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VERSE FOR THE JOURNEY

- **1 Thessalonians 4:15-18** For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.
- Caught up: *harpazo* (Greek) *rapturo* (Latin)

WHAT WE KNOW SO FAR

- Antichrist is a person (not a world system) who uses 10 kings that will arise out of the former Roman Empire
- He seems to also come out of the Roman Empire
- He doesn't serve the god of his fathers, has no regard for the "desire of women"
- He uses his resources to build up military power
- He comes to power at the mid point of the tribulation but is probably influential during the entire period
- He is spiritually empowered from the abyss
- He has a rider ("Babylon" coming to power with/on him)
- He gets his authority from Satan (Dragon)
- A false holy spirit will arise causing people to worship the antichrist, restrict trade, and mark adherents

WHO IS HIS FATHERS' GOD

- Some Christians believe the antichrist is Jewish
- Others believe there is a possibility that he is Muslim
- **Revelation 20:4** Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I *saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
- Both Sunni and Shia Muslims have a belief in a messianic figure who comes at the end of the age when the world is in terrible tumult
- There is a difference in their beliefs and view of Jesus

THE 12TH IMAM

- According to **Sunni** traditions, **Muhammad** did not clearly designate a successor and the **Muslim** community acted according to his sunnah in electing his father-in-law Abu Bakr as the first **caliph**.
- This contrasts with the **Shia** view, which holds that Muhammad announced his son-in-law and cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib as his successor
- Both believe there will be a Mahdi, a Dajjal, and Isa (good man, prophet, not God, never died, never rose)
- The Shia Mahdi is particularly interesting because of his close parallels to the antichrist in the Shia belief
- Shia believe that the Mahdi is the 12th imam
- They believe the Mahdi was born in 868 in Samarra, Iraq but went into occultation when he was 6 because he came too soon

ABOUT THE MAHDI

- Somehow he appeared at a well in Jamkaran, Iran and now pilgrims bring notes and prayer requests and drop them down the well to him
- **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4** Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come* unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

THE LAST 3 1/2 YEARS

- **Mark 13:19-23** "For those days will be a *time of tribulation* such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will. Unless the Lord had shortened *those* days, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect, whom He chose, He shortened the days. And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, *He is there*'; do not believe *him*; for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect. But take heed; behold, I have told you everything in advance.
- Is it possible that the Mahdi is the antichrist?
- If the restraint of the Holy Spirit is removed when the church is raptured, what happens next?

COMPARING

ANTICHRIST

- Comes in time of chaos
- Authorized by Satan
- Active in last 7 years
- Empowered from the abyss
- Makes 7 year treaty/Israel
- Breaks treaty at 3.5 yrs

12TH IMAM

- Comes in time of chaos
- Authorized by Allah
- Rules for 7 years
- Rises from abyss (occultation)
- Makes 7 year treaty/Israel
- Breaks treaty at 3.5 yrs

WARNING IS GIVEN TO PEOPLE ON EARTH

- **Revelation 11:3-4** "And I will grant *authority* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

FATE OF THE WITNESSES

- **Revelation 11:7-10** When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them. And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which mystically is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. Those from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations *will* look at their dead bodies for three and a half days, and will not permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who dwell on the earth *will* rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.
- Tormented: *basanizo: (ebasanisan)* to distress or cause pain; by extension through judgment

WITNESES RAPTURED

- **Revelation 11:11-13** But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were watching them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." Then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell; seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.
- This happens at the time of the 7th trumpet
- Question: does their resurrection coincide with the rapture of the church? (mid-trib rapture position)

COMPARISON CONTINUED

antichrist

- Claims to be God at the temple
- Gives mark of the beast (bad thing)
- Jesus appears and defeats him
- Assisted by false holy spirit
- Kills people who don't join him
- Great earthquake precedes his coming

12th imam

- Claims to be God at the temple
- Marks people (considered a good thing)
- (Isa) Jesus appears and joins him
- Assisted by Isa who tells people to worship the mahdi
- Kills people (beheads) if people don't believe
- Great earthquake precedes his coming

WHEN CHRIST COMES

- THE PEACEFUL KINGDOM

Daniel 7:27 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

- The mahdi is also believed to set up a peaceful kingdom
- **2 Peter 3:13** But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.
- The mahdi is also believed to make a new earth

HORSEMEN

- **ANTICHRIST RIDES A WHITE HORSE Revelation 6:1-2**
Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come." I looked, and behold, a white horse; he who sat on it had a bow; a crown was given to him; he went out conquering and to conquer.
- **JESUS RIDES A WHITE HORSE Revelation 19:11-13** I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes *are* a flame of fire; on His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself. *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.
- **THE MAHDI ALSO RIDES A WHITE HORSE**

HISTORY, LAW

- **Daniel 7:25** He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One; he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.
- Mahdi's goal: Sharia law to be enforced worldwide
- **Revelation 19:19-21** And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.