The prayers of the saints play a role.
 - All sufferings remain in God's control and serves his purposes for the saints.

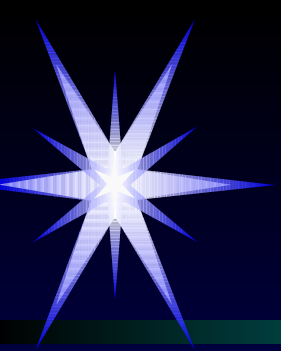


Particular Trumpets

1. Burn up 1/3 of the earth, 8:7.
2. Turn into blood 1/3 of the sea, 8:8-9.
3. Make bitter 1/3 of the fresh water, 8:10-11.
4. Darken 1/3 of the heavenly bodies, 8:12.
5. Send horrific scorpion-like locusts, 9:1-11.
6. Send huge army with plagues, 9:13-21.
(Promise: saints prophesy, 10:1-11:14.)
7. God's kingdom completed, 11:15-19.

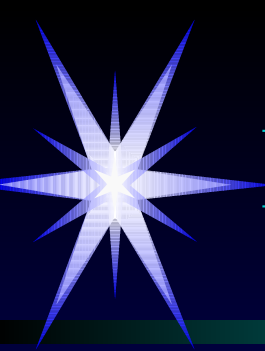


B. Interpreting the Locusts



Locusts of Rev. 9:1-11

- Roman Empire
- Final Crisis
- Church History
- Repeated Pattern
- Roman decadence
- Future locusts; or evil powers
- Islamic invasion
- Powers of evil in the wicked at all times



Interpreting Rev 9:1-11 (cont.)

→ Church History

● Islamic invasion

→ crowns

→ women's hair

→ five months

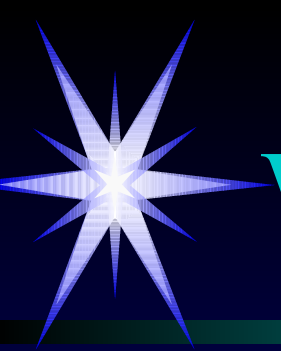
Mohammed opens
his mission

612

150 years

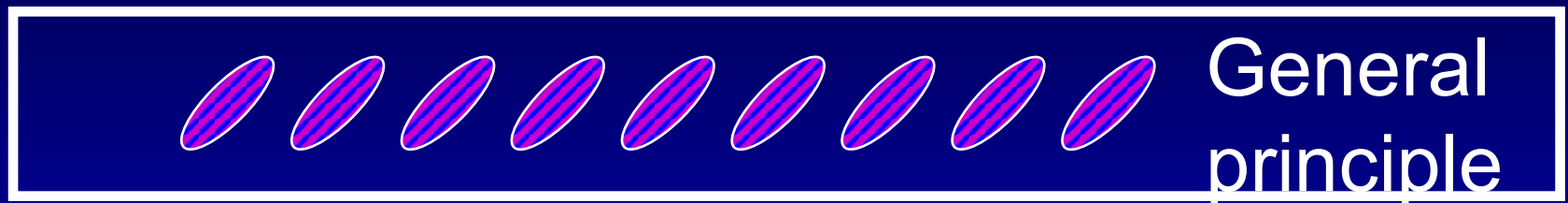
762

Caliphate to
Baghdad

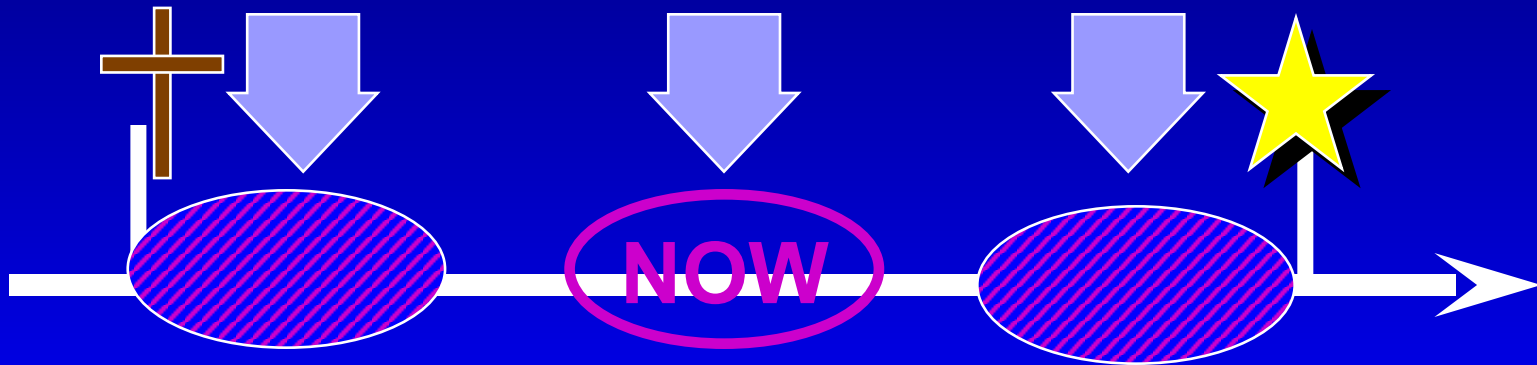


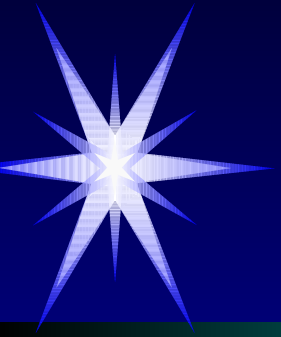
Ways of Interpreting

Symbol

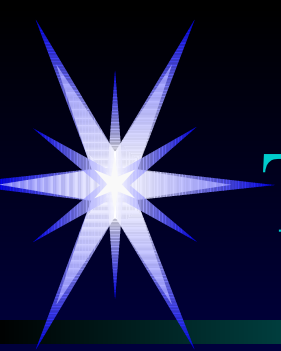


Embodied



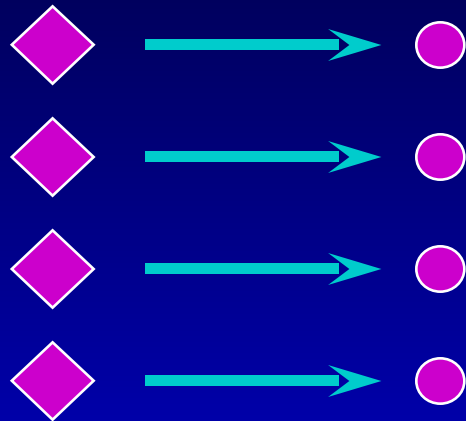


C. Symbolism



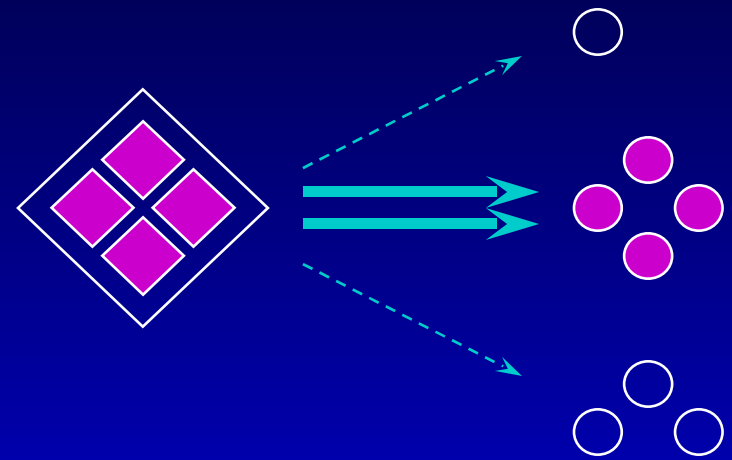
Two Approaches to Symbols

1. Code



- One referent
- Meaning = referent
- Isolated

2. Multifaceted



- Multiple allusions
- Multifaceted impact
- Holistic



Expanded Understanding of Isa. 40:1-5

Day of the Lord

Special highway for God

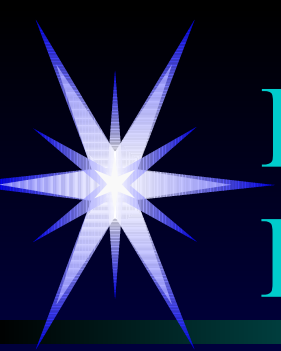
destroy pride
(Isa. 2:1-17)

earth changes when God
appears (Pss. 18:15; 46:6)

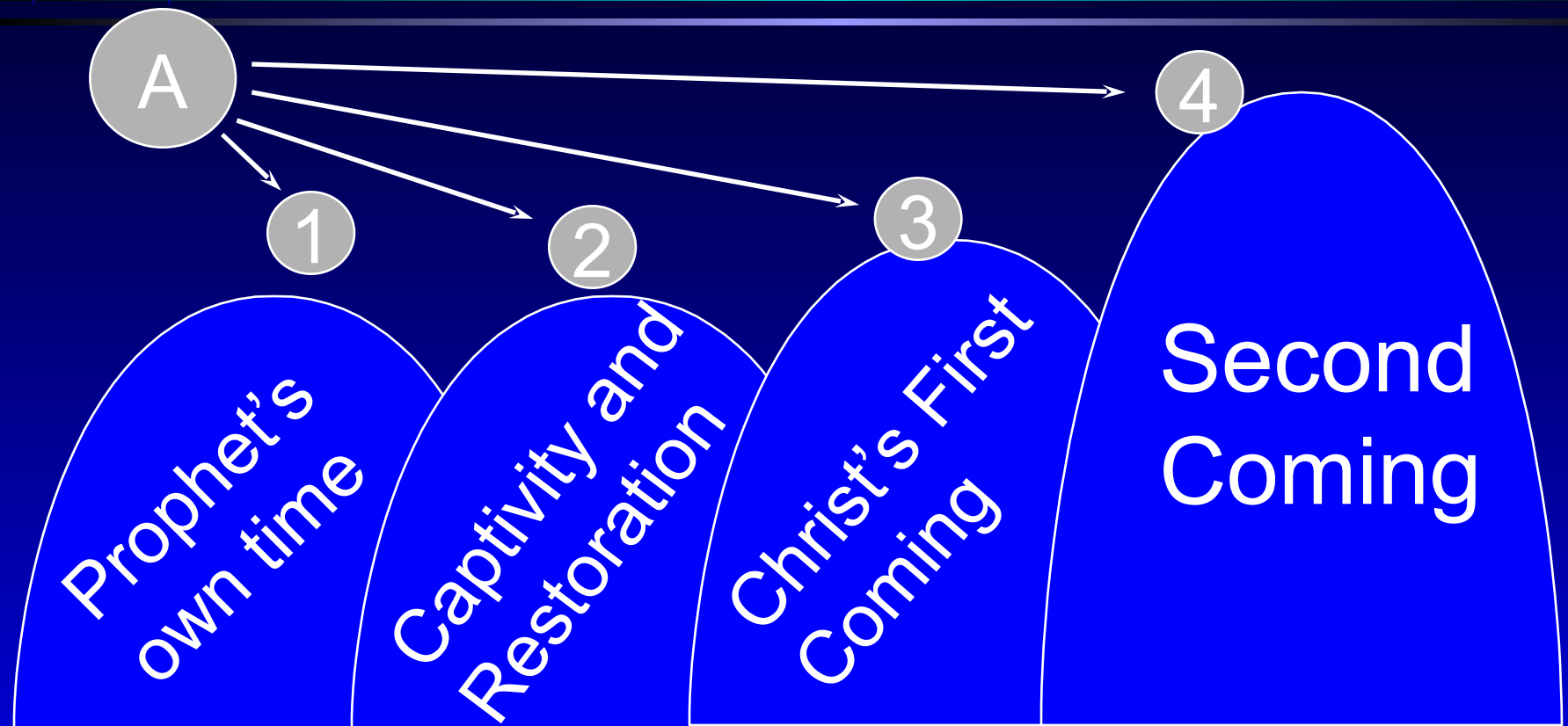
Fulfilled in John
the Baptist (Matt. 3:3)

valleys filled,
hills made low

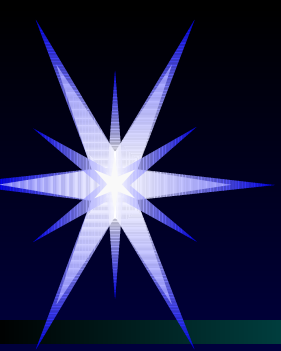
Isa. 40:4



Expanded Understanding of Prophetic Fulfillment



Adapted from Irving Jensen, *Bible Study Charts*



Expanded Understanding of Locust Plague (Rev. 9:1-11)

Day of the Lord

Punishment of wicked

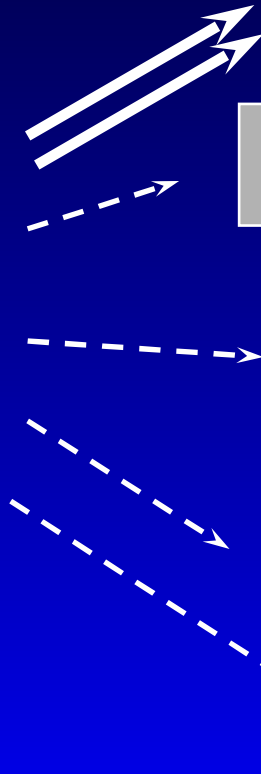
Damage of literal locusts

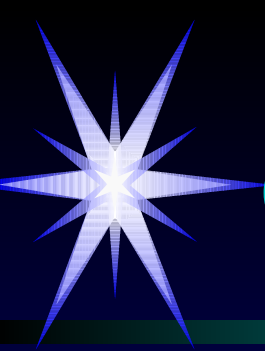
Plague on Pharaoh
(Exod. 10:1-20)

The Day (Joel 2:1-11)

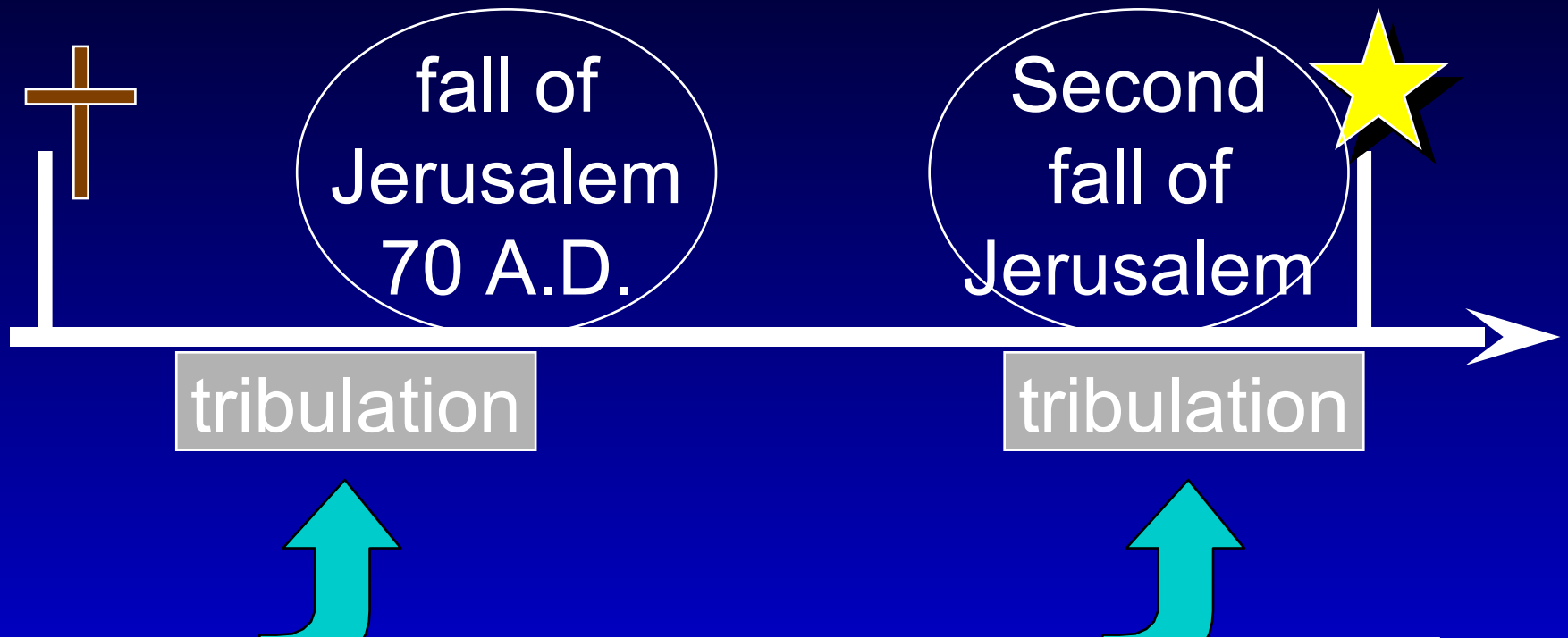
God's army

Locust
Plague
(Rev. 9:1-11)



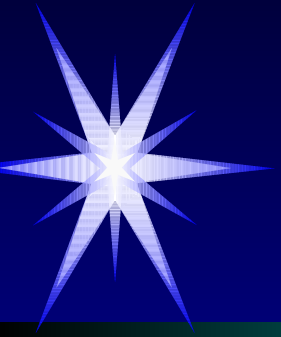


Olivet Discourse (Luke 21)

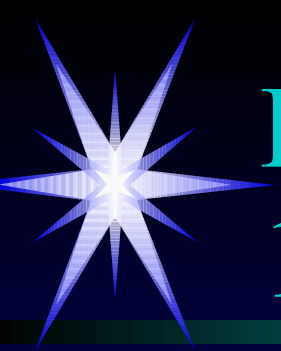


Double Perspective of Olivet Discourse

Adapted from Irving Jensen, *Bible Study Charts*



D. Symbols in Revelation



Expanded Understanding of Rev. 17:9

7 heads of the Beast



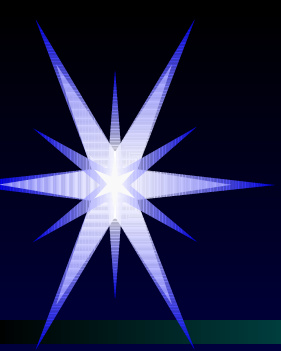
7 hills
on which
the woman sits.

(17:9)



7 kings,
5 of whom
have fallen.

(17:10)

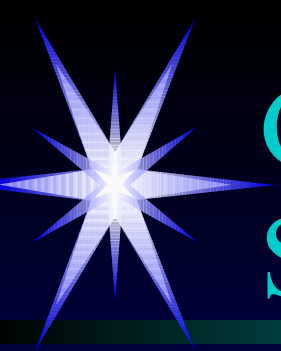


Expanded Understanding of the Beast (Rev. 13:1-10)

For

Beast

- ➔ Referent (Roman Emperor?).
- ➔ Hideous monstrosity (repulsiveness).
- ➔ Combination of beasts from Daniel 7.
- ➔ With background of Genesis 1-3, where beasts are subordinate to man.



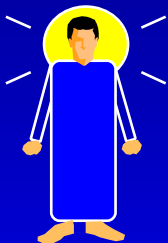
God's Mystery Reflected in Symbols



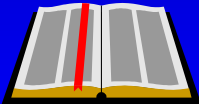
God's Trinitarian nature



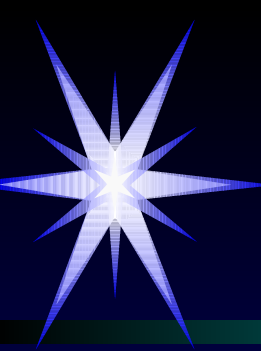
God's appearing in Rev.



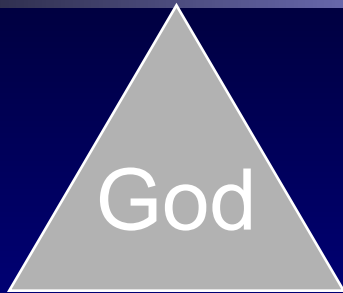
God's surroundings



all of Revelation



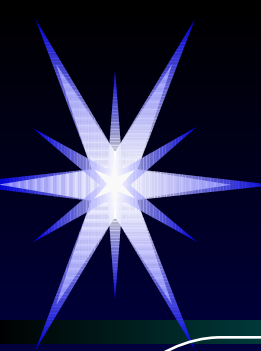
God-Centered Symbolism



God in theophany is rich,
multifaceted,
nonexhaustible,
Trinitarian.



Symbolism of
Revelation is
multifaceted.



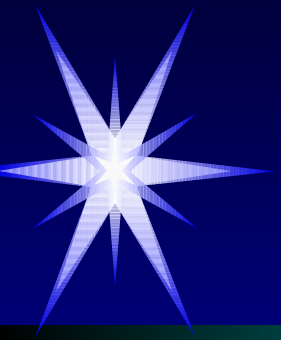
See the Whole

Hmm.... Let's see now. What does the "locust" of Rev. 9 mean? The "horse" part must refer to one of the months of the Chinese calendar. "Crowns of gold" must refer to Babylonian kings. "Women's hair" surely suggests that it is women who will bring about the final downfall of mankind. "Scorpion tails" ... hmm... Now let me see.

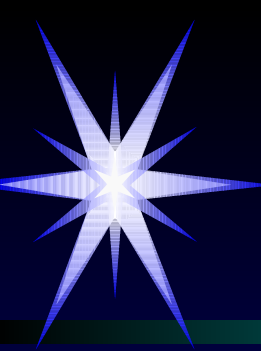


Awesome!
It's a **monster!**





E. Promise-Interlude in Rev. 10-11



Promise in Trumpet Cycle

→ God will enable his messengers to witness.

1. Jesus is the primary witness, 1:5

2. An angel witnesses, 10:1-7

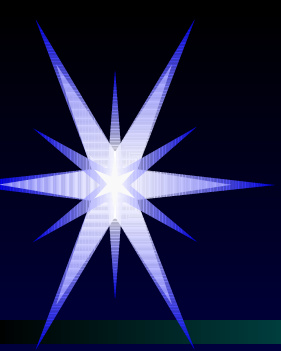
3. John witnesses, 10:8-11

4. The two witnesses, 11:3-13

like Moses
and Elijah

5. Lampstand/churches, 11:4, 1:20

6. You bear witness, Matt. 5:14-16



Promise 2 in Trumpet Cycle

→ God will cause his messengers to triumph over death.

1. Jesus is victor over death, 1:18; 11:8

2. John suffers exile, 1:9

3. Two witnesses are raised, 11:3-13

4. Churches face death, 2:10, 13

5. You are victor over death, Mark 13:9-13