

THE RAPTURE OF “THE CHURCH, WHICH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST”.

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Chapter 1

The “Conflict of the Ages”

In order to see the place, importance, and significance of the Rapture we need to begin with some verses that give us a glimpse into the big picture. We need to consider what has gone on *in heaven* and *on earth* in the timeless past and its impact upon each of us today as we press toward the consummation of the ages.

Most thinking people would have to agree that there is a pervasive darkness in the world and humanity today; we see society becoming more and more debased before our very eyes. “...*the whole world lieth in wickedness.*” (1 John 5:19b). What is behind all this evil?

Paul here below wrote of the whole creation *in HEAVEN*, and *on EARTH*. He notes the spirit world’s *visible* and *invisible thrones...dominions... principalities... powers*” – those on the earth and those unseen in heaven.

“...*by him (Christ) were all things created, that are IN HEAVEN, and that are IN EARTH, VISIBLE (physical) and INVISIBLE (spiritual), whether they be THRONES, OR DOMINIONS, OR PRINCIPALITIES, OR POWERS: all (these) things were created by him (Christ), and for him (Christ)*” (Col. 1:16).

These titles as seen above originally were levels of God ordained rank and authority among the angelic “host” (Isa 45:12b) in the “Kingdom of God” in heaven. But Paul also wrote here of these being the *fallen spirit world’s “Principalities, and Powers”* as the “*Rulers of the Darkness of This World.*”

“*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against (spirit) PRINCIPALITIES, against (spirit) POWERS, against THE RULERS OF THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD (Gk., aion, age), against SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS (depravity) IN HIGHPLACES (above the sky).*” (Eph. 6:12)

The “conflict of the ages” originated in the heavens with Lucifer, meaning “*the morning star*”; he was the third highest angel serving God in the 3rd heaven. Lucifer, who became Satan, meaning “*the adversary*,” caused this conflict that rages even today. He rebelled against God, scheming to be as “*the Most High (God)*” (Isa. 14:12-14). As result, Lucifer was cast out of the 3rd heaven (the abode of God) to the lower 1st and 2nd heavens where today he still has dominion; *ruling by his “principalities, powers,”* as the *spiritually wicked rulers of darkness* over the *lower heavens* and on the *earth*.

These heavenly positions of rank and authority are now under Satan, while he is the “*God of this world*” (2Cor 4:4). Satan’s “*invisible*” host of fallen spirits (angels) rule the lower heavens and the earth. They rule the earth through the “*blinded*” (2Cor 4:4) “*princes of this world.*” These worldly “*princes*” are Satan’s political and religious system cohorts on earth. As we’ve seen, sometimes our political leaders, dictators, prime ministers, governors, and “*religious*” leaders rise and appear suddenly as by the hand of the unseen “*principalities and powers*”; e.g., Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and perhaps Obama. Paul says it was the secular and religious “*princes of this world*” who “*crucified the Lord of glory*” (1Cor 2:8). These “*princes*” were the human, visible, Roman authorities in conjunction with Israel’s religious leaders of that day. They no doubt were influenced by Satanic forces in an effort to stamp out the Savior. They did this not knowing they were actually fulfilling God’s eternal plan for the Savior of the world, while sealing their own demise.

God’s eternal purpose in creating man was to *justly recover the earth* from the hand of Satan. God instructed Adam to “*replenish, subdue... have dominion*” on the *earth* (Gen 1:28). With these phrases of God’s instruction, one might assume there were some conflicting forces already at work in the earth. This is borne out when we consider the perfectly created earth being in chaos already in Genesis 1:2. “*The earth was (became) without form and an empty waste, and darkness was upon the face of the very great deep (the waters). The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the waters.*” (Genesis 1:2 AMP). Thus Satan’s hand had already brought chaos upon the

earth, **before** God's recreation of the earth seen later in Genesis, and before Adam was created (see Genesis 1:3-31). Peter tells us that world was judged by water long before Noah's flood. "**Whereby the WORLD THAT THEN WAS, being OVERFLOWED WITH WATER, PERISHED**" (2 Peter 3:6)

Very soon after Adam's creation, likely within the first week, Satan came as the Serpent to deceive and tempt Adam and Eve with the original lie. Satan contradicted God's words, saying if they would defy God's warning to NOT "**eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**" and actually did eat of that tree, they could obtain new found **knowledge** and "...**be as gods**" (Gen 3:5).

"**Be as gods?**" Hardly! The Serpent had **lied**. We know Adam's rebellion and fall has actually brought "**sin**" and "**death**" upon ALL of us as Adam's human offspring. "... **BY ONE MAN (Adam) SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD** (Gk., kosmos, the arrangement between God and man), and **DEATH BY SIN; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned**" (Rom 5:12). Adam's fall brought mankind into **slavery to sin, sickness, and death**, entirely affecting the arrangement of the world.

Adam had apparently made himself independent of God, but unknowingly he had become subject to and the slave of the "**god of this world**" - Satan. When Adam and Eve ate of that tree they took into themselves the lies of the Evil One, the one whose "Sin-spirit" now lives in the flesh of all mortal men born into this world. Man had gained a fallen nature. "... **the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.** (Ephesians 2:3)

Mankind, by Adam, has gained a "**knowledge of good and evil**" that he cannot bear, satisfy, or live up to. Fallen man knows what is right but the Sin-nature that he has gained by Adam contradicts that knowledge. "**However, it is no longer I who do the deed, but the sin [principle] which is at home in me and has possession of me.**"¹⁸ **For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot perform it. [I have the intention and urge to do what is right, but no power to carry it out.]**¹⁹ **For I fail to practice the good deeds I desire to do, but the evil deeds that I do not desire to do are what I am [ever] doing.**²⁰ **Now if I do what I do not desire to do, it is no longer I doing it [it is not myself that acts], but the sin [principle] which dwells within me [fixed and operating in my soul].** (Romans 7:17-20)

Mankind was brought under the dominion of Satan's kingdom that reigns by "**Sin and death.**" Only Christ's "**Spirit of life**" can set us free from the operation of "**Sin and death.**" The fact is that every believer can say; "**For the law of (the regulating operation of) THE SPIRIT OF LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS HATH (ALREADY) MADE ME FREE from the law of (the regulating operation of) SIN AND DEATH.** (Romans 8:2). Whether we walk in that liberty is another question for discussion at a later time.

Thus, with the fall of Adam, mankind was and is today usurped by Satan. But God's eternally planned kingdom **in HEAVEN** and **on EARTH** will ultimately come to pass and be co-ruled by regenerated willing men who have **been saved and born of His Spirit-loins, that is of His "Seed (Greek, sperma) which is Christ"** (Gal 3:16, 1Pet 1:23). God's eternally planned Kingdom was put in abeyance **until** His eternal plan and purpose would be completely fulfilled in and through our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, and through its outworking in "**the fullness of times.**"

Christ will establish His eternal Kingdom **in ALL the heavens** and **on earth, through the saved and redeemed of mankind.** Christ saves all men who will **believe.** "**That In The Dispensation of THE FULLNESS OF TIMES he (God) might gather together in one ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, BOTH which are IN HEAVEN, and which are ON EARTH; even in him (Christ)**" (Ephesians 1:10)

You might be asking, "**What does this "Conflict of the Ages" have to do with the Rapture?"**

- **The Rapture of "the body of Christ" to heaven marks a significant point in the outworking of God's plan to undo Satan's usurpation and reign in the heavens.**
- **The Rapture immediately precedes and starts the outworking of God's plan to undo Satan's usurpation and reign in the earth, through a believing Israel .**

In the next instalments we will examine the Rapture in greater detail, and then trace the future events of the world to their ultimate conclusion. This “conflict of the ages” will end in “*the fullness of times*” when God’s eternal plan is entirely fulfilled.

Chapter 2

The Significance of the Rapture of “the Body of Christ”

In this instalment we will discuss the place of the Rapture of the “*body of Christ*” in God’s plan to reconcile man and His fallen creation unto Himself, as described by the Apostle Paul. This below is the clearest description of what we call the Rapture of all the reconciled members of “*the body of Christ*.”

“I (Paul) would not have you to be ignorant ... CONCERNING THEM WHICH ARE ASLEEP (have died physically) that ye SORROW NOT, even as others which have no “HOPE.”¹⁴ For if we BELIEVE that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep (are dead) in Jesus will GOD BRING (to be) WITH HIM.

¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of (from) the Lord, that **WE WHICH ARE ALIVE and remain (on earth) unto the COMING OF THE LORD shall not prevent (not go up before) them which are asleep (dead).**

¹⁶ For **THE LORD “HIMSELF” SHALL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN with a SHOUT, with THE VOICE of the ARCHANGEL (Michael), and with the TRUMP OF GOD: and**

THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST: ¹⁷Then WE WHICH ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS, to MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR: and SO (Gk. houtos, in this manner) SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD. ¹⁸WHEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The “conflict of the ages” draws markedly closer to its God ordained ultimate *conclusion* with what we call “the Rapture.” This is the catching away of the members of “*the church, which is the body of Christ*” (Eph 1:22b-23a) from planet earth ...**to eternally dwell with Christ in heaven.**

The “*shout*” (v16 above) at **the Rapture marks THE END** of the pure grace age of the church under “*dispensation of the grace of God*” (Eph 3:2). Biblically, the “*shout*” most often is the mark of conclusive victory (Psa 47:1, 5; Jer. 25:30; Joshua 5:5, 10, 16, 20, et al).

Then “**the voice of the Archangel**” (Michael, God’s “Prince” to Israel, Dan 10:21, et al) announces the **RESTART of God’s program for Israel.**

Having then concluded the Gentile church age, God’s silence of more than 2000 years toward Israel is ended. The Rapture simultaneously marks the *restart* of God’s program for Israel; Israel has been “*blinded*” and temporarily set aside during this Gentile age of “*the dispensation of the grace of God*.” “... **blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25).** One last saved soul will mark the “*fulness of the Gentiles,*” of the “*body of Christ,*” to end this age of grace.

The “conflict of the ages” continues even today, but the Lord’s *recovery of man*, and the **heaven and the earth** will ultimately be fulfilled. In the “*fulness of times*” Christ will eternally **indwell and rule** through a believing remnant of **Israel ON EARTH**, while He will by then have already indwelled every member of “*the body of Christ*” with Him **IN HEAVEN.**

“That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he (God) might gather together in one all things in Christ, BOTH which are IN HEAVEN, and which are ON EARTH; even in him” (Eph 1:10)

God's "intent" and wisdom is manifested by His program to bring salvation and grace upon all who are and will be called in Christ, whether *in heaven* or *on earth*. "To THE (God's) INTENT that now UNTO THE (spiritual) PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS in HEAVENLY PLACES might be known by the church the MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD," (Eph 3:10).

Today, we as the members of "the body of Christ," are **NOT at home on earth**. Paul writes. "...our citizenship is IN HEAVEN" (Philip 3:20a, NIV). Paul says we as believers are "ambassadors" on earth, currently away from our home in heaven. One is an *ambassador* when he is in a *foreign* place. Our home is "ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS" (2Cor 5:1-2), **NOT on the earth!**

"God was in CHRIST, RECONCILING the WORLD (Gk., kosmos, the arrangement of God with man) UNTO HIMSELF, NOT imputing (counting) **their trespasses** (sins) unto them; and HATH COMMITTED UNTO US THE WORD OF RECONCILIATION. ²⁰ NOW then WE ARE AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST..." (2 Cor 5:19-20).

"The Rapture" of the "body of Christ" and Christ's 2nd coming to earth are not the same. Christ will come to earth in wrath to judge the world, and to save and bless the Nations through Israel. "The Rapture" and Christ's 2nd coming are two distinctly different comings.

Though not appearing in the Greek or English text as such, the word "rapture" comes from the Latin Vulgate text, a late 4th-century translation of the Bible, which translates the Greek into Latin as "rapiemur," from the verb "rapio," meaning "to catch up" or "take away." The transliterated New Testament Greek word is as "harpazo," meaning "seize" or "snatch away." It has been translated "caught up" in the 1Thessalonians 4:17 of the King James Bible Version, NIV, NASB and many other versions.

Actually, at the time Paul wrote of "the Rapture" the believers at Thessalonica were NOT concerned with Antichrist or the timing of the Tribulation. The text indicates their concern was for their loved ones "which sleep in Jesus" (v14), having died as believers in Christ as their Savior. Their concern was whether those who "sleep" (died) would miss out on being "caught up...to meet the Lord in the air." Paul is addressing the Thessalonians' concern for their deceased loved ones in 1Thes 4:13-18. I'll discuss this again later.

Paul wrote that the same Rapture applies to *both the dead* believers and *the living* believers. The Rapture is the most glorious event that God has promised for the members of the "church, which is His body." The word "church," which in Greek is "ekklesia," means "an assembly or gathering of citizens." The members of the only genuine church in this age of grace have their home and "citizenship in heaven." The living and the dead will be "caught up together" to "ever be with the Lord" in heaven (v17).

The Raptured is of the "body of Christ," which is "the church" (Eph 1:22b-23a). The "BODY of Christ" has Christ as its "HEAD," NOT as its "bridegroom." Believing Israel, is the "Lamb's wife" of Rev 21:9, and will have Christ as its soon coming bridegroom (Hosea 2:19-20; Rev 19:7-8).

The "the body of Christ" consists of ALL the genuine believers that are saved during the "dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph 3:2). Subsequently "All Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:26a). The unique church in this age has nothing to do with one's particular denominational affiliation. It includes ALL genuine believers who have trusted Christ as Savior; they may or may not have an affiliation with a manmade, man-defined, religious organization. The invisible "body of Christ" is the organism of which they are a part, and that is sufficient.

If one has faith in *Christ alone* as their Savior then their denominational religious affiliation neither adds nor detracts from their salvation. Only one's trusting *faith in Christ* has the power to save.

Today *salvation is freely given* to ALL who would **TRUST IN, RELY UPON AND CLING TO** Jesus Christ as their Savior – **they are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, totally apart from any requirement for religious works, ceremonies, or rites.** "For **BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD:** ⁹ **NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast.** (Eph 2:8-9)

During the earlier dispensations of "Promise" and "Law," Israel was elevated "above all people" (Deut 7:6, cf., Deut 28:1, Jer. 1:10) in God's eyes and plan. In fact Jesus of Nazareth's attention was strictly upon Israel.

"These twelve (Grk., apostolos, Apostles, sent ones) Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, GO NOT into the way of THE GENTILES, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶ But GO RATHER TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL." (Matt 10:5-6).

Now, since Israel's "fall" (Rom 11:11-12) from being the elevated people of God, Israel's prophesied eternal program has been *set aside, put in abeyance, for a time*. Today we live in the dispensational age of what Paul calls "*the mystery (mysterion)*," which had been "*kept secret since the world began*" (Rom 16:25).

"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my (Paul's) gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY, which WAS KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN,"(Romans 16:25)

The "mystery" concerns *Christ recovering man to co-reign in both then the heavens and on earth*, in spite of Israel's "fall." The "mystery" of this age includes "*the body of Christ*," which consists of **ALL the genuine believers in Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles - WITHOUT DISTINCTION!** Today, during this age, Paul writes, "*there is Neither Jew, Nor Gentile, ALL ARE ONE IN CHRIST*" (Gal 3:28).

God established the "*body of Christ*" by literally "dispensing" His resurrected "**Spirit of life in Christ Jesus**" (Rom 8:2a) into every believer's *human spirit*. Today any man may believe and be "regenerated" (Titus 3:5), born anew of Christ's own "*Spirit of life*."

John wrote; "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*" (John 3:6). First there is a natural *flesh birth*, then a *rebirth in spirit*. When a person receives Christ as Savior he also receives Christ's "*Spirit of life*" as his new and *eternal LIFE* (Greek, *Zoe*).

"... Now IF ANY MAN HAVE NOT THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, HE IS NONE OF HIS." (Romans 8:9b)

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON. ¹² HE THAT HATH THE SON HATH LIFE; and he that hath NOT the Son of God hath NOT life. (1John 5:11-12)

Paul wrote these words defining the personal or subjective aspect of the "mystery." "**... the mystery**" (Gk., *mysterion*, *God's secret plan*), **which is CHRIST IN YOU the HOPE (confident expectation) of GLORY**" (Col 1:27). Paul's "mystery" gospel and its "*hope of glory*" includes the *catching away* or "**the Rapture**" of the members of "*the body of Christ*" to "*glory*." Christ will bring each genuine believer to ultimate eternal "*glory*" to be "*with Him*" in heaven. The full expression of our eternal "*hope of glory*" is seen as "**ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS**" (2 Corinthians 5:1, below).

"... we (as believers) know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (our body) were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house (dwelling place) not made with hands, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS." (2 Cor 5:1)

"(Christ) SHALL CHANGE (Gk., *metaschematizo*, *transfigure*) OUR VILE BODY, that it may BE FASHIONED LIKE unto HIS GLORIOUS BODY" (Philip 3:21a)

The departure of one's *spirit* from their physical *body* is the Biblical definition of physical "death" (James 2:26a). Upon death, every believer's regenerated spirit is "*with the Lord*." "**We are confident... to be absent from the body, and (is) to be present with the Lord.**" (2 Cor. 5:8). Thus our regenerated *spirit and soul* is immediately with the Lord at death, but our *body* will return to dust.

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the (man's) SPIRIT shall RETURN UNTO GOD who gave it."(Ecclesiastes 12:7, cf. Gen 2:7 "breath of life," Zech 12:1 "spirit of man).

At the Rapture we will receive our new, Sinless, spirit-body to then... be joined to our regenerated human spirit (Titus 3:5) and soul. This will be the fullness of our "*new creation*" (2Cor 5:17), which we will enjoy with Christ in heaven...for eternity.

- The Rapture concerns the *catching away* of ALL the *dead* and the *living* members of the mainly Gentile “*body of Christ*,” who have been saved during this age *by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone*; to eternally dwell “*with Him*” in “*the heavens*.”
- The Rapture is only written of by Paul, “*THE Apostle to the Gentiles*” (Rom 11:13), in his epistles addressed to the members of “*the church, which is His body*,” to whom the Rapture applies.

In 1 Thess 4:13-18 Paul writes of the promise that one day soon, at the “*shout*,” the “*voice of the archangel (Michael)*” and “*the trump (sound) of God (His voice)*,” Jesus “*Himself*” (v16) will come “*in the clouds*” to meet and gather us unto His self “*in the air*.” The “*clouds*” are to shield the left behind lost from seeing the brightness of His glory – yet we will see Him as He is in all His glory. “*When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*” (Col3:4). He will gather ALL the Raptured dead and living members of the “*church, which is His body*,” taking them to “*ever be with Him*” (v17) *in heaven*.

“*Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:18)

Chapter 3

Co-Reigning With Christ In Heaven

Answering the concern of the Thessalonians, Paul writes in 1Thes 4:13-18, that both the *living* and the *dead believers* of this age of “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” will be Raptured home *to heaven*, but not simultaneously. The dead in Christ will rise “*first*” (1Thes 4:16) in their glorious new spirit-bodies. Then the living believers will be Raptured, having their *corruptible* bodies “*changed*” (1Cor 15: 52) into glorious “*incorruptible*” and “*immortal*” spirit-bodies. Both the dead believers and the living believers will then eternally dwell in the heavens to “*ever be with the Lord*” (v17).

Paul says he endured all things for the elect’s sake that they might obtain “*salvation ...WITH ETERNAL GLORY*.” “*Therefore I (Paul) endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the SALVATION which is in Christ Jesus WITH ETERNAL GLORY*.” (2 Tim 2:10)

Where is that “*eternal glory*”? It is in the place of glory, fully expressed in heaven!

Glory in practicality means the “*full expression of a life*,” just as the blossom of the carnation flower is the glory of, or the full expression of, the life within the carnation seed. Every believer contains the “*glory of God*,” in “*seed*” form (1Pet 1:23, Gal 3:16) when they receive Christ’s “*Spirit of life*” (Rom 8:2a) into their human spirit (1Cor 6:17) at the moment of their salvation. But, His glory will not be fully expressed in and through them until they are liberated from the *presence of the Sin nature* that is resident in their fallen Adamic human bodies (Rom 7:17-23).

Then also in glory, our soul’s “*mind*,” which has been tainted by “*the flesh*” as the “*mind of the flesh*” (Rom 8:6-7), will be liberated from the downward pull of “*sin in the flesh*” (Rom 8:3). There will be no more “*fiery darts*” shot into our minds (Eph 6:16). We will be freed from the constant onslaught from the *presence* of “*Sin in the flesh*.” At the time of our Rapture to heaven we most certainly will initially yet have *unrenewed* minds. But then... after the Rapture, we will begin to enjoy the *healing* and *enlightening* that comes to us by the divine radium of the “*light*” and love of Christ that emanates from “*the presence of the Lord*.” We then will enjoy Him and our completed being; our *regenerated spirit* with our *renewed soul* and our *glorious new spirit-body* in “*the presence of the Lord*” - “*THE VERY GOD OF PEACE SANCTIFY YOU WHOLLY; and I pray god your WHOLE SPIRIT AND SOUL AND BODY ...*” (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

The “*body of Christ*” and its members are dedicated to the very “*presence of the Lord*.”

*“In Him (Christ) the **WHOLE STRUCTURE** (of the body of Christ) is joined (bound, welded) together harmoniously, and it **continues to rise (grow, increase)** into a **HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD** [a sanctuary dedicated, consecrated, and **SACRED TO THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD**]. (Ephesians 2:21 (AMP)*

These are the blessing of our being saved to the Lord and which will be enjoyed by every genuine believer who is Raptured from planet earth to heaven. So, none of us should lose heart because of failing to *endure* and not gaining the reward of co-reigning with Him in heaven. ***We are never to be disqualified from salvation and a glorious eternal life in heaven.***

Apparently only “some” of the Raptured believers will be rewarded. They will assume their spiritual status as Christ’s agents in heaven to “co-reign” with Him.

“If we suffer (trustingly endure with Him), WE SHALL ALSO REIGN (Gk., *simbaileuo*, co-reign) WITH HIM...” (2 Tim 2:12);

The heavens will still contain God’s *created* angels. Concerning the angels Paul writes; “Do ye not know that the saints (sanctified believers) shall judge the world?... ³Know ye not that **WE SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?**” (1 Corinthians 6:2-3a). All those “born of God” immediately come to possess Christ divine life in their regenerated human spirits (1Thes 6:17, Col 1:27, Col 3:4a, John 3:6), but the angels are created and thus they are **not** literally born of God.

Some may not *reign with Christ in heaven*, but all will enjoy the glorious eternal life in heaven, in the very presence of the Lord. Note that before verse 2Tim 2:12 is verse 11; “***For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him.***” (2 Tim 2:11) This is a clear reference to every believer’s **identification with Christ in his death and in His resurrection unto eternal life in heaven.** Paul tells us every believer has died with Christ and that **every believer, even with our imperfect lives on earth, shall live and enjoy the fruit of His eternal “Spirit of life” within them** (Rom 6:3-4, 5:10, 8:2a, 9-10).

“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, WE SHALL BE SAVED FROM WRATH through him. ¹⁰For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, (so now) being reconciled, WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE.” (Romans 5:10)

“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even (that is) JESUS, WHICH DELIVERED US FROM THE WRATH TO COME.” (1 Thessalonians 1:10)

Here salvation is more than our initial reconciliation by His shed blood for us; full salvation is by having been a partaker of “His life” and being “**saved from wrath,**” delivering “**us from the wrath to come**” (above).

The Bible states that when we believed into Jesus, **we died “with Him”** (Rom. 6:3-11; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Gal. 2:20, 5:24, 6:14; Col. 2:11-13, 3:1, 3; 1 Pet. 2:24). The directly related truth brought out over and over is, ***if we died with him... we will also be raised with Him,*** which is exactly what 2Tim 2:11 says. “***Trust-worthy is the word. For IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT WE DIED WITH HIM, we SHALL ALSO LIVE BY MEANS OF HIM*” (Wuest). If we have believed in Jesus’ sacrifice for us, then we have died with Christ and have His eternal life in us as our new life. If we have died with Him, then it is the promise of God that we will also “**live (forever) with Him.**” It is impossible to die *with Christ*, and then not be raised to new life to “**live with Him.**” This is the exact point of 2Tim 2:11, as a wonderful promise of our *eternal security “in Christ.*” Then verse 13 here adds a new dimension to our security in Christ, which covers our *failing to endure, failing to consistently trust Him* in our living – that element is **His faithfulness toward us!****

“¹³If we BELIEVE NOT (if we don’t trustingly endure), YET HE ABIDETH FAITHFUL: he cannot deny himself. (2 Timothy 2:12-13)

So our Rapture to eternal glory and new life in Christ is certain because... ***He is always faithful.*** Our arrival in heaven is not owing to our faithfulness or lack of faithfulness, but rather to **His faithfulness.**

So what is the point of this statement in verse 12, “*If we SUFFER (ENDURE) WITH HIM WE SHALL REIGN WITH HIM*”? The point is not about our justification or whether we have eternal life or not. It’s not about our resurrection to heaven... these things are *sure and secure*. The point in verse 12 is about our “*conditional*” *REIGNING with Christ*. Whereas verse 11 already said that being raised to new life was a guaranteed *promise* because we “*died with Him*,” here is something *conditional* based upon our *enduring with Him*, by trusting Christ as our life-source and Lord (Gk. kurios, our *governor*). ALL believers will be resurrected at the “*Rapture*,” *which is NOT conditional*; but our “*Co-REIGN(ING)*” in *heaven* “*with Him*” is *CONDITIONAL*.

In the entire Bible, under both Israel’s program and also under “*the dispensation of the grace of God*,” we read the promises of the blessings of privilege and reward, both in this life and the life to come, for those of His children who are obedient and faithful to consistently trust Him (e.g. 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Tim. 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10; 20:4-6). Trust has its immediate and remote rewards. If we trust Him now and we enjoy the blessings of peace and rest in our hearts... and then also a trusting walk with the Lord will bring reward later, in heaven.

I believe those who are the more *faithful* to endure by trusting Him in the midst of life’s trials, situations and circumstances, are not necessarily the visible church leaders and teachers of the Word. Those who are genuinely faithful to the Lord in word, deed, and life, are most often not the high profile ones, but rather the less visible believers. They live a quiet inner life of trust in the Lord.

It appears that the first thing to occur after our rapture to heaven is “**The Judgment Seat of Christ**,” where all believers will have their works judged and some will be “**rewarded**.” We know Christ has authority over the entire universe that He created. Soon after their Rapture to heaven, Christ is going to parcel out some of His authority to those faithful Christians who have *endured* and walked with Him until the Rapture. Though not explicitly stated, I believe at “**The Judgment Seat of Christ**,” seen here below in Paul’s words, is where the *reward* of rank and authority necessary for *reigning with Him* in heaven will be parcelled out.

“According to **the grace of God** which is given unto me (Paul), as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But *let every man* (believer) *take heed how he buildeth thereupon*.¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² Now *if any man build* upon this foundation *gold, silver, precious stones*, (or) *wood, hay, stubble*; ¹³ *Every man’s work shall be made manifest*: for the day shall declare it, because *it shall be revealed by fire*; and the *fire shall try (test) every man’s work of WHAT SORT IT IS*.

¹⁴ *If any man’s work abide* (endures the fire) *which he hath built thereupon, HE SHALL RECEIVE A REWARD*.¹⁵ *If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss (of reward): BUT HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED; yet so as by fire.*” (1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

Are we building in our Christian life by the elements of *trusting Christ as our life* (Col 3:4, 1:27), which here are likened to “**gold, silver, precious stones**?” Or, do we try to build by the elements of *human self-effort*...likened to “**wood, hay, stubble**” that is so easily consumed?

- In the Bible “**gold**” always refers to **God’s incorruptible divine LIFE**; do we trust His love and life in us to carry us through our trials?
- “**Silver**” is representative of our **eternal redemption by the blood of Christ**; do live like those who are sure and secure in what *He has done for us*?
- “**Precious stones**” refers to the *transformed lives of believers*... are we being *renewed* in trusting Him in all that we do? Peter’s former name “Simon” means “clay

or St Peter sandstone,” but “Peter” means a “large rock,” indicating the transformation that come by Peter’s faith in Christ.

If we trust the elements of God’s provision and work, which are as “**gold, silver, precious stones,**” then that “**sort**” (v13) of work will pass through the test of fire. If we persist in trusting our own self effort and in having “our own way” then that “**sort**” (v13) of work will be “**burned up**” as would “**hay, wood, stubble**” – yet everyone who has confessed Christ as their Savior will still be *eternally saved* by having received His *eternal life*. It’s clear that the *reward* of “**reigning with Him**” is reserved for those who have learned in this life to **trust in His life and His leading, not in their own self-abilities and self-desires.**

Fortunately, salvation is by grace, through faith, and we do not doubt that even in the **dark ages** many were saved in spite of their blind leaders and their limited knowledge. However, many of the spiritual leaders of our day will fare little better than the leaders of their day when they appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ, for they have certainly not taken heed to build according to the plans and specifications committed to Paul as God’s appointed “*masterbuilder*” (1 Cor. 3:10) of the Church.

Just think a moment. Is the Church-at-large today mostly composed of “*gold, silver and precious stones*” (morally and spiritually), or of “*wood, hay and stubble*” (1 Cor. 3:12)? Surely many a man who enjoys prominence and popularity today will weep in that day to see his works go up in flames, as it were (1 Cor. 3:13). It will be a dreadful thing to “*suffer loss*” when the *rewards* for Christian service are parcelled out (Ver. 15).

So yes, the reward of co-reigning with Christ in the heavens is something **conditional**. “... *there is laid up for me a **CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me (Paul) only, but **UNTO ALL THEM also THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING.*** (2 Tim 4:8)

Yet, the “*reward*” of His indwelling life and “*citizenship in heaven,*” is forever belongs to every believer who has received Christ as Savior. Eternal salvation is sure and secure for every genuine believer. In heaven each of us will enjoy a *changed, eternal, sinless, spirit-body... these are secured by His work for us.*

None will suffer the loss of a sound mind ravaged by chemical imbalances in their brain as related to dementia, ADHD, or Alzheimers. “*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of A SOUND MIND.*” (2 Timothy 1:7)

Every believer will forever enjoy their home in heaven, whether that are “co-reigning with Him” or serving the Lord in whatever way He chooses for us.

“... *our conversation* (Gk., *politeuma*, *community of CITIZENSHIP*) **is IN HEAVEN;** from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: ²¹ Who **shall change**(transfigure) **OUR VILE** (lowly) **BODY, that it may be fashioned** (Gk., *symmorphos*, *jointly conformed*) **LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY**” (Philip 3:20-21a)

“*In a moment* (Gk., *atomos*, *an atom of time*), *in the twinkling of an eye*, at the **last trump** (trumpet sound): *for the trumpet shall sound*, and **THE DEAD** (believer’s body)**SHALL BE RAISED** (roused) **INCORRUPTIBLE** (undecaying), and **WE** (who are alive) **SHALL BE CHANGED** (GK., *allasso*, *made different*). ⁵³ *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal (physical body) must put on immortality.* ⁵⁴ *So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on IMMORTALITY, then ..., death is swallowed up in victory.* (1 Cor 15:52-54)

Truth Lost, Truth Regained, Truth Lost Again

In 1Thes 4:13-18, Paul, “*by the word of the Lord*” (15), addressed the Thessalonians, as members of mainly Gentile “*body of Christ*”(Eph 3:1-5), concerning the “Rapture” or catching away of “*the church.*”

Paul then also wrote to the Romans saying, “*I (Paul) am THE APOSTLE to the GENTILES*” (Rom 11:13). The word “*THE*” here is grammatically the “*definite article.*” The *definite article* here indicates the person is *uniquely specified*. In this case “*THE*” refers back to “*I(Paul)*” as *the uniquely specified one*. This means Paul alone is “*THE Apostle* (Gk., *apostolos*, *THE sent one*) *to the Gentiles.*”

To this some may say, “What about Peter?” Here below is what Paul wrote to clarify the difference between his and Peter’s callings – then having *two (2) different gospels* for *two (2) different people groups*. Paul was sent unto “*the Gentiles*” of “*the Church, which is the His body*” while Peter was sent to “*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” (Mat 10:5-6) - “*the circumcision* (Gal 2:7, see below)”

“But *CONTRARIWISE* (as *OPPOSITES*), when they saw that “*THE GOSPEL* (good news) *OF* (pertaining to) *the UNcircumcision* (the Gentiles)” *was committed* (entrusted) *unto me (Paul)*... as “*THE GOSPEL* (good news) *OF* (pertaining to) *THE CIRCUMCISION* (Israel)” *was* (committed) *unto PETER*” (Gal 2:7 KJV)

Earlier, in Gal 2:2, we have the context of Gal 2:7 (above). It accentuated Paul’s *unique gospel* as “*THAT GOSPEL WHICH I (Paul) PREACH among the GENTILES.*” Paul also said his “*gospel of* (concerning) *the uncircumcision (Gentiles)*” is versus “*any other gospel*” (Gal 1:9) during this age of “*the grace of God.*”

In Peter’s 2nd epistle, written just before his death, he acknowledged Paul’s unique “*wisdom.*” Peter warns the children of Israel, to whom he was sent (Matt 10:5-6), to learn from the “*wisdom*” Paul had written.

“And account that *the longsuffering* (patience) *of our Lord* (the delay in His return for Israel) *is* (opportunity for) *salvation* (before the coming judgments); even as our beloved brother *PAUL* also according to *THE WISDOM GIVEN UNTO HIM* hath written unto you; ¹⁶ As also *IN ALL HIS EPISTLES*, speaking in them of these things; in which are *some things hard to be understood*, which *THEY THAT ARE UNLEARNED AND UNSTABLE WREST* (twist), *as they do also the other scriptures, UNTO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION.* (2 Peter 3:15-16)

Also by the inspiration of God, Paul here claims *his unique place*, and the *unique place of his* “*gospel.*” telling us how he had “*RECEIVED IT... BY REVELATION... OF (directly from) JESUS CHRIST*”

“... *I (Paul) certify you, brethren, that THE GOSPEL which was preached of me is not after* (according to) *man.* “For *I (Paul) neither RECEIVED IT* of man, neither was I taught it, *but* (I received it) *BY the REVELATION* of (unveiling by) *JESUS CHRIST*” (Gal. 1:11 12).

“*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that THE THINGS THAT I (Paul) WRITE UNTO YOU ARE THE COMMANDMENTS* (Gk, entole, prescription) *OF THE LORD.*” (1Cor. 14:37)

From the time of his Christ-given ministry on earth unto this very day, Paul’s gospel and doctrines have been attacked, marginalized, or largely set aside. The Protestant Reformers of the 1500’s established their “**Five Solas**,” which were five Latin phrases that summarized **five core gospel doctrines for this age of grace**. The “Five Solas” were all truths drawn from Paul’s epistles; they are 1) *Sola Scriptura* (the Bible Alone) is the source that proclaims *salvation is available...*, 2) by *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone), 3) through *Sola*

Fide (Faith Alone), 4) in Solus Christos (Christ Alone), 5) unto “Sola Deo Gloria” (the Glory of God Alone).

Having established Paul’s place and status in God’s plan, let’s now consider what I call the “Lost & Found Truths of Paul’s Mystery Gospel.” Paul’s “**mystery**” gospel had been “**kept secret**” until it was revealed to Paul for the “*church, which is His body*” (Eph 1:22b-23a). “Now to him that is of **power to stablish you according to MY (Paul’s) GOSPEL, and the preaching of Jesus CHRIST, ACCORDING TO THE REVELATION of THE MYSTERY (God’s secret plan), which WAS KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN,**” (Rom 16:25)

These key Pauline truths were **Revealed to Paul, then Lost, and then Recovered.**

- Most today are Biblically confused because they’ve not seen Paul’s unique ministry of his “**mystery**” gospel that Jesus gave to Paul for the mainly Gentile “*body of Christ*” (Eph 3:1-5). **Salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone** (Eph 2:8-9), was **recovered** in the Reformation through men such as John Wickliffe, John Hus, Martin Luther and John Calvin. This light of God ended what we call “*the Dark Ages.*” Paul wrote, “*ye are not under the law, but under grace.*” (**Romans 6:14b**). Sadly, much of Christianity today has **apostacized** just as Paul predicted; having “**fallen from grace**” and going back to “*the Law.*” Many today cling to some form of “**the Law**” that **God gave Moses for Israel along with manmade religious laws.** Today Paul’s “*gospel of the grace of God*” (Act 20:24) **is mostly NOT seen** because Paul’s unique calling and ministry “**to the Gentiles**” has been marginalized. Many today think Paul is “just one of the Apostles.” Actually, Paul’s mystery gospel of “*the grace of God*” is for ALL who would believe today (both Jew & Gentile, Gal 3:28), but mainly for “*ye Gentiles*” (Eph 3:1).
- After Paul’s death, the **dispensational distinction between “Israel” and “the Body of Christ”** that Paul taught was still somewhat held early on by Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and others in the 1st – 3rd centuries. This understanding was undermined by Augustine’s teaching in the 5th century. Yet this truth was more fully **recovered** much later by men such as C.H. Spurgeon, J.N. Darby, D.L. Moody, R.A. Torrey, E.I. Scofield, EW Bullinger, Ryrie, Stam, and others. Without noting this distinction **between “Israel” and “the Body of Christ,”** the Bible is a confusing hodgepodge of seemingly contradictory information. Consider that most who ignore the **distinction** between “*Israel*” and “*the Body of Christ*” would say we “**are** under the law,” but Paul says we “**are not under the law**” (Rom 6:14). Today this truth **distinction** has been largely lost *again* in the church.
- Just as Paul received multiple progressive “**revelations**” (1Cor 12:1, 7), the recovery of these key Pauline doctrines has been progressive during and after the Reformation. **The doctrine of the Rapture of “the body of Christ”** was recovered not by the Reformers, but later by men such as E.I. Scofield, J.N. Darby who also translated the Darby Bible, E.W. Bullinger, and Charles Ryrie.

Though these doctrines were revealed and recovered by and since the Protestant Reformers of the 1,500s, many in the church today are “*falling away*” from the Pauline truths of “*the faith*” (1Tim 4:1, 2Cor 13:5; Col 1:23, 2:7), including the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of “*His body.*” With the loss of “*the faith,*” the “*blessed hope*” of the Rapture at “*His appearing,*” many today are “**shaken**” and insecure “**in mind**” in view of the world events.

“Now we **beseech** (desire for) **you, brethren, BY THE COMING OF OUR LORD Jesus Christ, and BY OUR GATHERING TOGETHER UNTO HIM (Rapture),²(So) THAT YE BE NOT SOON SHAKEN IN MIND, or be troubled. NEITHER BY spirit, nor by word, NOR BY letter (as if it were) from us, as that THE DAY OF CHRIST IS AT HAND.**”

(Note: Some were spreading error concerning the Lord's 2nd coming under Paul's name, saying the 2nd coming was at hand. Here below Paul sets this falsehood straight.)

³**LET NO MAN DECEIVE YOU by any means: for THAT DAY shall NOT COME, except (until) there come a FALLING AWAY FIRST, and that MAN OF SIN BE REVEALED, THE SON OF PERDITION (Antichrist);** ⁴*Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* (2 Thes 2:1-4).

(Note: Since there was no Antichrist sitting in the Temple, this could not be true, and it won't be until the middle of the Tribulation)

We today **aren't** to be looking for the Antichrist; Paul says we are to be looking and waiting for "**the glorious appearing of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ**" at the Rapture.

"LOOKING FOR that BLESSED HOPE, and THE GLORIOUS APPEARING of THE GREAT GOD and OUR SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST; (Titus 2:13)

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the PATIENT WAITING FOR CHRIST. (2 Thessalonians 3:5)

The church-at-large today has already and will yet come to breed even more *narcissistic, self-loving, and self-serving* "Christian pretenders," who actually "**deny (reject) the (sovereign) power of God.**"

"... IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having A FORM (only an appearance) OF GODLINESS, but DENYING THE POWER THEREOF (of God): from such turn away. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)

The blessings of these 4 Pauline truths (below) have largely been lost to the church-at-large today.

1. The blessings of *security and stability* are found only under **Paul's pure "gospel of the grace of God"** (Act 20:24). Many today have **lost the blessings of the gospel of "the dispensation of the GRACE of God."** God's *salvation and favor* comes to men only by **GRACE ALONE, through FAITH ALONE, IN CHRIST ALONE** (Eph 2:8-9). The church today has largely fallen away from the **pure grace and love of God, favoring rather Jewish and manmade laws, trying to be saved, or to have favor with God.**

2. With the church largely abandoning Paul's gospel and the "**revelation of the mystery**" (Rom 16:25), which "**is CHRIST IN YOU,**" believers today have not heard of **the key to successful Christian living.**

"To whom (the believers) God would make known what is the riches of the glory of THIS MYSTERY (heretofore secret) among the Gentiles; which is CHRIST IN YOU, the hope of glory: (Col 1:27).

The key is this; **salvation includes the BELIEVER'S ORGANIC UNION WITH CHRIST'S VERY OWN RESURRECTION LIFE.** Christ literally indwells each believing member of "**the body of Christ**" as their new "**life**" (Gal 2:20). Christ's indwelling life is the **all-sufficient, sustaining, inner reality** of the believer. Sadly, this reality has been mostly lost in favor of the externalities of religion's *precepts (laws), works, liturgy, ritualistic ceremony, and tradition*. With Christ as the believer's **inner reality and life supply,** religion's external laws aren't at all needed today.

Every believer today has the "**law (regulating power) of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus**" (Rom 8:2a) indwelling his human spirit as his new life and spontaneous inner guide

3. As discussed earlier, the church has **lost knowledge of the distinction between "Israel" and "the body of Christ."** The term "**the body of**

Christ” is only used by Paul. Mingling *Israel*’s keeping of “*the Law*” and the “*gospel of the kingdom*” ... with “*gospel of the grace of God*” (*Act 20:24*) for “*the church, which is the body of Christ*” is **THE GREAT ERROR** that causes contradiction and confusion in today’s church-at-large. Keeping **the Law** actually **destroys God’s free “gift of righteousness,” nullifying God’s GRACE** (*Gal 5:4*). “*If (salvation is) by grace, then is it NO more of WORKS...*” (*Rom 11:6a*). The “*Law*” the Lord gave *Israel* through *Moses* (*John 1:17a*) was for **Israel ONLY**.

“TO WHOM (TO ISRAEL) PERTAINS the adoption, the glory, the covenants, THE giving of THE LAW, the service of God and the promises...” (*Rom. 9:4-5*).

Contrariwise, Paul writes these words concerning the mainly Gentile church, which is His body.

“... YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, but UNDER GRACE.” (*Romans 6:14*)

“you... hath he quickened (made alive) having (now) forgiven you all trespasses; ¹⁴ BLOTTING OUT THE HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES (the Law) that was AGAINST US, which WAS CONTRARY TO US, and TOOK IT OUT OF THE WAY, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS;” (*Col 2:13-14*)

4. Most Bible teachers today misapply the Bible’s prophesied “future events” concerning “Israel” ... applying them to “the body of Christ.” This has led to confusion about the Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the “*the body of Christ*.” Paul is the ONLY God-inspired Bible writer who tells us about the Rapture of “*the body of Christ*.” Not seeing the distinction between that which applies to the nation “*Israel*” and that of “*the body of Christ*,” most today misapply the genuine prophecies of Christ’s 2nd coming (i.e., *Matt 24-25*, *Luke 21*) ... to the time of the Rapture of the church.

This results in contradiction and confusion that prompts many to fall away from the “*blessed HOPE*” of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture for “*the Church, His Body*.” Paul says of the “*body of Christ*” we are “NOT appointed to (God’s) wrath” (*1 Thes 5:9*). Actually, the Rapture marks the conclusion of the church age of “*His body*” and simultaneously ... the resumption of God’s prophetic program for Israel.

The Apostle Paul referred to **the Bible** as “*The Word of God*,” writing “*All Scripture is God-breathed and profitable, to teach, reprove, correct, and instruct*” (*2Tim 3:16*). But then some ask; “Why have so many sincere people been led astray by these false Bible teachings? Why do we see so many heresies and false teachings springing up – while *all claim to be based upon the Bible?*”

The answer is this. Being Biblical is one thing, most cults site the Bible. But to see the Biblically dispensational is quite another – noting what applies and to whom it applies.

Most often both teachers and followers have failed to heed this important instruction Paul gave just prior to his declaration *ALL Scripture is inspired of God and profitable*. Paul wrote;

“*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH*” (*2 Tim. 2:15 KJV*).

We must divide the Bible dispensationally. The fact is that through the centuries God has periodically altered His dealings with mankind, these times we call “*dispensations*.” First there was the *dispensation of Innocence in the Garden of Eden*, then the *dispensation of Human Government in Noah’s day*, the *dispensation of Promise to Abraham and his seed*, the *dispensation of the Law for Israel*, and now *Paul’s “the dispensation of the Grace of God” for the Gentiles* (*Eph 3:1-2*).

Thus Paul says we need to divide the Bible, *dispensationally*; noting the *dispensational differences* in the relationship between God and man. Only then can we clearly see the Lord's eternal plan and intent in *the Rapture for "the body of Christ"* as *distinguished from... Christ's 2nd coming to earth for Israel* and to establish His Millennial and eternal Kingdom on earth.

So we must heed Paul's method for Bible interpretation, to "*rightly divide the Word of truth*," for the simple reason that if we do not "*rightly divide*" we likely will pervert the truth and come to harmful error.

Example: Many religious rites that were **commanded by God in Old Testament** are **positively forbidden** in this present dispensation of grace. Consider that under the Old Testament **animal sacrifices WERE REQUIRED** for acceptance with God, and from John the Baptist through Pentecost **water baptism WAS REQUIRED** for cleansing from sin and for salvation (Lev 17:11; Mk 1:4; Acts 2:38).

But now, on the contrary, **AFTER the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and then Stephen's stoning**, Paul was sent with "the preaching of the cross" (1Cor 1:18). Paul declared; "*We (now) have REDEMPTION through His blood, the FORGIVENESS OF SINS according to the riches of His grace*" (Eph. 1:7);

"(we are) **JUSTIFIED FREELY by GRACE, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**" (Rom. 3:24).

So we must study the Bible in its near and remote context by *comparing Scripture with Scripture*. Paul's Epistle to the Roman's touches almost every Bible issue, of which John Calvin wrote; "*If a man understands it (Romans), he has a sure road opened for him to the understanding of the whole Scripture.*"

Romans brings together and sets out in systematic relation all the great themes of the Bible - *the sin nature, acts of sin, the law, judgment, faith, grace versus works, justification, sanctification, election, the plan of salvation, the work of Christ, the work of the Spirit, the believer's identity in Christ, the Christian hope, the nature and life of the Church, the place of Jew and Gentile in the purposes of God, the fulness of times, the heaven and the earth, the meaning and message of the Old Testament*. From the Romans vantage-point the whole landscape of the Bible open to view, and the broad relation of **all the parts to the whole become plain**. The study of Romans is the best starting-point for Bible interpretation and theology.

Miles Coverdale (1488-1569), the great Bible translator, offered basic tenets for proper Bible interpretation (hermeneutics). He produced the first complete printed translation of the Bible in English. Most people normally employ Coverdale's simple tenets of **context and literalism** when interpreting any book, secular or religious. I sometimes wonder why Christian Pastors and Bible students ignore these common sense, reasonable, Bible interpretation principles, of which Miles Coverdale wrote the following words.

Considering what goeth before and what followeth after (considering the context)." "*It shall greatly help ye to understand the Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but also;*

Of whom (who is speaking) and **To whom**, (*To Israel, the Gentiles, the body of Christ, or all mankind?*) **what words**, (*quotes, or direct statements?*), **at what time**, (*in the immediate, or long term?*).

Where, (*before all men, or only in the church?*). To **what intent**, (*to stir, build up, cheer up, or warn?*).

With **what circumstances**, (*e.g., while under the law, or while under grace?*).

We should use these aforementioned keys to Bible interpretation as we study the whole Word of God.

The “***consistently LITERAL OR PLAIN INTERPRETATION*** is indicative of a ***DISPENSATIONAL approach*** to the ***interpretation of the Scriptures***,” declared the great theologian Charles Ryrie. And it is this very consistency that is the strength of dispensational Bible interpretation. A “***consistently literal interpretation***” was listed by Ryrie as a most important ingredient of *dispensationalism*, which forms the foundation for **the most important defining Bible element ... THE DISTINCTION between ISRAEL and THE CHURCH.**”

The non-dispensationalist prefers to “***spiritualize***” the Bible, to make it say whatever he wants. Origen and Augustine of Hippo (3rd - 5th centuries) “***spiritualized***” the Bible, refusing to accept what the Bible plainly says about Israel. Not seeing Israel in “*the Land*” in their day, they wrongly assumed that *the church today must be “spiritual Israel.”* Hence, under Augustine’s influence, Romanism adopted its “*Israel-like*” *priesthood, temples, holy days, and ritual ceremonies* as “*church law*,” even though Paul says these ***externalities are done away “in Christ.”***

“... **YOU HAVE DIED WITH CHRIST to material ways of looking at things** and have escaped from **THE WORLD’S CRUDE** and **ELEMENTAL NOTIONS** and **(RELIGIOUS) teachings of EXTERNALISM...** [**Why do you submit to rules and regulations?—such as**]²¹ **Do not handle [this], Do not taste [that], Do not even touch [them],**²² ... **TO DO THIS IS to follow HUMAN PRECEPTS and DOCTRINES.** (Col 2:20-22 (AMP)

Chapter 5

The Three Major Comings of Christ

As we’ve already established, many today unwittingly mix the portions of the Bible that apply to the pre-tribulation Rapture of “*the church, which is His body*”... with those Scriptures that concern Jesus’ 2nd coming to establish His Kingdom on earth. Actually, these events will occur several years apart. Inter-mingling these events has led to error and confusion that distorts truth and robs many members of the “*body of Christ*” of the ***security, blessing, and comfort*** that is enjoyed by their faith in the word of the Rapture as their “*blessed hope.*”

In Part 14 you will see that I have listed *ten contrasting facts* in chart-form as examples of the *dissimilarity* between the **Rapture** and... **the 2nd Coming of Christ to earth**. Below is but one simple difference of note.

- **At the Rapture** of the members of “*the Church, which is His body,*” Christ Himself will meet and gather the members of the His body “*in the air.*” **Jesus will NOT touch His feet on earth.**
- **BY CONTRAST, at Christ 2nd coming to earth,** He will return as He left. “*his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives ...*” (**Zech 14:4**). He will then establish His Kingdom rule (Rev 12:5) and authority on earth. He will bless all “*the nations (Gentiles)*” (**Gal 3:8**) through the agency of the believers of the Nation of Israel on earth in the Millennial Kingdom and then in the eternal kingdom where “*there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and THEY (Israel’s Apostles, cf. Rev 21:12) SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.*” (**Rev. 22:5**)

The fact is that only the epistles of Paul, as “**THE Apostle to the Gentiles,**” reveal the doctrine and detail of the Rapture of the “*church.*” The promise of the Rapture applies *only* to the members of “*church which, is His body,*” those who are saved in this age of “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (**Eph 3:2**). Paul’s says his “*mystery*” (*Gk., musterion, secret*) gospel, which includes the Rapture, had been “**kept secret since the world began**” (**Rom 16:25**). The truths of Paul’s “*mystery*” were never revealed to the Old Testament prophets and thus never prophesied of or spoken of before it was revealed by Christ to the Apostle Paul for the Gentiles (**Rom 16:25, Col 1:26-27, Eph 3:1-5, Gal 1:12**).

Contrary to common thought among many, the **Rapture** of the church is **NOT revealed in the four Gospels**. Jesus never spoke of the Rapture. **Matt 24-25** and **Luke 21** refer not to the Rapture, but rather the events to be seen as “**signs**” of **Christ’s 2nd coming** several years *after* the Rapture of the “*body of Christ.*”

“*And as he (Jesus) sat upon the mount of Olives, the (Jewish) disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be THE SIGN of thy coming, and of the end of the world (aion, the age)*” (**Matthew 24:3**)

“*they asked...Master... what sign will there be when these things shall come to pass?*” (**Luke 21:7**)

“*(Jesus said) WHEN YE SHALL SEE... JERUSALEM COMPASSED WITH ARMIES, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. (cf. Dan 11:31) ²² For these be the days of vengeance (cf. 2Thes 1:8), that ALL things which are written (prophesied) may be fulfilled. ²³ But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and WRATH UPON THIS PEOPLE (ISRAEL). ²⁴ And they (Israelis) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED. ²⁵ And there shall be SIGNS in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers (Satan’s fallen angelic host) of heaven shall be shaken (toppled). ²⁷ And THEN shall they (Israel’s believers) see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ And when these things BEGIN TO COME TO PASS, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your (Israel’s) redemption draweth nigh. (Luke 21:20, 21-28)*

Jesus of Nazareth is here above addressing Israel in all these statements. This is because while Jesus of Nazareth was on earth it was still a “*Jewish age.*” Contrary to the division in our Bibles, the so-called four Gospels are in the Old Testament. They give us an account of the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth under the dispensation of “*the Law.*” It was still the Old Testament until the death of Jesus, as the “*death of the testator*” (**Heb 9:16-17**) of the New Testament. Jesus clearly said He had come only “*to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” (**Mat 15:24**). Jesus also had instructed His “*twelve*” apostles accordingly. “**These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go NOT into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶ But GO RATHER to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**” (**Matt 10:5-6**).

Today's Gentile age of "the dispensation of the grace of God" began soon after the stoning of Stephen by Israel's religious leaders (Acts 7). Soon after that Saul of Tarsus was converted (Acts 9) when he was personally called by the ascended Lord from heaven. Paul was then sent to be "**THE Apostle to the Gentiles**" (Rom 11:13). Paul is **to the Gentiles** in this age of "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24) as Moses was to Israel in the age of "the Law."

The Rapture does **not** apply to the Old Testament believers. However, both "the just (Old Testament believers)" and the "unjust (unbelievers)" will be resurrected. "The just" will be resurrected for blessing and reward (Luke 14:14) at the 2nd coming of Christ to earth, while "the unjust" will be resurrected to the "Great White Throne" judgment and eternal doom (2Pet 2:9) 1,000 years later. The Old Testament saint's (believer's) bodies will be raised several years after the Rapture in "**the 1st resurrection**" (Rev 20:6), at the start of the Christ's Millennial reign on earth.

"Blessed... is he that hath part in the FIRST RESURRECTION: on such the SECOND DEATH hath no POWER, but THEY (Israel) SHALL BE PRIESTS OF GOD and of Christ, and SHALL REIGN WITH HIM a thousand years." (Revelation 20:6)

The "1st resurrection" immediately follows the Tribulation when Christ returns to earth to execute His judgment on Israel's enemies, while He also refines Israel in the fire of these trials. Christ will then rule with "a rod of iron" (Rev 12:5) to maintain righteousness His Theocratic Kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom reign of Christ on earth is bounded by *two resurrections*;

- "The 1st resurrection," the resurrection of "the just" or righteous Old Testament believers, marks *the beginning* of the Millennium.
- The resurrection of "the rest of the dead (the lost)" is at *the end* of the Millennium. "...the rest of the dead (the lost)... lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev 20:5a).

Only the *resurrected Old Testament saints*, the *Tribulation martyrs*, and the *believing survivors of the Tribulation* will occupy the earth at the *beginning* of the Millennium. No non believer will enter the Millennial Kingdom on earth; however unbelievers will be born of the *believing survivors* of the Tribulation during the Millennium. Thus, Christ will of necessity rule with "the rod of iron."

Peter's "**gospel of (concerning) the circumcision**" (Gal 2:7) was **only for Israel**. In fact, whenever we read the gospels and epistles of "the twelve," i.e., Matthew, Mark, James, John, Jude (Thaddeus) or Peter, we are reading the writers to whom Jesus gave this restrictive instruction, "**GO NOT** into the way of **THE GENTILES**, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶ But **GO RATHER to THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL**." (Matt 10:5-6)

Jesus' restriction was later reinforced, as seen when we read Paul's record of the outcome of his meeting with the leaders of the Jewish Pentecostal Messianic Church in Jerusalem, with James, Peter, John.

"Then fourteen years after, I (Paul) went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus (a Gentile) with me also. ² And **I went up by revelation, and COMMUNICATED unto them THAT GOSPEL WHICH I PREACH AMONG THE GENTILES** ⁶ But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:

⁷ But **CONTRARIWISE (as opposites)**, when THEY SAW THAT **THE GOSPEL OF (concerning) THE UNCIRCUMCISION** was committed unto me (PAUL)... AS **THE GOSPEL OF (concerning) THE CIRCUMCISION** was unto Peter; ⁸ (for he that wrought effectually in PETER TO **THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CIRCUMCISION**, the same was *mighty in ME (Paul) TOWARD THE GENTILES*;) ⁹ And when James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; **THAT WE SHOULD GO UNTO THE HEATHEN** (GK. ETHNOS, GENTILES), AND **THEY (THE TWELVE) UNTO THE CIRCUMCISION (ISRAEL)**. (Galatians 2:1-2, 6-9).

So, in their Jerusalem meeting with Paul (Acts 15), James, Peter, John recognized Paul's unique gospel and ministry. They decided to **restrict** or limit the ministry of **the twelve to preach their "gospel of the kingdom"** to "**the circumcision (Israel)**." They agreed that Paul and Barnabas would continue to "**go**

unto the heathen (Gentiles)” with Paul’s new gospel of “**CHRIST ACCORDING TO THE REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY.**” (Rom 16:25). Paul’s “*mystery*” gospel was twofold;

1) The “***fellowship of the mystery***” (Eph 3:9) that we call “the joint body” of Christ which consist of both Jew and Gentile in which there are “no more Jews and Gentiles – all being one in Christ” (Gal 3:28).

2) The “***mystery***” of the indwelling: “***the mystery, which is CHRIST IN YOU (the grace believers) the hope of GLORY***” (Col 1:26-27).

Having the foregoing understanding in view, we can better understand that ultimately Jesus will have had three most important comings before the consummation of the ages in “*the fullness of times.*” We will look at these three comings in detail as we proceed in this series.

1. He first came to earth at His incarnation proclaiming to “*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” that the kingdom of heaven was “*at hand.*”

2. He will come “in the air” at the Rapture of the mainly Gentile “*body of Christ.*”

3. He will come again At His 2nd coming to earth to bring and manifest the Kingdom on earth

Below are the first two of the three primary appearances of Christ that we’re concerned with. His third coming, which we call Christ’s 2nd coming to earth, will appear in Part 7.

1) The Incarnation of Jesus of Nazareth :

“***And the Word (Jesus) was made (became) flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.***” (John 1:14)

The invisible eternal God who “*dwells in unapproachable light*” (1Tim 6:16) became incarnated in the person of “*the Son,*” called “**The Word.**” “**The Word**” is indicative of the fact that Jesus was the visible expression of the heretofore unapproachable eternal God. Jesus of Nazareth was physically born of 14-year old Mary. This was a relatively suddencoming, and He was barely recognized even though His birth was prophesied in detail.

“***For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER, The Prince of Peace.***” (Isaiah 9:6)

“***And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.***” (John 1:14)

“***But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made (ginomai, caused to be) of (ek, out from the life of) a woman (Mary), made under (subject to) the law***” (Galatians 4:4)

“***For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but (Jesus) was in all points tempted like as we are (as a human), yet without sin (any act of sinning).***” (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus Christ’s first coming in a physical human body of flesh brought Him to earth as the precious, sacrificial, “*Lamb of God*” that He might go to the cross of Calvary. In the offering of Himself He accomplished perfect redemption for all mankind, that is for whoever would “*believe*” to “*receive Him*” (John 1:12).

2) The Rapture of the Body of Christ:

Christ’s next coming is to be at the Rapture when He comes as “***the HEAD***” of “*the church, which is His BODY,*” appearing in “***the clouds... in the air.***” This ***coming*** will also occur suddenly, in “***the twinkling of an eye***” (1Cor 15:52). Unlike His 2nd coming several years after the Rapture, there’ll be no astonishing signs before the Rapture. Christ will suddenly ***appear*** to believers when He personally gathers the members of His body “***together... in the air***” (1Thes 4:17). Jesus’ feet will **NOT touch the earth.**

When a believer is “*saved by grace through faith*” in Christ alone, they are immediately positioned in Christ and “*seated in heavenly places*” with Him, yet they are also a heaven-bound people.

“For our conversation (Gk., politeuma, community of citizenship) is IN HEAVEN; from whence also WE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOUR, the Lord Jesus Christ: ²¹ WHO SHALL CHANGE OUR VILE BODY, THAT IT MAY BE FASHIONED LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY...” (Philippians 3:20-21)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual BLESSINGS IN HEAVENLY PLACES in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3)

“And HATH RAISED US UP TOGETHER, and made us sit TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY (Gk., epouranous, celestial) PLACES in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6)

Heaven is the eternal home and abode of all the members of “*the body of Christ*.” Most of us will acknowledge that there is little visible unity among Christians today... but the Rapture marks the first time ALL the genuine believing members of the “*body of Christ*” will be “*together*”; and this will be so “*forever*.”

“Then WE WHICH ARE ALIVE AND REMAIN SHALL BE CAUGHT UP (raptured) TOGETHER WITH THEM (those who have died beforehand, and were Raptured moments before) IN THE CLOUDS, TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR: AND SO SHALL WE (in like manner) EVER BE WITH THE LORD.” (1 Thess 4:17)

Some people wonder about “*the clouds*” of 1Thes 4:17. The clouds are necessary because the Lord is the “*bright and morning star*,” and “*the Sun of righteousness*” (Rev 22:16, Mal 4:2), He as God “... dwells in the light which no man can approach unto... (1 Tim 6:16a). Thus God’s presence is sometimes seen in the Bible as appearing in a physical “*cloud*” in order to shield human eyes from the “*brightness*” of His “*glory*” (e.g., Eze 1:4, 27-28). We, as Raptured believers in glorified bodies with glorified eyes, will be able to see and recognize Him and each other in the presence of the “*brightness of His Glory*.”

“Who (Christ) being the BRIGHTNESS OF (God’s) HIS GLORY, and the EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS PERSON, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

“When CHRIST, WHO IS OUR LIFE, SHALL APPEAR, THEN SHALL YE ALSO APPEAR WITH HIM IN GLORY.” (Col 3:4) “...our citizenship is in HEAVEN ...we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20)

“... the resurrection of the dead. It (the body) is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: ⁴³ It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: ⁴⁴ It is SOWN A NATURAL BODY (Gk., psychikos, a body subject to the soul); IT IS RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY (Gk., pneumatikos, a body subject to the spirit)...” (1 Cor. 15:42-44)

Paul here tells us *where we will be*, and for *how long* – we will dwell “*eternally in the heavens*”!

“For we (the members of the body of Christ) know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (our body) were dissolved (disintegrated), we have a building of God, an house (dwelling place) not made with hands, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS.” (2 Corinthians 5:1)

Chapter 6

Are You Pre, Mid, or Post Tribulation ?

Are you Pre, Mid, or Post? If you don’t know how to answer that question, you’re probably a Catholic or Anglican. Most Fundamentalists and Evangelicals know that these words are shorthand for faith in the pre-Tribulation, or mid-Tribulation, or post-Tribulation Rapture. The terms all refer to when the Rapture is supposed to occur.

You may be aware that there is a great dispute among believers concerning the timing of the Rapture. Though this is a secondary matter, I personally strongly believe in the **Pre-Tribulation Rapture** as being important information for the members of *the body of Christ*, that they "*be not shaken* (2Thes 2:2)."

Some Christians misinterpret the Scripture and then go to great lengths to twist the Scriptures so as to prove their idea of where the Rapture fits into the timeline of then events to come. Some believe the Rapture will come pre-Tribulation, some mid-Tribulation, still others say its just before the 6th Seal is opened. Then others, such as Roman Catholic Church see no Rapture at all (amillennialists) only seeing a gathering to Him at Christs 2nd coming to earth. Contrary to Scripture, they entirely reject the idea of a millennial reign of Christ, which they call millenarianism (see, Catechism of the Catholic Church 676).

*As far as the millennium goes, we (Catholics) tend to agree with Augustine and, derivatively, with the amillennialists. The Catholic position has thus historically been "amillennial (no millennium)" ... The Church has **rejected the premillennial position**, sometimes called "millenarianism" (see the Catechism of the Catholic Church 676)...(<http://www.catholic.com/tracts/the-rapture>)*

*Catholics believe that those Christians who are still living at the Second Coming of Christ will be gathered together with those who have died in Christ to be forever with the Lord. **CATHOLICS do not generally use the term Rapture, NOR DO THEY BELIEVE in a RAPTURE THAT WILL TAKE PLACE SOME TIME BEFORE THE SECOND COMING**, as do many Evangelicals.* (<http://www.catholic.com/quickquestions/do-catholics-believe-in-the-rapture>)

1Thes 5:1-3 (below) is one particular section of Paul's epistles that some *misuse* in order to say the Rapture of the church comes at or with the time of the 2nd coming. Paul wrote of the coming *day of the Lord*, then bringing *sudden destruction... coming upon them*(v3 below). I will here address 1Thes 5:1-3 in some detail.

BUT of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye (the Thessalonian grace believers) have no need that I (Paul) write unto YOU.

²For **YOURSELVES KNOW PERFECTLY**(from prophecy)...that the **DAY OF THE LORD** so cometh (in wrath) **as a thief in the night**(suddenly, **unexpectedly**).

³For when **THEY** (the non-believers left behind after the Rapture) shall say, Peace and safety; then **SUDDEN DESTRUCTION COMETH UPON THEM**, as travail upon a woman with child; and **THEY** (the non-believers) **shall not escape**. (1Thes. 5:1-3)

To this we might ask, *sudden destruction... coming upon who?* Is this *day of the Lord* and *sudden destruction* coming upon the *body of Christ*, or is it upon *the lost of the world left behind to suffer the Tribulation judgments, after the Rapture?* Will *the church, which is His body* see the coming *sudden destruction* of the Tribulation judgments? **That would conflict with Paul other words. And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come. (1 Thes 1:10)**

You will recall that we closed Part 4 discussing the proper method of Bible interpretation that uses the *plain literal interpretation* of Scripture, by *contextual* study, that how we will answer these questions. We must take the Bible for what it *plainly* says, unless we are reading an obvious metaphor or allegory, such as with Gal 4:24. In such cases the Word explains itself to reveal the meaning, such as with Jesus parables of the *wheat and tares*, and the *goats and sheep* that we will consider in coming installments.

Some mistakenly assume that, because 1Thess Chapter 5 follows Paul's description of **the Rapture** in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 must be continuing the same thought of Chapter 4, as if *sudden destruction* must then apply to the *body of Christ* and the Rapture. This is ridiculous and certainly would not be the *blessed hope* (Titus 2:13) of the Rapture that Paul said would *comfort* (1Thes 4:18) the believers. I will prove this erroneous idea.

Yes, Paul in 1Thes. 5:1-3 is writing **TO his brethren (the grace believers) (1Thes 5:1)** at the Thessalonians church, but it concerns the judgments that will come upon those remaining upon the earth after the Rapture by which nearly two-thirds of mankind will die...at the end of the Tribulation. In Chapter 5 Paul is writing to the church, but his writing *about them* (1Thes 5:3, see

above), those upon whom judgment is coming. Paul says, **THEY** (*the non-believers*) **shall not escape**(v3). Paul does **NOT** say **sudden destruction... is coming upon YOU**, upon the Thessalonians believers to whom he is writing.

Some mistakenly mingle Paul's words with Jesus words seen in the four Gospels, assuming they both are addressing the same events, as if applying the *body of Christ*, Jesus, as *minister of the circumcision* (Rom 15:8), never spoke a word concerning *the mystery* or the Rapture of the body of Christ.

Paul's words in 1Thes 5:1-3 do agree with the Lords prophecies concerning **judgments coming upon the world and Israel**. In Matt 24:30-31 (below) Jesus spoke of the **sign** that **all the tribes (nations) of the earth mourn** and then of His **coming in the clouds to gather together His elect (Israel)**, at the end of the **great tribulation** judgments. This refers to the 7-year Tribulation and His 2nd coming, **not to the Rapture**.

*And then shall appear the **sign of the Son of man in heaven**: and then shall **all the tribes of the earth mourn**, and they shall see the **SON OF MAN COMING IN THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN** with power and great glory. ³¹ And he shall send **HIS ANGELSWITH A GREAT SOUND OF A TRUMPET**, and **THEY SHALL GATHER TOGETHER HIS ELECT** from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. (Matthew 24:30-31)*

Many misapply Matt 24:30-31 (above) because these phrases, *he shall send his **angels with a great sound of a trumpet**, and ...**gather together his elect***, sound similar to Paul's words concerning the Rapture of the church in 1Thes 4:13-18. But actually Jesus and Paul refer to **2 different comings of Christ**. By looking closely at the verses preceding Matt 24:30-31 **in context**, we see that Jesus is clearly speaking of His 2nd coming... **in judgment**.

Note that Matt 24:13-21 (below) precedes and sets the context for Matt 24:30-31. Note my commentary on each verse (*in Arial print in the parenthesis*) and you will see that Jesus words obviously describe the Great Tribulation toward **the end** (v13 below) of the Tribulation. These verses do **not** apply to the *body of Christ*, which is to be Raptured several years **earlier**.

¹³ **But HE THAT SHALL ENDURE unto THE END, the same SHALL BE SAVED.**

(This indicates that this Scripture does not apply to the Christian believers under the dispensation of the grace of God (Eph 3:2). The Grace believers are assured of their salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone; they're failure to endure does not negate their salvation.)

¹⁴ And this **GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM** shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and **THEN SHALL THE END COME.**

(Christians are saved according to Paul's THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD (Act 20:24), **not** according to THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM that Jesus gave the Twelve for Israel.)

¹⁵ When **YE THEREFORE SHALL SEE THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION, SPOKEN OF BY DANIEL THE PROPHET**, stand in the holy place (temple), (whoso readeth, let him understand:) ¹⁶ Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

(Clearly, according to Dan 12:11, **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** occurs in the middle of the Tribulation, **3-1/2 years after the Rapture**, 1260 days before the end.

¹⁷ Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: ¹⁸ Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. ¹⁹ And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! ²⁰ But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: ²¹ For **THEN shall be GREAT TRIBULATION, such as was NOT SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD TO THIS TIME, NO, NOR EVER SHALL BE.** (Matthew 24:13-21)

(The **GREAT TRIBULATION** is such as we have never yet seen on earth. This has not yet occurred.)

For as the lightning (suddenly) cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so **shall also THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN be.** ²⁸ For **WHERESOEVER the CARCASE is, there will the EAGLES BE GATHERED TOGETHER.**

(These gathered eagles will eat the carcasses of the dead of the Great Tribulation. They are the fowls of Revelation 19:18. Consider these other Biblical references to fowls, eagles, and ravens eating the dead after judgments.

Jesus also said these events will occur before He comes again. (This is not a parable.)

³⁶Two men shall be in the field; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN**, and the **other LEFT**. ³⁷And they (Jesus disciples) answered and said unto him, (Taken) **WHERE, LORD?** And he said unto them, **Whosoever the body** (the flesh body, the carcass) **is, thither will the EAGLES be gathered together**. (Read Luke 17:33-37.)

The *taken* are not taken to a better place, NO! They are taken to death to judgment, after which the *eagles* (fowls) eat their flesh.

In Revelation 19:18, John confirms the fact that *fowls* will *eat the flesh* of the dead.

And I saw an **angel** standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all **THE FOWLS** that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; ¹⁸That ye may **EAT THE FLESH of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.**

Its commonly understood by those who think Jesus is referring to the Rapture in Matthew 24 that the *one taken* is Raptured and that those left behind will suffer the Tribulation, but **this is exactly wrong**.

1. First this will occur several years after the Rapture of *the body of Christ*, near the end of the Tribulation period. Then,
2. Those *taken* are taken in death by the judgments and their bodies are to be eaten by the fowls and,
3. Those **NOT taken** or left on earth alive are the believing Kingdom believers, permitting them to go on into the Theocratic Kingdom on earth. In other words it is a good thing to be left and **Not taken**.

Note that Jesus continued in Mat 24 by saying *as the days of Noah were, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man* (Matt 24:37). In Noah's day the flood took the lost all away and only Noah and his family were left on THE EARTH to go on. So shall it be at the coming of the Son of Man when the lost are taken and the believers are left on earth to go on.

Continuing Matt 24: ... ²⁹ Immediately **after THE TRIBULATION of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven** (asteroids?), **and THE POWERS** (the evil powers) **OF THE HEAVENS SHALL BE SHAKEN** (toppled) (Matt 24:27-29). (Satan, Antichrist, the False Prophet, and the fallen host of angels will be **toppled** just prior to the 2nd coming of Christ with power and glory (see v 30).

The coming of **sudden** and continuing judgments during the **Great Tribulation** was **NOT** the problem that troubled the Thessalonian believers. Having the eternal security of the **blessed hope**, the Thessalonian believers were **NOT** concerned with Antichrist or the Tribulation judgments. Their concern that Paul was answering in 1Thes 4:13-18 was **whether their loved ones, who sleep (had died in Christ), would miss the Rapture**. As noted earlier, Paul's answer is that the dead shall **rise first** to join *we who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord in the air*. Hence, concerning the Rapture, Paul says, **Wherefore COMFORT ONE ANOTHER with these words (1Thes 4:13-18)**. Obviously, there would be no *comfort* in the *sudden destruction* by the judgments that are coming upon the lost of the world and upon Israel.

It is by use of **contrast** with the *comfort afforded by Paul's words* in of 1Thes 4:18 that Paul goes on in 1Thes 5, to describe the **DAY OF THE LORD** with the *sudden destruction* of the Tribulation. The day of God's wrath was the subject of frequent Old Testament **PROPHECIES** concerning Israel. By *contrast*, Paul's **MYSTERY** gospel (*the gospel of the grace of God*) concerning the mainly Gentile *the body of Christ* had **not been prophesied**; it had **been KEPT SECRETSINCE THE WORLD BEGAN (Rom 16:25)**. Paul's says his *mystery* gospel had been **hid (by God) from ages and generations (Col 1:26)** until it was first revealed by the ascended Lord directly to Paul (Gal. 1:12), for his conveyance to ye *Gentiles, the members of the church, which is His body*.

For this cause I PAUL, the prisoner of Jesus Christ FOR YOU GENTILES, ² *If ye have heard of the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD which is GIVEN ME (Paul) TO YOU-WARD:* ³ *How that by revelation he (Christ) made known unto me THE MYSTERY; (as I wrote afore in few words,* ⁴ *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)* ⁵ *Which in other ages was NOT made known unto the sons of men, as IT IS NOW REVEALED UNTO HIS HOLY APOSTLES (Gk. apostollos, sent ones, i.e., Paul, Barnabas, Silas, etc) and prophets (preachers, i.e. Timothy, etc) by the Spirit; (Ephesians 3:1-5)*

Some Christians wrongly assume that because Paul wrote of the *sudden destruction* that, it will come upon the members of *the body of Christ*. Actually, Paul had taught the Thessalonian believers concerning the oft prophesied *times and the seasons* to come (1Thes 5:1, Eph 1:10, 1Tim 4:1, 2Tim 3:1). So they already knew *they (the non-believers)*. Paul **doesn't say** these things will come upon *you* believers, but that they will come upon **THEM** and **THEY shall not escape (1Thes 5:3)**.

So, the first word, **But** in 1Thes 5:1, marks a **transition** to properly introduced and **distinguish** it from the previous chapter of 1Thes 4:13-18. The Rapture of 1Thes 4, as a **comfort** (v18), is quite distinguishable from that of 1Thes 5:1-3 with its **sudden destruction... coming upon them who will not escape**.

In summary we can consider these distinguishing facts.

1. Note that 1 Thes 4:15-18 has to do with *the Body of Christ*, while the latter, seen in 1Thes 5:1-3, is related to *the Tribulation judgments* before coming Theocratic Kingdom on earth. Paul often draws *contrast* to make his points clear.

1Thessalonians 5 was in contrast to their blessed hope of the Rapture of the body of Christ that he describes in detail in 1Thes 4:13-18.

All believers to this day are to be **looking for that BLESSED HOPE, and the GLORIOUS APPEARING of the great God and our Saviour JESUS CHRIST (Titus 2:13)**. The word *you (believers)* in 1 Thes 5:1-3 is distinguished from *them* and 2. The closing verses of 1Thes. 4:15-18 deals with the *mystery, a heretofore secret (1Cor. 15:51)* that was first revealed through Paul. But the opening verses of 1Thes 5 deal with prophetic truths which had been proclaimed for centuries. 1Thes. 5 contains three familiar **prophetic** phrases: *the times and the seasons, the day of the Lord, and a thief in the night*, meaning the *day of the Lord* will come **unexpectedly** for those to whom it applies.

3. The former passage, 1Thes 4: 13-18, refers to the Rapture of the members of *the body of Christ*, while the latter, 1Thes 5:1-3, relates to the subsequent times of the return of Christ to earth to reign in His Theocratic Kingdom, nearly seven years later.

4. Paul wrote 1Thes 4:13 because the Thessalonian believers needed more light on the truth of the Rapture (1Thes 3:10; 4:13-18), so as to have faith concerning **their dead loved ones**. They already understood the truth about the coming judgments of *the day of the Lord*, so concerning that subject Paul wrote; *Ye have no need that I write unto you (1Thes 5:1)*.

5. 1 Thes. 4:13-18 concerns **the believers of the body of Christ** in this age, while 1 Thes. 5:1-3 concerns **them, the unbelievers** whom Christ will judge near the end of the Tribulation, just before He returns to earth. In the former passage we find the word *we* four times, and the *them* who are *asleep* and will be raised to join **we who are alive and remain**. These are both will be **caught up together... to meet the Lord in the air (v17)**. But in 1Thes 5 *they* and *them* is the subject. *When*

THEY shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon THEM ... and THEY shall not escape (v3).

6. While 1Thes 4:13-18 closes with an exhortation to *comfort one another with these words*, 1Thes 5 should clearly strike *fear into the hearts of the unbelievers, to whom it applies*.

7. The former passage (1Thes 4:13-18) concerns believing saints of God and a sacred secret called *the Mystery* that was first revealed through Paul, proclaiming their *hope* of glorious deliverance from the time of Gods *wrath*, affording them the most blessed *comfort*. Paul tells the Thessalonians, you *YOURSELVES KNOW PERFECTLY* of that *coming upon them* (*the unbelievers*), that is upon those who will be left on earth after the Rapture of the *body of Christ*.

8. Some ask why the Apostle Paul wrote to these believers with regard to *the day of the Lord*, if they already *know perfectly*. The first word in 1Thes 5:1, *But*, indicates Paul is indicating a *contrast* between that which was previously discussed, the Rapture of 1Thes 4:13-18, and that of *the day of the Lord* of 1Thes 5:1-3. Paul is simply emphasizing the *dis-relation* between the Rapture and that of the Judgments of the Tribulation to occur just prior to the 2nd coming of Christ to earth.

9. The latter passage (1Thes 5:1-3) deals with *them*, the Christ-rejecting world and the *sudden destruction* that will over take *them*. Inescapable vengeance will come on them *as travail upon a woman with child*. A baby's birth comes in a *sudden moment* even though it was preceded with inescapable *signs occurring over time*, which we may liken to the 7-year Tribulation. The many prophetic warnings of Gods wrath, so long unheeded by Israel and the world, will be fulfilled.

So, the contrast between 1Thes 4:13-18 and 1Thes 5:1-3 is evident.

Its a great error that some well-meaning preachers and teachers should confuse the *joyous day of the Rapture* with the calamitous judgments of *day of the Lord*.

Placing the Rapture at the time of or after the Great Tribulation is *frightening* to the very ones they should be *comforting*.

Chapter 7

The 2nd Coming of Christ to Earth

Jesus of Nazareth did **not** ride *triumphantly* into Jerusalem to become King of Israel on Palm Sunday. Yes, the Jerusalem townspeople may have cried: "*Hosanna! Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord*" (John 12:12-13), but Jesus was entering the city, riding "*an ass's colt*" (V14, 15). This definitely was **not** a very royal entry. Zechariah had prophesied of this 1st lowly entry of the Lord into Jerusalem, saying: "**Behold thy King!**" and then he describes His entrance as, "**lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass**" (Zech.9:9). This is not Jesus' triumphal entry to be seen in His 2nd coming to earth.

Once before, when Jesus knew that they "*would come and take Him by force to make Him a King, He departed...into a mountain Himself alone*" (John 6:15). Jesus of Nazareth knew He had **not** come to be King, not yet. He knew that it was not yet time for Him to reign as King; first, the cross, then the throne.

We do read of Him coming again in Revelation 19:11-16. How different the symbolism. The once meek, lowly One, "*having salvation,*" now comes, "*in righteousness doth He judge and make war.*" First He rode "*an ass's colt,*" then "**Behold! a white horse**" (Rev 19:11)! Those eyes that were once filled with tears as He wept over Jerusalem at His first entry are now "*as a flame of fire*" with His head having "*many crowns*" (Rev 19:12).

Our Lord's true triumphal entry is still future. According to prophecy He will come again, put down all rebellion against Himself, and reign in glory and power over the heavens and the earth. Thank God He has not yet come to "**judge and make war.**" Today still, in love He and His word point us to Mount Calvary, where He died for our sins and offers us the riches of His grace. "**Who (Jesus) was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification**" (Rom.4:25)

In His 1st coming to earth, Jesus of Nazareth definitively said "**I am come but (only) unto the lost sheep of the House of Israel**" (Matt 15:24). He also told His Jewish disciples; "**I will... go and prepare a place for you (the Messianic believers of Israel), I WILL COME AGAIN, and RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF... (Jn 14:3).** In Hebrews we read, "**...unto them (believing Israel) that look for him (Messiah) shall He appear the second time**" (Hebrews 9:28).

When Christ comes again to earth it will be as the resurrected victorious God-Man – **Jesus the Christ, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords.** Christ's victory in the great "conflict of the ages" will largely be actualized with His 2nd coming to earth at the **beginning** of the millennial reign of Christ in His Theocratic Kingdom on earth.

Yet, Satan, sin, death and hell are not finally dealt with until the very **end** of the Millennium, at the beginning of the eternal Kingdom on the New Earth.

Jesus is currently seated in the 3rd heaven. "**The LORD (the Father) said (to the Son) ... Sit thou at my right hand, UNTIL I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool.**" (Psa 110:1). Jesus is **awaiting** the time when His enemies will be brought low by the end time judgments; to make them as His "**footstool,**"... then Christ will return to earth.

What has the Lord done during this **waiting** period?

Among other things, the Lord turned His *attention from Israel to the Gentiles* for a time. "**... blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**" (Romans 11:25b)

The Gentiles had been excluded during His earthly ministry. "**But he (Jesus) answered and said, I am not sent but (only) unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" (Matthew 15:24) "**These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶ But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**" (Matthew 10:5-6)

"**But now**" all was not lost because a few years after the cross Christ called, saved, and gave Paul the "**gospel of the grace of God**" (Acts 20:24) "**for ye Gentiles**" (Eph 3:1-5), it includes the Rapture of the Gentile "**body of Christ**" (1Thes 4:13-18, 2Cor 5:1).

"**... YE (Ephesian believers) being in time past GENTILES in the flesh...¹² ... YE WERE WITHOUT CHRIST, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having NO HOPE, and WITHOUT GOD in the world ¹³ BUT NOW in Christ Jesus ye (Gentiles) who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.**" (Eph 2:11-13).

Jesus prophesied to His Messianic followers of His return before He left. His coming again would "**begin**" (Matt 24:8) with "**signs**" (Luke 21:25 below), to occur over **several years.** His 2nd coming is **NOT** to be quick like the Rapture of the "**body of Christ.**" His 2nd coming won't occur "**UNTIL the TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED**" (Luke 21:24 below, cf. Rom 11:25)

"**they (Israel) shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, UNTIL the TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED.** (Luke 21:24).

"**²⁵ THERE SHALL BE "SIGNS" in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth DISTRESS OF NATIONS (Gk., ethnos, Gentiles), with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring (tsunami); ²⁶ MEN'S HEARTS FAILING THEM FOR FEAR, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth...**" (Luke 21:25-26a).

Satan's evil hand and God's judgments upon the world will bring men low; serving God's purpose to dispense judgment due, and... to turn rebellious Israel to the Lord. Only then will Israel "**glory at His appearing**" (1Peter 1:7). These Israelites will, of their own *freewill*, receive Jesus as Messiah in the

light of their now recognized need. They will then enjoy His unending love, mercy, and grace toward them *forever* in His Kingdom on earth.

Mankind long ago declared war on God, killing His prophets, and then on His Son. Yet, Peter wrote, God is still withholding judgment. “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is LONGSUFFERING (patient) TO US-WARD (toward ISRAEL), not willing that any should perish, but THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE.* (2 Peter 3:9).

Peter continued, writing of “*the Day of the Lord*” and His judgments that are to come.

“*But the DAY OF THE LORD will come as a thief in the night (suddenly, unexpectedly); in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*” (2 Peter 3:10).

Paul also writes of the Lord’s “*vengeance*” (v8) that will fall upon those who “*receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved*” (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10).

Ultimately, at the consummation of the ages when Christ returns to earth, He will not forget His promise to “*the twelve Apostles*” who “*walked with Him.*” They will sit on “*twelve thrones*” in His eternal Kingdom on the earth (Matt. 19:28). The Roman Popes claim to be successors to the Apostle Peter, but there can be no successors to Peter or the eleven other Apostles, since only the original “*twelve*” will have been resurrected in the “*first resurrection*” (Rev 20:6) to occupy those thrones of authority in the Theocratic Kingdom on earth.

The culmination of “*the conflict of the ages*” *begins* with the Rapture or removal of the Gentile “*body of Christ*” and then followed by the Tribulation judgments. The purpose of these judgments is twofold; 1) to bring judgment on a Christ hating world and, 2) to purge, prepare, and refine the remnant of a believing Nation of Israel for their righteous co-reigning with Christ as the priests of God in the Kingdom.

Some think God’s “*wrath*” in judgment comes only at the 6th Seal of Revelation in the 4th year of the Tribulation or later, but this is not correct. The awful events Christ spoke of will span the 7-year Tribulation as the judgments “***BEGIN to come to come to pass***” (Luke 21:28). (see chart, Trib Event Timeline)

In the midst of the Tribulation, the “***POWERS (ANGELIC FORCES) OF HEAVEN SHALL BE SHAKEN (TOPPLED)***” This is the fall of the Devil and his angels from the 2nd heaven, then “*cast into the earth*” (v9 below). The Devil and his host will be toppled by Michael the Archangel in the “*midst*” of the 7-year Tribulation (Dan 9:27).

“*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, ⁸ And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was cast out, that OLD SERPENT, CALLED THE DEVIL (accuser), and SATAN, which DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD: he WAS CAST OUT INTO THE EARTH, and his angels were cast out with him. ¹⁰ And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, NOW IS COME salvation, and strength, and the KINGDOM OF OUR GOD, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. (Rev. 12:7-10)*

“*for the **POWERS** (Satanic powers) OF HEAVEN shall be SHAKEN (Gk., saleous, TOPPLED). ²⁷ And THEN shall they see the SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. ²⁸ And when these things BEGIN (commence) TO COME TO PASS, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your (Israel’s) redemption” (cf. Isa 54:5, 8) draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:26b-28)*

Satan will then be fully manifest with his horrific acts in the person of the *Antichrist*, and testified to by “*the false prophet.*”

“*And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. ²⁴ And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully (FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE, cf. v25), and*

shall prosper, and practice (perform), and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people (Israel).²⁵ And through his policy also he shall cause craft (fraud of craftiness) to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and **BY PEACE shall destroy many**: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes (the Lord); but **HE SHALL BE BROKEN WITHOUT HAND.** (Daniel 8:23-25)

Thus the Satanic trinity will be fully developed and at work in the Tribulation. The “Beast” (Antichrist) will have miraculous powers to attract “the whole world” to his cause in opposition to God and His Christ. In [Rev 13:11](#) we see reference to “another beast,” also called “the false prophet” ([Rev 16:13](#); [19:20](#); [20:10](#)). The “false prophet” will be a false “christian” religious leader who will sway the western world. “And I beheld **ANOTHER BEAST coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.** (Revelation 13:11). The “lamb” implies a Christian, but one who has the “horns” ..., actually “the dragon” as a counterfeit Christian.

The “false prophet” will have supernatural power to “make fire down from heaven (Gk., ouranos, sky) to earth” ([Rev 13:13](#)). The signs he performs, combined with the demonic words he speaks ([Rev 16:13-14](#)), will cause people to give their allegiance to and even worship “the Beast (Antichrist)” ([Rev 13:14](#)). The “false prophet” will have tremendous religious influence and, inspired by “the Dragon (Satan),” he will successfully convince most of [the world](#) to commit [idolatry](#) in worshipping “the beast” (the Antichrist) ([Rev 13:12](#)). This evil trinity will work in unison against the purposes of the Lord to establish and populate His Kingdom.

“And I (John) saw **three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of THE DRAGON (SATAN), and out of the mouth of THE BEAST (ANTICHRIST), and out of the mouth of THE FALSE PROPHET.**¹⁴ For they are **the SPIRITS OF DEVILS**(demons), **WORKING MIRACLES,** which go forth **unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.**” (Revelation 16:13-14)

Ultimately, at Christ’s 2nd coming to the earth His enemies will be destroyed, except the Devil who will be locked away for 1,000 years. Christ will come and save Israel from annihilation, and bind “the Dragon” during the Theocratic Kingdom. After the horrible Tribulation period with its final 3-1/2 year “Great Tribulation” period, Christ will return to form His Theocratic Kingdom on earth. This fulfils the prayer Jesus gave His Jewish disciples; “**Thy KINGDOM COME... thy will be done IN EARTH** ([Matt 6:10](#)).”

Christ will visibly return to earth exactly where He ascended from on the Mount of Olivet in Jerusalem. “...this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, **shall so come in like manner** as ye have seen him go into heaven. ([Acts 1:11](#))

The victorious Christ will then reign in His Theocratic Kingdom with the “rod of iron.” The millennial Kingdom Reign of Christ on earth will commence with the outworking of the “harvest.” The “harvest” is to be per His parable concerning the “the wheat and the tares.” Here the “wheat” represents the **believers**, and the “tares” represents the false intermingled grains, **unbelievers**. It’s clear from Jesus’ words that **NO unbelievers will be harvested alive into Christ’s Kingdom on earth**. Note in Matthew 13:30 and in v40 (below), the **tares are gathered first and burned**. **The unbelievers are consumed**.

“Let **both** (wheat and tares) **grow together until the harvest**: and **in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the TARES** (false intermingled grains, unbelievers), and **bind them in bundles to burn them**: but **gather the WHEAT** (believers) **into my barn.** ([Matt 13:30](#)).

The gathering of the “wheat believers” into the Lord’s “barn” (above) as a place of safety may refer to this from [Rev 12:6](#); “And the woman (Israel’s elect) **fled into the wilderness, where she hath A PLACE PREPARED OF GOD**, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days (3-1/2 years)”

“Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, **Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.**³⁷ He answered and said unto them, **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;**³⁸ **The field is the world; the good seed are the CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM; but the tares are the CHILDREN OF THE WICKED ONE (Satan);**³⁹ **The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world**

(Gk., aion, age); and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ As therefore **THE TARES ARE GATHERED AND BURNED IN THE FIRE;** so shall it be in the end of this world (age). ⁴¹ The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather **OUT OF HIS KINGDOM all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;** ⁴² And shall **CAST THEM INTO A FURNACE OF FIRE:** there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father..." (Mat 13:36-43)

The parable of "the wheat and the tares" is to be fulfilled as seen here in Rev 14.

"I looked, and behold a **white cloud**, and upon the **cloud** one sat like unto **the Son of man**, having on his head a **golden crown** (divine authority), and in his hand a **sharp sickle**. ¹⁵ And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, **Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH IS RIPE.** ¹⁶ And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and **the earth was reaped.** (Rev 14:14-16)

In contrast with "the Lord **Himself**" gathering "the body of Christ" unto His self "**in the air**" (1Thes 4:16-17) at the Rapture, at His 2nd coming the Lord's angelic "reapers" will harvest the believers of Israel into His "barn" just as His millennium Kingdom reign begins. The "wheat believers" will be gathered into the Lord's "barn" as a place of secure safety, while the "**tares**" (false grains, unbelievers) are left as grapes to be crushed in "**the great winepress of the wrath of God.**" (Read Rev 14:17-19).

Then also we have Jesus' parable of the **sheep** (the genuine Tribulation believers of the Kingdom Gospel of Israel) **and goats** (unbelievers) (Matt 25:31-34, 46) to confirm that **No unbelievers will enter the Millennial Kingdom.** ALL the **goat unbelievers** will go to "**everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**"

"And he shall set the **SHEEP on his right hand, but the GOATS on the left.**" (Matt 25:33)

"Then shall he (the Lord) say also unto them (the Goats) **ON THE LEFT hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, INTO EVERLASTING FIRE, prepared for the devil and his angels**" (Matt 25:41)

"these shall go away into **everlasting punishment: but the righteous into Life Eternal**" (Matt 25:46)

Notice that also in Matt 25:40 there will be **non-Jewish "sheep."** These are the **Gentile believers who helped the King's "brethren (Israel)"** during the Tribulation. "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt 25:40)

These two parables match the words of the Book of Revelation confirming that **ALL who enter the Millennium on earth will be genuine believers.** The Lord will gather the believers of Israel out of all the nations of the earth into "the Land" long promised.

"At that time will I bring you again, even **in the time that I gather you:** for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when **I turn back your captivity** before your eyes, saith the LORD." (Zeph 3:20)

"**Our (Israel's) God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.** ⁴ He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, **that he may judge his people (Israel).** ⁵ **GATHER MY SAINTS (of Israel) TOGETHER UNTO ME; THOSE THAT HAVE MADE A COVENANT WITH ME BY SACRIFICE.**" (Psalm 50:3-5)

"For, behold, in **those days, and in that time,** when **I shall bring again** (Heb., shub, I shall reverse) **the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem**" (Joel 3:1)

The "sheep and goat" judgment will divide the nations as was prophesied. "**I WILL ALSO GATHER ALL NATIONS** (Heb, Goy, **Gentiles**), and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat (meaning, **Jehovah-judged**), and will plead with them (Heb., shapat, **judge them**) there for my people and for **MY HERITAGE ISRAEL, whom THEY HAVE SCATTERED AMONG THE NATIONS (Gentiles), AND PARTED MY LAND.**" (Joel 3:2)

Today we see and hear of the USA and other western nations encouraging the further division of Israel and Jerusalem . Judgment will come upon all these nations, including the USA . In establishing His Kingdom, Christ will “**break (to pieces)**” the Gentile nations “**with a rod of iron.**”

“**Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.**” (Psa 2:9). “⁸... it shall come to pass in all the land,” says the LORD, That **TWO-THIRDS IN IT SHALL BE CUT OFF and DIE**, but **ONE THIRD shall be left in it (the Land)**: **I WILL BRING THE ONE-THIRD THROUGH THE FIRE**, will **REFINE THEM (Israel) AS SILVER is refined, and test them as gold is tested. THEY WILL CALL ON MY NAME, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘THIS IS MY PEOPLE’; and EACH ONE WILL SAY, ‘THE LORD IS MY GOD.’**” (Zech 13:8-9)

During the Tribulation many new believers will be saved to the Messianic “*gospel of the kingdom*” that will be preached by the “*two witnesses*” (Rev 11:3) who will perform miraculous signs. There will also be 144,000 of Israel “*sealed*” from harm (Rev 7:2-8). Many people of every tribe and tongue will be saved (Rev 7:9-17), along with the many Jews who will be saved as Israel ’s “*remnant*,” also becoming witnesses by “*their testimony*” (Rev 12:17), perhaps be martyred. Thus the Lord will save many from Satan’s kingdom and enlarge the membership of His Kingdom on earth.

Many of these will live through the Tribulation and on into the Millennial and eternal Kingdoms on earth. They will have children born during the Theocratic Kingdom of the Millennium. Everyone born of Adam’s physical lineage is “**by nature children of wrath**” (Eph 2:3). They will have that “**(Sin) spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph 2:2b)**. So, Christ will have to “**rule them with a rod of iron**” (Rev.2:27). There will be only one religion during the Millennium – one faith in the one true God according to the “*gospel of the Kingdom.*” Those who refuse to worship Christ will be punished (Zech. 14:16-19). In fact during the theocratic rule of Christ, those who rebel against that righteous rule will be executed (Isa. 11:3-4; 29:20-21).

The sin nature in some of those born in the Millennium will be fully exposed soon after Satan is “loosed” from his 1,000-year imprisonment. Many will not only refuse salvation in Christ’s righteous Kingdom, but they will join Satan in his *final rebellion*. It’s not strange then that we read of Satan being loosed to stir up the final rebellion. In verse 9 (below) we see the final rebellion; the rebels attacking Jerusalem are then devoured by the fire from God out of heaven.

“... he laid hold on the dragon, that **OLD SERPENT, WHICH IS THE DEVIL, AND SATAN**, and **bound him a thousand years**,” (Rev 20:2)

“...**when the thousand years (of the Theocratic Kingdom) are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison**. And shall go out to **deceive the nations** ...And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and **compassed the camp of the saints (Israel) about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem)**: and **FIRE CAME DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN, AND DEVoured THEM.**” (Rev 20:7-9)

This is immediately followed by casting the “*Devil and his angels*,” into “*the lake of fire*,” where the Antichrist and the false prophet were consigned 1,000 years before, at the end of the Tribulation.

“**THE DEVIL that DECEIVED THEM was CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE and BRIMSTONE, where the beast (Antichrist) and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.** (Rev 21:10).

Chapter 8

The Eternal Kingdom On The New Earth

(Portions of this below were taken from a paper called “The Kingdom of God And The Eternal State,” by Nathan Busenitz.)

By the time we’ve reached the 21st chapter of Revelation, the recorded history of man is at its end. All of the ages and administrations (dispensations) of God have come and gone. Christ has gathered His church, the “*body of Christ*” in the Rapture (1Thes 4:15-17). The **Tribulation** and the **Great**

Tribulation have passed. The battle of **Armageddon** has been fought and won by our Lord Jesus Christ (Rev 21:17-21). **Satan was chained** for the thousand-year Kingdom reign of Christ on earth; **Satan was released** and deceived “*the nations*” once again, causing them to rise up in rebellion against God and to come against the Holy City once more. **God defeated Satan’s final insurrection** and **Satan has received his just punishment, eternity in “the lake of fire”** (Rev 20:1-10.) The **Great White Throne Judgment** has taken place, at which the **Book of Life** has been opened and the lost of all ages have been judged (Rev 20:11-15) unto “*the lake of fire.*”

In Rev 21 we see that the Heaven and Earth have been purged and made refreshed. But the New Earth could not appear until *after* the Millennium. This is because the dead lost (unsaved) who were to be judged were being held “*in the heart of the (old) earth*” (Matt 12:40, cf. Gen 37:35) in the place called Sheol/Hades/Hell. The underworld had also formerly contained Paradise where the righteous dead were held until Jesus rose from the dead, from Paradise, taking them to Paradise in heaven (read Eph 4:8-9). The lost remained held in Sheol/Hades/Hell until their resurrection to stand at the **Great White Throne Judgment** at the end of the Millennium (Rev 20:12), just prior to the appearance of eternal Kingdom on the Renewed Earth.

Having refreshed the Earth, God the Father will then bring the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem (the city with “*no Temple*” Rev 21:22), to the New Earth. Only God’s believing children of the Kingdom will dwell with Him in the New Jerusalem. New Jerusalem is the ultimate fulfillment of all God’s promises to Abraham and to his faith “*seed,*” believing Israel. Heaven’s genuine Paradise, “The New Jerusalem” will be brought to earth. It is “*that city*” that Abraham had sought, “*whose builder and maker is God*” (Heb 11:10).

Immediately following the Millennium and the demise of the Devil and his angels, we see the eternal Kingdom of Heaven brought down to the “*new earth*” (Gk. *kainos, remade, refreshed earth*, Rev 21:1), centered in the New Jerusalem. No unbelievers will dwell on the new earth in the eternal “*Kingdom.*” The eternal “*Kingdom*” will be occupied by two sorts of people;

1) The once dead **believers, now in resurrected glorified bodies**. There will be no more marriage or reproduction for the *resurrected glorified saints* (Rev 20:6, Luke 20:35-36, Matt 22:30) who live in the Millennial and eternal Kingdoms on earth.

2) The *Messianic believers who survived the Tribulation and Millennium in physical bodies* will have access to the city with its “*river of life*” and “*tree of life*” (Rev 22:2)...for healing and restoration of their physical bodies. The physical believers on earth will reproduce for eternity.

“*And he shewed me (in the New Jerusalem) a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations (ethnos, ethnics, the believing non-Jews). ³ And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it: and his servants shall serve him” (Revelation 22:1-3)*

The Sin-nature in man is ended. The lost who faced the *Great White Throne Judgment*, and Satan with his “*spirit of error*” (1Jn 4:6), and “*death and hell*” (Rev 20:14) as “*the last enemy*” (1Cor 15:26) are cast into the “*lake of fire.*”

“*And I saw a GREAT WHITE THRONE, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead (ALL the dead of ALL ages who did not believe), small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is THE BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according (due) to their works. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according (due) to their works. ¹⁴ And DEATH AND HELL WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And Whosoever Was Not Found Written In THE BOOK OF LIFE was CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE” (Rev 20:10-15).*

ALL unbelievers born during the Millennium will have died in the final rebellion (Rev 20:9). ALL these dead unbelievers are judged by Christ (John 5:22) at the “**GREAT WHITE THRONE**” (Rev

20:11). They will be punished “according to (due to) their works” (Rev 20:13) they have done. Paul tells us, “***There is none righteous no not one***” (Rom 3:10), so no works will save or reward any of the lost. Rather, the self-serving works of unbelievers only serve to store up “**wrath**” against them. “...***after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up (amass) UNTO THYSELF WRATH AGAINST THE DAY OF WRATH and revelation of (by) the RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT OF GOD***” (Rom 2:5). All the lost are eternally lost as seen when the “**Book of Life**” is opened and their names are NOT found. “***whosoever (their name) was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.***” (Rev 20:15). There will be no recourse or further chance to receive Christ’s salvation.

John wrote, “***And I looked, and, LO, A LAMB (Christ) STOOD ON THE MOUNT SION...***” (Revelation 14:1). In the book of Revelation the slain “**Lamb of God**” occupies the center of the glory of the universe from the City. No believer can ever boast of his own righteousness. All will acknowledge their own unworthiness and proclaim the praises of the One who died that they might be justified and “**glorified**” (Rom 8:17, 30) and live eternally. The unsaved and the fallen angelic host will also acknowledge Jesus as Lord in *that day*. Jesus, who humbled Himself and submitted Himself to death of the cross, is now seen as the “**Lord of lords.**”

“... ***DEATH OF THE CROSS...*** God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him A NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME... that ***AT THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW***, of things ***IN HEAVEN***, and things ***IN EARTH***, and things ***UNDER THE EARTH...*** and that ***EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD***, to the ***GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER***” (Phil.2:8-11).

Jesus said He came specifically to “***the lost sheep of the house of Israel***” (Matt 15:24). He preached the “***gospel of the kingdom***” to Israel, through whom the world is to “***be blessed.***” God told Abraham, “***in thy seed... shall all the families of the earth be blessed***” (Genesis 28:14). Christ will reign with and through ***Israel’s glorified saints as His agents*** on the earth in the Millennial and eternal Kingdoms. Israel has never been promised heaven. Only “***the Church, which is His body***” is promised heaven (Philip 3:20-21). Believing Israel has been promised to co-reign with Christ in the Kingdom of God ***on earth, as the “priest of God”*** (Rev 20:6, below, cf. 5:10).

“... ***THEY (the believers of Israel) SHALL BE PRIESTS OF GOD AND OF CHRIST, and SHALL REIGN*** (Gk. *basileou, rule*) ***WITH HIM (Christ) A THOUSAND YEARS.***” (Rev. 20:6b, cf. v4, 1:6, 5:10)

“***But ye (Israel) are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light***” (1 Peter 2:9)

After His Millennial reign, Christ’s reign will extend that reign to the ***ETERNAL KINGDOM ON THE RENEWED EARTH***, upon which will rest the Holy City, New Jerusalem. God, who cannot lie, promised Israel’s King David an ***eternal seed, an eternal throne, and an eternal kingdom.*** David’s seed is the Messiah, the Christ, who will rule over the His Kingdom forever from David’s throne (cf. Isa 9:7, Rev 5:5-7).

“***I saw a NEW HEAVEN and a NEW EARTH: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (Rev. 21:1) “And (the New Jerusalem) had ... TWELVE GATES, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon... of THE TWELVE TRIBES of the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL (Rev. 21:12) “²² And I saw NO TEMPLE Therein: For The Lord God Almighty And The Lamb Are The Temple Of It. ²³ And The City Had No Need of The Sun, Neither of The Moon, To Shine In It: for THE GLORY OF GOD DID LIGHTEN IT, and THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT thereof. ²⁴ And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of THE EARTH do bring their glory and honour into it.” (Rev. 21:22-24) “And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and THEY (Christ and His redeemed) SHALL REIGN (rule) FOR EVER AND EVER.” (Rev. 22:5)***

A simple survey of Revelation 21–22 reveals several general characteristics of this divine kingdom. First, it will be a *geo-physical kingdom*—located on a new earth within a new universe (21:1). It has geographical features: the absence of a sea (21:1), the presence of a city (21:2), a high mountain (21:10),

a river with banks (22:1–2), and a tree that produces fruit (22:1–2). It occupies physical space (21:16–17) and encompasses the physical activity of its inhabitants (21:24). The apostle John describes it as a land of bright color and exquisite beauty, like dazzling jewels (21:19–21). There is even a reference made to the marking of time in terms of *months* and *seasons* while in eternity future (22:2).

It will also be a *socio-political kingdom*—complete with a capital city, the **New Jerusalem** (21:2). The city itself has gates, high walls, foundations, engraved names, and streets (cf. Isa 62:3–5). Its inhabitants communicate through speech and writing (21:3, 5). There is government hierarchy (21:24), an ongoing economic system (21:24), and some form of national distinctiveness (21:24, 26). But most importantly, the King’s throne is present on the new earth (22:1, 5). Though His people will reign with Him (22:5), they are also His willing bond slaves—with His name written on their foreheads designating that they belong to Him (22:4; cf. Isa 62:2). Third, it will be a *spiritually-perfect kingdom*. Sin and its effects will be gone (21:4), thus, there will no longer be any separation between God and man (21:2–3). There will no longer be any spiritual thirst (21:6–7) Instead, the essence of life will revolve around face-to-face communion with God (22:4–5). No sinful influences or unregenerate people will be in the New Jerusalem, but only those who have been redeemed, and therefore love to worship and serve their Lord and Master (22:3).

The Lord’s will be a *divinely-glorious kingdom*. The **New Jerusalem** will be the crown jewel of the new earth, radiating the glorious light of God (21:11).

- The Triune God—Father (21:22), Son (22:1, 5), and Holy Spirit (21:10)—will be present in the midst of His people.
- The Shekinah glory of God will permeate the entire world (22:5), such that there will be no need for the sun or the moon (21:23; cf. Isa 66:20–22), or even a lamp (v. 23).
- The redeemed will bask in radiance of His presence, as they worship Him in perfect purity (22:3–4).
- They will continually enjoy the essence of eternal life—fellowship with God (cf. John 17:3)—as they drink of the water of life (Rev 21:6) from the river of life (22:1) which flows from His heavenly throne now on earth.

How large is the New Jerusalem? The answer varies slightly depending on the version of the Bible. The NIV version says it is 12,000 stadia in length and width (Rev. 21:16), where a stadia is 607 feet. This translates to 1,400 miles. The KJV and other versions say 12,000 furlongs (*Gk. stadion*), which translates to 1,500 miles. Regardless of whether the city is 1,400 miles or 1,500 miles in length and width, it is shaped like a square at the base. These measurements are meant to be literal since they are described as man’s measurements (Rev. 21:17). Even more astounding than the size at the base is the height that is also at least 1,400 miles (Rev. 21:16). This means New Jerusalem is either a cube or pyramid. This goes well beyond Earth’s atmosphere and into space. If a building in the city is this high and has a generous 12 feet per story, the building would be over 600,000 stories!

The Apostle John relates the grand consummation of salvation history by focusing on four major themes.

1. the punishment of the King’s enemies (20:11–15),
2. the perfection of the King’s territory (21:1–8),
3. the physical properties of the King’s capital city (21:9–21), and
4. the personal presence of the King Himself (21:22–22:5).

Outlined another way, these four themes center around four items.

- the Great White Throne Judgment (20:11–15),
- the New Heavens and New Earth (21:1–8),
- the New Jerusalem (21:9–21),

and within the New Jerusalem, the throne room of God (21:22–22:5).

Naturally Created Human Life On The New Earth

Isaiah prophetically described the time of better conditions coming on the New Earth. “*For, behold, I create **new (freshened) heavens and a new (freshened) earth**: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*” (Isaiah 65:17).

Some ask whether or not there also will still be *naturally created human physical life* on the New Earth for all eternity. We see in Gen 1:26-28 God’s originally intention was that *man, made in God’s image*, man was to “*multiply and replenish the earth,*” and have “*dominion over every living thing*” on the earth. This will come to pass.

1.) By the time of Revelation chapter 21 and John’s description of the eternal Kingdom of God on earth the members of “*the body of Christ*” have already been dwelling “*eternal in the heavens*” (2Cor 5:1) for about one thousand and seven years already.

2.) The *resurrected glorified Kingdom believers of Israel* were resurrected one thousand years before, at the start of the Millennium. They already have served to co-rule with Christ on earth as the “*priests of God*” in the Christ’s Millennial Theocratic Kingdom .

3.) The lost that refused salvation in Christ, the Devil and his angels, the Antichrist, and the False Prophet are all in “*the lake of fire.*”

4.) The *dead and martyred resurrected, glorified, Kingdom believers of Israel* will have their co-rulership with Christ extended from the Tribulation to serve under Christ on the new Earth forever.

But who will they rule, serve and bless under Christ on the New Earth?

They will rule, serve and bless the *natural human physically alive believers* on the New Earth, those living believers who survived the Tribulation and Millennium (Rev 5:10, 20:6, and 22:5).

Now consider these following points concerning the *natural human physically alive believers on the eternal New Earth*.

(Portions of this below were taken from www.netbiblestudy.com/ where information “*is offered free for use in the Lord’s work.*”

1. God assures Israel that they will be an “*eternal people – forever!*” (Isaiah 66:22-23 and 59:21). The word translated “*descendants,*” in these verses comes from the Hebrew word, “*Sera*” which means organic “*seed, fruit, plant or posterity.*” This word is used 273 times in the Old Testament and in every case; it means **natural physical seed** – either seed sown in the ground or the **natural seed of man**. Many of those who will dwell in the Eternal Kingdom are those who *believed* and lived through the Tribulation and Millennium and on into the Eternal Kingdom .

They will have human bodies, but the Tempter and Accuser, Satan, will have been destroyed to never again tempt or accuse the believers in human bodies. Christ has made sin “*of no effect*” (Rom 6:6-7). Sin and death will no longer reign. “*... there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*”(Rev 21:4). The “*Sin*” nature of the Evil one in man’s flesh body will have been made absolutely “*of no effect.*” These believers will now be free from the “*Tempter and Accuser,*” and his “*fiery darts of the enemy.*” They will have full, unhindered, *identification* with the cross as the place of their death with and in Christ (Rom 6:1-7) and so they will ably manifest and actualize Christ’s victorious indwelling life in their human living upon the New Earth. Just as Jesus of Nazareth was “*tempted in all ways as we are, yet without acts of sin*” (Heb 4:15), so will they will now live by His life in them as their overcoming life; “*I am crucified with Christ,*” it is “*no longer I that live, but Christ who liveth in me*” (Gal 2:20).

2. Rev 21:3-4 says “*men*” (*Gk. anthropos, human beings*) will dwell in the tabernacle of God; that is His habitation, or dwelling place, now on earth. God Himself “*dwelt with them*” when the Holy City of the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven to live with them on earth – throughout eternity. Verses 24-26 continue by speaking of the now saved of the “*nations*” (*Gk., ethnos, Gentiles*) that will enter the New Jerusalem and bring glory and honor to God in His habitation on earth. The *resurrected glorified saints* of the Old Testament and Tribulation will have already been with Him for the 1,000 years that followed the “*1st Resurrection*” of Rev 20:6a, at the beginning of the Millennium.

3. "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth THE HEAVENS, and layeth the foundation of THE EARTH, and formeth THE SPIRIT OF MAN within him." (Zech 12:1) This verse indicates "the heaven" (the sun, moon, rains, etc) are for "the earth," the earth was made "for man" because man, by his human spirit, was to become the eternal abode of the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9, 1Cor 6:17, Col 1:27).

The physical Earth was created to be inhabited by Holy Spirit indwelt physical human beings that were promised the Earth as an "eternal inheritance" from the very beginning (Psa 37:9-11, 22, 29 and 34; 60:21; 69:36; 82:8; Matt 5:5 and 25:34).

David wrote of the faithful of Israel; "... **his seed shall inherit the earth.**" (Psa 25:13). These passages were spoken to *earthly people* and will be fulfilled after the Millennium on the New Earth. Earthly surviving believers will inherit the Earth, *under the rule of the resurrected glorified saints of Israel* who will co-reign priests under Christ, forever. Dan 7:13-27 tells us Christ's kingdom on earth will "**never be destroyed.**" Isa 9:6-7, says of Christ's earthly government "**there will be no end... from that time on and forever.**" Luke 1:32-25; "**Jacob's house will reign on earth forever... and there will be no end... from that time on forever.**"

The Scriptures tells us that the *resurrected glorified saints* of Israel are to reign as "**kings and priests on earth forever.**" How could they be "priest" forever without worshippers to minister unto? How could they be "kings" (Rev 5:10) forever without a kingdom and subjects, to reign over?

Israel's *resurrected glorified saints* are to rule and bless the world under Christ as King. In Rev 5:9-10; 11:15; 20:4-10 we can see that natural people will live on Earth during the Millennium, **not** having glorified bodies as the *resurrected glorified saints* do, nor will they have the same privileges as the saints. Rather, the living believers are the subjects of the eternal benevolent Kingdom that Christ, and His *resurrected glorified saints* are said to reign over.

The living believers will marry and reproduce *natural generations of men on the eternal New Earth wherein no sin dwells.* By contrast, concerning the *resurrected glorified believers*; "**when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.**" (Mark 12:25)

4. God created man to live forever in his **natural physical body.** It's only because man sinned that we see God's penalty for sin, which is *physical, spiritual, eternal death,* come to the fore. God's plan foreknew the need of Christ as Savior to die for men. That plan included placing His own "*Spirit of life*" within every believer who would freely and willingly receive Him out of their recognized need. God will have gained spirit-birthed children of every age, those who are to be born of His Spirit-locks by His "*Seed, which is Christ*" (Gal 3:16, cf. 1Pet 1:23). God will have gained both a *regenerated, heavenly glorified, people* ("*the church, which is His body*") to reign in heaven... and He will have gained a *born-again, resurrected, glorified Israel* who will reign over the coming generations of natural people on the new earth.

Why did the Lord permit the "fall of man (in Adam)" and the "fall of Israel"?

If the fall and the Savior had not come, then all men would have continued as *natural people forever.* There would have been no class of *glorified saints* taken from the human race to **help God administer the affairs of heaven and earth** in place of Satan and His angels. After the Millennium, natural men will be fully redeemed and will live on the New Earth, just as Adam did *before* the fall, to carry out God's original purpose of replenishing the Earth with natural people (Gen 1:27-31; 9:12 and Isa 45:18). At that time, with the Tempter and Accuser (the Devil) destroyed and the truth of the cross the "Sin" nature of the Evil one in man's flesh body will have been made absolutely "*of no effect*" (Rom 6:6-7). It was Sin that brought forth death (James 1:15b). "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" (Romans 8:2). There is no sin in the Eternal Kingdom. Man's identification with the Lord's all-sufficient work at the cross will be actualized in their human living.

5. The Bible plainly declares that there will be "*eternal generations*" of **natural peoples who will inhabit the Earth.** In the following verses note when the phrase, "*all generations to come,*" or "*from generation to generation,*" translated from the Hebrew word "*Hebraism,*" meaning "**perpetual generations – generations that continue forever and ever.**" (Gen 9:12; 13:15; 17:7-8 and verse 19; Exo 3:15; 12:14 and verse 42; 27:21; 30:8 and 21; 31:16; 40:15; Lev 3:17; 6:18; 10:9; 17:7; 23:14, 21, 31

and 41; 24:3; 25:30; Num 10:8; 15:15; 18:23; Deut 5:29; 12:28; 28:46; 29:29; 2 Sam 7:24-29; 1 Chron. 23:25; Psalm 12:7; 45:17; 72:5; 79:13; 89:4; 100:5; 102:12 and 24; 106:31; 119:90; 135:13; 145:13; 146:10; Isa 9:6-7; 51:8; 59:21; Jer 31:35-36; 32:38-40; Eze 37:24-28; Lam 5:19; Dan 2:44-45; 4:3; and 34; 7:13-18; Joel 3:20; Luke 1:32-25; and 54-55; Rev 11:15.)

One can envision what conditions will be like in the future for the *New Earth*. Had man not sinned, children would have been born to *live forever*, *animals would never have been man's enemy, but rather, would have always been utilized by man for his own good*. There would have been no "*thorns and thistles (Gen 3:18)*, *pain of childbirth (Gen 3:16)* – or curse of any kind on the earth. There would have been *no sufferings, pain, tears, failures, sin, death, or any of the other present effects of man's rebellion and sin*. Certainly every man can conceive of these wonderful conditions that would have been man's for all of eternity had he chosen to eat of the "*Tree of Life*" in the Garden of Eden and remained true in obeying God.

Those who will not rebel with Satan, at the end of the Millennium, will not die; they will continue on the Earth forever as *natural body* people. The rebels who will have aligned themselves with Satan during that time will be destroyed from the Earth (Rev 20:9). Once Satan and his followers are destroyed, the curse, and all its effects, will be removed and man will be able to live forever in his natural body and carry out God's original creative plan to replenish natural life on the Earth.

During this present age, God is preparing those of Israel who believed and were saved in the OT who currently dwell in the Paradise of Heaven to *reign* over coming generations of *natural* people on the New Earth. They will have had their "*natural*" bodies "*changed*" to spiritual, glorified, resurrected bodies (Rev 20:6). There will also be eternal generations of natural people. When the phrase, "*a thousand generations*," is used, it is also translated from the Hebrew word, that means, "*perpetual generations – generations that continue forever and ever*." (Deut 7:9; 1 Chron. 16:15; Psalm 105: 8 and 90:10).

6. There are a number of Scriptural passages that speaks of God making an "*eternal, everlasting*," covenant with *natural man and beast*. (Gen 9:16; 17:7 and 19; Exo 31:16; Lev 24:8; Num 18:19; 2 Sam 23:5; 1 Chronicles 16:17; Psa 105:10; Isa 55:3; 61:8; Jer 32:40; 50:4-5; Eze 16:60 and 37:26.)

7. Eternal lands were promised to Abraham, and his *natural* posterity, forever. How could the following Scriptural promises from God's Word be true if both parties of the covenants were not **eternal**? Gen 13:15; 17:6-8; 48:4; Exo 32:12-13; Lev 25:23, 30 and 34; Deut 4:40; Psa 111:5 and 9; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa 60:21; Luke 1:32-35, Matt 19:28

8. The Scriptures prove that David's *natural physical* seed, his *earthly throne and kingdom* with its *earthly* subject, are all *eternal* and will be ruled by Christ *forever*. (2 Sam 7:11-17 and verses 24-29; 22:52; 23:5; 1 Kings 2:45; 9:3-5; 1 Chron 17:7-15 and verses 22-27; 22:10; 28:4-9; 2 Chron 13:5; 21:7; Psa 89:3-4 and 35-37; 145:13; Isa 9:6- 7; Eze 43:7-9; Dan 2:44-45; 7:13-14 and 18-27; Micah 4:7; Luke 1:32-35; Heb 1:8; 12:28; Rev 11:15 and 22:5.)

9. Planting and harvesting, summer and winter, day and night, will go on while the earth remains eternally. (Gen 8:22; Psa 104:5; Eccl 1:4; Isa 65:21-25; Mic 4:3-4; Joel 2:18-32 and 2:1-21.)

The *physical natural believing* people who have come out of the Tribulation period into the Millennium and from the Millennium into the New Earth will plant, and harvest, on the earth *forever* – they will plow, sow, reap, and enjoy the fruits of their labors.

10. The *natural physical kingdom believers* will be the ones that will marry and have **children forever**, and live a normal natural life just as man would have done if he had not sinned and eaten of the "*Tree of Life*" in the beginning. Thus we must distinguish between the two classes of eternal people of Adam's race, the *natural believers* who will be the **subjects** of the kingdom *forever*, and the **immortal, spiritual, resurrected, heavenly, glorified saints of all ages** who will be the **rulers and heirs of the kingdom forever**. (Gen 17:13; Exo 12:14 and 24; 27:20-21; 28:29 and 43; 29:9; 30:8 and 21; 31:16-17; 40:15; Lev 16:3; 17:7; 23:14 and 21; 24:3; Num 10:8; 15:15; 18:8 and 23; 19:10 and 21; 1 Chron 15:2; 23:13; 2 Chron 2:4; 2 Kings 17:37; Psa 125:1; Isa 45:17; 55:13; 60:15-20; Exo 45:14 and Zech 14:16-21.)

11. Most of the passages quoted in this study concerning the Lord's Eternal Kingdom on earth use the words "everlasting, forever and perpetual," when speaking of the existence of *natural physical* man. These are the same words that are used to denote the eternal existence of God, the existence of natural man must be as eternal as the existence of God. We have no right to take such words to mean anything but what they say, unless such is plainly implied in the passage where they are found, or statements found elsewhere to the contrary. Any usage of the words, in any passage of Scripture, other than that of an eternal sense, is always made clear in the passage itself. When these words are used dispensationally, and in connection with eternal things, they mean eternal in every case.

12. God gave recognition to His intention to have a *perpetual race* through the "**tree of life**" when He drove Adam from it (Gen 3:24). The eternal life of the *resurrected glorified saints* will **not** depend on access to "*the Tree of Life*" because they will live in their *glorified spirit-bodies*. They have *immortal, incorruptible, resurrected, glorified bodies* by the virtue of their transformation by the Spirit of God. "**Who (Christ) shall CHANGE OUR VILE BODY, THAT IT MAY BE FASHIONED LIKE UNTO HIS GLORIOUS BODY, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.**" (Philippians 3:21)

Now we know the purpose "*the tree of life*" has on the new Earth in the New Jerusalem... it is for the preservation of *natural human life*. "*And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and TAKE ALSO OF THE TREE OF LIFE, AND EAT, AND LIVE FOR EVER:* ²³*Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.* ²⁴*So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of THE TREE OF LIFE.*" (Genesis 3:22-24)

If the above passages mean what they say then they prove the perpetuity of the human race as natural physical beings. This would have been the case if man had not sinned. When death, the penalty for sin, is destroyed after the Millennium, because sin ceases to be, **life will automatically go on through the medium of natural preservation via "the tree of life"** (Revelation 2:7 and 17; 22:2).

In view of the perpetual multiplying of the race, an obvious question would be, "How can the earth hold so many coming generations?"

This may be answered by the following observations. The "*how*" of many revealed parts of God's eternal plan is not yet clear. We are not asked to understand how certain things will be brought about, but rather, we are simply asked to believe what is plainly written in God's Word. The *how* of God's entire plan is in *His* hands. Is the God Who created all things, and foretold eternal plans, now limited in His power to bring these things to pass? Nonetheless, the *how* of this question of "*over-population*" seems to be answered by Psa 8 and Isa 40:29-31. These passages tell us that common, natural man was supposed to have power and dominion over *all* the works of God's hand, which would include all the planets. Since Christ came to restore man's dominion over "**all things**" (Hebrews 2:7-10), it seems logical to believe that, in the future restoration, man will have power over, and access to, *the planets*, which are a part of God's handiwork. This being true, God could, then, take care of all future generations, whenever necessary, by populating other planets. Keep in mind that Hubble Space Telescope discovered galaxies 55 millions light years from the Earth. After the restoration, it will be possible for vast multitudes of people to live on the earth. In addition, once the ground is freed from the curse its productivity potential will return to what it was *prior* to the curse!

Remember too, that when the Earth is made "*New*," there will not be any wilderness or desert waste land, no steaming jungles, frozen arctic, or wide expansions of arid, barren lands, but rather, the whole Earth will be fruitful, fertile and productive. And, if God should ever need more room – the Creator of the vast universe certainly could push its wide borders out a few billion light years.

Nothing is impossible to God!

The Delay in Israel's Program

Under the influence of Satan as “*the god of this world*” since Adam’s fall, mankind long ago declared war on God. We see this in many ways, but more directly by Israel’s threefold attack on God. First, Israel killed the Lord’s “*prophets*” (Rom 11:3), then they “*killed the Prince of life*” (Act 3:15), His Son who was sent to redeem and save them, and then they killed Stephen when they “*stoned him to death*” (Act 7:58). Stephen was the witness of “*the Holy Spirit*” (Act 7:51). Thus they have literally attacked the Triune God in total.

Yet, even after man and Israel’s attacks upon the Lord, He is still withholding and delaying His judgment and wrath that is prophesied to come, for a reason - “*that all should come to repentance*” (2Pet 3:9). Peter goes on to tell his Jewish hearers the delay in the coming judgments of God will not last forever, “*the DAY OF THE LORD (judgment) will come as a thief (suddenly).*”

“*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering (patience) to us-ward, not willing that any should perish (Gk., *apollymi*, be destroyed), but that all should come to repentance.*”

¹⁰ ***But the DAY OF THE LORD (judgment) will come as a thief in the night (suddenly); in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are (of man’s hands) therein shall be burned up. (2 Peter 3:9-10)***

Paul wrote that God’s “*vengeance*” (v8) will ultimately fall upon all those who “*receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved*” (2 Thess 2:10). At the consummation of the ages when Christ returns to earth, the Lord’s wrath will fall upon this Christ-hating world, and upon Israel as a *refiner’s fire that they might call upon His name* (Zech 13:9).

“*For we know Him Who said, **Vengeance is Mine [retribution and the meting out of full justice rest with Me]**; I will repay [I will exact the compensation], says the Lord. And again, **The Lord will judge and determine and solve and settle the cause and the cases of His people.**” (Hebrews 10:30 AMP)*

But then, in bringing the Kingdom He will not forget His promise to give “*twelve thrones*” to the “*the twelve*” Apostles who walked with Him on the earth (Matt. 19:28) in His eternal Kingdom. They will reign over the twelve tribes of Israel in the eternal Kingdom. Rome claims its Popes to be successors to the Apostle Peter but there can be no successors to Peter or the other Apostles, since it is the original twelve (Mathias, not Judas) who will be resurrected in the “*first resurrection*” of Rev 20:6. They will fill those thrones of authority in the Millennium and eternal kingdom on earth. Even Paul was not qualified to be one of “*the twelve.*”

We need to recognize that almost immediately following Israel’s “*fall*” (Rom 11:11-12), when its religious leaders stoned Stephen to death, the Lord “*blinded*” Israel and set Israel aside for a time, that is “*until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” (Rom 11:25) at the Rapture. With Israel’s fall the age had turned from *Israel under the Law* to the *Gentiles under the pure grace* of “***the dispensation of the grace of God***” (Eph 3:2, cf. Rom 6:14). The Lord interrupted Israel’s prophesied program and *inserted* a new program for the Gentiles that will last for an unspecified time period, which some call *the parenthesis*. (See chart: “Daniel’s 70 Weeks (490 Years) of Israel Under Gentile Rule”) The Lord’s interruption of His program for Israel delayed His coming Kingdom on earth. He turned to and saved Paul, sending him with the message of “*the mystery*” and “*gospel of the grace of God*” (Act 20:24) to “*ye Gentiles*” (Eph 3:1-5).

Peter, as “*the Apostle to the circumcision (Israel),*” came to understand this *interruption* and *delay* in God’s program for Israel some years after the cross. Peter suggests that it was through Paul’s spoken words and epistles that he came to understand Paul’s unique calling to the Gentiles and...Paul’s explanation of the full meaning of the cross to *save all men* of all ages who would trust in the Lord. Peter then understood that the Lord had, so to speak, ***pressed the pause button on Israel’s program*** when He ***inserted*** the ***unprophesied*** “*dispensation of the grace of God*” into the timeline of the ages for the Gentiles. Being ***unprophesied***, Paul’s message was God’s “*secret*” plan that Paul calls “*the mystery*” (*secret*), his unique “*gospel*” message.

*“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my (Paul’s) gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the REVELATION OF THE MYSTERY** (the secret plan of God), which was **KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN**” (Romans 16:25)*

Thus, there was a delay in God fulfilling His prophesied program for Israel and the coming Kingdom in wherein Israel will reign with Christ as His agents on earth. So, Peter wrote these words below to Israel, *“the circumcision”* (Gal 2:7) to whom he was sent (Matt 10:5-6). Peter refers them to read Paul’s epistles that **explain the delay** in the appearing of Christ in His 2nd coming, warning them of ignoring Paul’s words.

*“And account that **the longsuffering** (patience) **of our Lord is salvation** (opportunity for salvation before the prophesied judgments that are to come); even as our beloved brother **Paul** also according to the wisdom given unto him (Paul) hath written unto you; ¹⁶ As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which **THEY THAT ARE UNLEARNED AND UNSTABLE WREST** (twist), **AS THEY DO ALSO THE OTHER SCRIPTURES, UNTO THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION.** (2 Peter 3:15-16)*

Paul here explains the delay in Christ’s 2nd coming for Israel . Paul says Israel is under “*blindness*” for a time, but only **until** the *inserted Gentile age* is finished. The *parenthesis* in God’s program for Israel will end with the Rapture or out-taking of the then completed mainly Gentile “*body of Christ.*”

*“... **BLINDNESS in part is HAPPENED TO ISRAEL, UNTIL the fulness** (pleroo, **COMPLETION**) **OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN.**” (Romans 11:25).*

When the “*body of Christ*” is Raptured, God will simultaneously turn again to Israel to restart and fulfill all prophesy concerning Christ’s Kingdom to come to earth, and believing Israel ’s reign with Him.

The first thing that occurred during this God ordained **interim period of delay** in God’s Kingdom program for Israel, was that God chose “another Apostle,” who was NOT one of “*the twelve.*” The Greek word for “apostle” is *apostolos*, meaning “*sent one*” This new Apostle, Paul, who stands apart from “*the twelve.*” Christ actually descended from the 3rd heaven to appear to “Saul of Tarsus” as a bright “*light*” (Act 9:3) and a “*voice*” (Act 9:4). Saul of Tarsus was a Jew with freeborn Roman citizenship (Acts 22:27-28). God saved “Saul of Tarsus” sending Him now as “Paul,” “**THE Apostle to the Gentiles**” (Rom 11:13), with a new gospel message called “**the mystery**” (Rom 16:25). The “*mystery*” was the “**gospel of the grace of God**” (Acts 20:24), “**for ye Gentiles**” (Eph 3:1-5), which included the Rapture of the mainly Gentile “*body of Christ*” (1Cor 15:51).

We today are blessed to live in the period of the *parenthesis* or time of *delay* in God’s program for Israel . While we are blessed today with the grace gospel and eternal salvation, the *parenthesis* serves to delay Christ’s return to bring *judgment* as well as *the blessings* of His righteous Kingdom on earth.

So it is clear that the Apostle Paul was not and is not one of “*the twelve,*” nor is Paul an afterthought on God’s part. In fact Paul would not have qualified to be one of “*the twelve Apostles,*” which required that the Kingdom Apostles had to have “*walked with Him (Jesus) from the beginning,*” per Acts 1:21.

Paul is separate from “*the twelve Apostles,*” being converted *after the cross*, after Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection and ascension. The Lord, in His celestial ministry reached down from heaven to convert “*the chief of sinners.*” Paul then was sent to bring his new gospel of God’s “*grace*” to **all races** in this Christ-rejecting world. Thus, Paul’s far-flung missionary journeys are the most noted in the New Testament.

God’s love and mercy was extended to the *Gentiles* through the Apostle Paul. Paul is to “*the body of Christ*” as Moses was to “*Israel*” – God’s chosen sent ONE. Paul “*laid the foundation*” (1Cor 3:10) of the faith through the revelation He received from Christ and his subsequent “*preaching of the cross*” (1Cor 1:18) as the “*power of God*” to save men by faith in Christ, apart from any requirement of works (Eph 2:8-9, Titus 3:5).

In the light of these facts, how then are men saved today? How are their sins remitted? Must men today come to some recognized religious authority and be “*baptized for the remission of sins*” as Jesus instructed “*the twelve*”? **The answer is “No”!** Men are to simply “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*” to be “*saved*” (Acts 16:31).

Yet, many today still follow Peter, “*the Apostle to the Circumcision (Israel)*.” Sadly the vast majority of the church-at-large today still clings to Israel’s program and law. Many mistakenly expect God’s promises to Israel will to be fulfilled for them as Christians today – then they wonder why it does not work for them. They fail to recognize the age has changed and that they have their own Apostle, Paul. They marginalize Paul and his “*(unique) gospel that I (Paul) preach.*” Christ sent Paul with His distinctive message of the pure grace of God for “*ye Gentiles,*” which includes a new way of living – *purely by faith.*

Let’s now see what “*the Apostle to the Gentiles,*” Paul, had to say about *salvation and the remitting of sins*, under the grace gospel for today, then comparing it with what Peter preached to “*ye men of Israel.*”

Paul wrote: “***FOR BY GRACE ARE YE SAVED, THROUGH FAITH, and THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES: IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast***” (Ephesians 2:8, 9). “***NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH WE HAVE DONE, but ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY HE SAVED US, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the holy ghost***” (Tit 3:5).

Paul’s words stand in striking contrast to Peter’s words to “*Ye men of Israel*” (Act 2:22, 3:12, 5:35). Peter preached, “*Repent and be baptized ... for the remission of sins*” (Acts 2:38). Peter at Pentecost and thereafter was preaching to Israel, to whom he was explicitly sent by Jesus. His words were for Israel ONLY (Matt 10:5-6). Peter was **NOT sent to address the Gentiles, or “the body of Christ,”** which was yet to be revealed to and through Paul some time later.

Romanism today still says **water baptism offers justification for salvation from punishment for sin.** Catechism 192: “*The remission of all punishment that we owe because of sin, both temporal (in this world and in Purgatory) and eternal (the punishment that we would suffer in hell).*” “***Justification is conferred in Baptism...***”

Jesus said, “*He that believeth AND is baptized shall be saved*” (Mark 16:16). **Water baptism was for Israel only,** being required for salvation under the “*gospel of the Kingdom*” that Jesus said was to be preached to the “*the circumcision (Israel)*” (cf. Matt 10:5-6). Paul’s preaching stands in stark contrast to the words of the so-called Great Commission that Jesus of Nazareth gave to His Jewish disciples.

By contrast, Paul offers these words of pure unadulterated grace, simply “***... BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and (this is offered to all in) thy house (Acts 16:31).*** Paul says *salvation* under the “*gospel of the grace of God*” (Acts 20:24) today is **freely** made available **by God’s grace alone, through faith in Christ alone.** This is the great doctrine of “*justification by faith*” (Rom 3:28) that Luther and the Protestant reformers recovered, noting its stark contrast with the requirements of Romanism in their day.

The majority of Christians today are bound by religion’s manmade laws and misinterpreted or twisted Scripture, so they miss out on the **security and assurance** of their salvation. This is lost because such salvation joy comes only “***by grace through faith... not of works.***” Paul says every genuine grace believer is “***sealed***” securely with “***the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of redemption***” (Eph 1:13, 4:30).

These and many other differences indicate a major change in God’s program took place when the Lord raised-up Paul, that “*other apostle*” for the predominantly Gentile “*body of Christ.*” With Paul’s calling and ministry there was a massive paradigm shift. God turned His focus *from Israel to the Gentiles* during this period of **the gap** or **parenthesis** in Israel’s Kingdom program. Today *Israel has been set aside, temporarily.* Here Paul clearly says Israel has “*fallen*” ... ***so that... the gospel would go to the Gentiles.***

“*I say then, Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather **THROUGH THEIR (ISRAEL’S) FALL salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy.***”¹² ... ***THE FALL OF THEM (Israel) BE THE RICHES OF THE WORLD, and the DIMINISHING OF THEM THE RICHES OF THE GENTILES...*** (Romans 11:11-12)

“***... blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL the FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN.*** (Romans 11:25b)

The King of all kings, Jesus Christ, and His kingdom currently remain in *exile* until His enemies become His “footstool” (Heb 1:13b) by the many judgments to be suffered by the end of the Tribulation. Yet TODAY believers can participate in and enjoy the riches of the *invisible* kingdom (realm) of God by freely receiving the “*Spirit of life in Christ Jesus*” who will come to indwell their *human spirit* as their new and eternal life.

“... **CHRIST WHO IS OUR LIFE...**” (Col 3:4b)

“**But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit (with Him).**” (1 Corinthians 6:17)

“**To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this MYSTERY AMONG THE GENTILES; WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY**” (Colossians 1:27)

You see, when a sinner today believes “*the gospel of the grace of God*” that Paul preached he receives Christ as His Savior. But then even more, the believer also simultaneously receives the literal resurrected “*Spirit of Christ*” by which he is “**translated into the kingdom of His dear Son**” (Col. 1:13), and “**made accepted in the Beloved (Jesus)**” (Eph. 1:6). Christ has settled the problem between fallen mankind and God by His death of the cross on our behalf; all one needs is to **believe, trusting in the resurrected Christ**.

“(Christ) **Who GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, THAT HE MIGHT REDEEM us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**” (Titus 2:14)

“**Let us DRAW NEAR WITH A TRUE HEART IN FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH...**” (Hebrews 10:22a)

We today live in a time when all men of all nationalities may be saved “**by grace through faith as the gift of God... not of works,**” to enjoy the peace and rest of eternal security. That security rests solely in the finished work of Christ on the cross offered for us. “... **GOD WAS IN CHRIST, RECONCILING THE WORLD UNTO HIMSELF, NOT IMPUTING (counting) THEIR TRESPASSES (sins) UNTO THEM...**” (2 Cor 5:19a)

Paul says all believers today are no longer Jews or Gentiles – they are “**all one in Christ Jesus.**”

“**For by one Spirit are we all baptized (immersed) into one body (of Christ), whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.**” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

“**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for YE ARE ALL ONE in Christ Jesus.**” (Galatians 3:28)

Thus, the fall of Israel *delayed* the purpose of God on earth, but because of the *delay*, God has gained more than He would have otherwise gained because, as it is *now*, God will have gained two great people groups.

1. **The Raptured heavenly glorified people** of the “*church, which is... the body of Christ,*” to **reign in heaven**, and...

2. **The Resurrected glorified people of Israel who will co-reign with Christ over the coming generations of natural believing people on the New Earth.**

Therefore, if the fall of Adam and fall of Israel had not come, then all men would have continued as *natural people forever –not having God’s life by Christ in them*. There would have been no class of **resurrected glorified saints** taken from the human race to **be used of God in administering the affairs of the heavens and affairs on earth** in place of Satan and His angels. Thus, God is working by use of both the *fall of Adam* and the *fall of Israel* in order to accomplish His “*eternal purpose that was purposed in Christ Jesus*” (Eph 3:11).

After the Millennium, the **resurrected glorified saints** (Rev 20:6) of Israel will return to earth to reign over and bless all the **surviving believers** who are still in their natural human bodies on the New Earth in the Eternal Kingdom. They will be fully redeemed and will live on the New Earth in human bodies just as Adam did *before* the fall, but with Christ resurrected eternal life dwelling in them. They will enter the gates of the Holy City the New Jerusalem to eat of “*the tree of life*” and drink of “*the river of life*” knowing that it is His life that is their life and source, for eternity.

These restored natural believing people will carry out God's original purpose of replenishing and having dominion on the earth (Gen 1:27-31; 9:12, Isa 45:18), now in a world free of sin. With the "Tempter and Accuser" (the Devil) and "Sin and death" in "*the lake of fire*," and the truth of the cross made evident, the former "Sin nature" in man's flesh body will have been made absolutely "*of no effect*" (Rom 6:6-7). Man's identification with the cross will be manifestly actualized in their human living on the New Earth.

Charter 11

Chronologically Dating Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" Prophecy

Below we have the timeline of Daniel's "Seventy Weeks" prophecy. It dates the coming of the Messiah and several significant items to be noted in order to properly understand "*the last days*."

- ²¹ *Yes, while I (Daniel) was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel (the Lord's messenger)... said, O Daniel, ²²I am now come forth to give you skill and wisdom and understanding. ²³ At the beginning of your prayers, the word [giving an answer] went forth, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved. Therefore consider the matter and understand the vision.*
- ²⁴ *SEVENTY WEEKS (70 weeks of 7yrs = 490 yrs of Israel under Gentile rule) are determined upon thy people (Israel) and upon thy holy city (Jerusalem), to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation (justice) for iniquity (by the cross), and to bring in everlasting righteousness (in the Kingdom), and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*
- ²⁵ *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to (re)build Jerusalem unto (the presentation of) the Messiah the Prince shall be SEVEN WEEKS, THREESCORE AND TWO WEEKS AND (plus then) the street (Jerusalem) shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

(7 weeks of 7yrs = 49 yrs PLUS 62 weeks of 7yrs = 434 yrs ... for the Grand Total of 483 YRS)

- ²⁶ *after (the) threescore and two weeks shall MESSIAH BE CUT OFF (killed), but not for himself (not for His own sin but "for the sin of the world")... and (in 70 AD) the people of the prince (Rome under the Antichrist spirit) that shall come, shall DESTROY THE CITY and THE SANCTUARY; and the end thereof shall be with a flood (overwhelming deluge of judgment), and unto the end of the war desolations (devastations) are determined.*

The preceding events have already happened. Now the prophecy moves to *things yet to come*.

- ²⁷ *And he (the Antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (7 years): and IN THE MIDST OF THE WEEK (at 3-1/2 yrs) he (Antichrist) shall cause the (Temple) sacrifice and the oblation (offerings) to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate (waste), even until the consummation (the end of the age), and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Daniel 9:24-27)*
- *"from the time that the DAILY (Temple) SACRIFICE SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY (by Antichrist), and THE ABOMINATION that MAKETH DESOLATE set up (a speaking image of Antichrist in the Temple, cf. Rev 13:15), there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days ¹³ "until the end..." (Daniel 12:11, 13)*

Daniel 9:24-27 and 12:11-13 record prophecies of events to be understood by in their chronological order.

1. First, Gabriel tells Daniel of "*the vision*" referring to a total of "**70 Weeks**" of years (490 years), which begins with *the edict to rebuild Jerusalem and ends with the events of the awful last 7 years that we call – The Tribulation period.*

2. The 490 years is interrupted at year 483 with the presentation and death of Jesus of Nazareth on Palm Sunday as the Prince to be “*cut-off*” (v 26). In Hebrew the word is “*karath*,” literally meaning “*executed*.”

3. A Biblical prophetic “week” is a “*week of years*.” In Hebrew a *shabua* or *shabu'im* is 7 years.

4. Dan. 9:27 mentions a coming period of severe Jewish persecution that begins in the “*midst*” of the final Seventieth Week of seven years and continues to the “*end*” of the Week. This period is obviously the ***three and one-half years*** of the Great Tribulation.

5. As we will establish herein, a Biblical prophetic year is 360-days. The Biblical calendar uses a 360-day lunar years and then adds a “Leap Month” on specific years so as to coincide with the Solar cycle we use on the ‘Gregorian’ calendar we use today.

6. The easiest way to unravel this **Bible prophecy** is to **first convert the prophecy years into DAYS**.

7. **We must let the Bible interpret itself in terms of the length of a Biblical prophetic year.** A Biblical prophetic Year can be defined by noting that Dan 7:24-25 speaks of a “*king*,” the same is the Roman Prince of 9:26, Antichrist. It says he will persecute Israel for “***a time (1) and times (2) and the dividing of time (1/2)***” - in the Aramaic this is “***three and a half times***,” or as we will see, **3-1/2 years**. Then Rev. 13:4-7 speaks of the very same great political Ruler and his persecution of the Jewish “*saints*” lasting “***forty and two months***” (v5). Rev. 12:13-14 refers to the same persecution, stating the duration in the exact terms of Dan. 7:25 as being “***a time and times and half a time***.” This period is further defined in Rev. 12:6 as “***a thousand two hundred and three score (1260) days***.” Thus we have the same period of time variously stated as ***3 ½ times (years), 42 MONTHS, OR 1260 DAYS***. It is clear then that the length of a **Biblical prophetic month is 30 days and Biblical prophetic month year is set as 360 days**.

Knowing this, we can now better compute the years involved to arrive at the dates of these prophecies; 1) *Jesus’ presentation to the world as the Israel’s Messiah/King’s* at His entry into Jerusalem, riding on “*a donkey*,” and 2) *the time of His death*, and 3) *the time of the 2nd destruction of Jerusalem’s Temple*.

1. We first can add the **7 weeks and 62 weeks** of Daniel 9:24 = **69 weeks of years**.

2. Multiply the **69 weeks x 7 days** and we get **483 days**. **Each of the 483 days is for a year**, as we see by Numbers 14:34. Thus we get **of the prophecy**

3. Knowing **1260 days** (Rev 12:6) is the same as **42 months** (Rev 13:5), we then know each month is 30 days and each year is 360 days.

4. By multiplying **483 years by 360 days**, then “**Daniel’s 70 weeks**” vision covers **173,880 DAYS**.

So, the prophet Daniel, who lived 500 years before Jesus, wrote that from the day King Artaxerxes gave the commandment to ***rebuild Jerusalem and its walls, unto the coming Messiah would be 173,880 days!***

We can convert the **173,880 days** of the Daniel’s prophetic vision into Gregorian calendar years by dividing 173,880 days by the 365.25 days of a Gregorian year (the .25 adjusts for leap years). This results in **476 Gregorian calendar years**...which **EQUALS 483 Biblical Prophetic Years**.

Here is a brief detailed summary of the items we are concerned with in Daniel 9:24-26. It says “***Messiah the Prince***” (9:25) **will be revealed after 7 weeks + 62 weeks, or 69 “weeks of 7 years,” or 483 Biblical prophetic years, when King Artaxerxes would give the “commandment to restore and to (re)build Jerusalem,” with its “walls.” Then 173,880 days later the Messiah will “be CUT-OFF (executed!),” but “NOT for Himself,” that is not for His sins (9:26). Being sinless, Jesus died as the sacrificial perfect “*Lamb of God*” for “*the sin of the world*.”**

This is a detailed prophecy whose timing may be interpreted by simply calculating the years. The prophet Daniel wrote that ***it would be 476 Gregorian years, or 483 Biblical Prophetic years, from the time of Artaxerxes’ commandment to rebuild Jerusalem and its walls unto the time the Prince/Messiah would first be revealed to Israel by His entry into Jerusalem, “riding on a donkey”***

From: **March 14, 445 B.C.**, King Artaxerxes’ “*commandment*” to rebuild Jerusalem and its walls.

To: **April 6, 32 AD** (Palm Sunday), the 10th of Nisan, is when the Messiah would be welcomed as King is **477 years Gregorian calendar years**.

Now we must **deduct 1 year from the 477 years** because we can't count "0" as a year, we can only count complete years. This result in **476 years** on the **Gregorian calendar** we use today. As we've already proven, **476365.25 day Gregorian calendar years equals 483 360-day Biblical Prophetic years.**

- **King Artaxerxes Commandment (Edict):** This prophecy of the coming Messiah is both remarkable and *extremely precise*. There were other orders to rebuild the Temple, but, there was only *one* commandment to restore both **Jerusalem and its wall**. On March 14th, **445 BC**, as confirmed by modern archaeology, King Artaxerxes I of Persia issued the edict to rebuild Jerusalem and *specifically included its walls* (Neh. 2:2-9). The book of Nehemiah records an account of rebuilding the *city and its wall, at length*.
- **The Prophecy fulfilled:** Now take the **483 Biblical Prophetic years** (476 Gregorian calendar years) in this prophecy and simply count from March 14, 445 B.C. when the "*commandment to rebuild the city Jerusalem and its wall*" was given. This brings you to the exact year and the very day that Jesus rode "triumphantly" into Jerusalem "*riding on a donkey*." Jesus was praised as King by thousands upon thousands of Israel's faithful people who had gathered from all over for the Passover. This was *exactly* as the prophet Zechariah said Messiah would. "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion (Israel)! Behold, your King (and Messiah) is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, yet HE IS LOWLY and RIDING ON A DONKEY.*" (Zechariah 9:9.)

On the 10th day of Nisan, which is April 6, 32 AD, 476 Gregorian years (483 Biblical prophetic years) **after** the commandment was given to rebuild the city *and its wall*, Jesus made this "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem, "*riding on a donkey*." The people of Israel cried out and sang what is spoken of in David's Psalm 118; "**Hosanna to the Son of (King) David** (*this is a Psalm of the coming Messiah*), **blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!**" (cf. Mark 11:8-10). This took place just a few days before Jesus of Nazareth was "*cut-off*" or "*executed*," exactly as Daniel's prophecy said He would. It was what we call "Palm Sunday," **April 6, 32 AD**, when Jesus was presented and welcomed as Israel's King and Messiah. This was the **only time** that Jesus of Nazareth *ever* allowed Himself to be honored as the Messiah/King. Who but Jesus of Nazareth has fulfilled all these prophecies in 32 A.D? Know this; God always keeps His prophetic word. The Son of God, Jesus Christ, came to earth in His 1st coming about 2,000 years ago exactly as promised, literally fulfilling hundreds of prophecies.

Peter wrote to "*the circumcision (Israel)*" to whom he was sent (cf. Gal 2:7, Mat 10:5-6) concerning "**THE LAST DAYS**" saying, "... *there shall come in THE LAST DAYS scoffers, walking after their own lusts (desires),* ⁴ *And saying, WHERE IS THE PROMISE OF HIS COMING...?* Peter then writes of these willingly ignorant "*scoffers*" ... "*perishing*" in the coming judgments (2Pet 3:3-6). This is similar to the scoffers who mocked Noah before the flood, who being warned did not heed the words of warning of coming flood of judgment.

We must realize that more than 75% of the Bible is devoted to and concerns God's calling and eternal plan for the Nation Israel and their part in the eternal Kingdom of God to come *on earth*. Jesus' disciples inquired and He taught them repeatedly about the long prophesied coming "**Kingdom of God**" during His ministry on earth. In fact, after His resurrection, Jesus spoke almost exclusively of "*the Kingdom of God*" for 40 days, just before His ascension to heaven. "**he (Jesus) shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them FORTY DAYS and speaking of the things pertaining to THE KINGDOM OF GOD.**" (Act 1:3).

The angel Gabriel came to Joseph confirming Isaiah's prophetic words (Isa 7:14) of the Messiah's birth. "... *a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, GOD WITH US.* (Matt 1:23) Jesus was Israel's long awaited Messiah, the "*King of the Jews*." As prophesied in Daniel 9:25, the Messiah/King actually first came to make sacrifice of Himself, giving His "*life for the sin of the world*." Jesus entered Jerusalem and offered Himself in the year and on the exact day that Daniel had foretold. Calculating from the Luke's Gospel Jesus entered Jerusalem the 10th of Nisan, which is the Gregorian date of April 6, 32 AD. (See chart: Daniel's 70 Weeks (490 Years) of Israel Under Gentile Rule)

Note that Israel was warned in Daniel 9:26 that the rebuilt Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple (the “Sanctuary”) would be destroyed again AFTER the Prince/Messiah was “*cut-off*” (*executed*). The rebuilt city and its temple were in fact rebuilt as seen in Nehemiah, and in fact they were destroyed again in 70 AD by the Roman General Titus, under the Roman Emperor Vespasian.

In the verses of Daniel’s 70 weeks prophecy concerning judgments to come upon the people of Israel , the city of Jerusalem (Dan 9:24) will be under Gentile rule. Israel shall be under Gentile rule for the duration of 490 years, but not all in succession. This does not count the years of Israel scattered.

Daniel’s prophecy covers six things with regard to Israel and Jerusalem.

1. Solomon’s Temple and the Jerusalem with its walls had been totally destroyed 142 years before Nehemiah began to rebuild Jerusalem , its walls and sanctuary.
2. The 490 years commenced with the rebuilding of the Temple in 445 BCE (v25) as authorized by King Artaxerxes Longinus of Persia .
3. On Palm Sunday April 6, 32AD Jesus of Nazareth’s made an open presentation (v25) as “*Messiah the Prince*,” the King of the Israel ; this was 483 Jewish years from the Edict to rebuild.
4. After the first 483 years, Messiah would be “*cut off (killed)*” (v26).
5. After the first 483 years, in AD70, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed again (v26).
6. The Seventieth Week of Seven Years does NOT immediately follow the first sixty-nine weeks of years. An interruption came by Israel ’s rejection of Christ... and God’s interjection of Paul’s Christ-given ministry of “*the dispensation of the grace of God... for the Gentiles*” (Eph 3:1-2).
7. After the Rapture of the Gentile “*body of Christ*” the false “*prince*,” the “**Antichrist**” will come.
8. **The Tribulation begins with Antichrist** covenanting with Israel to defend them, thus begins the *3-1/2 year, or 42 month, or 1260 day*, “**Great Tribulation**,” but at mid-week (at 3-1/2 years) he’ll break that covenant (Daniel 9:27).

To date sixty-nine “*sevens*” of years (483 years) of Daniel’s prophesied 490 years have been completely fulfilled. Having completed 483 years, only one week of years (7 years) remain. We call this “Daniel’s 70th Week.” This will complete the **490 years** that the Angel Gabriel spoke of to Daniel (Dan 9:21, 24). The 70 weeks of years was interrupted by Israel ’s fall and scattering, and the establishment of “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (Eph 3:2) for the Gentile “*body of Christ*.” The remaining “70th week” of Israel under Gentile rule, includes the final 3-1/2 years, the “*Great Tribulation*,” leading to Christ’s 2nd coming.

Before Jesus of Nazareth ascended into heaven from “*the Mount of Olivet*,” He told His disciples He was going away to “*prepare a place*” (John 14:1) wherein “*the twelve*” will sit “*twelve thrones*” when the literal Kingdom comes down from heaven to earth. (Rev. 3:12, 21:2).

Relating to His return with the Kingdom, Jesus gave the parable of Luke 19:12 wherein “**A certain nobleman**” left His servants to “*receive... a Kingdom*” and then “*return*.” Christ is that “*nobleman*” who supplied his “*citizens (Israel)*” all they needed and then He went to a far country (heaven). Christ will “**return**” a 2nd time with the “*kingdom*” for His faithful servants.

“*(Jesus) said therefore, A CERTAIN NOBLEMAN (JESUS) went into a far country (Heaven) to RECEIVE FOR HIMSELF A KINGDOM, and TO RETURN.*”¹³ *And he called his ten servants (“ten” represents the fullness of Israel), and delivered them ten pounds (“all” they needed), and said unto them, OCCUPY (in righteousness) TILL I COME.*”¹⁴ **BUT HIS CITIZENS (Israel) HATED HIM, and sent a message after him, saying, WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN TO REIGN OVER US.**

¹⁵ *And it came to pass, that when he was returned, HAVING RECEIVED THE KINGDOM, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money (the valuable gospel of the Kingdom), that he might know how much every man had gained by trading (investing the kingdom).(Luke 19:12-15)*

By this parable the Lord was metaphorically indicating that He wouldn't be setting up His Kingdom immediately during His 1st coming, not in the way the people expected, but that He would be leaving soon to be made King and then return with the Kingdom. When He returns a 2nd time He'll reward His followers, punish His enemies, and then He will establish His Theocratic Millennial Kingdom on earth.

As the "noblemen" noted in the parable of Luke 19:12-15, Jesus did instruct Israel's Messianic believers to preach the "***gospel of the kingdom***" until the end of the age, when He would return (Matt 24:14). They were to make "*kingdom*" disciples (Matt 24:4), baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything that He had commanded, until His return (Matt 28:20). But what did they do to Jesus? They crucified the King, rejecting Him and the word of His Kingdom. "The Twelve" were faithful to proclaim and offer "*the kingdom*" for a brief time in the early Acts period, but of course the leaders of the Nation Israel continued to rebel, stoning Stephen to death while he yet spoke as the witness of the Holy Spirit (Act 7:51-59). These "*citizens (Israel)*" were in effect saying "*We will not have this man (Jesus) to reign over us.*" (Luke 2:14).

Though Israel failed by rejecting Jesus and His offer of the Kingdom through the Apostles the 1st time, preaching the "***gospel of the kingdom***" will be fulfilled by believing men of Israel in the Tribulation, then to receive Him in His 2nd coming to start the Millennial Kingdom. Israel then will, as "*priests of God*" fulfill God's words that Abraham's seed shall rule and "*bless all nations (Gentiles)...all the families of the earth.*"

With the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58-59) we have the last straw in Israel's rebellion. Though being the Lord's chosen elevated people (Exo 19:5), Israel long rejected the Lord, killing His prophets. Then they crucified Jesus of Nazareth, and stoned Stephen to death; these acts are the equivalent of "three strikes and you are OUT." Thus Paul writes of Israel as "***fallen***" (Rom 11:11-12). God then interrupted Israel's prophetic program when Israel was thereby "***blinded***" (Rom 11:25a). The promise of the coming Kingdom on earth was set aside for a time. "...***BLINDNESS IN PART IS HAPPENED TO ISRAEL, UNTIL the FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN***" (Rom 11:25).

After Stephen's stoning, the Lord Jesus appeared to and saved Saul of Tarsus, later to be called by His Greek name, Paul. Paul was called by the ascended Lord and to be the Lord's "Moses to the Gentiles." Paul was sent as "***THE Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13)***" with a ***new*** pure grace gospel that he called "***the mystery ("secret," see below)***" and "***the gospel of the grace of God***" (Acts 20:24). "*Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to MY (Paul's) GOSPEL, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of THE MYSTERY (secret plan of God), which WAS KEPT SECRET SINCE THE WORLD BEGAN*" (Rom 16:25).

Thus Israel's prophetic program has been interrupted with the heretofore "*secret,*" therefore unprophesied, Gentile age of grace *to last for an unknown duration*. Paul's "***my gospel,***" is his "*gospel of the uncircumcision*" (Gal 2:7) that had been "***kept secret since the world began,***" until Jesus revealed it first to Paul (Gal 1:12).

It is according to Paul's gospel that we of the church today look for and have the "*hope*" (*confident expectation*) of the Rapture of "*the body of Christ.*" After the Rapture of "the church, which is body of Christ," (Eph 1:22b-23a), the Lord will pick up where He left off with Israel's prophetic program. This restart will begin with the judgments and wrath of the Tribulation, to be followed by the Millennial Theocratic Reign of Christ on earth.

Jesus of Nazareth prophesied that "*signs*" and circumstances would characterize His return at "*the end of the age.*" Since Jesus' crucifixion, at least two Biblical prophecies have been fulfilled; 1.) Jerusalem and Herod's Temple was destroyed in 70AD (cf. Dan 9:26, Matt 24:2, Mk 13:2, Luke 19:44, 21:6); and 2.) Israel was restored as a nation on May 18, 1948, as prophesied in Ezekiel 39:27 and Micah 5:3.

But there are still several Bible prophecies remaining to be fulfilled *before* the world comes to Daniel's 70th Week. These prophesied events must occur before Daniel's 70th Week of Tribulation.

1. Before the Rapture of “the church which is body of Christ” and 7-Year Tribulation Judgments, the Bible says there will be **the War of Gog & Magog**. This war will be an attack on the nation of Israel by an alliance of Russia, Turkey, Iran, and several other Arab nations who will be drawn into battle, only to be then thwarted by divine intervention on Israel’s behalf. We see this war beginning to take shape at this very moment on the nightly news. Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 give us a very clear and detailed description of this imminent war known as The War of Gog & Magog.

(<http://www.arewelivinginthelastdays.com/article/gogmagog/gogmagog.htm>)

2. **The Rapture** of the mainly Gentile “church, which is His body” will conclude the Gentile age of “the grace of God” (Act 20:24). This simultaneously marks the turning of God back to His plan for Israel, which during this time is yet set-aside. In the Book of Revelation we see God’s restart of Israel’s program, with judgment, and then blessing upon those who believe (trust in Christ).

3. **The rise of a world religious superpower in league with Antichrist:** It is known as “*Mystery Babylon the Great, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS*” is prophesied (Rev 19:7–8). Israel is Christ’s virgin bride, while the “harlot” represents a *false church* pointing the world to Antichrist, not being faithful to Christ. This wealthy superpower religion will exercise authority and influence over the whole world to worship the Antichrist and take his “mark”... until it is destroyed by a conspiracy headed by the Antichrist.

4. **The rise to power of Antichrist’s Kingdom** (Dan 7:23-25, cf. Rev 17:9-16): “(Antichrist’s) coming is after **THE WORKING OF SATAN** with all power and signs and lying wonders, ¹⁰ with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because **THEY RECEIVED NOT THE LOVE OF THE TRUTH, THAT THEY MIGHT BE SAVED.** ¹¹ for this cause God shall send them **strong delusion.** Antichrist’s kingdom will dominate the whole world by force after the religious system called “*Mystery Babylon the Great, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS*” is destroyed. Antichrist will be a powerfully successful and at his peak he will be worshiped by most of the people of the world. His signing a covenant with Israel begins the 70th Week.

Chapter 12

Questions Regarding Daniels’ 70th Week

“**SEVENTY WEEKS** (70x7 = 490 years) ARE DETERMINED (Heb., *hatak, decreed*) **UPON THY (Daniel’s) PEOPLE (Israel) AND UPON THY HOLY CITY (Jerusalem), TO FINISH** (Heb., *kala, restrain*) **THE (Israel’s) TRANSGRESSION,** and to *make an end of sins,* and to **MAKE RECONCILIATION for INIQUITY,** and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.” (Daniel 9:24)

As noted, Daniels’s 70 weeks prophecy may be properly interpreted as 490 years by considering 70 weeks X 7 days, with each day for a year = 490 years. As we will see Israel is decreed to be under Gentile captivity or rule for 490 years for good reason. Let’s now consider some questions regarding Daniel’s 70th Week.

1) “How do you know a **day** can be Biblically interpreted as a **year**” in Daniels prophecy of the 70 weeks of years such that **each day of the 70th week is a year long?**

We must let the Bible interpret itself wherein a “day” is often spoken of as a “year.”

“After the **number of the days** in which ye searched the land, even **forty days, EACH DAY FOR A YEAR,** shall ye bear your iniquities, **even** (that is) **FORTY YEARS...**” (Num 14:34).

2) Why would God place Israel in captivity or under the rule of Gentile kingdoms for 490 years?

Israel was to be punished with Gentile rule for 490 years as repayment to the Lord for disobeying the Lord's command to rest "*the land*" every seventh year, which is called a **Sabbatical year**.

"Then shall THE LAND [of Israel have the opportunity to] ENJOY ITS SABBATHS as long as it lies desolate (empty) and YOU ARE IN YOUR ENEMIES' LAND; then SHALL THE LAND REST, to enjoy and receive PAYMENTS FOR ITS SABBATHS [divinely ordained for it]." (Leviticus 26:34 AMP)

Every "week" of **Daniel's 490 weeks** of 7 years is a "**Sabbatical week of years**" ends in the *seventh year* called the "**Sabbatical year**." This is also called the Hebrew "*shmita*" – literally meaning "*a seventh*". The שביעית, occurring every **seventh year** or *sheviit* (Hebrew "*shmita*" is the **seventh year of the seven-year agricultural cycle mandated by the Torah for resting the Land of Israel** (See Leviticus 26). This is still observed by some in contemporary **Judaism** today. (<http://www.hazon.org/resource/shmita-project/>) "*Shmita*" literally means "**release of debts.**" Israel had disobeyed the Lord's commandment to allow the land to *lay fallow* or *at rest* for 490 Sabbatical years

Aside from Daniel's prophecy, because Israel is currently set aside during this day grace for the Gentile "*body of Christ,*" the next "*shmita*" year would be from Oct. 4, 2014 to Sept. 22, 2015.

For its failure to obey God's law to "rest the land," Israel was judged and sent into **captivity to allow the land to rest. The Gentile kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Hellenistic Greece, and Rome had held Israel captive of ruled Israel for 483 years when Jesus was executed.** Thus, seven of the four hundred ninety years remain. In the last seven years Israel will be under Antichrist's rule as some form of a revived Roman empire, including its religious element called "**Mystery Babylon, Mother of Harlots**" (Rev 17:5).

So, just how many years and Sabbatical cycles (the 7th year) did this prophecy entail? The Lord's judgment upon Israel was that Israel was to be in captivity for the 70 weeks of years or 490 years (Daniel 9:1-2); **each was for the Sabbatical years not kept by the people of Israel.** Thus the Lord brought Israel into captivity "*to make reconciliation for their iniquity (lawlessness)*" (Dan. 9:24, above). This was the length of time decreed by Gabriel to Daniel for what the Lord will bring upon Israel. The 70 weeks of years of judgment are for "*debt due,*" and "*release of debt*" to the Lord for His land that supplied their sustenance.

"And them that had escaped from the sword (survived) carried he away to Babylon (CAPTIVITY); where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: ²¹ To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, UNTIL THE LAND HAD ENJOYED HER SABBATHS: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years (70 years)." (2 Chronicles 36:20-21)

The decree for Israel to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple came from the Persian King Artaxerxes. Then, as prophesied, Messiah was "*cut-off*" at the end of the 69th Sabbatical year, number 483. The beginning of the next and final civil 7-year cycle of Daniels prophecy appears to be on the Rosh Hashanah, which will be the "new year's day" after the Rapture. This starts the **next Sabbatical cycle of Daniel's prophesied 70th week.** This timeframe is important to establishing Christ's 2nd coming to establish His Kingdom, wherein there is the ultimate "**rest that remaineth for the people of God (Heb 4:9).**

Having completed 483 years in captivity, Daniel's 70th week of 7 years to come will fully restore the 490 Sabbatical years that Israel took from the Lord by not allowing the land to have its Sabbath rest every seventh year. This remaining "debt" is paid in the 7-yr Tribulation judgments of Daniel's 70th week under Antichrist's rule. With the debt then

discharged, the Lord will return to earth to reign with believing Israel, to bless the earth in His righteous Theocratic Kingdom.

After the pre-tribulation War of Gog & Magog (see Eze 38-39), Daniel specifically tells us the 70th week will begin with a “covenant” between Antichrist and Israel. This deceptive guarantee of peace and safety for Israel will mark the beginning of the 70th week, the seven-year Tribulation period.

There is no indication in Scripture regarding exactly when the Temple will be reconstructed. It may be rebuilt during the present age or at the latest during the first half of Daniel’s 70th Week. Today, even though Israel has possession of Jerusalem, they are unable to rebuild the Temple because of the presence of the Islamic Al Aksa Mosque that sits on the Temple mount. The Temple mount is a Muslim holy site (Haram al-Sharif) and because of the religious strife between the Jews and Muslims it is currently impossible to rebuild the Temple. The Bible strongly indicates there will be a Jewish Temple and “sacrifice” will be restored (v27) for a time before the time of the abomination of the “*image of the Beast*.”

We know from Daniel that the temple will be rebuilt and sacrifice will be reinstated. This will be *in ignorance*, not having believed the real Messiah, Jesus Christ, has come and been offered already “*for the sin of the world*,” once and for all time. The website www.templeinstitute.org describes the ongoing preparation for the coming Temple. They have reproduced and readied the gold Menorah and other Temple elements.

The Nation Israel will continue to be a center of trouble for the world as we see today, **until** the Antichrist confirms his covenant of peace with Israel as prophesied in Daniel 9:27.

“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.”³ And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.” (Zechariah 12:2-3)

In Isaiah 28:15-18 we see that Israel’s *false security* with Antichrist’s covenant will be *broken*.

*“And he (Antichrist) shall CONFIRM THE COVENANT WITH MANY FOR ONE WEEK (7 YEARS)... and in THE **MIDST OF THE WEEK** (at 3-1/2 yr) he shall cause the (Temple) **sacrifice and the oblation** (offerings) **to cease**, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even (that is) **UNTIL THE CONSUMMATION** (end of the age), and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” (Daniel 9:27)*

*“Because ye (Israel) have said, **WE HAVE MADE A COVENANT with DEATH**, and **with hell** are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for **WE HAVE MADE LIES OUR REFUGE**, and **UNDER FALSEHOOD** have we hid ourselves:” (Isaiah 28:15)*

Israel’s covenant with the Antichrist will not last. Antichrist will break his security covenant with Israel in the middle of the seven years. Antichrist will put an “*end to sacrifice*” to God offered in the newly built Temple. In a wing of the temple, the “*False Prophet*” will set up an image of Antichrist that will actually speak (Daniel 9:27). This will convince many to “*worship the image of the Beast (Antichrist)*” (Rev 3:15).

*“He (the “false prophet” Rev 16:13, 19:20) was granted power to **give breath to the image of the Beast**, (the coming Antichrist) that **THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST** should both **SPEAK** and **cause as many as would NOT worship the image of the Beast to be killed.**” (Revelation 13:15)*

“Your covenant with death (Antichrist) will be annulled (broken); your agreement with the grave will not stand. When the overwhelming scourge sweeps by, you will be beaten down by it” (Isaiah 28:18).

*“While people are saying, “Peace and safety,” **DESTRUCTION WILL COME ON THEM SUDDENLY**, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and **THEY WILL NOT ESCAPE**” (1 Thessalonians 5:3).*

The sacrilege of the image of Antichrist in the Temple being worshiped is the “*abomination that causes desolation* (Heb. *shamem*, “**astonishment**,” Dan 11:31, 12:11). This is a significant event because Jesus Himself gave it as a specific sign of His soon return at “*the end of the age*,” (below). Jesus said; “*when you see the appalling sacrilege [the abomination that astonishes and makes desolate], spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the Holy Place — let the reader take notice and ponder and consider and heed [this]* (Matt 24:15 (AMP)).

This event has been prophesied in Scripture from Isaiah to Revelation. The “Great Tribulation” occurs when the Antichrist declares that *he is God, in the Temple of God*, in the middle of the 7-year Tribulation. Antichrist will stop Jewish sacrifices from being offered and begin a period of unprecedented persecution of Israel known as “The Great Tribulation.”

As we detailed in the past installment, “The Great Tribulation” will last for “*a time, times, and half a time*” – 3-1/2 years (Daniel 7:25, 12:7; Revelation 12:14), recorded also as “42 months” in Revelation 11:2 and as 1,260 days in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6. The Great Tribulation will be a time of incredible supernatural activity on the earth and in the lives of mankind.

“*The 1st resurrection*” of the Old Testament believers and the Tribulation martyrs will occur at the time of the harvest, to reign on earth with Christ as “priests of God” in His Theocratic Millennial Kingdom.

“*And many of them (of Israel) that sleep in the dust of the earth (the dead and buried) SHALL AWAKE, SOME to EVERLASTING LIFE, and SOME to SHAME and EVERLASTING CONTEMPT.*” (Dan 12:2)
“*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in THE FIRST RESURRECTION: on such the second death (in the lake of fire) hath no power, they shall be PRIESTS OF GOD and of Christ, and SHALL REIGN WITH HIM (Christ) a THOUSAND YEARS.* (Rev 20:6)

In the Bible only those of the children of Israel can be referred to as “*priests of God*” (v6, above). The term “*priests of God*” is never seen in Paul’s letters to or concerning the members of “*the body of Christ.*”

His Jewish disciples asked Jesus “*what shall be the sign of thy coming, and THE END OF THE AGE*” (Matt 24:3). Their question reflects their understanding that His return would be at “*the end of the age.*” Jesus told them that the angelic harvesters would come with a “*sickle*” at “*the end of the age*” (Matt 13:39). They separate “*the tares*” (the false grains, *unbelievers*) to be burned, from “*the wheat*” (Messianic believers) taken into His “barn” (Matt 13:30). (See the page of Part 7 for more detail.) Jesus gave them several *signs*, warning them to “*watch*” or “*stay alert*” because of the great deception that would come in the last days.

Note by contrast, “*the body of Christ*” is NOT looking for any “*signs*,” but rather awaits “*the shout*” at the Rapture (1Thes 4:13-18). The Rapture of “*the church, which is body of Christ*” (Eph 1:22b-23a) was not among the signs since it wasn’t yet revealed. Only later did Paul receive the “*revelation of the mystery*,” which includes the Rapture. “*I shew you a MYSTERY: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (1Cor 15:51).* The “*mystery*” was “*kept secret*” (Rom 16:25) until Jesus from heaven revealed it to Paul for “*the body of Christ.*”

The following list includes some of the signs and events that will take place **during The Great Tribulation, prior to, and at the Lord’s return.** (Not necessarily in chronological order.)

1. Worldwide “*rebellion*” and believers “*falling way*” from faith in the God. (Matt 24:9-11; Dan 8:11-12)
2. The Antichrist will persecute and kill the people of God. (Revelation 12:13-17, 13:5-7, Dan 7:25)

3. A Jewish remnant will flee to what appears to be Petra in ancient Edom, in the Jordanian desert for three-and-a-half years (Revelation 12:14), out of the reach of Antichrist's influence (Dan 11:41).
4. Angels will announce the fall of "*Mystery Babylon the Great is Fallen*" (Rev 18:1-2). This religious/political power **will support the Antichrist, but then he will destroy her**. These angels will warn the world not to worship the beast or take his "*mark*" (Rev 14:6-11, Matt 24:14).
5. Another beast, the "*False Prophet*," is a religious leader performing great signs to deceive the world, causing the majority to worship the Antichrist and **receive his "*mark*" or be killed**. (Rev 13:11-18)
6. "Two witnesses" will preach for 1,260 days and be killed, but then after 3-1/2 days be resurrected in the sight of the whole world, ascending to heaven, followed by a killer earthquake. (Rev 11:1-13)
7. The wrath of God will be poured out on the unbelieving and disobedient world. (Rev 16:16, 19:17-19)
8. The Lord Jesus Christ will judge His people, Israel, wherein the non-believers, two thirds of Israel's number, will die. (Psalm 50:4-5, Jeremiah 13:7-9, Revelation 11:18). The sun, moon and stars will be darkened before the "*Day of the Lord*." (Joel 2:31, Mat 24:29, Isa 13:10, Acts 2:20), perhaps by volcanic ash and/or an eclipse of some sort.

Upon Christ's 2nd Coming to Earth

1. The "*trumpet*" of the **Lord's 2nd coming** will sound (Matthew 24:31 and Rev 11:15). In the Bible a trumpet sounding always speaks of imminent victory. There was no trumpet at Jesus' 1st humble coming as a lowly servant. This "*trumpet*" marks Christ's return as King of kings and Lord of lords. "*And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*" (Rev 19:16).
2. Christ will come to earth from heaven and appear in "*the clouds*" (Matt 24:30) with His holy "*angels*" (v31) and with the resurrected the Old Testament saints and Tribulation martyrs (Rev 17:14, 20:6).
3. The living surviving "*elect*" of Israel who were preserved during the Tribulation will be gathered at His coming.
5. At His return, The Lord will stand on the Mount of Olivet it will split apart in two. On the day of the Lord's return an earthquake will split the Mt. of Olives in two, along an East-West line (Zechariah 14:6)
- 9). It creates a great valley through the center of Jerusalem and will immediately fill with "*living waters*" "*that shall go out from Jerusalem*" for a waterway from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea (Zech 14:8).
6. The Lord will prepare "*a feast*" on Mount Zion and "*wipe away all tears*" (Isaiah 25:6-8).
8. The Lord will separate the Tribulations surviving *wheat believers* from the *tare non-believers*, and divide the believing *sheep nations from the unbelieving goat nations*, judging the goats and tares with destruction by fire. (Matt 13:30, Matt 25:31-34, 46)
9. All the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord. (Revelation 11:15; 20:4-6)
10. He will rule in His Theocratic Millennial Kingdom with "*the rod of iron*" in righteousness.

We've recounted the expected horrible judgments but there will be blessing also coming just as the light of day follows the dark of night. A Biblical "day" begins with the evening, with the darkness of nighttime. It is followed by the *brightness* of the daytime. Most people know the Jewish Sabbath begins at sundown (Gen 1:5). The darkness of the "day of the Lord" covers the whole 7-year Tribulation period, climaxing in "**THE Great day of the Lord**" (*Zeph 1:14*). The Tribulation judgments are the *night side* of the "day of the Lord," while the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom age that follows are the *dayside* of the "day of the Lord." Christ's return ushers in the thousand-year benevolent and righteous Theocratic Kingdom reign of Christ on the earth. Christ will eliminate most of the curse at the time of His return for the 1,000 years. He will renew and restore Israel when He reigns from the David's throne in Jerusalem .

"Of The Increase Of His (Christ) Government and Peace There Will Be NO END. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness...FOREVER" (Isa 9:7). "Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms UNDER the whole heaven will be HANDED OVER TO THE SAINTS (Israel resurrected saints), THE PEOPLE of the Most High..." (Dan 7:27 NIV).

At Christ's return the heavens will be ablaze with the glory and brightness of His victorious 2nd coming. He will be accompanied by millions of His holy angels and also and by the resurrected believing Old Testament and martyred Tribulation saints who will then be in their *glorified spirit-bodies*.

The resurrected saint's spirits will have moved from heaven's "paradise" to join to their newly resurrected *glorified spirit-bodies*, to dwell on earth where they will then co-reign with Christ in His Theocratic Millennial Kingdom... and then in the Eternal Kingdom on the New Earth.

Chapter 13

The "Times of the Gentiles" and The "Time of Jacob's Trouble"

Daniel prophesied that Israel would be *under Gentile rule for a total of 490 years (seventy weeks of 7 years)*. Taken together these years are Biblically called "**the Times Of The Gentiles.**" These 490 years are the penalty for Israel's disobedience in *not permitting "the land" to "rest" every seventh year (Lev 26:34)*. History records that to date Israel has been held under *Babylon , Medo-Persia ,Greece , and Rome* for 483 of the 490 years. The remaining seven years to come are Biblically called the "**The Time Of Jacob's Trouble,**" when **Antichrist** (a Gentile) will reign over the whole world, including Israel . "**...THAT DAY IS GREAT, so that none is like it: it is even The Time Of Jacob's Trouble; but He (Israel) Shall Be Saved Out of It.**" (*Jer. 30:7*)

The Biblical phrases "*a time of distress,*" "*the day of wrath,*" "*the day of vengeance,*" "*the year of the Lord's redeemed,*" and "**The Time of Jacob's Trouble,**" and others, all refer to aspects of the end-time events we call the Tribulation period or Daniel's 70th Week. At the end of this period the Lord will literally return to earth to destroy His enemies, save Israel , and set up His Millennial Theocratic Kingdom on earth. This will conclude the terrible times of long delayed judgments upon the Christ hating world and rebellious Israel .

"And it shall be "A TIME OF DISTRESS" such as has never occurred since people first existed on the earth until that time." (Daniel 12:1b)

"For AT THAT TIME THERE WILL BE A GREAT TRIBULATION such as has never occurred from the beginning of the world until now, and [such as] will never again occur thereafter." (Matt 24:21 cf. Mk.13:19)

The "**Time of Jacob's Trouble**" is obliquely referenced by *a particular sound* among those listed here by Paul.

“For The Lord Himself Shall Descend From Heaven With A Shout, **with THE VOICE OF THE ARCHANGEL**, and with the trump (sound) of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” (1Thes 4:16).

You might say, “How could this verse possibly relate to “*The Time of Jacob’s Trouble*”?”

Let me explain with some detail. Most believers know that when the “**shout**” and “**Trump of God**” sounds it will mark the **Rapture**, the catching away will **end this age of “the dispensation of the grace of God”** for “**the body of Christ**” on earth. Yet, the **Rapture Also Simultaneously Marks The RESUMPTION Of The Lord’s Prophesied Program For Israel**, which had been set aside since Israel fell (read Rom 11:10-11, 25). The sound of “**the voice of the archangel**” is that of “**Michael THE Archangel**,” he is **Israel’s “Prince”** (see Dan 10:2). The “**voice of the archangel**” is more significant than we might otherwise think. Michael’s “**voice**” marks the resumption of Israel’s program and its final 7-year repayment on the 490 years. The seven-year Tribulation, with its judgments will end with the appearing of Jesus in His return to earth at His 2nd coming.

At Pentecost, before the 490 years were interrupted, Israel was under Rome. Christ had been crucified and “*the last days*” had nearly begun. All was ready for “**The Time of Jacob’s Trouble**.” Peter stood and spoke to “**ye men of Israel**,” quoting the prophet Joel, whose blessings had begun, **but NOT the judgments** (see Acts 2:16-20). Some of Joel’s prophecy began to be fulfilled at that time, but thank God He still hasn’t brought the “**Great and Notable Day of the Lord**” in judgment (Act 2:20).

Thankfully, God has in His infinite grace **interrupted** Israel’s program, delaying the remaining 7 years to be fulfilled in judgments. Then Christ from Heaven revealed to the Apostle Paul His secret plan to offer to His enemies everywhere (Gentiles) salvation and reconciliation under a new program of grace – salvation coming **by the free gift of grace, through faith** in the crucified, risen Savior. Paul wrote the Ephesian Gentiles presuming they had by now heard of “**the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD, which is given me (Paul) to you-ward; how that By Revelation He (Christ) made known unto me (Paul) THE MYSTERY (God’s secret plan)**” (Eph. 3:1-3). God’s eternal purpose in Christ is no longer a secret. Now, so long as this **day of grace** lasts we may be “**justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus**” (Rom. 3:24).

Here’s the significance of the phrase, “**The time of Jacob’s trouble**.” Jacob was the son of Isaac who was the Son of Abraham. Jacob’s name was *changed* to “**Israel**” and the “**Twelve Tribes**” of Israel are named for his twelve sons. “**The time of Jacob’s trouble**” is called such because Jacob represents **unbelieving Israel**. Jacob did come to *see and trust the Lord* at “**Bethel**” (Gen 28:10-22) and there his name was changed to the Hebrew “**Yisrael**,” meaning “**he will rule as God**.” Jacob was second in line from Abraham to whose lineage belongs the “**promises**” of God – both of judgment and blessing. The blessing to come on Israel is that they will rule and bless the earth in the Millennium just as God had promised Abraham, **after** “**The time of Jacob’s trouble**.”

The Church, Paul says, is “**not appointed to wrath**” (1Thes 5:9), therefore “**the body of Christ**” must be **Raptured BEFORE** the Lord restarts Israel’s 7-year program with judgment on the world and Israel. The term “**Pre-Tribulation Rapture**” of the Gentile “**church, which is the body of Christ**” refers to a Rapture “**Pre the time of Jacob’s trouble**.” Israel’s program was *interrupted* by their “**fall**” (Rom 11:11-12) when they killed the Messiah and soon after stoned Stephen to death (Act 7:58). The next thing that was due was Daniel’s 70th week of judgments, but... this was *interrupted* “**UNTIL the fullness of the Gentiles (body of Christ) be come in**” (Rom 11:25b). Israel’s program was *interrupted* only temporarily, while the Gentiles would be offered “**the gospel of the grace of God**” (Acts 20:24) in this age of “**the grace of God**,” to end with the “**fulness**” and Rapture of “**the body of Christ**.” Paul here tells us exactly how long Israel is to be set aside in “**blindness**.” “**... blindness in part is happened to Israel, (only) UNTIL the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25b)**

Though Israel is the focus of God in 75% of the Bible, the current day in which we live today is the God-blessed time of the mostly Gentile “**body of Christ**” under the terms of “**the dispensation of the grace of God**.” This grace age should be seen as but an **intermission** in God’s program for Israel and His planned recovery of dominion over the earth through recovered Israel.

Today's **grace dispensation** was inserted after Israel's "fall"; then soon followed by Paul's conversion. Jesus Himself appeared from heaven to save Paul and give him the "**mystery (secret of God)**" gospel and ministry as "**THE Apostle to the Gentiles**" (Rom 11:13). Paul's "**gospel of the grace of God**" is the **only "gospel" in effect today, until the Rapture**. The riches and blessings of today's **grace dispensation** are for ALL men of ALL races. Thus Paul wrote of today's age of grace wherein "**there is neither Jew or Gentile... ALL ARE ONE IN CHRIST**" (Gal 3:28). Paul's grace gospel is the only gospel for today. In fact, nobody could practice Judaism today because there is **no Temple in Jerusalem, and no priesthood**. The only way a Jew can be "saved" today is under Paul's "grace" gospel for "**ALL men**" (Titus 2:11; Eph 3:9; 1Tim 2:4; 4:10).

God will again turn to Israel, but **only after** the last member of "**the body of Christ**" will have been added to the church. Imagine being the last one saved into "**the body of Christ**," just before the door closes. Then God will remove the current "**blindness**" from Israel and restart His planned judgments on Israel. This starts the Tribulation, to end with His 2nd coming and believing Israel co-reigning with Him on earth for eternity.

Take note that the "**FULNESS of the Gentiles (the church)**" (Rom 11:25 above) is **not** to be confused with "**the TIMES of the Gentile**" kingdoms that will reign over Israel and under whom... "**they (Israel) shall fall by the edge of the sword...be led away CAPTIVE INTO ALL NATIONS (Gentiles): and Jerusalem shall be TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, until the TIMES OF THE GENTILES (the 490 years) be fulfilled. (Luke 21:24)**

The Lord said I... "**will cause them (Israel) to return to the land**" and "**shall assemble the outcasts of Israel**" and "**gather together... Israel and Judah**" (northern and southern kingdoms) back to "**the land**" to re-establish Israel.

"... behold, **the days are coming,**' says the LORD, 'that I will **bring back from captivity MY PEOPLE ISRAEL and Judah,**' says the LORD. '**And I WILL CAUSE THEM TO RETURN TO THE LAND that I gave to their fathers, and THEY SHALL POSSESS IT.**'" (Jer 30:3)

"And it shall come to pass **in that day, that the LORD SHALL SET HIS HAND AGAIN THE SECOND TIME TO RECOVER the REMNANT (Heb, shear, remainder) of HIS PEOPLE (Israel), which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.**"¹² **And HE SHALL SET UP AN ENSIGN FOR THE NATIONS, and SHALL ASSEMBLE THE OUTCASTS of ISRAEL, and GATHER TOGETHER THE DISPERSED OF JUDAH from the four corners of the earth. (Isa 11:11-12)**

You may ask, "**How would God "cause them (Israel) to return to the Land**" (Jer. 30:3 above)? Over the past century we've witnessed preparation for "**the last days.**" The 1917 Balfour Declaration that followed WWI rearranged and divided the lands of the nations in the Mideast. It assigned a portion of the land of Palestine to Israel to be its homeland, as it had earlier been for thousands of years. Being "**scattered**" since after 70AD, many of Israel were relatively comfortable living in the nations of the Caucasus, Western Europe, and Russia. It wasn't til the rise of the Hitler and Stalin that many Jews were sufficiently motivated to return to "**the land**" that had become available to them by the Balfour Declaration. Thus the Lord has used the evils of Satan inspired men to do this (Rev 17:17). After awful conflict and bloodshed with the Muslims under the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem to hold "**the land,**" on May 14, 1948 the "**ensign**" (fulfilling v12 above) of the flag of David was raised – the **Nation of Israel was reborn** – exactly as God had promised thousands of years earlier. Since then we witness the ongoing birth pangs of "**the Time of Jacob's Trouble**" in our daily news.

"**Jacob's trouble**" will heighten greatly in the 2nd half of the 7-year Tribulation, before the Lord returns to save Israel. The Tribulation judgments will come upon the whole Christ-hating world, but also upon Israel as a **pruning** or **purifying fire**. Jesus said the "**branches**" who don't "**abide in the vine (in union with Him)**" will be purged and "**burned**" (v6 below). The word "**IF**" in v6 below indicates the **conditionality for salvation** to escape burning; thus this applies to Israel under "**the Law.**" Never could this be said of the church under the grace dispensation we live in today, whereby we are "**saved by grace through faith, NOT of works**" (Eph 2:8-9).

“I (Jesus) am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. ² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he (the Father) taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” ⁶IF a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and CAST THEM INTO THE FIRE, AND THEY ARE BURNED. (John 15:1-2, 6)

Peter also wrote of horrendous “**great trials**” for Israel as being “**More Precious Than Of Gold... Tried With Fire**”; to occur prior to the Lord’s “**Appearing**” on earth. “**Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye (Israel) are in heaviness through manifold (many) temptations (TRIALS): ⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory AT THE APPEARING (2nd coming) of JESUS CHRIST: (1 Peter 1:6-7)**

The Lord has warned His people Israel but they have consistently been a “**rebellious,**” not heeding His words of instruction. Note these prophetic words of the Lord, given to Israel through His prophet Isaiah. “**Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the DAYS TO COME it may be an everlasting witness. THESE ARE REBELLIOUS PEOPLE, DECEITFUL CHILDREN... UNWILLING TO LISTEN TO THE LORD’S INSTRUCTION. They say to the seers, “See no more visions!” and to the prophets, “Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions. Leave this way, get off this path, and stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!”... this is what the Holy One of Israel says: “Because you (Israel) have REJECTED THIS MESSAGE, relied on oppression and depended on DECEIT, this sin will become for you like a high wall, cracked and bulging, that collapses suddenly, in an instant” (Isa 30:8-13 NIV).**

God spoke also through Ezekiel regarding the corrupt “**shepherds**” of Israel, His “**flock.**” As with all man-governed institutions of religion; the corrupt “**shepherds**” of Israel were self-seeking, not caring for the sheep.

“Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? ..., but you do not take care of the flock. ... You have ruled them harshly and brutally...” ‘Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ... because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, therefore... I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock” (Eze 34:2-9 NIV).

“I (JESUS) AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. ¹² But he that is an hireling (paid), and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³ The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.” (John 10:11-13)

Israel has been “**Loammi,**” meaning, “**not my people,**” from about the time the Lord’s manifested glory departed the Temple (Eze 10:18-19).

Prophetically to Hosea, “**the Lord said, Call his name Lo-Ammi [Not-my-people], for you are NOT My people and I am not your God. ¹⁰ Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered; and instead of it being said to them, You are not My people, it shall be said to them, Sons of the Living God! ¹¹ Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together and appoint themselves one head, and they shall go up out of the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel (Armageddon) the SPIRITUALLY REBORN ISRAEL, a divine offspring, the people whom the Lord has blessed.] (Hosea 1:9-11 AMP)**

Hosea prophetically, by metaphor, tells us about Israel becoming Loammi, “**not my people.**” This actually happened when Israel rejected the Messiah in His 1st coming, making them Loammi. The Lord said, “**I gave FAITHLESS ISRAEL HER certificate of DIVORCE and sent her away because of all her adulteries (Jer. 3:8).** The Bible calls their estrangement many things; Israel “**blinded (Rom 11:25), “cast away” (Rom 11:1-2), “Loammi (not my people).” “I say then, Have they (Israel) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather THROUGH THEIR FALL SALVATION IS COME UNTO THE GENTILES, for to provoke them to jealousy. (Rom 11:10-11)**

Still today being “**blinded**” (Rom 11:25) and in “**unbelief,**” Israel is mainly secular, not believing, and not possessing the Lord’s indwelling Spirit. God has turned His face away from the nation of Israel while it is being punished thoroughly. For about 2,000 years since the Messiah 1st came God

has hid his face from the nation of Israel . But the time is coming when the genuine believers of Israel will be spiritually reborn as the Lord's blessed people on earth (Ez. 37:14).

As discussed earlier, Daniel prophesied about the "seventy weeks" of years of Israel under Gentile rule. Israel fell by "*cutting off Messiah the Prince*," thus becoming "*Loammi*" – "*not my people*." The time clock of the seventy weeks was interrupted and stopped when *Messiah the Prince* was killed. During this time God has given the Gentiles a time that Paul calls "*the dispensation of the grace of God*," during which He has given the Gentiles the spiritual blessings that He has promised to Israel. Today is the time of Israel being "*Loammi - not my people*" and the Gentiles being "*blessed with all spiritual blessings*." This is between Daniel's 69th and 70th weeks. (Request my chart – "Daniel's 70 Weeks of Israel Under Gentile Rule.") So, Israel fell at the end of the 69th week of Daniel's prophecy when Jesus was "*cut-off (killed, Dan 9:25)*," judging Israel in unbelief. Then shortly after that "***The Salvation of God is Sent Unto the Gentiles (Act 28:28, below)***" under Paul's ministry.

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am THE apostle of the Gentiles..." (Romans 11:13) "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you (Israel) : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES. (Acts 13:46). "Be it known therefore unto you, that THE SALVATION OF GOD IS SENT UNTO THE GENTILES, AND THAT THEY WILL HEAR IT."(Acts 28:28)

After about 2,000 years of focus upon "*the body of Christ*," after the Rapture, the Lord will again turn again to Israel . Then, initially, the judgments of the "*four horsemen of the Apocalypse*" who symbolize the **manmade disasters** by; **1) conquest, 2) war, 3) bringing famine, and 4) death**, will appear. (Rev. 6:1-8)

Then the last three and one-half years of the 7-year Tribulation period will bring **supernatural judgments** by cosmic disturbances in the sun, moon, and stars, with earthquakes (Rev 6:12), poisoned waters of the sea and rivers (Rev 8:11) and more. Two-thirds of rebellious mankind will suffer and die during the Tribulation. "***men were scorched with great heat, and Blasphemed The Name Of God, Which Hath Power Over These Plagues: and they repented (still chose) NOT to give him glory.*** (Rev 16:9). Then also Satan pours out his wrath on Israel .

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, NOW IS COME salvation, and strength, and THE KINGDOM OF OUR GOD, and the power of his Christ: for THE ACCUSER (Satan) OF OUR BRETHREN IS CAST DOWN, which accused them before our God day and night." (Rev 12:10)

¹²Therefore REJOICE, YE HEAVENS, and YE THAT DWELL IN THEM (the heavens). Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for THE DEVIL is come down unto you, having GREAT WRATH, Because He Knoweth That He Hath But A Short Time.

¹³ And when THE DRAGON SAW THAT HE WAS CAST UNTO THE EARTH, HE PERSECUTED THE WOMAN (Israel) WHICH BROUGHT FORTH THE MAN CHILD (Jesus, King of Israel).

¹⁴ And to the woman (believing Israel, the Lamb's Bride) were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished FOR A TIME, AND TIMES, AND HALF A TIME, from the face(expression) of THE SERPENT (Antichrist during the 3-1/2 years of the "Great Tribulation"). ¹⁵ And THE SERPENT cast out of his mouth (literal) water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. ¹⁶ And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. ¹⁷ And THE DRAGON WAS WROTH WITH THE WOMAN, and WENT TO MAKE WAR WITH THE REMNANT OF HER SEED(the elect of Israel), which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12:12-17)

Israel will endure terrible times. The prophetic word (above) refers to the *middle of the Tribulation* period when the enraged "*Dragon (the Devil)*" and his angels are "*cast to the earth*" (v13). But, the Lord will preserve this believing remnant, being represented here as "*the woman (Israel),*" on "*wings of a great eagle*" (v 13-14)

Note in Rev 12:12a (above) "***Ye That Dwell In Them (in the heavens)***," during this persecution "***REJOICE.***" Some think these rejoicing are the members of "*the body of Christ*" who were

Raptured earlier to take their place in the heavens, but most likely those rejoicing are the spirits of the **dead O.T. saints**, long dwelling in “*the paradise of God*” awaiting the resurrection of their **glorified bodies** in the “*1st resurrection*” of Rev 20:6.

Jesus of Nazareth said the specific “**gospel of the kingdom**” (not Paul’s “gospel of the grace of God” (Act 20:24) would then be the gospel preached till “**the end come**” (Matt 24:14). The “*two witnesses*” and the 144,000 elect of Israel will no doubt preach the “**gospel of the kingdom**,” just as Jesus prophesied.

“I (The LORD) Will Give Power Unto My TWO WITNESSES, AND THEY SHALL PROPHECY (speak forth) A THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND THREESCORE DAYS (3-1/2 yrs), clothed in sackcloth.” (Rev 11:3)

“(Jesus said) And THIS “GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM” shall be preached in ALL the world for a witness unto ALL nations; and THEN SHALL THE END COME” (Matt 24:14).

During the Tribulation many people of “**all nations**” will believe the “**gospel of the kingdom**” and be **martyred**.

“After this I beheld, and, lo, A GREAT MULTITUDE (of martyrs), which no man could number, of ALL NATIONS, and KINDREDS, and PEOPLE, and TONGUES, stood BEFORE THE THRONE, and BEFORE THE LAMB, clothed with WHITE ROBES, and palms in their hands; (Revelation 7:9) “And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These Are They Which Came Out Of GREAT TRIBULATION, and HAVE WASHED THEIR ROBES, and MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB. (Rev 7:14)

Many misuse Jesus’ prophetic words in Luke 21 and Matt 24. We must understand that their context is in view of the seven-year Tribulation and particularly the Great Tribulation of the last 3-1/2 years. Its true that one “*sign*” of Israel’s coming restoration and the Lord’s 2nd coming to earth is seen in its restoration as a nation in May, 1948. Yet, Gentile domination will intensify under Antichrist in the Great Tribulation until “**the winepress**” of the “**day of vengeance**” that also marks “**the year of MY redeemed**.”

“I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Me: for I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, I will stain all My raiment, for the DAY OF VENGEANCE is in Mine heart, The Year (age) of MY REDEEMED IS COME.” (Isa. 63:3-4)

Note the phrase “**the year (Heb. shana, turning age) of My redeemed is come**.” This refers to the all Kingdom gospel believers of all ages, those who have died and those believers who will survive the Tribulation.

The living believers will “**look upon (Christ)**” when He appears. Every living Kingdom believer will see Him whom “*they have pierced*” by their sins, Him who thereby took “*away the sins of the world*.”

“... IN THAT DAY, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem . ¹⁰ I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and They Shall LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” (Zech 12:9-10)

The Old Testament saints and martyred Tribulation believers will returning from *paradise* to appear in resurrected glorified spirit-bodies to be there with Christ at His 2nd coming and enter the Kingdom.

The Tribulation concludes with Christ setting His feet upon Jerusalem’s “*mount of olives*.” He will establish His millennial rule on earth with a “*rod of iron*,” which will be necessary since many will be born during the 1,000-year Kingdom, some of those will come to believe, but some will not and need His righteous hand.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dreamed Image

In Daniel 2 we are introduced to Nebuchadnezzar, a king of Babylon, reigning forty-three years until 562 BCE. Because of Israel's disobedience, God had allowed His people to be overtaken and some were taken captive to Babylon. The Babylonians generally took the most important conquered people out of their native lands and trained them in the ways of the Babylonians. They integrated them into their culture and made them serve their kings. Daniel was one of them.

Let's now examine the Biblical record and that of known recorded historical events in the light of Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

Daniel interpreted the dream given to King Nebuchadnezzar to explain the events to ultimately come upon Israel "in the latter days." The words "afterward" and "latter days" (v 5 below) imply the specific time of Israel being scattered, being "without a King." In Luke 21:24 Jesus referred to this period as "the times of the Gentiles."

*"For the **CHILDREN OF ISRAEL shall abide many days WITHOUT A KING (of Israel), and without a prince, and WITHOUT A SACRIFICE (since the Jerusalem Temple is destroyed), and without an image, and without an ephod (priestly garment), and without teraphim (idols):** **Afterward shall the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL RETURN, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness IN THE LATTER DAYS.**" (Hosea 3:4-5)*

The first part of Hosea's prophetic quote speaks about the time when the Jews would mainly be "scattered" and not be able to perform national religious worship because the Temple was destroyed and there was no more priesthood. The Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD70 and dispersed many of Israel's people all over their empire. This was the situation when Israelis had started to "return" to their land and re-founded the nation of Israel in May 1948. This continues even to this today in which we are witnessing the events of "the latter days," about which Nebuchadnezzar's dream holds further information.

We've already studied the 490 years of Daniel 9. Now here in Daniel 2 Daniel interprets [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) dreamed of an "great image," describing the Gentile Empires that would dominate Israel, one Gentile Kingdom after another for the 490 years of captivity assigned by the Lord. At the very end of these eras the Lord Jesus will return to save Israel, destroying her enemies and smashing ALL the Gentile empires on the earth.

Here below is the Scriptural account of [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) dream.

*"Thou, O king ([Nebuchadnezzar](#)), sawest, and behold a **GREAT IMAGE**. This **great image**, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was **terrible (awesome)**.³² This image's **Head Was Of Fine Gold**, his **Breast And His Arms Of Silver (Medo-Persia)**, his **Belly And His Thighs Of Brass (Greece)**,³³ His **Legs of Iron (Roman Empire)**, his **Feet Part Of Iron And Part Of Clay (the latter divided Roman Empire)**.*

³⁴ *Thou sawest till **THAT A STONE (Christ) WAS CUT OUT WITHOUT HANDS, which SMOTE THE IMAGE (Gentile kingdoms) upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and Brake Them To Pieces.***

³⁵ *Then was **the (kingdoms of) IRON, THE CLAY, THE BRASS, THE SILVER, AND THE GOLD, BROKEN TO PIECES together**, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and **THE STONE (Christ) THAT SMOTE THE IMAGE (at Christ's 2nd coming) became a great mountain, and (His Kingdom) FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH.***

³⁶ *This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.*³⁷ *Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for **the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.***³⁸ *And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven*

hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. **Thou (Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon) Art This Head Of Gold.** ³⁹ And **after thee** shall arise **another kingdom** inferior to thee, and **another third kingdom of brass**, which shall bear rule over all the earth. ⁴⁰ And the **fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron**: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

⁴¹ And whereas thou sawest **The Feet And Toes, Part Of Potters' Clay, And Part Of Iron. The Kingdom Shall Be Divided**; but there shall be in it of the **strength of the iron**, forasmuch as thou sawest the **iron mixed with miry clay**. ⁴² And as the toes of the feet were **part of iron, and part of clay**, so the kingdom shall be **partly strong, and partly broken**. ⁴³ And whereas thou sawest **iron mixed with miry clay**, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: **BUT THEY SHALL NOT CLEAVE ONE TO ANOTHER**, even as **IRON IS NOT MIXED WITH CLAY**.

⁴⁴ And **in the days of these kings shall THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall NOT be left to other people, but IT SHALL BREAK IN PIECES and CONSUME ALL THESE KINGDOMS, and IT SHALL STAND FOR EVER**. ⁴⁵ Forasmuch as thou sawest that **the stone (Christ) was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.** (Daniel 2:31-45)

Below is Daniel's interpretation of [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) dreamed image. It has been confirmed as such by Christian scholars who hold the perspective of the Bible while able to look back on recorded history. The image was of a ***giant standing***, which represents several great Gentile Empires that would rule over Israel and Jerusalem throughout the 490 years of the "***Times of the Gentiles***" (Luke 21:24). Daniels interpretation of the dream points to the specific Gentile kingdoms that will rule "***the people and the city***" of Jerusalem for 490 years, but ***not*** in a continuing sequence. There was an *interruption* after 70AD when the Roman Empire (#4. below). Only the fifth kingdom ***is yet to come***, "***partly of iron and partly of molded clay***," to rule Israel .

1. "**Head of gold**" – This represents [Nebuchadnezzar's](#) [Babylon](#) (v38 above).
2. "**Breast and arms of silver**" – This is [Medo-Persia](#), a divided kingdom. The **Medo-Persia** (527 – 336BC) is the next kingdom represented by the *chest and two arms of silver*.
3. "**Belly and thighs of brass**" – This is [Hellenistic Greece](#), under Alexander the Great (336 – 28BC).
4. "**Legs of iron**" – are the [Roman Empire in its early form](#). **The Romans** took it over and grafted it into their kingdom (28 BC – AD 476). Rome, whose armour was made from iron, is represented by the **legs of iron**.
5. **The "Feet & Toes"** are ***partly of iron and partly of molded clay*** – This is the [divided Roman Empire](#) in its later final form. The Western Empire in Rome & Eastern Empire in Constantinople, now modern day Istanbul, Turkey, which is Islamic.

The destiny of Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonian kingdom was clearly foretold. After Babylon, four more kingdoms would possess "***the people and the city***" of Jerusalem, one after the other. Thus, the image was a *time-line*, a continuous historic unfolding of the Gentile kingdoms who would reign over Israel.

The "***legs of iron***" (Dan 2:33, 40) of the fourth kingdom suggest Rome's strength would be far superior to the previous empires—just as iron is far stronger than *brass, silver and gold*—although it also indicates the diminished quality of its culture. Of course Israel was scattered in 70AD while Rome reigned in the land. Rome was overthrown in 476AD. The Eastern Roman Empire (later known as the Byzantine Empire) continued on in Constantinople, today called Istanbul, Turkey, a Muslim nation.

After Jerusalem's destruction and Israel's ***scattering*** in 70AD, the Land of Israel would not be held by just one kingdom again, but by many – some strong and some weak. Palestine was invaded by Muslim Arab armies that captured Jerusalem. Thus begins 1,300 years of the Muslim presence. This is what we see after the fall of the Roman Empire... until Israel is reborn as a Nation, May 14,

1948. Nebuchadnezzar's dream only addresses those ruling Gentile Empires who would actually rule Israel ***while the nation still existed in the land...*** **not** while Israel was scattered.

Next, the 5th Gentile kingdom was demonstrated by the "***Feet & Toes***" of the image that are made "***partly of iron and partly of clay***" (Dan 2:41), but **clay** will not bond to **iron**. Thus the Gentile kingdom's power further declines to the point that is only "***partly strong and partly fragile [brittle]***" (Dan 2:42). The clay takes its toll on the qualitative aspects of iron. Daniel 2:43 indicates the empire's ***internal unity will be very unstable in its final form***, though it will retain its toughness to some degree.

We may note that Jerusalem today has its Jewish, Muslim, and Christian sections, and still an Islamic Mosque sits atop to Holy Temple Mount in the Holy City of Jerusalem. I believe the final Gentile kingdom is Antichrist's worldwide Kingdom during the Tribulation, as represented by the image's "***Feet & Toes***" that are **partly of iron and partly with the addition of clay**. This may be an ecumenical ***mixture of apostate Christianity and remnants of a weakened Islam after the War of Gog & Magog***, then to come under Antichrist's authority and power along with the rest of the world.

In the midst of Antichrist's 7-year Kingdom, God will protect a remnant of the believers of Israel during the Tribulation, before the Lord's return in victory over all the nations of the earth. Revelation chapter 7 then also describes the 144,000 of the twelve Tribes who are "***sealed in their foreheads***" (Rev 7:3). The 144,000 have "***the name of the Lamb and the Father written on their foreheads***" (Rev 14:1). A "***great multitude***" of people will believe the "***everlasting gospel***" the 144,000 receive from the angel of heaven (Rev 14:6).

The **seventh "seal"** opens what is known Biblically as "***The Day of the Lord***" (Rev.6:17) and the "***Great Tribulation,***" to last for 3-1/2 years. In Revelation 7, the 144,000 are called "***the servants of our God***" (Revelation 7:3). These 144,000 will be saved Israelites who will give faithful witness to Jesus Christ. They will have ***been sealed for their ministry and protection throughout the Tribulation period***. They are His Jewish witnesses in the Tribulation period. These are also later referred to in Revelation 14:4 as the "***first fruits unto God and to the Lamb.***" They will be the first to come to Christ as Saviour during the Tribulation period. They will be the evangelists going throughout the world preaching the "***gospel of the kingdom,***" fulfilling what Jesus specified to be preached until "***the end will come***" (Mat 24:14).

Many will be saved as result of the preaching of the 144,000 and the two witnesses and be martyred in the time of the Tribulation. "***After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands***" (Rev 7:9)

These described above are those saved through the ministry of the 144,000 as His witness to every nation and people. The "***white robes***" speak of those made clean through faith in the Lamb's blood sacrifice for their sins and the "***palm branches***" speak of those who welcomed the word of Him as the Messiah. In Revelation 14:1 we see also the 144,000 with the Messiah on the mount Zion when He returns. The kingdom gospel believers are those who will be looking for the "***New Heavens and a New Earth, Wherein Dwelleth Righteousness.***"

"Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the DAY OF GOD,

wherein the HEAVENS BEING ON FIRE SHALL BE DISSOLVED, AND THE ELEMENTS SHALL MELT WITH FERVENT HEAT.

¹³ Nevertheless ***WE (ISRAEL), according to his (God's) promise, Look For NEW HEAVENS and A NEW EARTH, WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS.***

(2Pet 3:12-13 - Peter writes as the Apostle "to the circumcision," see Gal 2:7.)

In Rev 9:1-4 the bottomless pit is open and the ***demonic forces*** are told **not** to touch the sealed 144,000. "***They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do NOT have the seal of God on their foreheads.***" (Rev 9: 4) The 144,000 are all ***males and unmarried as virgins***, and they ***speak only truth***, having no deceit in their mouth.

"These are the ones who were not defiled with women (false religions), for they are (spiritual) virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were

redeemed from among men, being **firstfruits to God and to the Lamb**. And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are **without fault before the throne of God.**" (Rev 14:4-5).

Thus the 144,000 appear to be on the earth ministering during most of Tribulation from the time they are "sealed" for doing the Lord's ministry. Being sent throughout the world they might also be in the city of Petra in the Jordanian desert where it's believed that many of Israel are expected to flee in the second half of the Tribulation (Rev 12). There the 144,000 may be influential to *lead Israel into their repentance* (Zech. 12:9-14).

The 144,000 are mentioned **after** the opening of the sixth seal of God's wrath, **before** God begins executing the most horrendous events contained in the **seventh seal**, which contains the seven trumpet plagues. These coming judgments will bring a violent collapse of the old order of things in the whole world, affecting *the earth, sun, moon, stars, sky, land and sea, by which the earth was made fit for human habitation*. The world will then be in total *disorder* – with darkness, asteroids, bitter oceans and rivers and much more. At the end of the Tribulation Israel will call upon Jesus to come back (Matt. 23:39; Zech. 13:9; Hosea 5:15) to rescue them in the valley of Meggido where the battle of Armageddon will occur (Zech. 14:2-5).

The last seven judgments (*the 7 bowl judgments of Rev 16:1-21*) cause the further hardening of the hearts of men on earth, just as the plagues hardened the heart of Egypt's Pharaoh. These judgments are also called "*plagues*" (Rev 15:1) and have much the same result on the world as the plagues of Egypt had on Pharaoh. These plagues will show:

(a) The **total rebellion and independence of the creature to his Creator**. Because of the callousness and hardening built up in the hearts of men, these judgments will result in anger and blasphemy from the heart and mouths of men rather than fear and reverence and trust toward God. They are hardening plagues, which God uses to His own glory (cf. vs. 9, 11, and 21).

(b) But **these plagues (the bowl judgments) will crush man's rebellion and remove ALL the rebellious from the earth**. Only believers will survive. The completion of this will be accomplished by the return of Christ with His armies (Ezek. 20:38; Joel 3:2-17; Matt. 13:40-43; Rev. 19:11-21).

You can read of the 7th Seal with its 7 Bowl judgments that will come upon the whole world in Rev 16.

- The First Bowl: Painful Sores (Rev 16:1-2)
- The Second Bowl: The Seas are Smitten (Rev 16:3)
- The Third Bowl: The Rivers are Smitten (Rev 16:4-7)
- The Fourth Bowl: Scorching Heat (Rev 16:8-9)
- The Fifth Bowl: Darkness (Rev 16:10-11)
- The Sixth Bowl: The Euphrates River will be Dried (Rev 16:12-16)
- The Seventh Bowl: Widespread Destruction (Rev 16:17-21)

*"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. ¹⁸ And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and There Was A **Great Earthquake**, such as was not since men were upon the earth, **so mighty an earthquake, and so great.** ¹⁹ And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. ²⁰ And **every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.** ²¹ And **there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent** (about 75 lbs.): and **MEN BLASPHEMED GOD because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.**" (Revelation 16:17-21)*

In the face of these horrendous judgments, somewhat as was of the Lord when He delivered Israel out of Egypt on "*eagle's wings*," "we see that the remnant of the believers of Israel will be carried away on the "*eagle's wings*." They are carried to a place of safety prepared for them, where they are kept alive during the remaining Tribulation, until the appearing of the Lord at His 2nd coming.

*"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how **I bare you (Israel) on eagles' wings**, and brought you unto myself." (Exodus 19:4) "**to The Woman (Israel) Were Given Two Wings of A Great***

Eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time (3-1/2 years), from the face of the serpent (Antichrist).” (Rev 12:14)

This living remnant of believing Israel will be preserved in the last half of the Tribulation. Then as surviving believers, they will be alive and *remain in their human bodies on earth on into the Millennial Kingdom* reign of Christ over the whole earth. Metaphorically, this is just as Noah was *preserved* in the Ark through the Flood Judgment on earth; **then after that judgment they were left to “replenish the earth” (Gen 9:1).** Thus we can see that the surviving believers of Israel will **remain on earth, preserved to go on into the Millennial Kingdom on earth under Christ’s Reign as the Messiah/King.**

Realizing that two-thirds of the earth’s population will die before the end of the Tribulation, these living ones in human flesh bodies will *repopulate the earth* in the Millennium and continue later on the New Earth. Some of those born of them during the Millennium will believe, but some will rebel, then only to die in the final rebellion with Satan after he is loosed from his pit, very near to the end of the Millennium.

There will also be many believers who had been martyred during the “Great Tribulation.” “*And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar The Souls Of Them That Were Slain For The Word Of God, And For The Testimony Which They Held:* ¹⁰*And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (Rev 6:9-10).*

These martyrs will be joined by the justified faithful Old Testament saints who have long been dead. They both will be raised up in “*the 1st resurrection*” (Rev 20:6), at the close of the Tribulation. The soul and spirit of these dead believers will return to the earth from “*paradise,*” to live in their **resurrected glorified spirit-bodies** that can be seen and touched, and yet pass through doors, just as the resurrected Lord Jesus did.

“*I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I Saw The Souls Of Them That Were Beheaded For The Witness of Jesus, And For The Word Of God, And Which Had Not Worshipped The Beast (Antichrist), neither his image, Neither Had Received His Mark Upon Their Foreheads, Or In Their Hands (see Rev 13:17); and THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS. THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION.* ⁶ *Blessed and holy is he (those of Israel’s remnant) that hath part in THE FIRST RESURRECTION: on such the SECOND DEATH hath no power, but They Shall Be Priests Of God and of Christ, and SHALL REIGN WITH HIM A THOUSAND YEARS.*” (Rev 20:5-6)

These resurrected glorified ones of the “*first resurrection*” (v5) shall “*reign with Christ*” (v6 *above*) throughout the Millennium. They shall reign over and bless the whole world of new believers. Recall that only the faithful believers will survive the Tribulation in their human physical bodies to go on to live in the Millennium. This is the fulfillment of what the Lord had long ago promised Abraham that in His seed shall “*all the families of the earth be blessed.*”

“*And thy seed (Abraham’s seed) shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED.*” (Genesis 28:14)

After the Millennium, *all the lost unjust dead* will be resurrected in some form to stand and be judged at the “*GREAT WHITE THRONE,*” wherein ALL of them will be “*cast into the lake of fire*” since their names are “*Not Found Written In The Lamb’s Book Of Life.*”

“*I saw a GREAT WHITE THRONE, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

¹² *And I Saw The Dead, Small And Great, Stand Before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (Hades) delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works (evil doings). ¹⁴ And Death And Hell Were Cast Into The Lake Of Fire. This Is The Second Death.

¹⁵ And WHOSOEVER WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE ... WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. (Rev 20:11-15)

Chapter 15

The Millennial Kingdom

Those who come to *believe*, trusting Christ during the 7-year Tribulation period, and endure *faithful*, will enter into Christ's Kingdom on the earth. The diagram below defines who will go on from the Tribulation into Christ's Kingdom age, and then also into the ultimate Eternal Kingdom of God on the New Earth.

Peter wrote of those believers who are... *LOOKING FOR* and hasting unto **THE COMING OF THE DAY OF GOD**, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Vs13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **NEW HEAVENS and A NEW EARTH**, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3:12-13)

<p><<The 7-yr Tribulation>></p> <p><i>Only Surviving Tribulation</i></p> <p>BELIEVERS will live on into the Millennium>></p>	<p><<<<The Millennial Kingdom>>>></p> <p><i>The Surviving Trib.c Believers, plus the Raised O.T. Saints & Raised Trib. Martyrs will live on into the <u>Eternal Kingdom on the New Earth, with the Newborn Millennial Believers>>>></u></i></p>
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Jesus specifically said "*this Gospel of the Kingdom*" to come on earth would be preached "*til the end come*" (Matt 24:14). During the Tribulation many people will come to believe the "*everlasting gospel*" ... "*of the Kingdom.*" It will be preached by the "*144,000*" (Rev 7:4, 14:6) and the "*two witnesses*" (Rev 11:3-12).

The "*two witnesses*" will preach and have *miraculous powers* during their "*1260 day (3-1/2 yr)*" (11:3-6) ministry until they are *killed*. They will be *raised from the dead by the Spirit of God after 3-1/2 days*, and "*ascend up to heaven*" in the eyes of the whole world (11:11).

*"And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. ¹⁰ And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these **Two Prophets** tormented them that dwelt on the earth. ¹¹ And **after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them**, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. ¹² And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, **Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.**" (Revelation 11:9-12)*

Hearing the "*gospel of the Kingdom*," many will be "*saved*" even in the face of Antichrist's persecution and "*beheadings*" (Revelation 20:4), and the judgments of God that are to be poured out upon the whole world. Let's now consider *how one may be saved during the Tribulation*, to enter the Millennial Kingdom .

First realize what Jesus said to “his disciples,” “... one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law. Till All Things Be Accomplished” (Matt 5:17-18). So, during the Tribulation salvation will be similar to salvation under “the law” dispensation, so far the *requirement to keep the commandments* and also as what does **NOT happen inside of the kingdom believer.** Innermost “regeneration” (Tit 3:5) by “the Spirit” will no longer be available as it is today under the present “dispensation of the grace of God.” **Nothing changes inside the Tribulation believer to secure and seal his salvation.** Only the 144,000 are specifically said to be “sealed” in their foreheads.

Those who believe in Jesus and are saved during the Tribulation won't be *saved on credit* as was the case in the Old Testament. Old Testament saints were *saved on credit* in that their sins were **only covered by animal blood sacrifices, but not removed** (Heb 10:4). When O.T. saints died they **didn't go to heaven.** They went to “paradise,” also called “Abraham's bosom” (Luk 23:34; Eph 4:8-10, Psa 63:9). This was on the opposite side of the pit from, and within sight of, the suffering *lost* who are eternally damned (Luke 16:22-26) to later be judged at the “Great White Throne” judgment.

Only when Jesus was crucified and resurrected, was atonement then complete and applicable to the O.T. saints who had believed. Thereby, Jesus was then *justified in saving them* (Rom 3:26), so He raised the souls and spirits of O.T. saints (Matt 27:52-53) from the dead with Him, then moving them to “paradise” now located in heaven (cf. 2 Cor 12:4). “the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,”⁵³ And came out of the graves after his resurrection. (Mat 27:52-53).

Jesus' descent into hell (Acts 2:27), the *paradise side of Hades*, in the heart of the earth (Psa 55:15; Amos 9:2), was **not** to complete His suffering and redemption. Our redemption was “finished” by His shed blood and His death of the cross. His descent into the *paradise side of Hades* was to complete His *human experience*, just as his entire life was part of His human experience (Heb 4:15, 2:17a). Christ's participation in the human experience has not to do with redemption, but to do with **qualifying HIM to be a faithful and merciful high priest and the “first born among many brethren”** (Col 1:18). Jesus became the overcoming “man” and as such He had to experience the full grip of death (Heb 2:9) to make His resurrection an experience that has implications for us also.

The Tribulation believers, like the Old Testament saints, are NOT regenerated, or born again, as we are today under the grace dispensation. The **Tribulation Believers are Not Saved by Works, BUT Works Are Required by those who “Believe.”** They must endure faithful to the end.

“I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation (ethnos), and kindred, and tongue, and people,” (Revelation 14:6)

“And He That Shall Endure (faithfully) Unto The End, The Same Shall Be Saved.” (Matt 24:13)

- 1) During the Tribulation all men must first **believe** the “*everlasting gospel*” (Rev 14:6),
- 2) And then ... **obey God by “repenting” of their sins** (Rev 2:21),
- 3) And then ... be **faithful to him by “NOT taking the mark of the beast”** (cf. Rev 20:4);
- 4) Only then ... **may they be saved... IF** they “*endure (are patiently faithful) unto the end*” (Matt 24:13).

Salvation in every dispensation is *by the grace of God*, but **Tribulation salvation requires continual faithfulness to the end, or until death.** It's not a certain level of goodness that God requires, but rather **complete faithfulness to God in regard to NOT Taking “The Mark of The Beast.”**

*“he (the False Prophet) **Causeth All, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to Receive A Mark In Their Right Hand, Or In Their Foreheads:** ¹⁷ that **No Man Might Buy Or Sell, Save (except) He That Had The Mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.** ¹⁸...is **Six hundred threescore and six.**” (Rev 13:16-18)*

Clearly, “*believing*,” that is “*trusting Christ*,” during the Tribulation will be just the **first step in salvation**. Along with **believing one must ALSO ...**“*Keep the Commandments of God*,” as seen in these passages.

*“And the dragon (Antichrist) was wroth with the woman (Israel), and went to make war with **the remnant of her seed, which KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.**” (Rev 12:17)*

*“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that **KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, and THE FAITH OF JESUS.**” (Rev 14:12)*

*“Blessed are they that **DO HIS COMMANDMENTS**, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city.” (Rev 22:14)*

So, in the Tribulation men are **saved by FAITH... PLUS they must** “*Keep (His) Works Unto The End*”... if they are to **co-reign with Christ** in the Millennial Kingdom . “*he that overcometh, and Keepeth My Works Unto The End, to him will I give POWER OVER THE NATIONS (Gentile survivors of the Tribulation)*” (Rev 2:26).

This “**Faith PLUS Works**” standard is in accord with what James wrote to the scattered of Israel . “*Faith Without Works Is Dead*” (James 1:1, 2:17, 20, 26). Of course this does **not** apply to us today. Such a **contingent requirement** of “*Keeping (His) Works Unto The End*” confirms that salvation “*by grace through faith in Christ alone, NOT OF WORKS*”(Eph 2:8-9) will have then **ended** with the Rapture ~7 years before the Tribulation.

What about UNBELIEVERS born in the Millennial Kingdom ? Clearly, “*ALL...Who Believe NOT the Truth*” will be “**DAMNED**” before the Tribulation ends, missing the Millennium.

*“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then **sudden DESTRUCTION cometh upon them**, as travail upon a woman with child; and **THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE.**” (1 Thessalonians 5:3)*

*“When **THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN (at His 2nd coming)** with his mighty angels, in flaming fire **TAKING VENGEANCE ON THEM THAT KNOW NOT GOD, and THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ**” “... That they **ALL MIGHT BE DAMNED WHO BELIEVED NOT THE TRUTH**, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” (2 Thes 1:7b-8; cf. 2:12, Matt 25:31-34, 46)*

Since only believers will enter the Millennium, unbelievers appear only **later** in the Millennium, being born of them during the Millennium with the Adamic a Sin nature. **Some of these will believe and some will not.**

What about the Tribulation believers who are martyred before its end? They will join all the other “righteous” kingdom believers, who died mainly in the Old Testament, in “*the 1st resurrection*” (Rev 20:6). The “*1st resurrection*” will occur immediately at the start of the Millennium. These all will be raised in **new, immortal, glorified, spirit-bodies** at that time. Their spirits and souls, which were already in the “*Paradise*” of heaven, will then join their **new, immortal, glorified, spirit-bodies**; then to be **whole spirit beings**, able to serve and reign with the Lord in the Millennium and beyond in the eternal kingdom on the New Earth.

*“I saw **thrones, and they (the Twelve Apostles) sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were BEHEADED for the witness of Jesus (martyred), and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, Neither Had Received His Mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and They Lived and Reigned With Christ A Thousand Years.** ⁵ But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the **FIRST RESURRECTION.** ⁶ Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the **FIRST RESURRECTION: on such the second death hath no power, but They Shall Be Priests Of God and of Christ, and Shall Reign With Him A Thousand Years.**” (Rev 20:4-6)*

While those martyred for their demonstrated *faith* during the Tribulation are obviously saved and will enter the Millennium in their **resurrected glorified spirit-bodies** (Rev 20:6), those who are **Saved and Survived the Tribulation** will enter the Millennium in their **Natural Human Bodies**.

The literal the promises of God concerning the Kingdom will be fulfilled, including the rebuilding of the Temple once again. In the closing sections of the Old Testament prophetic books we note specific details that can be fulfilled in no other way than in a ***literal, physical, Millennial Theocratic Kingdom on earth.***

“For thus saith the LORD; Like as I (the Lord) have brought all this great evil upon this people (Israel), so will I Bring Upon Them All The Good That I Have Promised Them.” (Jer. 32:42)

“IN THAT DAY will I raise up the (physical) tabernacle (Temple) of David that is fallen, ... and I Will Raise Up His (David’s) Ruins, And I Will Build It As In The Days Of Old.” (Amos 9:11)

”Of the increase of His Government And Peace there shall be NO END, upon the THRONE OF DAVID, and upon His Kingdom, to order it, and to Establish It With Judgment And With Justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:7).

Jesus of Nazareth plainly told His Israeli followers that the time of His coming would be as the “*days of Noah*” (Matt 24:37); whereby **ALL the unbelievers perished** in the flood judgment.

“And God said unto Noah, The end of ALL flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” (Gen 6:13) “[Noah] entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them ALL.” (Luke 17:27b) “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering (patience) of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, EIGHT SOULS (Noah’s family) WERE SAVED by water.” (1Pet 3:20)

Listed below are prophecies that reveal the restoration for Israel , and that the whole world will come under Christ’s righteous Millennial rule. When Christ returns to usher in the Kingdom He will have a “*sword*” to defeat His enemies (Rev 19:15, 21). In Matt 13:41 (below) we see a “*sorting out*” of the “*offenders*” will take place when the Lord returns. Again, **NO** unbelievers will survive the Tribulation to enter the Millennium.

“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they SHALL GATHER (sort) OUT of (from) HIS KINGDOM ALL things That Offend, and them Which Do Iniquity (Lawlessness).” (Matthew 13:41)

“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and ALL the PROUD, yea, and ALL That Do Wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall BURN THEM UP, saith the LORD of hosts...

² But unto you (Israel) that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. ³ And ye shall tread down the wicked; for THEY SHALL BE ASHES under the soles of your feet in the day that I SHALL DO THIS, saith the LORD of hosts. ⁴ Remember ye the law of Moses my servant... with the statutes and judgments. (Malachi 4:1-4)

“For then will I TURN TO THE PEOPLE (to the gathered lost sheep of Israel) a pure (single) language, that they may ALL call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” (Zephaniah 3:9)

Now let’s consider aspects of life as it will be in the time of Christ’s Millennial Kingdom on earth.

Ezekiel 40 describes “*sacrifices*” to be made in the rebuilt Temple on earth **during the Millennium**. But why sacrifices? We know Jesus is the reality of all the O.T. sacrifices. During the Millennium these will be **memorial sacrifices to commemorate the work of Christ’s cross**, having died as the Sin sacrifice for all sin in all ages. Sacrifices in the Temple will be a vivid reminder of what Jesus’ cross means in redemption. This “*raised up the tabernacle of David*” in the Millennium won’t compare to the “New Jerusalem” of the Eternal Kingdom . The “New Jerusalem” is the post-millennium “*Holy City*” let down from Heaven only ***after*** the Millennium when “*time should be no longer*” (Rev 10:6) and eternity is restored.

Christ will at last bring peace and prosperity to earth. Every wrong will be righted. The Genesis curses will be *partially lifted* so that crops will grow more abundantly. Though Satan will be bound for the duration, “Sin” will remain until Satan’s demise at the close of the Millennium. “Death” remains until Rev 20:14.

In the Millennial Kingdom age there will be perfect justice, perfect love. This is God’s final answer to Satan. Christ will *dwell among His people in peace*. This will be true through-out the world because the Lord will settle disputes among the nations and righteous peace will flow like a river as never seen in this world since the fall of Adam. At the beginning of the Millennium life will be as close to heaven on earth as one could imagine. There will be peace on earth and goodwill toward men, as the angel promised to the shepherds the night of the Lord’s birth (Luke 2:14). The newly freed physical creation will respond eagerly to man’s husbandry. Perfect weather and overflowing bounty will make the work of men a joy, ending burdensome toil. Long life will return as sickness and disease become a thing of the past. “Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there.” (Zech. 8:4-5). The curse of cities and field will be ended (Deut 28:16).

The Tribulation believing survivors in human bodies who enter the Millennium will *bear children*. These children have inherited the sin nature from Adam. Some of these newborns will become believers and some will not, thus we see reference to “*the sinner*” in Isa 65:20 (below). Life-spans in the Millennium will be increased greatly for most, but some will still die as unbelievers. “*There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the CHILD SHALL DIE AN HUNDRED YEARS OLD; but THE SINNER being an hundred years old SHALL BE ACCURSED* (condemned).²¹ *And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.* (Isaiah 65:20-21)

During the Millennium *most* people will be walking around on the face of this planet with *natural human bodies that are still subject to the decay and death*. All men have inherited from Adam “*Sin and death*” (Rom 8:2) in their bodies, by whom “*Sin entered the world*” (Rom 5:12). Note by verse 20 (above), while natural people will live longer, their flesh bodies can still die. “*Sin in the flesh*” (Rom 8:3b) of the body still will end in death. “*Death*” is not to be destroyed until the end (Rev 20:14). By contrast, in the eternal Kingdom on earth there is “*no more death*” (Rev 21:4). This is important to note.

Christ is the wise and just King who shall then establish righteous order on the earth. When Christ returns to establish the Kingdom, the *universal moral law* will be enforced to bring order throughout the earth. We do not have that kind of order today because we do not have righteous rulers and judges who are sufficiently wise or just. During the Millennium, Christ will justly rule the world “*with a rod of iron.*” He will chasten the rebellious kings, nations, and peoples who defy Him. “*Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel*” (Psalms 2: 9). There will be capital punishment in the Millennium for those who openly oppose the Lord. The Genesis curse will be partially removed and health will be better in the Millennium, but death can still come upon those who are physically alive and resist the Lord.

Some newborns in the Millennium will remain alive as sinning unbelievers even under the Lord’s “*rod of iron*”; they will be punished (Isa 65:20). The Devil will be released after his 1,000-year imprisonment to stage his last attempt to overthrow Christ at Armageddon. Many unbelievers will join the rebellion against Israel and Jerusalem and all of these will be quickly destroyed (Rev 20:7-9). Some newborns during the Millennium will faithfully believe and will live in the eternal Kingdom on the New Earth.

In His 1st coming Jesus of Nazareth came to address to “*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*,” (Matt 15:24). Jesus described the two resurrections – one to “*life*” and one to “*damnation*.” “... *for the hour is coming, in the which All That Are In The Graves Shall Hear His Voice,*”²⁹ **AND SHALL COME FORTH; they that have done good, Unto The Resurrection Of Life; and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection Of Damnation** (John 5:28-29)

The “*resurrection of damnation*” is what could be called the 2nd resurrection of Rev 20:11-15. The bodily remains of ALL the *lost* of ALL ages that currently reside in “*Hades*,” which is Greek for “*hell*” (*this is not “the lake of fire”*) will be raised up so they can “*stand*” before God at the “**Great White Throne Judgment**.” The outcome for ALL those who appear at this judgment is to be “*cast into the lake of fire*” because their names are “*not found written in the Lamb’s Book of Life*” (Rev 20:12, 15).

Which do you suppose will come first? Must Israel’s repent first, or, does Christ’s appear first and then Israel will believe?

The verses below indicate that Israel is to be converted **NOT because of seeing Him return in the clouds**. It’s the other way around. **Israel’s repentance must come first**; “*in their affliction*” (Hosea 5:15 below), as result of the Lord’s wrath and judgments during the Tribulation. This then brings the return of Christ to earth. Christ will return from heaven to earth at the end of the Tribulation, but **Not until Israel First Repents**.

“I (Jesus) Will Go And Return To My Place (In Heaven), TILL THEY (Israel) ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR OFFENCE, And Seek My Face: In Their Affliction They Will Seek me early.” (Hosea 5:15)

“For I say unto you, Ye Shall Not See Me Henceforth, TILL YE SHALL SAY, BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH in the name of the Lord.” (Matthew 23:39)

“(Israel’s expected prayer) Oh that thou (Lord) wouldst REND THE HEAVENS, THAT THOU WOULDST COME DOWN, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence,” (Isaiah 64:1)

The Lord has been waiting for the moment when Israel would return to Him. He will then return in direct answer to Israel’s prayer that God would “*rend the heavens... (and) Come Down*” (Isaiah 64:1, above). Israel has turned to Him in hopeless moments before and He has miraculously saved them out of trouble. It is in response to their prayer of repentance that He “*rends the heavens*” as He breaks through the clouds and is reveals Himself to Israel as the One “*Whom They Have Pierced*.” He will save them again, rescuing them from their enemies, and **save them spiritually** (Eze 36:25-27 below).

“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about (the Arabs), when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem.” (Zechariah 12:2) “*And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*”¹⁰ **And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED** (at the cross), and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” (Zechariah 12:9-10)

“Then will I (the Lord) sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.”²⁶ **A NEW HEART ALSO WILL I GIVE YOU, AND A NEW SPIRIT WILL I PUT WITHIN YOU:** and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.²⁷ **And I WILL PUT MY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU, AND CAUSE YOU TO WALK IN MY STATUTES, AND YE SHALL KEEP MY JUDGMENTS, and do them.”** (Eze 36:25-27)

“(I) SHALL PUT MY SPIRIT IN YOU, and ye shall live, and I SHALL PLACE YOU IN YOUR OWN LAND: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.” (Ezekiel 37:14)

Now consider more of the nature of Christ’s Kingdom rule. After Christ finishes His work judgment and defeating His and Israel’s enemies He will separate the *wheat believers* from the *tare unbelievers* and *goat and sheep nations*. Then He will establish the promised Theocratic Millennial Kingdom on earth.

The entire world will then be under the rule of “*the King of kings.*” Jesus Christ is the God/man, “*born of a woman, made under the Law*” (Gal 4:4). He will govern the earth in accordance with His divine will (Psa 2:7-9; Zech 14:9, Rev 11:15). Born in the line of David, according to His humanity, He will fulfill the prophetic Scripture by ruling from David’s throne as King over Israel (Isa 9:6-7, 11:1-12; Jer 23:5-8; 33:14-16; Luke 1:31-33; Act 2:29-30; Rev 22:16). As “*King of kings and Lord of lords,*” He will rule over all the Gentile monarchs and their nations (Psa 72:8-11; Dan 7:13-14; Zech 14:9; Rev 11:15, 19:16). The world will have the benefit of the benevolent and righteous Kingdom government of Christ on earth for the 1,000 years, but some will rebel.

“*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities:* ²¹ ... saying, ***Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also.*** ²² Yea, ***many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and To Pray Before The LORD.*** ²³ Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ***ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even Shall Take Hold Of The Skirt Of Him That Is A Jew, saying, We Will Go With You: For We Have Heard That God Is With You.***” (Zech 8:20-23)

In the Millennial Kingdom on earth Christ will reverse many of the consequences of man’s rebellion in Eden . The Lord will make all animals tame again (Isa 11:6-9, 65:25); heal all diseases and deformities (Isa 33:24, 35:5-6); eliminate hazards (Ex 34:26-27); increase the lifespan of man (Isa 65:20, 22); cause a great abundance of trees and fruit (Isa 53:13; Eze 47:12; Joel 2:21-22), of fish (Eze 47:9-10), and of grain and “*sweet wine*” (Joel 2:24; Amos 9:13); and control the environment of man (Eze 34:26-27); heal the effects of pollution and mutations (Eze 47:1-12); and abolish war and injustice (Isa 2:2-4, 9:6-7, 11:2-5; Jer 23:5; Micah 4:1-3; Zech 9:9-10). These changes constitute what Christ and Peter referred to as “*in the regeneration,*” the “*seasons of refreshing*” and “*the times of the restoration of all things*” (Mat 29:28; Acts 3:19-21). This will be the present earth’s golden age.

During the Millennial Kingdom Israel will fulfill the role that God originally intended for her – to be the *spiritual leader of the whole world* (Exo 19:5-6) as the “*priests of God.*” Israel’s Jerusalem will be the spiritual and political center of the world. Those of all nations will come there to worship Christ and be instructed according to His righteous ways and in the Word of God (Isa 2:1-4, 11:10-12; Micah 4:1-3). Gentiles will call the saints of Israel “*the priests of the Lord*” and the “*ministers of our God.*”

Properly placing the **Rapture *before* the Tribulation**, whereby the members of “*the body of Christ*” will have already been Raptured and taken their place ***in THE HEAVEN*** for eternity (2Cor 5:1), allows a ***new group of Kingdom gospel believers to spring up and populate THE EARTH during the Millennium.***

After the Millennial age is ended Christ and **His kingdom believers of Israel will dwell in eternal Holy City of the New Jerusalem that will come down to the New Earth, forever.** Then the two God ordained expressions of Christ’s life; 1) ***the church*** will occupy ***the heavens***, and 2) ***Israel will occupy the earth, co-ruling there respective spheres for eternity – all being ONE IN CHRIST.*** This will fulfill Paul’s prophetic words concerning the culmination of the ages, which Paul calls “*the FULNESS OF TIMES...*”

“*that In The Dispensation Of The FULNESS OF TIMES He Might Gather Together In One All Things IN CHRIST, both which are IN HEAVEN, and which are ON EARTH; even IN HIM*” (Ephesians 1:10)

The Apostle Paul had multiple instances whereby some tried to undermine his teaching concerning the “catching away” (*Rapture*) of the members of “*the body of Christ*.” Paul taught that the “catching away” (*Rapture*) of the members of “*the body of Christ*,” along with *tempering effect of the Holy Spirit*, will be removed from the social order **before the Antichrist is revealed and the Tribulation begins.**

Consider first this instance as noted in Paul’s own words. “*Hymenaeus and Philetus*” (v17-18, *below*) had attacked and undermined Paul’s doctrine of the Rapture of the members of “*the body of Christ*” by “**Saying That the Resurrection (Rapture) Is PAST Already.**” Some falsely teach this even today.

“¹⁷ **their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is *Hymenaeus and Philetus*; ¹⁸ *Who Concerning The Truth Have Erred*(missed the mark), Saying That THE RESURRECTION IS PAST ALREADY; and overthrow the faith of some.** (2 Timothy 2:17-18)

This false teaching has served to “***overthrow the faith of some***” (v18) because it contradicts Paul’s message of the “***blessed hope***”(Titus 2:13) concerning the resurrection and “catching away” (*Rapture*) of the believing members of the “*body of Christ*” at His “*appearing ... the air*” (1Thes 4:13-18). Paul says “*Hymenaeus and Philetus... have erred*” in departing from “*the truth.*” As many today do, they likely twisted the Scripture and contrived a sort of *allegorical resurrection*. This false concept is taught also even today by certain “*preterist*” groups, and others that falsely say “the church today replaces Israel.” Most of these believe that most of the Scripture’s prophecies of the Book of Revelation have already been fulfilled. By the deception of saying *the resurrection (or Rapture) has already past*, Satan thereby overthrows some *fundamental articles of “the faith”* of the “***blessed hope***” of Pauline truth concerning the resurrection and Rapture of believers.

“**Looking For That BLESSED HOPE, AND THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF the Great God and Our Saviour Jesus Christ;**” (Titus 2:13)

For us today, looking back on such old false teachings that were so condemned by Paul, the thought that some would say “*the resurrection is past already*” shouldn’t trouble us at all. Yet, we learn that from the very beginning, even while Paul himself still taught “***the gospel of the grace of God,***” the faith of some was subverted. Such an example ought to make us diligent to follow Paul’s instruction to contextually “***Study***” and “***rightly divide the word of truth***” in our personal Bible study (2Tim 2:15). We must seize early every opportunity to turn away from ourselves such dangerous teachings that would “***subvert the faith of some.***” Sadly, with the strong inclination of some men to vanity, there is no absurdity so ridiculous that there will not be some men who will listen to it and thereby be deceived.

Paul’s writings to the members of “*the body of Christ*” make clear that the **Tribulation judgments are ordained of God to come upon Israel and the world ... NOT upon “the Church, which is His body.”** The “*Church*” will be “*caught up*” and away (Raptured) before the ~7-year Tribulation period begins. Paul clearly wrote concerning the members of “*the body of Christ*”; “**God Hath Not Appointed Us (the body of Christ) To Wrath (God’s vengeance), but to obtain (full) salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ**” (1 Thes 5:9).

We must recognize that the specific **context of 2 Thessalonians is that Paul is dealing with the false information.** The lies being taught by some at that time said the persecution the believers were experiencing was “the Tribulation” and that these believers must have missed the Rapture that supposedly had already past. Recognizing this we can see that Paul’s correction in 2 Thessalonians makes sense.

There have always been awful events suffered in the world and no doubt there will be terrible earthly events before the day of the Rapture of “*the body of Christ*.” However; the church shall escape the specific “**time of Jacob’s (Israel ’s) trouble,**” called the Tribulation. That phrase alone tells us who the trouble is coming upon – ***Jacob (Israel)***. That “*day*” will bring God’s wrath and vengeance upon all rebellious mankind. Note that it is **not** called “the time of the church’s trouble.”

Paul wrote “***let no man deceive you***” in 2Thes 2:3 (*below*) as he undertook to dispel the fears of some believers who have heard the ***false teaching of some that the “the day of Christ (the Lord’s 2nd coming) is at hand (already)”*** (v2). In verses 4-5 Paul reminds them of his teaching about the key

signs of the revealing of “**THE SON OF PERDITION (The ANTICHRIST)**” in regard to the timing of Christ’s 2nd coming to earth – **not** about the Rapture.

¹ *Now we beseech you, brethren (the believers), by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him (unto Christ at the Rapture),*

² ***That ye BE NOT soon SHAKEN IN MIND, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by (a falsified) letter as (as if it were) from us, that “the day of Christ (Lord, see below)” is at hand (already). (2Thes 2:1-2)***

(NOTE: Here “the day of **Christ**” (above) is mistranslated. it should be translated “the day of the **LORD**,” from the Greek “**kurios**,” meaning “**Lord**,” as seen the **Greek Interlinear, NIV, AMP, etc.** If it were “the day of Christ” the Greek word would be Greek “**Christos**” - “the day of **Christos**,” as correctly seen in Philip 1:10 and 2:16.

THIS IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE;

1. “**The Day of The LORD**” Always Refers To Christ’s 2nd Coming to Earth in fulfillment of prophecy to Israel .

2. “**The Day of “CHRIST”** Always Refers To The Rapture of The Church, the “**body of Christ**,” bound to dwell “**eternal in the Heaven**,” (Philip 3:20-21, 2Cor 5:1b)

Paul continues his teaching in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-5, reminding them of what he had told them (v5 below).

³ ***Let No Man Deceive You by any means: for THAT DAY (The “Day of the Lord” and His return to earth) Shall Not Come, Except (until) there come A FALLING AWAY FIRST, and that MAN OF SIN Be Revealed, THE SON OF PERDITION (The ANTICHRIST);***

⁴ *Who (The Antichrist who) opposeth (God) and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that HE (Antichrist) AS GOD SITTETH IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD, SHEWING HIMSELF THAT HE IS GOD. ⁵ Remember Ye Not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? (2Thes 2:3-5)*

Some *mistakenly* think this above means the Rapture will occur after the “**man of sin (Antichrist, v3) be revealed.**” It takes careful Bible study to make sure we do not skip over any key phrases in Scripture. Verses 1-2 are the critical verses for understanding the timing of the revealing of the “**man of sin**,” the Antichrist.

Let’s consider these verses 1-2 as seen more understandably in the Amplified Bible in order to get a clearer idea of what Paul is writing. He is saying **don’t believe the lies that “The Day of the Lord (the 2nd coming) has [Already] Arrived and Is Here”** (v2 below).

¹ ***BUT RELATIVE to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our (the body of Christ) gathering together to [meet] Him (at the Rapture), we beg you, brethren,***

² ***NOT to allow your minds to be quickly unsettled or disturbed or kept excited or alarmed, whether it be by some [pretended] revelation of [the] Spirit or by word or by letter [Alleged To Be] From Us, To The Effect (or, as if) That THE DAY OF THE LORD Has [Already] Arrived and Is Here.” Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a Falling Away First, and that Man of Sin Be Revealed, the son of perdition;” (2 Thess 2:1-3 AMP)***

Paul then goes on in 2 Thessalonians in 2:3-4 (above), saying “**That Day of the Lord**” in His 2nd coming **can’t come until AFTER .. the Antichrist is revealed and also usurps the Temple of God calling himself God** (v4 above and below). As of today, we haven’t seen the Antichrist or the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem .

In short Paul is telling the believers the 2nd Coming of Christ will not take place until...

1) ... there is the **falling away from faith in the Lord (among Israel) first** (v3) **on earth at that time.** The time will come when Israel will welcome the Antichrist, signing his covenant that starts the Tribulation.

2) ... **The Antichrist is revealed** (v3 above) **taking the throne in the Temple .**

These yet unfulfilled major signs are Paul's proof to the Thessalonians that the Rapture had NOT already past; even though they were being persecuted, they were **NOT experiencing the Tribulation**.

As stated earlier, the phrase "**Day of the Lord**" always refers to the **2nd coming for Israel**, while the phrase "**the Day of Christ**" always refers to the **Rapture of the Church**. Yet, many wrongly assume "**the day of Lord**" in 2 Thes 2:2 means the day of the Rapture.

No, "**the day of the Lord**" refers to the day of the literal 2nd Coming of Christ to earth. Paul wrote in 2 Thessalonians 2:2, "**nor by (a falsified) letter AS (as if it were) from us, that "the day of the Lord (the 2nd coming)" is (already) at hand.**" Sadly, many articles and commentaries skip over the little word "**as**" (meaning, "**as if**"). Thus, Paul is saying, "**What they are saying is NOT TRUE!**"

Having mistaken The Day of the Lord (2nd coming) for the Day of Christ (Rapture), they then jump to and erroneously interpret the two signs given in verse 3 as 1) the falling away in the church and 2) the revealing of the Antichrist; erroneously saying the "**body of Christ**" will see the Antichrist. However, the phrase, "**as if or "to the effect" that the day of the Lord is at hand**" cannot be overlooked. They imply "**AS IF the Rapture was past,**" just as did "^{17...} **Hymenaeus and Philetus;** ¹⁸ **Who Concerning the Truth Have Erred, Saying That THE RESURRECTION (at Rapture) IS PAST ALREADY; and overthrow the faith of some.** (2 Timothy 2:17-18)

When Paul is giving **the two signs** in verse 3 he is speaking of the "**day of the Lord.**" The "**day of the Lord**" is always a term for the Second Coming of Christ to Earth as described in prophesy and referring of the coming Messianic Kingdom on earth. In 2 Thessalonians 1:10 Paul uses the phrase, "**That Day,**" then clearly describes what is undeniably the time of the 2nd Coming to "**take vengeance (v7)**" in "**THAT DAY (v10 below).**"

⁷to you who are troubled rest with us, **when THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED From Heaven With His Mighty Angels, ⁸In Flaming Fire Taking Vengeance On Them** That Know Not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, ⁹Who shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; ¹⁰When **he shall come to be glorified in his (kingdom) saints,** and to be admired in all them that believe **IN THAT DAY.**" (2 Thes 1:7-10.)

Jesus will return in "**That Day**" of His 2nd Coming to "**take vengeance... with everlasting destruction (v9)**" on Antichrist and the unbelieving world to close the Tribulation. By contrast, Paul's Rapture account in 1Thes 4:13-18 makes no mention of "**angels**" or "**vengeance.**" The Rapture is a secreted "**catching away**" of "**the body of Christ,**" which will escape "**the wrath to come.**"

In this passage the term "**Day of Christ**" is properly translated as used by Paul to refer to the Rapture.

"I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence... **TILL The Day Of Christ. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.**" (Philip 1:9-11)

Paul's exhortation in this passage is that the "**body of Christ**" should remain abiding in Christ until the Rapture, which is the end of this age of grace, just before the Tribulation. Here above the context ascribes what Paul writes to his fellow grace believers. Paul then uses the phrase "**the day of Christ**" is **not** referring to the Second Coming, but to **the Rapture**.

Some have wrongly argued that the day of "**our gathering together unto him,**" (2The 2:1), "**the day of Christ,**" "**The Day of The Lord**" (1Thes 5:2) and "**That Day**" (2Thes 1:10) refer to the 2nd Coming, are the same event. But "**the Day of Christ**" as the "**Head of the body**" (Col 1:18) refers to the day of the Rapture of "**the church which is His Body,**" while "**The Day of The Lord**" (1Thes 5:2) and "**That Day**" (2Thes 1:10) refer to the 2nd Coming.

Paul clearly dispels that false notion by the following. " **Holding forth the word of life; that I may REJOICE In The Day of Christ...**" (Philip 2:16, cf., 2Thes 2:2, Philip 1:10). Clearly

Paul **would not be rejoicing** in the midst of the devastating end time vengeance and judgments poured

out during “The Day of The Lord.” Instead he is writing that he will rejoice at “The Day of Christ,” which is the day of the Rapture of “the body of Christ.”

So, when Paul is addressing the Thessalonians he is telling them... **do not to be shaken** or **scared** when you hear the lies of some that to the 2nd Coming is “*at hand (already here)*” and that you have missed the Rapture, and that you are now experiencing the Tribulation. He is saying it is **NOT TRUE**.

Chapter 17

The Moderating Influence of the Holy Spirit

Here below Paul tells us of another major event that will mark the time of the Rapture. The loss of the moderating influence of the Holy Spirit on the social order due to the out-taking of the members of “*the Body of Christ*” must come before the “**WICKED (the wicked one, the Antichrist) BE REVEALED,**”

“⁶And now you know **What Is Restraining** (Gk., *katecho*, **holds down**) **Him (Antichrist)**; it is so that he may be manifested (revealed) in his own [appointed] time. ⁷For the **mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority)** is **already at work in the world.** [but it is] **RESTRAINED** only until he (the Holy Spirit) who restrains is taken out of the way. (2 Thess 2:6-7) (AMP)

“And now ye know what (that which) **Withholdeth** (Gk., *katecho*, **Limits, Restrains**) that he (Antichrist) **might be revealed** (only) **in his time.** ⁷For the **mystery (secret) of iniquity doth already work:** only **HE** (the Spirit of Christ) **Who Now Letteth** (Gk., *katecho*, **limits or restrains**) **WILL LET** (limit or restrain), (only) **UNTIL HE** (the Spirit) **BE TAKEN OUT OF THE WAY** (by the Rapture). (2 Thess 2:6-7)

⁸And **THEN SHALL** that **WICKED** (Wicked One, Antichrist) **BE REVEALED,** whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: ⁹Even (that is,) him, whose coming is **AFTER THE WORKING OF SATAN WITH ALL POWER AND SIGNS AND LYING WONDERS,** ¹⁰And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness **IN THEM that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.** ¹¹And for this cause **God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:**” (2 Thessalonians 2:9-11)

As we see above, the unhindered release of evil in the Tribulation will come by *the loss of the moderating influence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in the social order.*

“**BUT UNDERSTAND** this, that **in the last days will come (set in) perilous times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear].** ²For **people will be** lovers of self and [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing), disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane. ³[They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good. ⁴[They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God. ⁵For [although] they hold a form of piety (religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. **Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].**” (2Tim 3:1-5) (AMP)

How is “*the mystery of lawlessness (that hidden principle of rebellion against constituted authority)*” that is “*at work in the world*” restrained even to the extent that it is today? Presently the Holy Spirit indwells each member of “*the Church, which is His body,*” serving to foster restraint upon

the destructive evils of society such as homosexuality, abortion, and other degrading societal elements. Today we see evil getting stronger as the influence of the apostate Christian church-at-large wanes. After the Church and its indwelling Holy Spirit of Christ is removed from the earth, its moderating influence upon evil will be totally lost. Evil, will no longer be tamped down, limited, or hindered by the Holy Spirit working in and through believers on earth.

We've already seen what the evil lies and deceit of sovereign governments can do to weaken a nation and lead it to ultimate destruction. Antichrist's worldwide government will be powerfully multiply that evil in the Tribulation period. That "*Wicked one*" will be absolutely free and uninhibited during the Tribulation.

God has been audibly silent during this "*dispensation of the grace of God*" in which we live today, since Jesus' passion, but we are not without guidance. Our authority is the written "*Word of the Lord,*" that is "*rightly divided*" concerning the pre-tribulation Rapture as revealed by "*Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13).*" "*For this we (Paul and his co-workers) say unto you by **THE WORD OF THE LORD**, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep (have died).*" (1 Thes. 4:15)

The apostasy of the church-at-large is a "*falling away*" (2Thes 2:3) from "*the faith.*" It is due to the church's marginalization of Pauline Biblical truth for us in this age. Paul wrote Holy Spirit inspired words in his thirteen epistles to "*the body of Christ*" as "*the Apostle to the Gentiles*" and as "*the commandments of the Lord*"

"*For I (Paul) Speak To You Gentiles, Inasmuch As I Am **The Apostle Of The Gentiles...***" (Romans 11:13)

"*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or **spiritual**, let him acknowledge that **the things that I (PAUL) write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.***" (1 Cor. 14:37)

"... **IPAUL**, the prisoner of Jesus Christ **FOR YOU GENTILES**, If ye have heard of **the dispensation of the grace of God** which is **given me to youward**: How that **BY REVELATION HE (CHRIST) MADE KNOWN UNTO ME (PAUL) THE MYSTERY**; (as I wrote afore in few words, ⁴ Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand **my knowledge in THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST**) ⁵Which **IN OTHER AGES WAS NOT MADE KNOWN** unto the sons of men" (Ephes. 3:1-5a)

"Even **THE MYSTERY** which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints (believers): To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of **THIS MYSTERY AMONG THE GENTILES**; which is **CHRIST IN YOU**, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26-27)

"Behold, **I shew you a mystery (secret)**; We shall not all sleep, but **WE SHALL ALL BE CHANGED, IN A MOMENT, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, AT THE LAST TRUMP**: FOR THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND, and **THE DEAD SHALL BE RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE, AND WE SHALL BE CHANGED. FOR THIS CORRUPTIBLE MUST PUT ON INCORRUPTION, AND THIS MORTAL MUST PUT ON IMMORTALITY (ETERNAL LIFE).**" (1 Cor. 15:51-53)

Paul wrote concerning the Rapture "*by the Word of the Lord*" (v15, below) to "*the Church, which is His body*" and our "*blessed hope*" (confident expectation) concerning our being taken to heaven to ever be "with Him." At the Rapture there are to be two categories of peoples to consider; 1) those "*caught up*" (*taken up to heaven*) and, 2) *those that remain on earth to go into the Tribulation* and suffer God's judgment and wrath.

"*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For **THE LORD HIMSELF SHALL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN With A Shout, With The Voice Of The Archangel (Not Angels), And With The Trump (Not Trumpets) Of God: And The Dead In Christ Shall Rise First: Then We Which Are Alive And Remain Shall Be Caught Up (Raptured) Together With Them In The Clouds, To Meet The Lord In The Air: AND So Shall We Ever Be With The Lord. WHEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS.***" (1 Thes. 4:15-18)

In 1 Thessalonians 5 (below) Paul contrasts two different destinies one for "*them*" versus one for "*ye.*"

1. One group will endure "*The day of the Lord*" whose coming is wrath upon "**THEM.**"

¹... **For yourselves know perfectly that the DAY OF THE LORD SO COMETH (suddenly) AS A THIEF IN THE NIGHT. For when THEY (the unbelieving lost) shall say, Peace and safety; then SUDDEN DESTRUCTION cometh upon THEM, as travail upon a woman with child; and THEY SHALL NOT ESCAPE..." (1 Thes. 5:1-3)**

2. The other group is "the body of Christ," referring to us as "Ye" of the "children of the light." ⁴**BUT YE** (the members of His body), **brethren, are NOT in darkness**, that **that day** (of the Lord's vengeance) should overtake you as a thief. ⁵**YE are all the children of light**, and the children of the day..." (1Thes. 5:4-5) His children will "**be caught up together ... in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air**" (1Thes 4:13-18).

Thus Paul writes of the lost as "**they**" and "**them**" in "**the day of the Lord**," which is the subject of prophecy's judgments to "**cometh upon them**" on earth during the Tribulation. Paul continues in verse 4 by using the important word "**But**" to note the contrast between the **awful destiny** for "**them**" in verses 1-3 and that of the **secure destiny** of believers who are "**all the children of light**" and "**NOT in darkness**."

True, the believers of this age of grace will likely see a time of great trouble, as many already have, with the decline and degradation of the apostate church, society and fallen mankind (2 Timothy 3:1). But we should be those who *know the truth of Paul's doctrines of "the faith"* (2Tim 3:10) and are secure in that knowledge. Today we see the Lord is setting the stage for "**the last days**" of this age, But we are secure, having "**the blessed hope**" of the Rapture whether we are dead or alive at His appearing, some time **before "sudden destruction cometh upon them"** (v3, above).

Paul then writes of the "**Helmet, (of) The HOPE (= confident expectation) of Salvation (by Rapture) (v8 below) for "body of Christ." Continuing, Paul writes, "**God Hath NOT Appointed Us to WRATH but to obtain salvation** (v9)"**

"But let us, who are of the day, be sober, PUTTING ON THE Breastplate Of Faith and Love; and for an HELMET, THE HOPE (confident expectation) OF SALVATION. ⁹ For GOD HATH NOT APPOINTED US (the grace Believers) TO WRATH. But To Obtain SALVATION By Our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ Who Died For Us. (So) That, Whether We Wake Or Sleep (Have Died), WE SHOULD LIVE (Grk, zao, Have Eternal Life) TOGETHER WITH HIM. (1 Thes 5:8-10)

Deliverance by the Rapture is for "We" of "the body of Christ."

"... WE say unto you by the word of the Lord, WE which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. ¹⁶the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷Then WE which are alive and remain shall be Caught Up Together With Them In The Clouds, To Meet The Lord In The Air: and so shall WE ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thes. 4:15-18)

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump (of God): for the trumpet shall sound, and the DEAD SHALL BE RAISED INCORRUPTIBLE, and WE SHALL BE CHANGED (allasso, made different). ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (1 Cor 15:52-55)

The Rapture will come at all those of the “*body of Christ,*” those who “*love His appearing,*” still believing that we should be “*looking for that blessed hope*” (2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13).

In contrast to the church Raptured to eternal life in heaven (2Cor 5:1b), the fate of a very large number of those who are on earth after the Rapture in the time of the Tribulation period will be *death*. Some ask, “How many of the earths population will die during the Tribulation?”

Most Bible teachers believe two-thirds of earth’s population will die during the Tribulation, but I cannot exactly find it in the Bible. Estimates of end times deaths are based on the assumption that 1/4 of the world’s population will die during the “seven seal” judgments. This comes from an interpretation of Rev 6:8 where Death and Hades are given power over *1/4th of the earth to kill by the sword, famine, plague, and wild beasts*. If 1/4th of “*the earth*” refers to the population, which leaves 3/4ths of the population still alive at the end of the Seal Judgments.

Then, by the “Trumpet” judgments of Rev. 9:15, four angels are released to “*a slay 1/3rd part of men*” (1/3 of 3/4^{ths} = 1/4th). So, 1/4th will die in the Seal Judgments, plus another 1/4th in the Trumpet Judgments, equaling **1/2 of the earth’s population**. Therefore, between the Seal and Trumpet judgments 1/2 of the world’s population that was alive at the beginning of Daniel’s 70th Week will have died

before the 2nd half of the 7-year Tribulation called the “**Great Tribulation.**” We’re not told how many die during the Bowl Judgments, but certainly there will be many more.

Zech 13:8-9 concerns the Lord’s “*sheep,*” which is Israel . It says “*it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, Two Parts Therein Shall Be Cut Off And Die; but The Third (part) Shall Be Left. I will bring the Third Part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined.*”

The refiner’s “*fire*” is thought to refer to the Great Tribulation. This means 2/3rds of the people of Israel will die sometime before the Great Tribulation begins; then 1/3 of Israel alive at the time of the Great Tribulation will pass through and survive, being purified in the Great Tribulation trials.

A more careful reading of Zechariah 13:8-9 shows that 2/3rds of Israel will perish sometime between the scattering that took place after the crucifixion, in 70AD and the beginning of the **Great Tribulation**. One interpretation of this has the 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust representing the 2/3rds, but it’s also possible that this many Jews could be added to the dying during the Seal and Trumpet judgments of Daniel’s 70th Week.

No matter how we calculate it, the fact remains that Daniel’s 70th Week will be the deadliest time the people of Earth have ever experienced.

Chapter 18

Several Misapplied Scriptures

The abandonment of the Pauline doctrine of the Pre-Tribulation Rapture is mostly due to a failure to recognize Paul’s unique ministry and message as being uniquely “*for ye Gentiles*” (Eph 3:1-5, Rom 11:13). Rather, men today favor the erroneous religious “*traditions, commandments... doctrines of men*” (Col 2:8, 22). If we listen to Paul’s admonition to be “*rightly dividing the Word of truth*” (2Tim 2:15) we will avoid error.

Most Christians miss-apply the prophecies of the OT and Jesus’ words (e.g., Matt 24, Luke 21), which actually concern Israel **in the “last days,” the Tribulation, and Christ’s 2nd coming**. They misapply them to the “*the church, which is His body.*” According to Paul, the Church will be Raptured to heaven **before** those events of the Tribulation and Christ’s 2nd coming. It’s worth noting some obvious

comparisons to be made between Christ coming at the Rapture versus that of Christ's 2nd Coming to earth; see the table below.

**Chart Comparing Aspects of “Christ Coming at the Rapture of the Body of Christ” with
“Christ’s 2nd Coming to Earth”**

<u>Christ Coming at the Rapture of “His Body (As An Aspect of Paul’s “Mystery” Gospel)</u>	<u>Second Coming of Christ to Earth (The Subject of “Prophecy”)</u>
<p>1. Jesus returns to Rapture His “church, which is the body of Christ,” bringing it with Him to dwell “<i>eternal in heavens</i>” (2Cor 5:1).</p> <p>2. Christ comes personally WITHOUT ANGELS at the Rapture, except Michael “<i>The Archangel</i> ,” the highest angel, (1Thes 4:13-18).</p> <p>3. Jesus’ come in the air; His feet DON’T TOUCH the earth at the Rapture (1Thes 4:17).</p> <p>4. The Rapture is an UNPROPHESED “mystery” event kept secret from the foundation of the world until Paul received it (1 Cor. 15:51).</p> <p>5. Christ will return as the LORD OF GLORY (Col. 3:4) and “<i>Head of the body</i>” (Col 1:18).</p> <p>6. The Rapture is imminent, sudden, and can come at any moment — WITHOUT SIGNS; we simply wait for the Son (I Thes. 1:10).</p> <p>7. The Shout, Voice of the Archangel and Trump of God occur suddenly and together. (1Thes 4:13-18).</p> <p>8. Christ will be Invisible to the world, hid by the “<i>cloud</i>” when He catches away the “<i>His Body</i>” to heaven with Him (1Thes. 4:16).</p> <p>9. The Rapture precedes The Judgment Seat of Christ in heaven (2 Cor. 5:8, 10), for believers to receive crowns & heavenly assignments (1Cor 9:25, 2Tim 2:12).</p> <p>10. The Raptured dead and living believers both receive “changed,” resurrected, incorruptible, eternal, glorious, spirit-bodies at His coming. (1Cor 15:51-55)</p>	<p>1. Jesus returns from heaven WITH His Old Testament saints (Rev 19:14) to dwell in the Kingdom, eternally on earth as an everlasting possession (Gen 17:8).</p> <p>2. Christ returns WITH ANGELS and Old Testament believing saints of the 1st Resurrection in glorious, incorruptible, bodies (2Thes 1:7-9; Rev 20:6).</p> <p>3. Jesus’ FEET WILL TOUCH the “ Mount of Olives ” (Act 1:11-12).</p> <p>4. Christ’s 2nd coming in judgment is a Widely PROPHESED event (Jude 14, 15).</p> <p>5. Christ will return is as JUDGE and KING OF kings(Rev. 19:11-16).</p> <p>6. 2nd Coming is associated With Signs, Times, And Seasons, occurring over several years.</p> <p>7. The 2nd coming events occur over the several years of Tribulation (several chapters of Revelations).</p> <p>8. Christ’s will be Visible to believing remnant when He returns to earth to save and redeem repentant Israel, nationally (Zech. 14:4, Rev 1:7).</p> <p>9. Judgment of World, Israel, and the nations (sheep & goats) is on earth (Matt. 25:31-46) with a life and death as the consequence.</p> <p>10. Living believers are NOT CHANGED at Christ’s 2nd coming to earth. All the lost dead are in Hades awaiting the 2nd death (Rev 20:6) at the Great White Throne Judgment.</p>

Some Commonly Mistaken Scriptures:

“Two in the Field,” “Two at the Mill” Does not Apply to the Rapture:

*“Then shall two be in the field; the **one shall be TAKEN**, and the other **LEFT**. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the **one shall be TAKEN**, and the other **LEFT**. Watch therefore: for ye (Israel) know not what hour you Lord doth come” (Matt.24:40-42).*

Often the above passage is wrongly been interpreted to apply to our Lord’s coming for the members of “*the church, which is His body*” at the Rapture. It’s wrongly said that, the *one taken is Raptured to heaven* and the *other left will go through God’s Tribulation wrath*. Similarly, they misinterpret the two women grinding side by side at the mill as *one will be caught up to be with the Lord* and the *other left behind in the Tribulation*.

This passage has nothing to do with the Rapture of “the church, which is His body.” In its context, Jesus is here talking to Israel about Israel as the “*fig tree (v32)*” in “*that day (v36)*.” So, the correct interpretation is the other way around. The fact as seen in context is that the “**One Taken**” is **taken in judgment and death**, while the “**One Left**” is **the kingdom believer who is blessed to live on into the promised Millennial Kingdom** .

Actually, the truth of our Lord’s coming for the members of “*the body of Christ*” in the Rapture was an un-prophesied secret that was first revealed by the glorified Lord through Paul (1Cor.15:51-58; 1Thes. 4:15-18).

As we will see from Matthew 24, it’s evident that the “Two in the Field,” “Two at the Mill” passages *cannot* refer to the Rapture. True, the passage says: “*The **one shall be taken, and the other left,***” but we should ask, taken where and how will the one be taken, and what will be the lot of the one who is left behind? The answer lies in the context of Matt 24.

The verses immediately preceding Matt 24:40-42 concern Christ’s 2nd coming **to earth to judge and reign**. Jesus said His *coming* is to be likened to what happened in the “*days of Noah*” (v37 below) when the people ate and drank, and married, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, “*and **knew not until the flood came and Took Them All Away.***” The mass of people in Noah’s day were **not taken away to glory, they were “taken away” in judgment...to die in the flood.**

*“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. ³⁷But **AS THE DAYS OF NOE (NOAH) were, so shall also THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN be.** ³⁸For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that **Noe entered into the ark** (carrying him and his family to safety), ³⁹And knew not until **the flood came**, and **TOOK THEM ALL AWAY; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**” (Matthew 24:36-39)*

Our text, verses 40-41 (above), is a continuation of the Noahic illustration. The Noahic flood “**Took THEM ALL Away**” (v39 above) ... **but TOWHERE?** In Noah’s time the ones “**taken**” were not the ones safe in the Ark, rather those taken were the ones **who remained on earth to suffer judgment by flood**, they were “**taken**” **in death – they were NOT saved from the flood!** In contrast to the ones “*taken away*” *in judgment* at our Lord’s return to earth, the Ones “**Left**” are the **blessed believers “Left Alive” to enter Christ’s Millennial Kingdom**. This is consistent with the whole context of Matt 24 in which we find this passage.

Never confuse the Lord’s 2nd coming to earth with...the Rapture of “*His body*.” How much confusion would be avoided if the truth of the Rapture to be with the Lord were recognized to be a divine secret that was first revealed to Paul concerning the predominantly Gentile Church, which is called “*the Body of Christ*.”

We should NOT take these Jewish Scriptures referring to the time of the Tribulation for Israel as being for “*the Church, Which is His Body*.” Rather, we must “*rightly divide the word of truth,*” as Paul admonished here. “**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH.**” (2 Timothy 2:15) We must divide that in the Bible where it refers to Israel and her destiny “on earth” ... from that which applies to

the heavenly people of the **“the body of Christ”** and their eternal destiny **“in heaven”** (Philipp 3:20, 21). If we get this straight we can properly interpret **“the Word of Truth.”**

Now concerning Israel at the close of the Tribulation, Jesus’ mentions **“the eagles.”** **“Wheresoever the Carcase Is, There Will THE EAGLES be gathered together”(Matt 24:28, cf. Luke 17:37).** Similarly, after Noah’s flood the **“ravens”** came to **“eat the flesh”** of those **“taken”** in the flood (cf. Eze 39:17-18)

Noah’s flood, according to Jesus, is the pattern for the time of Israel in the Tribulation and their transition into the Millennial Kingdom on earth. **Those “left behind” on earth in the time of Noah’s flood were “taken away” when their bodies were eaten by “ravens.”** We must always study in the context, both near and far.

- The real Messianic **believers** who survive the Tribulation (those not martyred) will enjoy the BLESSING OF BEING “LEFT”BEHIND on earth to go on into the Millennium Kingdom and then the Eternal Kingdom on the New Earth.
- The Non-believers, Jews and Gentile, will be **“taken”** in death.

Those who are **“left,”** that is ALL non-believing rebellious of mankind, will endure the terrible judgment sufferings of the Tribulation, and many will die before it ends if they do not come to believe. Let’s now see how Jesus further clarifies this for us in parable. **“Two in field...bed,”** etc., and the **“One Shall Be Taken”** (Matthew 24:40-44). These verses **are about the non-believing of Israel** who will be **“taken”** in judgment to be destroyed... thus they miss out the Messianic Kingdom that was long promised to the Abraham’s earthly **“seed.”** The one **“left”** will go on to enjoy the promised Millennial Kingdom on earth.

*“Then shall two be in the field; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN,** and **THE OTHER LEFT.** Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN,** and **THE OTHER LEFT.** Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, if the Goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye (Israel) also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not **THE SON OF MAN COMETH.**” (Matthew 24:40-44)*

The parallel passage to Matt 24:40-44 is Luke 17:33-37. Jesus of Nazareth is addressing **Israel concerning Israel ONLY** (cf. Matt 15:24). Again, Jesus said **“as it was in the days of Noah,”** so the **non-believing of Israel** be **“taken”** to judgment, and **...then have their carcasses eaten by “the eagles”** (v37 below).

*“Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN,** and the other shall be **LEFT.** **Two women shall be grinding together; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN,** and the other **LEFT.** Two men shall be in the field; the **ONE SHALL BE TAKEN,** and the other **LEFT.** And they answered and said unto him, (Taken) **WHERE, LORD?** And he said unto them, **Wheresoever the body (the flesh body, the carcass) is, thither will the **EAGLES be gathered together.**” (Luke 17:33-37)*****

Revelation 19 confirms that **“The Son of Man”** will come in Judgment at the close of the Tribulation. All those **“taken”** are the **“slain,”** to then be eaten by the **“fowls,”** (v17, 21 below, cf. Eze 39:4).

*“¹¹And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon **him was called Faithful and True** (Christ), **and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.** ¹²His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called **The Word of God** (cf. John 1:1).*

*¹⁵And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and **he shall rule them with a rod of iron:** and he treadeth the **winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.** ¹⁶And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**” (Rev. 19:11-12, 15-16)*

¹⁷I saw an **angel** standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to **All The Fowls That Fly In The Midst Of Heaven**, Come And Gather Yourselves Together Unto The **Supper Of The Great God**; ¹⁸that **Ye May Eat The Flesh** of Kings, And **The Flesh** of Captains, And **The Flesh** of Mighty Men, And **The Flesh** of Horses, And of Them That Sit On Them, And **The Flesh** of All Men, Both Free And Bond, Both Small And Great.” (Rev 19:17)

¹⁹And I saw **THE BEAST**, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.²⁰And **THE BEAST** was taken, and with him the **FALSE PROPHET** that wrought miracles before him, with which he **DECEIVED THEM THAT HAD RECEIVED THE MARK OF THE BEAST, AND THEM THAT WORSHIPPED HIS IMAGE**. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹And **THE** (unbelieving) **REMNANT WERE** (all) **SLAIN with the sword of him that sat upon the horse**, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the **FOWLS WERE FILLED WITH THEIR FLESH**. (Rev 19:19-21)

- After **THE BEAST and the FALSE Prophet** are to be “cast alive into the lake of fire,” then **ALL “THE** (unbelieving) **REMNANT WERE (ALL) SLAIN with the sword of him that sat upon the horse**,” then “**THE FOWLS (will be) FILLED WITH THEIR FLESH**” (Rev 19:21 above).

- At His 2nd coming, only the still living **Faithful Messianic Kingdom Gospel Believers** will enter Christ’s Theocratic Millennial Kingdom on earth. These **believers are those “left behind” as the Blessed Survivors of the Tribulation, to go on from the Tribulation ... into the Millennial Kingdom, and then pass into the eternal Kingdom on the New Earth!** These believers are of “**the woman**” (Rev 12:6 below) that is of Israel **only**.

Jesus spoke of “**the last days**” as in the “**days of Noah**” when the flood destroyed **ALL those who were “left”** (Matt 24:37). Yet Noah and his family were kept safe in “**the Ark**.” Noah’s The “Ark” may also be a pre-figure or metaphor for the believing Jews who will be carried to a “**place prepared for them**” (Rev 12:6), for safety – perhaps this is Petra in Edom, in the Jordanian desert, where the Beast is said to have no influence (see Daniel 11:41). This below may explain how, “**I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation.**”

“And **the woman** (Israel’s believers) **fled into the wilderness, where SHE HATH A PLACE PREPARED OF GOD, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days (3-1/2 years)** (Rev 12:6).

“**He (Antichrist) shall enter into the Glorious Land [Palestine] and many shall be overthrown, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: EDOM, Moab, and the main [core] of the people of Ammon.**” (Daniel 11:41 AMP)

Let’s look closer at this verse. “**Because Thou Hast Kept the Word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation (trial), which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.**” (Revelation 3:10) Actually, in Revelation 3:10 Jesus is addressing His believing “lost sheep,” the scattered of Israel in the locals of the seven **churches (ekklisia, “called out ones”)** in southern Roman provinces of Asia who are being addressed. Many Christians wrongly assume this verse above to indicate “**the church, which is His body**” will be Raptured to “**kept from the hour of temptation**” (the Tribulation), but as you will see, this cannot be.

The key phrase “**BECAUSE thou hast Kept The Word**” indicates the **contingent requirement to keep the “Law of works”** is in force in order for one to be **saved** and “**kept**” from “**the hour of temptation.**” Being Law, this then cannot apply to “**the body of Christ**” under “**the gospel of the grace of God**” (Act 20:24). Paul writes that “nothing,” not even our failures “**can separate us from the love of God**” (Rom 8:35-39). So this verse applies only to a remnant of Israel. But, how will this remnant be “**kept**” from “**the hour of trial**”? As we’ve already studied, many of the believers of Israel are to be **secreted to safety for 3-1/2 years** (v14 below).

“When **The Dragon Saw That He Was Cast Unto The Earth, He Persecuted The Woman (Israel) Which Brought Forth The Man Child (Jesus, King of Israel).**¹⁴And to **the woman** (believing Israel, the Lamb’s Bride) **were Given Two Wings Of A Great Eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished For A Time, And Times, And Half A Time (3-1/2 years), from**

the face (expression) of THE SERPENT (Antichrist). ¹⁵ ***And THE SERPENT cast out of his mouth water (literal water) as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*** ¹⁶ ***And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*** (Rev 12:13-16)

Throughout the Tribulation the works of “the Law” **plus** faithfulness to **not** take the “*mark of the beast*” will be required for salvation. By contrast, Paul writes to the members of “***the body of Christ***”... “***But now (under grace) the righteousness of God Without The Law is manifested***” (Rom. 3:21); “***by grace are ye saved through faith (alone)***” (Eph 2:8); “***ye are sealed unto the day of redemption***” (Eph 4:30).

Men today are saved solely by faith in Christ; “being Justified FREELY By (God’s) Grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:24). This difference in the modes of salvation is yet another indication “the body of Christ” is to be Raptured before the horrendous Tribulation trials come upon all the Opeople on earth, including the new Tribulation believers, many of whom will to be “martyrs” (Rev 17:6).

Chapter 19

The Bride of Christ & The New Jerusalem

We need to *rightly divide* the Word, comparing Scripture with Scripture, in order to determine who the bride of Christ actually is. “***Study to shew thyself approved unto God...Rightly Dividing The Word of truth.***” (2 Tim 2:15). We must also apply the normal or *literal method of interpretation*, where applicable.

The term “the bride of Christ” does not appear anywhere in Scripture, but “*bride*” and “*bridegroom*,” “*wife*,” and “*husband*” are addressed in the O.T., three of the Gospels, and the Book of Revelation.

“***I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared AS a bride adorned for her husband.***” “***And he carried me (John) away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that Great City. The Holy Jerusalem, Descending out of Heaven From God.***” (Rev 21:2, 10)

Notably, the words *bride* and *bridegroom* appear nowhere in Paul’s thirteen epistles to “*the body of Christ*.” So, let’s see if the *marriage* of Christ applies to “*the body of Christ*,” or does it apply only to *faithful Israel*?

I must first address a couple common false arguments. Many misapply Ephesians 5:25, saying this refers to Christ and His bride. The issue at hand was about husbands; “...***Husbands, love your wives.***” Paul goes on to tell the Ephesian husbands to what measure they are to love their wives; “... ***AS Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.***” Paul used this *comparative simile* to describe the *husband’s proper love for his wife*, comparing it with ***Christ’s love in giving Himself for “the church, which is body of Christ”*** (Eph 1:22b-23a). The “*body of Christ*” is never anywhere referred to as the “bride of Christ.”

Some then may point to one other New Testament verse seeming to support their false notion that “*the church, which is the body of Christ*” is the Lord’s bride. Let’s look more closely at it. “***I (Paul) am jealous (zealous) over you (the church) with godly jealousy (zeal): for I have espoused you (Gk, joined you as members of His body) to one husband (Gk., aner, “man”), that I may present you AS a chaste virgin to Christ.***” (2 Cor 11:2 (KJV))

Here we have a translation issue. The word translated “***espoused’ you***” in the KJV can be translated “***joined you***”; and the word “***husband***” in the KJV is from the Greek “*aner*,” which is most often translated “***man***,” as in 150 other places. Paul is referencing the fact that it was he who taught the believers that they were *joined to the Lord*, now being “*one spirit*” with Him. **We are joined to Christ because Christ is “the head of the body,” not its husband.** Christ loves “*His body*” **AS a husband**

would. Believers are literally *joined* to Christ by receiving “*His Spirit*” into their “*spirit*” (1Cor 6:17; Rom 8:9-10). Paul’s mystery gospel is “*Christ in you*” (Col 1:27). Paul declared that this *intimate union of Christ and “His body”* came about when we were “*baptized into (Christ’s) one body*” (1Cor 12:13). The Lord Jesus made the church chaste (spotless, sinless) by His shed blood, so He can later “*present*” the “*church*” to “*Himself,*” “*unblameable,*” soon after its Rapture in heaven.

“²⁷ That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. (Ephesians 5:27) ²² ..., to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:22)

The “church” is not the Lord’s bride or counterpart, but *rather*, the church is literally and eternally “one with Christ,” as seen by the term His “*One body*” (Eph 4:4).

In contrast to these two verses, we’ll now explore some of the large number of Scriptures that clearly tell us that *only the faithful of Israel are to be counted as Christ’s “bride.”* The “*New Jerusalem*” is often equated with the “*bride*” because, as we will see, it will be the dwelling place of “*the Lamb’s Bride.*”

Christ’s *bride, the faithful overcomers of Israel*, will have made themselves ready by *faithful waiting*, while He was in “*a far country (heaven) (Matt 5:14).*” Christ will return with “*the Kingdom*” and eternally dwell with the *faithful believers of Israel in the massive “New Jerusalem,” in the Kingdom on the New Earth.*

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of The City Of My God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.” (Rev 3:12)

How do we know that City called the “New Jerusalem” is a literal physical city?

Many falsely *spiritualize* the “*city*” called “*New Jerusalem*” because Paul said “*the body of Christ,*” in which Christ now dwells, is “*the Temple of God.*” They confuse the *spiritual inheritance* of “*the body of Christ*” with the literal *City, the New Jerusalem.* In Hebrews 11 the **New Jerusalem** is seen as a physical “*city...whose builder and maker is God.*” ¹⁰*For he (Abraham) looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*” The New Jerusalem is described in Rev. 21:11-27 as having **physical length, width and height**, with twelve **physical gates**, being built of specific **precious stones** for its foundation and gates, etc. ¹⁶*... He hath prepared for them a CITY” (Heb 11:10, 16).* Who are “*they*” for whom “*He hath prepared...a city*”? As we will see, New Jerusalem is the eternal abode of the *faithful of Israel...Christ’s “bride.”*

All will agree that *faithfulness* is a key requirement for any good relationship. Hebrews 11 is about all the “*faithful,*” speaking of the Old Testament *faithful ones*, including Abraham who “*looked for a city.*” The New Jerusalem is prepared *for all the Old Testament faithful ones to enjoy*, but the resurrected *faithful* of Abraham’s seed will not only dwell therein, but they also will “*reign with Him (Christ)*” (Rev 20:6).

By contrast, the “*church, which is His body*” has no such promise of a city; rather we have been promised our home “*eternal in the heavens*” – **not on earth.** “*For our conversation (our citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. (Philip. 3:20). “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, We Have A Building (Gk. Oikodome, Home Built) of God, an House (Gk., Oikia, home) Not Made With Hands(non-material), ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS. (2 Cor 5:1)*

When we “*rightly divide*” the word of truth, *dispensationally* we can then clearly see and differentiate the Lord’s eternal plan and intent for “*the body of Christ*” versus that which He has for *Israel.* Let’s apply Paul’s *right dividing* principal to interpreting these Scriptures below in order to dispel some false notions.

We must begin by acknowledging that **Jesus of Nazareth** came in His earthly ministry specifically to **minister to Israel ONLY.**

“... ***I (Jesus) Am Not Sent But (exclusively) Unto the Lost Sheep of the House of ISRAEL.***” (Matthew 15:24). Paul wrote; “... ***Jesus Christ Was a Minister of the Circumcision (Israel) ...to confirm the promises made unto the fathers(of Israel)***” (Romans 15:8)

Matthew’s Gospel is mainly about Christ as the “King” and His “Kingdom” that is to come ***to earth***, as was long promised to the faithful of “***Israel.***” Christ will ultimately come and occupy King David’s throne (Luke 1:32-33) in the literal city of “New Jerusalem” in Israel. Recall the prayer Jesus gave His Israelite disciples. “***Thy KINGDOM COME. Thy will be done IN EARTH, as it is in heaven***” (Matthew 6:10).

“When” does the eternal “New Jerusalem” appear as coming down from heaven?

Many would say the New Jerusalem will appear *after* the Millennium, in the “eternal kingdom.” Actually, comparing Scripture with Scripture seems to make clear that the **New Jerusalem will appear in the Millennial Kingdom on earth, not long after physically Jesus’ 2nd Coming.** Much of what we read of in Rev 20-22 applies to the Millennial Kingdom, and you will see that there’s reasonable Scriptural proof.

We need to realize that Revelation 20:7-15 is parenthetical, it was inserted by John to carry on his discussion of the ultimate destiny of Satan, his cohorts, and all the unsaved who are all headed for “*the lake of fire.*”

“⁷And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, ⁸And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle (Armageddon): the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. ⁹And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints (of Israel) about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem): and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. ¹⁰And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever. ¹¹

And I saw a Great White Throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their (insufficient) works. ¹⁴And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And Whosoever Was Not Found Written In The Book Of Life Was Cast Into The Lake Of Fire.” (Rev 20:7-15)

Rev 21 then returns to the beginning of the Millennium, describing the “New Jerusalem” on the New Earth.

“¹And I Saw A New Heaven And A New Earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. ²And I John saw The Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared AS a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, The Tabernacle (habitation) Of God Is With Men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. ⁴And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. ⁵And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. ⁶And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. ⁷He that Overcometh SHALL inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. ⁸BUT the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” (Revelation 21:1-8)

Compare Revelation 21:1 (above) with Isaiah 65:17 (below). It is well known that Isaiah 65 describes the conditions on the earth *during the Millennium* wherein the “*sinner*” (v 20 below) **will still be present**. These sinners of course are those born during the Millennium with the Adamic “*sin nature*” (Eph 2:3).

“¹⁷For, behold, ***I Create New Heavens and a New Earth***: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. ¹⁸But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, ***behold, I create Jerusalem*** a rejoicing, and her people a joy. ¹⁹And ***I will rejoice IN Jerusalem***, and ***joy IN my people***: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. ²⁰There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child ***shall die an hundred years old***; but ***The Sinner*** being an hundred years old shall be accursed.” (Isa 65:17-20)

Isa. 65:20 (above) clearly indicates “*sinners*” (unbelievers) **will still be around on the “New Earth” (v17) so this must be in the Millennium**, not yet the eternal Kingdom wherein nothing defiled shall exist.

The ***New Jerusalem will come down to the “New Earth” in the Millennium***. The “New Earth” is the Greek, *kainos*, which means “*the refreshed earth*” (Rev 21:1-2, cf. Isa 65:17). To make the earth habitable again, the *earth* will need *refreshing*. There will be the awful pollution of the chemical and nuclear weapons likely to be used in the Tribulation wars, and the “*bitter waters*” of the earthquake and volcano judgments.

Christ will take His “*throne*” (Rev 20:11, above) in the “New Jerusalem,” and then also the twelve Apostles (Not Paul) will sit on their “*twelve thrones*” (Matt 19:28) of authority during the Millennial Kingdom. The *resurrected faithful of Israel* will be the “*priests*” and “*servants of God*.” They will function as co-regents with Christ in the Millennium and eternal state. “***Blessed and holy is he that hath part in The First Resurrection, they Shall Be Priests of God and of Christ, and Shall Reign with Him a Thousand Years***” (Rev 20:6).

The “New Covenant” will be God’s standard of righteousness in the Millennium, being based upon *the riches of the cross that are derived from Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection as “the life-giving Spirit” (1Cor 15:45)*. There’s only one New Covenant. The “*body of Christ*” was the first to enjoy *the spiritual blessings of “the cross,”* which is also the core truth of the New Covenant for Israel. The same cross blessings will be applicable to all believers living in the Kingdom age.

Israel will have added benefit of the New Covenant relative to *reigning on earth* as a blessing to all the families of *the earth*. Rev. 22:14-15 references the New Jerusalem during the Millennial Kingdom, in which there is “*the river of life and flowing from the Throne of God*” and the “*Tree of life*” for the *healing (restoration) of the Nations (Gk is ethnos, Gentiles)*.

“¹⁴ ***Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates Into THE CITY***. ¹⁵For ***WITHOUT (Outside the City) are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie***.” (Rev 22:14-15) It’s possible that the reigning ones of Israel will likely be governing the “New Jerusalem,” making sure ***no sinner enters the City during the Millennium***.

Now, setting aside the matter of the New Jerusalem on the New Earth, let’s look into the *marriage* of Christ and His *bride*. Christ is “ *betrothed,*” to the *faithful of Israel*. Jesus gave His followers parables related to this, including the parable of the “*ten virgins*.” This parable states the requirements of Christ’s “*betrothed*” for their ultimate union in “*marriage*” in the Kingdom. That parable may be summarized by these few verses.

“Then shall the ***Kingdom of (from) Heaven*** be likened unto ***Ten Virgins***, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the ***bridegroom***. ²And ***five of them were wise, and five were foolish***. ³They that were foolish took their lamps, and took ***no oil*** with them: ⁴But the wise ***took oil in their vessels*** with their lamps.” (Matt 25:1-4)

“And while they (the foolish virgins) went to buy (oil), ***the Bridegroom came; and They That Were Ready Went In With Him To The Marriage: and THE DOOR WAS SHUT***.” (Matthew 25:10)

*“Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour the **Son of man cometh**. For the **kingdom of (from) heaven** is as a man **travelling into a far country**, who **called his own servants**, and **delivered unto them His Goods**.” (Matthew 25:13-14. cf. v15-30)*

This (above) is the context of the 2nd Coming of Christ, as the **bridegroom of believing Israel**, as His **betroted**. Of the ten virgins, only five are said to **make themselves “ready” to “meet the Bridegroom.”** The requirement of making herself “ready” is in keeping with Israel’s prophetic program insofar as they were required to **“overcome, seek,” and “endure to the end,** etc. (Matt. 6:33; 24:13; 1 John 4, 5).” This contingent requirement corresponds to James’ **“faith without works is dead,”** as he wrote to **“the lost sheep of Israel.” (James 1:1).** In **making herself ready by remaining faithful to the coming bridegroom,** many of the **bride** no doubt will die as martyrs during the Tribulation.

In the “Parable of the Talents” Jesus is seen metaphorically as the **“man travelling into a far country” (Mat 25:14).** This speaks of Christ returning to heaven. Recall that Jesus said, **“... I go to prepare a place for you (John 14:2b).** Before leaving, He **“delivered to”** His people **“His goods” (v14),** which is the **“gospel of the Kingdom,”** and also sufficient **“talents” (v15, et al)** to carry out His instruction. Then, **“After a long time” (v19)** He’ll return to receive the return on His **“gospel of the Kingdom”** that He invested with them. He will **expect a return on that “Gospel of the Kingdom” that He deposited with His “servants.”** We know the record is that Israel soon failed; but in the Tribulation they will preach the **“Gospel of the Kingdom.”** Many will believe and receive the **“gospel of the Kingdom”** and then be martyred before His return to earth, but they will be raised to **“reign with Him.”**

Jesus’ title in Matt 25:13 (above) is the **“Son of Man,”** indicative of His humanity. He will **appear physically as “a man”** to reign eternally on the **physical earth.** By contrast, Jesus is **NEVER once** referenced in Paul’s epistles as the **“Son of Man”** “because He is not to be seen by the church as “the man, Jesus of Nazareth.” Paul wrote to the heaven-bound **“the body of Christ.”** Saying; **“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, Though We Have Known Christ After The Flesh (as Jesus of Nazareth), Yet Now Henceforth Know We Him No More” (2 Cor 5:16).**

Paul’s epistles never references Jesus of Nazareth’s words or doings. Rather, Paul preached Christ; crucified, risen, and coming again. Paul wrote **“NOW The Lord (Jesus) Is That Spirit” (2Cor 3:17),** and that Christ is the unprophesied **“Head of the body, the church” (Col 1:18)** that is heaven-bound, to dwell with Him **“eternal in the heaven” (1Cor 5:1, Phil 3:20-21).**

The “bride” is determined *conditionally*, based upon **“enduring (faithful) to the end” (Matt 10:22).** This conditionality proves the “bride” can’t be **“the Body of Christ.”** We as grace believers are saved **“by grace through faith” alone.** We’re eternally saved and secure, being **“sealed by the Spirit” (Eph 1:13, 4:30).** We possess the indwelling **“Spirit of Christ” (Col 1:27, Rom 8:9-10)** and have the inner assurance that we are His children. Our salvation relationship today has no contingency other than believing (Act 16:31). As **“His body”** we are all immediately **“accepted in the Beloved” (Eph 1:6)** and **“complete in Him” (Col. 2:10).**

Yet many Christians today wrongly believe **“the church, which is body of Christ”** is **“the bride of Christ.”** Our relationship is with **“(Christ) the Head of the body, the church” (Colossians 1:18).** As members of His **“One body” (Eph 4:4a)** our relationship” is more intimate than one of marriage – **we’re literally One With Him.**

How can we say Israel is “the Lambs Betrothed, Bride and Wife? Pay attention to these Scriptures.

“... behold, I will allure her (Israel) ... ¹⁶it shall be at that day saith the LORD, that thou shalt call me Ishi (husband); and shalt call me no more Baali (master)... ¹⁹And I Will BETROTH Thee Unto Me For Ever.” (Hosea 2:14, 16, 19) **“Return thou backsliding Israel ... Turn O backsliding children, saith the LORD, for I AM MARRIED UNTO YOU.” (Jer 3:12, 14)** **“For Thy Maker Is Thine (Israel’s) Husband; The LORD Of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.” (Isa 54:5)** **“Thou (Israel) ... shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For THY MAKER IS THY HUSBAND. The Lord of hosts is His name.” (Isa 54:4-5)** **“⁹ And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee THE BRIDE, THE LAMB’S WIFE.” Revelation 21:9 (KJV)**

Sound Biblical interpretation says we must realize *Jesus of Nazareth spoke to Israel, about Israel*. Each of Jesus' parables has one main point; in this case of the "Ten Virgins" it is the *required preparedness of the faithful of Israel*. The necessary "oil" is at the center of understanding the meaning of this parable. Among several significant things, the "oil" represents holy consecration, dedication. This is seen in the Exo 40:9-16, which deals with consecrating the Tabernacle and the priesthood. All ten virgins were called to wait for the bridegroom, yet the lack of oil among five of the virgins does not suggest forgetfulness but willful neglect, **unfaithfulness**, thus **breaking the betrothal**. Every genuine believer of Israel will have the oil of the "anointing" (1Jn 2:27).

The Bible is clear that *Israel is "Betrothed (engaged)" to Christ*. Yet Israel must meet the requirement of *making her self ready* by being **faithful to the Lord while He is away**. To better understand, let's look into **faithfulness** in the matter of **betrothal**. Isaiah and the other prophets wrote of Israel as the Lord's "**betrothed**" and also His "**wife**" at the same time, thus needing some explanation.

Being *betrothed* was similar to our present day engagement, except though **betrothal** took place **before the actual marriage ceremony, it also was considered binding as being "married."** In ancient Israel a woman who was "*betrothed*" was then considered the "*wife*" of the man she was "*betrothed*" to; she was bound to be **faithful to him**. If she had sexual intercourse during this period she was considered an adulteress as if she was married, and was to be "*stoned to death*" (Deut. 22:23-25). If she was not caught in the actual act, but found **not to be a virgin**, the husband could dissolve the marriage by quietly by signing a bill of divorce.

The *betrothal* period usually lasted 6 months and sometimes one year; it was a *binding promise between the bridegroom and bride to marry*. Often the *betrothed* woman would not see her *betrothed* husband until the day of the actual marriage ceremony. Upon completion of the **betrothal** ceremony, the couple usually returned to their respective family's homes for one year. This period was to give the husband an opportunity to prepare a home for his bride. This sounds like the Lord saying, "***I Go and Prepare A Place For You (Israel, His betrothed), I Will Come Again, and Receive You Unto Myself...***" (John 14:3)

This time before the marriage ceremony was also to **ensure that the woman had been faithful**, and she was not with child. The Ten Virgins parable is near the end of the Olivet discourse. Jesus addressed **faithfulness**, teaching His disciples the importance of **prudence** in the **betrothal** relationship.

After her **betrothal** to Joseph, Mary, the mother of Jesus, spent 3 months with Elizabeth (Luke 1:56), then returning to her home, not yet seeing Joseph. Of course, it was during this time of **betrothal** that Mary was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Mary returned to Joseph pregnant. This was all before she and Joseph had come together in the intimacy of the marriage (Matt 1:18, below). Joseph thought to "**put her away privily** (v19)," but "*the angel of the Lord*" intervened, revealing "**that which is conceived in her (Mary) is of the Holy Ghost** (v20)."

¹⁸Now **the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused (betrothed) to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.** ¹⁹ Then **Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily.** ²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, **the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost (Matt 1:18-20).**

It's in this regard of **betrothal** that Christ, as the committed Bridegroom of Israel, has temporarily returned to heaven to "*prepare a place*" for His *bride* in the Kingdom to come to earth. Since this is the "**kingdom of heaven**," when it is brought to the earth, it will be **like heaven on earth** in the Millennium. As the Tribulation period runs its course, those of **Israel will be observed to determine who among them has been "faithful" to "the commandments of God"** (Rev 12:17) contained in the "**gospel of the Kingdom**" (John 14:1-3 cf. Luke 19:11-27). These **faithful believers of Israel's "gospel of the Kingdom"** will have thereby made themselves "*ready*" for the coming of Christ, their "**Bridegroom**."

"while they went to buy (oil), the Bridegroom Came; and They That Were Ready went In With Him To The Marriage: and The Door Was Shut. Afterward came also the OTHER VIRGINS, saying, Lord,

Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not (I'm not intimate with you)." (Matt 25:10-12)

Who are the "other Virgins" of Matt 25:11? They are the bridesmaids, the **saved believing Gentiles** who as proselytes received "*the gospel of the Kingdom*" during the Tribulation. They are saved to the Kingdom but they are not of the "*bride*."

"*The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold* (divinity). ¹⁴*She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.* ¹⁵*With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: They Shall Enter Into The King's Palace.*" (Psalm 45:13-15)

The Virgin bride also has Gentile "*companions that follow her.*" These "*companions ... follow her (Israel)*" in her ministry as "*kings and priests*" in the King's Palace of the Millennial kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom is the world-wide "Kingdom of God." The people of the *believing Gentile nations* will follow Jews to the "*House of the God of Jacob.*" The nation of Israel is God's chosen elect (Isaiah 41:8-9) and as His "*priests,*" they will give instruction to ALL nations (Gentiles) in "*the Word of the Lord*" (Mic 4:2)

"(God) *hast made us (Israel) unto our God Kings And Priests: and We Shall Reign On The Earth.*" (Rev 5:10) "*Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations (Gentiles), even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We (the Gentile proselytes) will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.*" (Zech. 8:23)

"*In days to come the mountain (kingdom) of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains (kingdoms), and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples (Gentiles) shall stream to it,* ²*and many nations shall come and say: 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the House Of The God Of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways, and that we may walk in his paths.'* For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." (Micah 4:1-2)

The ultimate goal of O.T. prophecy was ALWAYS the eternal Kingdom "*under... heaven* (Dan7:27, below), and **recovering dominion over the whole earth.** "*he (Jesus) said unto them, When ye (you of Israel) pray, say, **Our Father** which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so IN EARTH" (Luke 11:2). After Jesus' resurrection He proceeded to teach His disciples for "forty days," speaking almost exclusively of "*things pertaining to the Kingdom Of God*" (Acts 1:3).*

Daniel wrote prophetically of Israel's long sought "*kingdom*" to come "*under the whole heaven,*" wherein the faithful of Israel are "*the people of the saints of the most High*" (v27 below).

"*And in the days of these (Gentile) kings shall the **GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM,** which **Shall Never Be Destroyed:** and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these (Gentile) kingdoms (on earth), and it shall stand for ever. (Daniel 2:44) "*And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the **Kingdom UNDER the whole HEAVEN, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, Whose Kingdom Is An Everlasting Kingdom, and all (other) dominions shall serve and obey him...***" (Dan 7:27-28)*

Chapter 20

"In My Father's House"

"Replacement theology" is the erroneous view that the New Testament church replaces and/or supersedes the nation Israel. This view says the church is the new and true spiritual Israel and that Israel will not literally

experience its prophesied restoration to the long promised eternal kingdom on the New Earth.

We as believers should never buy into this false concept that has permeated much of the church since the days of Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine of Hippo, et al (~100 - 400AD).
Replacement

theology is an established fundamental doctrine of the Catholic Church as seen here below.

"... In fact, from the beginning of his ministry, the Lord Jesus instituted the Twelve (apostles) as THE SEEDS OF THE NEW ISRAEL and the beginning of the Sacred Hierarchy (of the Roman church)." (Excerpt,

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #877, parenthesis added)

This dangerous false concept is also prevalent among many in the Protestant church-at-large, particularly among the Charismatics and Pentecostals. It's also known as "dominion theology." It teaches that Israel has no further

place in God's plans and that when Israel came into judgment for rejecting the Messiah, they were cut off forever and the promises that had been made to her then came to belong to the Church. Yet Paul tells us Israel is

blinded only for a limited time. "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, (only) until the fulness of

the Gentiles be come in." (Rom 11:25 (KJV)

From their position, "dominion theology" is belief in a "covenant theology." But dominion theology goes beyond traditional covenant theology, teaching that the church is to be governed by the same laws, is subject to the same

curse, and is promised the same blessings as Israel. As a result, it makes no distinction between the church and Israel (i.e., the church has become "spiritual Israel"). Because they do not follow Paul's admonition to

"rightly divide" the Bible they perpetuate this confused teaching. Paul clearly teaches us what applies to "the body of Christ" versus that which applies to national Israel only.

Since 75% of the Bible concerns Israel, thus many then suffer by having to spiritualize most of the Bible. They presume that the promised blessings that belong to Israel now belong to the church as the spiritual Israel.

Sadly, this lie then serves to condemn and/or destroy the faith of many believers. Many believers today listen to these lies and proceed to claim Israel's promises... but they soon find it doesn't work for them. Some of these are self-condemned, being told it didn't work only because they did not have enough faith. This is a treacherous falsehood being perpetrated by Satan through the deceived leaders of the church today.

Such "dominionist" theology essentially negates God's promised restoration of literal Israel in the "kingdom" on the New Earth, wherein the faithful of Israel will reign over "the land" and the whole earth. This was God's

promise to Abraham's familial "seed," the children of Israel, as an everlasting inheritance.

So they essentially say, "When the Bible says Israel, it means the church to day." No! The Bible means what it says, literally. Once we abandon the literal interpretation of the Bible in favor of spiritualizing the Bible we open ourselves to any idea that may arise popularly; we've then departed from the Word of God.

William R Newell, the former assistant superintendent of Moody Bible Institute, under R.A. Torrey, wrote this below. Consider his words regarding the New Jerusalem as a literal City on the New Earth.

1. The New Jerusalem is a literal city because of the literalness of its description. If gold does not mean gold, nor pearls - pearls, nor precious stones - stones, nor exact measurements - real dimensions, then the Bible means nothing accurate nor reliable. There is no one on earth who can assure your heart concerning the meaning of these "symbols" - if they are symbols! Nowhere in God's Word, for instance, is there any account of the "symbolism" of precious stones. Twelve such stones are found in the high priest's 'four-square' breastplate (Exo 28:15-21): sardius, topaz, carbuncle, emerald, sapphire, diamond, jacinth, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, jasper. No one doubts that these were literal stones; but to deny that they are literal stones in Revelation, and to admit them in Exodus as literal, is not only absurd, but unbelieving.

2. A second reason to consider the city a literal one is that child-like faith in reading the account always regards it as such. As the little girl asked her mother concerning the preacher who said that our Lord's words in John 14, "I will come again," did not mean that He would come back in person: "Mamma, if Jesus did not mean what He said, why didn't He say what He meant?"

3. Abraham and the patriarchs "looked for a city," not a state of mind! The sublime faith of Abraham led him to leave a city in the most remarkable civilization known on earth, and become a stranger and pilgrim of the earth, caring only for a cave in which to bury his dead; "for he looked for the city that has the foundations, whose architect and maker is God." Abraham will be satisfied with nothing short of a place, such as he looked for.

4. In all other parts of the Bible, simple faith in God's statements is asked from man; why not then in Revelation 21, of all places, here at the end of God's book! "Wherefore do questionings arise in your hearts the Lord asked, when He presented Himself in a risen body in the Upper Room (Luke 24:38)?" But if reasonings and doubts of the reality and literalness of His body were excluded then, when the human mind would naturally be astonished, how much less can questionings and doubts be admitted as to the literalness of the marvelous city of Revelation 21, which is to be the eternal home of our Lord's risen body, and that of His (kingdom) saints in glorified bodies?

5. If the New Jerusalem is not to be taken literally, we cannot claim that the Millennial Jerusalem of Ezekiel 20, 40, 48 and Zechariah 14 can be literal. But to deny these is to abandon faith in the accuracy of God's Word.

6. In this book of the Revelation the former Jerusalem is literal (11: 8); and also "Babylon, the Great" (8:10). Indeed both Jerusalem (the 'great city'), and Babylon, were the objects of the last fearful earthquake (the former partial, the latter final) of Revelation 16:19. Just so also, as the old earth which disappeared was literal, and the new earth which takes its place is literal and substantial, so also must the New Jerusalem be.

7. The unfolding of divine things in the Bible is precisely contrary to the idea that in order to have spirituality, material things must be left behind. The old Manichaeian heresy (to which Augustine subscribed) governs millions who call themselves Christian; though it is a Satanic lie, and pagan, and utterly anti-biblical. The Bible leads on to a literal and blessed home of the redeemed (of that age), possessed of bodies like Christ's body – real

and holy, incorruptible, immortal."

It is true that we as members of "the body of Christ" are a heavenly, heaven-bound people, having an invisible spiritual union with the Lord as our eternal reality in "heavenly places" (Eph 1:3). However, this doesn't negate the Lord's promises for His earthly people, the believers of Israel. One of the greatest of the Lord's promises concerns the literal restoration, and their inheritance of, the eternal, physical, "kingdom of God" on the New Earth, in which the faithful of Israel will "co-reign" with Christ (Rev 5:10, 20:6) over the Gentiles.

Now with the foregoing aside, let us proceed to discuss the Father's house. Jesus of Nazareth came to earth the 1st time saying "I must be about my Father's business" (Luke 2:49b).

In the parable below Jesus is seen metaphorically as "a certain nobleman" who distributed all that He had to His servants, expecting them to produce a gain for Him by investing all that He had given them. As noted in the parable the "certain nobleman" returned as Christ will ultimately return, with "the kingdom" - for the faithful of Israel.

"... A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. (Luke 19:12). "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, Having Received The Kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading (investing)." (Luke 19:15)

Then in Luke 19:16-19 Jesus went on to say the faithful believers of Israel will become the literal local governors and mayors of "the Kingdom," which will be worldwide (cf., Matthew 25:23).

In John 14:1-3 (below) Jesus was speaking to "the twelve" Apostles, who He sent exclusively to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt 10:5-6) with the "gospel of the kingdom." Jesus was speaking again concerning His going and His returning to the believers of Israel, with "the Kingdom" that includes the "Father's house." The "Father's house" concerns the literal physical "house of God" to come to the New Earth with "the Kingdom."

"1Let not your heart be troubled: ye (Israel) believe in God, believe also in me. In My Father's House Are Many Mansions (Gk., mone, abodes, residences) 2If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to

prepare (make ready) a place for you. 3And if I GO and prepare (make ready) a place for you, I Will Come Again, and Receive You Unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3)

His disciples that, "In my Father's house (household) are many mansions (abodes or dwelling places)" (John 14:2). Also in the "Fathers house" will be the "throne of David" (Psalm 132:11) for Jesus Himself and the "twelve thrones" of authority for "the twelve" Apostles.

"Jesus said unto Them (The Twelve), Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man (Jesus in His resurrected humanity) shall sit in the throne of his glory, Ye Also

Shall Sit Upon Twelve Thrones, judging THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL." (Matt 19:28).

The dead faithful of Israel are destined to be resurrected to serve the Lord in the Father's House. Contrary to then common belief, their spirits will not remain in heaven forever. They will come to earth with Him and receive

their new spirit-bodies. Jesus' words, "Thy kingdom come... in earth" was as God promised Abraham and his seed as "an everlasting inheritance" (Gen 17:8, 48:4); to be "heirs of the world" (Rom 14:3). The centerpiece of "the

Kingdom of God" is to be the "Holy City," the "New Jerusalem"; it will come down from heaven to the New Earth and be the eternal command center of the Lord over "the heavens and the earth."

These scriptures describe the role of the resurrected believers of Israel in "ruling and reigning" in the Millennial kingdom.

- * The resurrected believers of Israel will co-rule as kings (Job 36:7).
- * The resurrected believers of Israel will be judges, officers, and magistrates (Psalm 149, Isa 60:17).
- * The resurrected believers of Israel will be teachers: (Psalm 37:29-31, Jeremiah 3:15).
- * The resurrected believers of Israel Tribulation martyrs will serve in God's Temple: (Rev 5:10, 20:6).

The New Jerusalem will be the center of worship for "all nations" during "the Feast of Tabernacles," which is also known as the "Feast of Ingathering" (Lev 23:34 <http://www.ucg.org/bible/1/LEV/23/34> - v34

Exodus 23:16) during the Millennium.

"And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations (Gentiles) which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will NOT come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do NOT come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles." (Zechariah 14:16-19) By contrast, Christ's mainly Gentile "church, which is the body of Christ" looks for Christ's coming at the Rapture to bring them "with Him" to dwell "eternal in the heavens" (2Cor 5:1).

"For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (Philippians 3:20-21)

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, Eternal In The Heavens."(2 Corinthians 5:1)

Jesus spoke of the physical Temple in His day, Herod's Temple, as the "My Father's house." This is where Jesus purged the Temple of the money changers. "passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem" (John 2:16); "(saying)...make not My Father's House an house of merchandise." (John 2:13). This was a sort of replica of Solomon's Temple, also known as the First Temple. It was a literal Temple and built in ancient Jerusalem, on the Temple Mount, also known as Mount Zion. The Temple proper consisted of its "Outer Court," "Holy Place" and "the Holiest of All," This main building was between the outer altar, where most sacrifices were made, and inside at the far end of the building was the "Holy of Holies," It originally containing "the Ark of the Covenant." The "Holy Place" contained a number of sacred ritual objects including the seven branched "candlestick," the "altar for incense," also called the "Golden Altar," and there was the "table of the showbread."

"The Temple" refers to a complex with two courts surrounding the Temple proper. The "Inner Court" (1 Kings 6:36), or "Court of the Priests" (2 Chr. 4:9), was separated from the space beyond by a wall of three courses of "hewn stone," surmounted by "cedar beams" (1 Kings 6:36). It contained the "Altar of burnt-offering" (2 Chr. 15:8), the "Brazen Sea laver" (4:2-5, 10) and ten other lavers (1 Kings 7:38, 39). A "brazen altar" of sacrifice stood before the Temple (2 Kings 16:14), its dimensions were 20 Hebrew cubits square (34 feet) and 10 cubits (17 feet) high (2 Chr. 4:1). These were used daily to make sacrifices for the sins and to make offerings for the people

as were prescribed in detail by the Lord through instruction He gave to Moses.

Then the "Great Court" surrounded the whole Temple (2 Chr. 4:9). It was here that people assembled to worship (Jeremiah 19:14; 26:2). The Temple also included a huge complex of abutting structures, with massive walls in which were "chambers" (dwelling places). Didn't Jesus say "In My Father's house are many mansions (abodes)?"

In the "New Jerusalem" of the Millennium there will be daily sacrifice (cf. Eze 43:5-11), but not to pay for sins because Jesus Christ has already given His life as the "One" perfect sacrifice - the "Lamb of God" "without spot and blemish." Jesus as "The Lamb of God" fully satisfied God's righteous demand to take away all the sins of all believers for eternity. So, these Millennial sacrifices are only to remind the believers of the reality of

Christ as Savior, and to also to point the unsaved born during of the Millennium to Christ. Isaiah is prophetic of these sacrifices in the Millennium. "Even them will I (The Lord) bring to my holy mountain (Zion), and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their (Old Testament) sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for ALL people." (Isaiah 56:7) In likeness to the original Temple's servants, I believe the "1st resurrection" (Rev 20:6) kingdom believers will be the servants of God as "priests of God" (ibid). They will have glorified spirit-bodies such as Jesus had after His resurrection, and they shall "reign with Him" on earth (Rev 20:6, 5:10) and occupy their abodes ("chambers" Ex 40:44-48) in the final Temple of the "New Jerusalem." Even the first Temple was an imperfect metaphor as it was a "figure of the true" (Heb 9:24) Temple of the New Jerusalem. Only believers will enter the Kingdom's New Jerusalem, having believed the Kingdom gospel of Christ's one sacrifice at the cross. Solomon's Temple was built with "chambers" in the massive walls of the Temple as dwellings to house the priests and servants of God. These "abodes" specifically included "a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick." "Let us make A LITTLE CHAMBER, I pray thee, ON THE WALL; and let us set for him there a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick..." (2 Kings 4:10a). In John 14:2 Jesus referenced the eternal Temple, where the word "mansions" is better is translated "abodes, dwelling places," as were these "chambers" in Solomon's Temple.

God really does mean what He says. The Lord's appointed prophet of Israel, Ezekiel, described the Millennial Temple complex, in 40:44-48, with its "chambers" or apartments for "the singers" and "priests." Those who have discovered the key to interpreting God's Word properly understand the Bible in a normal/literal way. They will see that the Ezekiel 40-48 description of the Millennial Temple is not a burden, but a delight in truth. What joy the whole Bible brings us when we realize that God did not give us any portion of His Word to confuse us, but rather to enlighten us.

"15And without the inner gate were the chambers of the singers in the inner court, which was at the side of the north gate; and their prospect was toward the south: one at the side of the east gate having the prospect toward the north. And he said unto me, This chamber, whose prospect is toward the south, is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the house. And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the Lord to minister unto him. So he measured the court, an hundred cubits long, and an hundred cubits broad,

foursquare; and the altar that was before the house. And he brought me to the porch of the house, and measured each post of the porch, five cubits on this side, and five cubits on that side: and the breadth of the gate was three cubits on this side, and three cubits on that side." (Ezekiel 40:44-48) "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." (Rev. 7:15)

Thus, the elements of the literal Old Testament physical Temple were "Figures of the True" (KJV) Temple in the kingdom on the New Earth.

"For Christ (the Messiah) has not entered into a sanctuary made with [human] hands, Only a Copy and Pattern and Type Of The True One, but [He has entered] into heaven itself, now to appear in the [very] presence of

God on our behalf." (Hebrews 9:24 AMP)

The Lord is preparing a Temple of priestly service and authority for the resurrected faithful of Israel who will ultimately co-rule with Him "over the nations" (Rev 2:26, 20:6, 5:10) on earth in His eternal Kingdom. They shall "bless," teach, and lead "all the families (nations) of the earth" (Gen 12:3).

Similarly, the Lord will by then have already set in authority those of "the body of Christ" who will dwell with Him "eternal in the heavens" (2Cor 5:1) Recovery of the heavens will have begun with the Rapture of the believers "saved by grace through faith (alone)" (Eph 2:8-9) several years before the Millennial Kingdom. Only some those of the church who have learned to endure with Him in this life will "reign with Him" in the heavens. Paul writes, "If we suffer (endure), we shall also reign with him... (2 Tim 2:12a). All of the saved are eternally saved and secure, even if they do not reign in heaven. Again, let me make clear that every believer who has received Christ as Savior is eternally saved, while only some will "reign with Him" in heaven. The "hope" (expectation) of ALL the members of "the Church, which is His body" is seen by those who "love His appearing" at the Rapture. Paul wrote that "ALL them that love His appearing," who will receive the "crown of righteousness," which is Christ's righteousness.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I (Paul) have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, BUT to ALL Them also THAT LOVE HIS APPEARING (manifestation)." (2 Tim. 4:6-8)

The Rapture of "the body of Christ" will be immediately followed by the "Judgment Seat of Christ" (1 Cor 3:9-15). What is being judged is not our sin - our sins were dealt with once and for all time by "the blood of Christ." What will be judged is how, after our salvation, we've proceeded to walk with the Lord - did we build upon the foundation of Christ's salvation with that which endures, such as incorruptible gold, silver, precious stones), or did we squander our time laboring in self-loving self-serving works, which are likened to "wood, hay, stubble"? The "gold" speaks of Christ's "divine life" within us, and the "silver" speaks of His redemptive work for us, and these should result in our lives being transformed by His Spirit into the "precious stone" of His living temple, building up "the church, which is His body."

The judgment of believers at the "Judgment Seat of Christ" has the outcome not of life or death; but some will be "saved; yet so as by fire." I believe the rewards to be gained include positions and assignments in the Lord's heavenly government where some will co-rule with Christ in the heavens.

Part 21

What Are the Next "Things to Come"?

"Eschatology" is defined as the study of *"things to come as relating to the ultimate destiny of mankind and world as we know it."* This entire series has been *eschatological*, examining not only the Rapture but all the key events *to come*, as best we can see by closely examining both the Old and New Testaments. In this installment I offer a sequential timeline of the *"things to come"* as I currently see it. In the next installment I will offer a further "Explanation of Things to Come."

So what does the Bible tell us about the things that are to come after the Rapture?

God has withheld His wrath even while man has long-declared war on God. Rather, God freely offers all mankind full salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. We've already well established that the Rapture of "*the church, which His body*" is *imminent*. After the Rapture of the church occurs, the long-prophesied seven-year Tribulation judgments will come upon the world, setting the stage for the Lord Jesus' 2nd coming to earth to establish His kingdom.

The **Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war** is also *imminent*. Regarding this soon coming war, Isaiah 17:1 says Syria's capital, Damascus, will "*be a ruinous heap.*" The events of our day certainly indicate this could occur very soon. Both the Rapture and Psalm 83 war will occur sooner rather than later, but it's not entirely clear to me whether the Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 war is before the Rapture or after the Rapture of "*the church which His body.*"

Then the **Gog & Magog War** of Eze. 38-39 will occur, but only after both the Rapture and Psalm 83 War have occurred. These three events will occur before the Tribulation. In the Gog & Magog War a Russian and Iranian led coalition will attack Israel while Israel will be at that time militarily secure, then dwelling "*safely...without walls*" (Eze 38:11, 14). Israel will be seemingly secure at the time of this attack because Israel will have attained regional superiority over its immediate neighbor states as result of its God-given triumph in the earlier Psalm 83 War. I will expand on this in the next installment of this series.

In all, three wars will follow the Psalm 83 War. All three will occur *after* the Rapture. 1) The "War of Gog and Magog" will occur just before the Tribulation. 2) The following war, Armageddon, will occur is at the end of the Tribulation. 3) A final brief war will occur when Satan is loosed at the end of the Millennium.

Below is the order of the soon coming end-time events, as I see it. I'm quite certain that all these wars and events listed below, except possibly the Psalm 83/Isaiah 17 War, will occur after the Rapture of "*the church, which is the body of Christ,*" but I will list the Rapture as being first to come.

1. **Rapture** of the "*church, His body*" to dwell eternally in heaven (1Thes 4:13-18, 1Cor 15:51-58, 2Cor 5:1).
2. **The "Psalm 83 War"** will result in Israel growing territorially by victoriously subjugating most of the "inner ring" of its surrounding Arab neighbors (Syria, Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan; etc (cf., Psa 83, Isa 17).
3. **The "War of Gog and Magog"** (Ezek. 38-39) - In this war the more remote Arab nations, led by Russia and Iran, will come against Israel and set the stage for the Tribulation. God will intervene to smash Israel's largely Muslim attackers (Ezek 38:18-23), as He will in the earlier "Psalm 83 War."
4. **Then the Tribulation begins when Israel signs a security covenant with Antichrist** (Dan 9:27).
5. **After 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation, Antichrist will reveal himself** when he as "³that man of sin be revealed...⁴who... exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (2 Thessalonians 2:4)
6. **The "Battle of Armageddon" will end the Tribulation.** Russia, among ALL the nations of the earth, including the "*kings of the east, (China)*" will rebel against Antichrist's rule and the Lord's Israel.
7. **Then the Lord will return to rescue Israel and set up His Millennial Kingdom** (Rev 16:12-16).
8. In the course of "*the end of the world (Gk., aion, current age)*" (Mat 13:39) the "**Wheat and Tares**" will be harvested (cut down). The Lord's angels will harvest out and "*burn*" the religious "*tares,*" (the imposters); "*out*" keeping them from "*His Kingdom*" (Matt 13:41). The "wheat," the believing martyrs, will be gathered to the Lord's "*barn*" (Matt 13:30, *apotheke, repository, i.e., paradise*), awaiting the Kingdom.
9. **Antichrist and the False Prophet** are then "*cast into the lake of fire.*" (Rev 20:10)

10. The **Sheep and Goats** of the "**Nations**" (*Gk. ethnos, "the Gentiles"*) who survive the Tribulation are judged by Jesus Himself at the beginning of the Millennium (Matt. 25:31-46). Only Gentiles who believed to help Israel (Matt 25:34-40) are saved and blessed to enter the Millennial Kingdom (v34).
11. **Satan is "bound a thousand years"** (Rev 20:2-3).
12. The current **earth will become "renewed"** ("*New Earth*" (*New, Gk., kainos, refreshed*))" (Rev 21:1-8).
13. The city "**New Jerusalem**" appears "*coming down from God out of heaven*" to the New Earth (Rev 21:2).
"The Bride," the "Lamb's wife," is seen in the Holy City New Jerusalem (Rev 21:10). Access to the city New Jerusalem's "*River of life*" and "*Tree of life*" on the New Earth will be available to *all believers* for their *healing restoration*. "*he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*" ² *In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*(Gentiles)." (Rev 22:1-2)
14. The **Temple** within the **City** will be restricted to the **co-reigning resurrected saints of Israel** as His *kings, priests and servants* (cf., Rev 5:10, 20:6; 21:8). They will reign, preach, teach, and lead all men on the New Jerusalem (cf., Zech 8:23, Micah 4:1-2).
15. **Satan will be "loosed" after 1,000 years (Rev 20:7)**. He will stir the newborn unbelievers of the Millennium to the final war. This Millennium will end when **ALL** the rebellious attackers are destroyed; "*fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them,*" (Rev 20:7-9).
16. **Satan is "cast into the lake of fire."** (Rev 20:10). His job as the adversary is ended.
17. "**The Great White Throne**" judgment immediately follows. **ALL the lost dead of ALL ages** will be resurrected from Hades to "*stand*" before the "**Great White Throne**" to be judged (Rev. 20:11-15).
18. At the "**Great White Throne**" judgment **ALL who appear before the Throne to be judged by the Lord will find that their names are "not found written in the Lamb's book of life"** (Rev 20:12). They will be "*cast into the lake of fire*" (Rev 20:14) and experience "*the second death*" of Rev 20:6.
19. **Death and Hell (Hades) are "cast into the lake of fire"** (Rev 20:14)
20. **All the living believers of the Millennium, and the co-reigning resurrected saints of Israel, will go on to enter Eternal Kingdom on the New Earth.** In the Tribulation the curse will have only partially been removed; in the Eternal Kingdom it will be fully removed (Isa 11:1-9).

³ **And THERE SHALL BE NO MORE CURSE: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants** (*the 1st resurrection believers of Israel, c.f., Rev 20:6*) **shall serve him:** ⁴ **And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads** (*minds*). ⁵ **And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign forever and ever.** (Revelation 22:3-5)

Then "*the earth*" will have become "*filled with the glory (expression) of the Lord* (Num 14:21)." All the earth's people will be in full accord with the sovereign rule of the Lord Jesus Christ, being eternally blessed with *His indwelling Spirit of life*(Eze 37:14) and also the "*light*" of *His literal presence*.

"That In The Dispensation Of The Fulness Of Times he might gather together in one all things In Christ, both which are In Heaven, And Which Are On Earth; even In Him: (Ephesians 1:10)

In the next installment we will examine the Scriptures and fill in the details necessary to understand and explain many of these coming events in yet more detail.

Explanation of "Things to Come"

The very next significant Biblically prophesied event will be the **Rapture**, when every member of “*the church, which is His body*” will be taken to heaven with Jesus Christ to be their our eternal abode.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle (physical body) were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house (abode) not made with hands, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS. (2 Corinthians 5:1)

The Rapture of "His body" is imminent, meaning it requires no sign or pre-happening except one. Paul writes that currently “*blindness*” is upon "Israel," but only until “*the fullness (or completion) of the Gentiles to come in*” (Rom 11:25b), that is until “*the church, which is His body*” is completed with its Rapture to heaven.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. (Romans 11:25)

So, when the very last person to be saved by grace is added to “His body,” our Rapture to heaven will occur. God’s focus will then return to Israel and the end-time program of events concerning Israel and the earth.

The “**Psalm 83 War**” is the first significant thing to occur either just after the Rapture or just before the Rapture. Psalm 83 is a prayer calling down judgment and justice upon Israel’s neighboring enemies. The nations listed are the modern nations that surround Israel today. **Tents of Edom** is modern day Southern **Jordan**. The **Ishmaelites** is modern day **Saudi Arabia**, **Moab** is modern day Central Jordan. The **Hagrites** is modern day **Egypt**. **Byblos** is modern day Northern **Lebanon**, **Ammon** is modern day Northern Jordan, **Amalek** is then modern day Sinai Peninsula. **Philistia** is modern day **Gaza**(Hamas). People of **Tyre** is modern day Southern Lebanon (**Hezbollah**), **Assyria** is modern day **Syria** and **Iraq**. Israel hasn't yet subjugated the lands since it became a nation once again in 1948. In Psalm 83 and Isaiah 17 we see Israel will battle these immediate neighbors. Israel today must do something about all the missiles aimed from Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza, with their Iranian-led Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamist extremists. I believe the next significant war on Israel is what many call the “**Psalm 83 War.**” In it the Lord will miraculously intervene, victoriously, by it Israel will begin to see the Lord’s hand (Isa 17:1-7, cf., Jer 49:23-27). The Lord's defense of Israel will demonstrate that He is intimately involved in human affairs surrounding Israel.

The map and chart below lists the nations to be involved in the following war we call the **War of Gog-Magog**. In the list you will note that the "inner ring" of listed nations surrounding Israel (i.e. Syria, etc.) **are NOT involved in the Gog-Magog attack**. This is because they will have already been dealt with beforehand, in the earlier “**Psalm 83 War,**” wherein Israel is bring these neighboring lands under its rule.

Note the countries of the 1st War of Gog & Magog located on the chart and map below.

ANCIENT NAME	MODERN NATION	EXPLANATION
Rosh	Russia or Chief	Ancient Sarmatians known as RASHU, Rasapu, Ros, and Rus.
Magog	Central Asia	Ancient Scythians - <u>Islamic southern republics of the former Soviet Union</u> with a population of 60 million Muslims. This territory could include modern Afghanistan.
Meshech	Turkey (Southern)	Ancient Muschki and Musku in Cilicia and Cappadocia.

Tubal	Turkey (south Russia ,Iran)	Ancient Tubalu in Cappadocia .
Persia	Iran	Name changed from Persia to Iran in 1935.
Ethiopia (Cush)	Sudan	Ancient Cush , south of Egypt .
Put	Libya	Ancient Put, west of Egypt .
Gomer	Turkey	Ancient Cimmerians - from the seventh century to first century B.C. in central/western Anatolia .
Beth-togarmah	Turkey	Til-garimmu - between ancient Carchemish and Haran (southern Turkey) .
Many peoples with you	Other Islamic nations	Possibly Iraq , Jordan , Somalia ,Egypt

Note that among nations to participate in the **Gog and Magog War** , **Syria is NOT listed**. This is because; before the War of Gog and Magog, Syria will be fully subjugated to Israel and Damascus will have been fully destroyed (Isaiah 17:1) as result of the **Psalm 83 War** that comes first. Damascus today is one of the longest continually inhabited cities of the ancient world.

*“THE MOURNFUL, inspired prediction concerning **Damascus** [capital of **Syria**, and Israel ’s bulwark against Assyria]. Behold, **Damascus Will Cease To Be A City And Will Become A Heap Of Ruins.**” (Isaiah 17:1 AMP)*

After the “**Psalm 83 War**” the next major thing to occur is the “**War of Gog and Magog.**” The Russians will then lead Iran and a Muslim coalition down from “*the north*” (Eze 38:6) in an attempt to invade and destroy the Jewish state once and for all. Even now we see these events beginning to take shape in our daily news. Ezekiel 38 and 39 give us a detailed description of the war known as the “**War of Gog & Magog.**”

The “War of Gog & Magog” will occur when Israel is feeling secure, dwelling “*safely....in unwalled cities*” (Eze 38:11, 14) due to their God-given victory over their hostile neighbors in the Psalm 83 War. Today we see the many miles of walls Israel has built to try and secure their land. Israel will then also be enjoying oil wealth and trade when the “War of Gog and Magog” occurs. Israel is 2nd only to the USA in sales technology items. The Russia (Rosh, of Eze 38:3) is referred to also by the ancient name of “Gog” (38:2). The Iran, here referred to as “*Persia*,” They seek to bring the Iranian Shia Muslim rule over the world. Gog is Russia, Magog is “*the land of Gog*,” referring to the Islamic southern republics of the former Soviet Union .

Now let’s look closer at the War of Gog and Magog to see the apparent *basis for this war*, its *outcome*, and its *place in the timeline of end-time events*. Eze 38:4 indicates that Russia is going to be *dragged* into this coming war by the Lord placing “*hooks in the jaw.*” This is similar to the way a rider makes a stubborn horse move by the bit in its mouth, to guide it. The Lord will cause *Russia (Gog)* to move against Israel militarily.

*“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, ² Son of man, set thy face **against Gog, the land of Magog**, the chief prince (leader) of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, ³ And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, **I am against thee, O Gog, the chief (leader) prince of Meshech and Tubal (Turkey):** ⁴ **I Will turn thee back, and Put Hooks Into Thy Jaws, and I Will Bring Thee Forth, and All Thine Army**, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with **all sorts of armour**, even a **great company** with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords: ⁵ **Persia (Iran), Ethiopia, and Libya with them**; all of them with shield and helmet: ⁶ **Gomer (Asian Turkey)**, and all his bands; the*

house of **Togarmah (southern Turkey)** of the north quarters, and all his bands: and **many people with thee.** (Ezekiel 38:1-6)

Some well respected Biblical scholars place the “War of Gog and Magog” midway through Tribulation, when Christ opens the 7th seal. But the Biblical evidence is that the “War of Gog and Magog” will occur directly **before the beginning of Tribulation**. Consider this; **if** the “War of Gog and Magog” were to occur at the midway point of the 7-year Tribulation, Daniel’s 70th Week, at that time the nations and peoples of the whole world will be under the complete control of the Antichrist who by then has covenanted to protect Israel (Dan 9:27b). So the nations of the “War of Gog and Magog” **would have to break Antichrist’s treaty with Israel in order to attack Israel**. There's no Biblical support for the theory. The Bible indicates Antichrist will break the treaty himself, midway through Tribulation; *“in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”* (Dan 9:27). Antichrist will reveal himself and defile of the rebuilt temple (Dan 11:36).

The “War of Gog and Magog” will be led by **Russia and Iran** in an alliance with *Turkey*, and several Arab nations (see chart and Eze 38:1-6). They will be crushed by God’s *divine intervention* on Israel’s behalf; by *friendly fire* (v21), a “*great earthquake*” (v20), and a “*rain of great hail, fire, and brimstone*” (v22). God will end the battle almost before it starts, without His personal appearance.

*“¹⁸it shall come to pass at the same time when **Gog (Russia) shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face...²² ... I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.**²³ Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of Many Nations, And They Shall Know That I Am The LORD.”* (Ezekiel 38:18, 20-23)

By contrast, the “**War of Armageddon**” will occur at the **very end of the Tribulation**. It will involve virtually **every nation** on earth and will be centered on and against Israel. The “War of Gog & Magog,” while involving a large number, will **NOT include every nation on earth**. So the “War of Gog & Magog” before the Tribulation, is **NOT** the “Battle of Armageddon” which occurs at the very end of Tribulation. Victory at Armageddon literally brings Christ to earth to establish His Millennial Reign (Rev 19:11-16).

It’s reasonable to assume that at the time of the **War of Gog & Magog**, the world will still be in chaos due to the then recent Pre-Tribulation Rapture of the “*body of Christ*” and the Psalm 83 war. Thus Israel will no longer have the support of any Christian organizations as they do today. The Russian and Muslim coalition would use this time of chaos to seize the opportunity to attack a then friendless Israel .

The verses below indicate the motive of the **Gog and Magog invasion and War is for the “spoils.”**

*“¹³ **Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish** (Western merchant nations, with Saudi Arabia , question Gog), with all the **young lions** (Britain & USA ?) thereof, shall say unto thee (Gog), **Art thou come to take a spoil?** hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to TAKE A GREAT SPOIL? ¹⁴ Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when My People Of Israel Dwelleth Safely, shalt thou not know it? ¹⁵ And thou shalt come from thy place out of The North Parts (Gog), thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: ¹⁶And thou shalt come up Against My People Of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog (Russia),before their eyes.” (Ezekiel 38:13-16)*

The greatest “**spoil**” likely will be Israel’s new found oil and gas reserves. along with the eastern Mediterranean ports in Lebanon and Syria that Israel will control after the Psalm 83 War. The invading coalition comes to take “*spoil*” (v13). Over the years, many Bible scholars have speculated what the “*spoil*” might be but have never been able to put a finger on it until now.

See: <http://www.thejc.com/business/business-features/109211/should-israel-export-its-natural-gas>,

Recent news reports show that in addition to owning the Dead Sea with its priceless amounts of strategic minerals and metals, Israel has come upon relatively accessible massive amounts of offshore oil and natural gas. In fact, the amount of **gas and oil can make Israel an energy exporter** while providing for

their own energy for what is estimated to be for 50 years. I believe these discoveries during the end of the end times are no coincidence. Russia seeks to dominate and control energy in its part of the world, so this is exactly the type of "spoils" that would encourage Russia to take up arms against Israel.

There will essentially be no one to stand in the way of the **Gog and Magog** coalition attacking Israel. The U.S. will be either be neutral due to the political time or, perhaps due to the Rapture, the US will simply not in a position to help Israel. This is exactly what God wants since He alone will save Israel.

*“¹⁸...**Gog Shall Come Against The Land Of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face.** ¹⁹ For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; ²⁰ ...**the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.** ²¹ And I will call for a sword against him (Gog) throughout all my mountains, saith the **Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.** ²² And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. ²³ Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and They Shall Know That I Am The Lord.” (Eze 38:18-23)*

Above we see the Lord's fury as the Gog and Magog allies move on Israel to destroy her. They will see the hand of the God of Israel as He lashes out in anger for those who want to destroy His people of Israel. God will destroy the invading forces and intervene with His classic weapons of *a rain of hailstones, and fire and brimstone from Heaven*. God will also use another classic weapon of having *Israel's enemies fight each other*, as we see among Muslims today. Many will perish at their sword as they try in vain to destroy Israel. God will clearly sanctify His Holy name and the "nations" will know that He is the Lord.

These verses below tells us that the Lord's destruction of the invading forces will be so great, that only one-sixth of the invading forces will remain alive. God will supernaturally destroy those who came against His chosen people and the mountains of Israel. The invading forces would surely defeat Israel if God does not intervene. But God will do this to magnify and sanctify His Holy name. He will then call on "The Ravenous Birds of Every Sort" (v4 below) to come and feast upon Israel's dead enemies, as they did after Noah's flood.

*“Therefore, thou son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, **I am against thee, O Gog (Russia), the chief prince (leader) of Meshech and Tubal (Turkey):** ² And I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee, and will cause thee to come up from the north parts, and will bring thee upon the mountains of Israel: ³ And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. ⁴ Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I Will Give Thee Unto The Ravenous Birds Of Every Sort, and To The Beasts Of The Field To Be Devoured. ⁵ Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 39:1-5)*

Here below the Lord indicates that He is not just content with destroying the invading forces that amassed against Israel; God "will also send fire on Magog," that is on "the land of Gog."

“⁶I will send a FIRE on Magog (the land of Gog), among them that dwell carelessly in the isles (the Black Sea ?): they shall know that I am the Lord. ⁷I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel. ⁸Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken.” (Eze 39:6-8)

Many see this as God's punishment and judgment on Russia for her long history of anti-Semitism and perhaps even for arming the enemies of Israel. Russia claims all the time that their selling of weapons to Israel's enemies is simply for "defensive" purposes but they know this is not the case. Russia is currently involved in building a nuclear weapons program for Iran, as it tried to in Syria only to be bombed by Israel. Russia and Iran are the state sponsors of terrorism worldwide. Their day of reckoning is coming.

The Tribulation: With the more Christianized nations in disorder due to a Pre-Tribulation Rapture, and the Islamic world in ruin due to the Psalm 83 War and Gog-Magog War, the Antichrist, will easily be able to fill the vacuum. With the Muslim nations shattered *before* the Tribulation due to both the Psalm 83 War and the Gog and Magog War, the Antichrist will have an easier time of making good on a *peace covenant with Israel*.

By Antichrist making his peace covenant with Israel and Israel having easily conquered the lands of the Middle-Eastern Muslim countries, the Roman Empire could be revived once more. The Bible records the continued existence of China. They too will be under the control of the Antichrist, until the end of the Tribulation, when China as *"the kings of the east"* (Rev. 16:12) will join the many nations that come against Israel and Antichrist at Armageddon. Again, of course the Lord will personally intervene in this war also, at the end of the Tribulation. The Lord will save Israel and destroy her enemies, and then set up His Millennial kingdom on the New Earth over a period of 75 days.

So, the signing of the peace covenant between the Antichrist and Israel actually begins the 7-year Tribulation period (Dan 9:27). We know the Jerusalem Temple must be rebuilt for Antichrist to occupy mid-Tribulation, 3-1/2 years into the Tribulation (Dan 9:27). This means there would be a 3-1/2-yr or more delay between the Rapture and the Tribulation, since Israel will have the prophesied *"seven years... to burn the weapons with fire"* (perhaps nuclear, Eze 39:9-10). These weapons will likely have been taken from the Gog-Magog War.

The ultimately horrific 7-year Tribulation will end with Jesus' literal return to save Israel and destroy her enemies. At the **end of the Tribulation** the *Antichrist and False Prophet* will be the very first to be *"cast into the Lake of Fire."* ALL the unbelievers who die in the Tribulation will go to the dark side of Hades to await the end of the Millennium and the Great White Throne judgment and *"lake of fire."*

Scripture allows for a **period of up to 75 days between the second coming and the actual start of the Millennial kingdom**. Daniel 12:11-12 declares that the one who perseveres **unto 1,335 days** (3-1/2 years **plus 75 days**) **from the time the sacrifice is taken away (at mid-Trib), would be wonderfully blessed**.

The Lord Jesus will use the 75-day period after His Second Coming and His victory at Armageddon to judge the *"wheat & tares"* and separate the *"goats and sheep nations (Gentiles)."* In that 75 days those who survived the *plucking* of Matt 13 as *"wheat,"* and the *"sheep" believers* of the *"Nations"* (Gk., *ethnos, Gentiles*) (Matt 25:31-32), will enter the kingdom. *"When the Son of man shall come in his glory...before him shall be gathered all nations (Gentiles): and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31-32)."* To the *wheat* and *sheep* Jesus will say, "enter the kingdom." The *tares* will be burned (Mat 13:40), and the *goats* will *"depart into everlasting fire"* (Mat 25:41). All the surviving of the Tribulation will be believers. They will live on into the 1,000-yr reign of Jesus Christ's in His kingdom of peace and righteousness on the New Earth.

The **Millennial Kingdom will end** with Satan being released from his 1,000 year incarceration. Satan will then lead the unbelieving newborns of the Millennium, those who never accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord, against the Lord. The Lord will quickly destroy them with *"fire"* in this final war.

After the Millennial Kingdom, will come the **Great White Throne Judgment of ALL the unbelieving dead of ALL ages**. They will be resurrected to *"stand"* before the Lord to be judged (Rev 20:11-14). Then, not finding their names *"written in the Lamb's book of life,"* ALL of them will be *"cast into the Lake of fire,"* called *"the second death"* (Rev 20:6b).

The Messianic Kingdom believers of the Tribulation will move from the Millennial reign of Christ into the Eternal Kingdom on the rejuvenated New Earth with its New Jerusalem. The Lord's *"bride,"* which consists of all the *resurrected believers of Israel*, will reign with Him and serve Him, being in union with Him who *"is the Temple"* (Rev 21:22).

In all honesty, God has yet to reveal with any great clarity what life will be like for those who will dwell in eternal state of the Kingdom of God on the New Earth and in the New Heaven. We do know it will be most glorious for the believers of Israel and the members of the *"body of Christ."* We do know that by then, the *"body of Christ"* will have already been a long time "reigning in heaven with Him" (2Tim 2:12), as they will for eternity, from the time of the Rapture (2 Cor. 5:1, Philip. 3:20-21).

Chapter 23

"In The Fullness of Times"

As we've already discussed, the Kingdom Reign of Christ, called the Millennium, immediately follows the 7-year Tribulation period. The Millennial Kingdom will commence with a clear indication of our Lord's reign as "*King of kings*," having His rod of authority. He will purge out those who rebelled and opposed Him, those refusing to believe the preaching of the 144,000 and the "*two witnesses*" in the face of the terrible Tribulation judgments.

In a 75 day lapse between the Battle of Armageddon ending the Tribulation and Christ's Millennial reign (see Part 22), Christ will separate the *wheat believers of Israel* from the *unbelieving tares, imposters*, who will be "*burned*" (Matt 13:30). He will also *separate the sheep believers from the unbelievers of the Gentiles* from the *unbelieving goats of the Gentiles* ("*nations in KJV means 'Gentiles'*"); they will go to "*everlasting fire*." All believers will enter "*the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world*." Man is always a failure apart from regeneration and union with the Lord and His indwelling "*Spirit of life*" given freely to ALL believers. Thus, *no unbelievers will survive the Tribulation or the Millennium* (Rev 20:9) *to enter the eternal kingdom* on the New Earth.

Some things revealed to John (below) are more foretelling of the dire time to come just before the glorious "*Kingdom of God*" on earth that is ushered in. Some elements of the *eternal kingdom* are seen by these verses below. First note that "*time*" will be no more (v1) in "the eternal."

*¹And I (John) saw another **mighty angel** come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: ²And he had in his hand **a LITTLE BOOK OPEN**: ... ⁵And **the angel** which I saw **stand upon the sea and upon the earth** lifted up his hand to heaven, ⁶And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the **earth**, and the things that therein are, and the **sea**, and the things which are therein, that **THERE SHOULD BE TIME NO LONGER**: ... ⁷But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, **THE MYSTERY** (*musterion*, *secret plan*) **OF GOD SHOULD BE FINISHED**, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. ⁸And the voice which **I (John)** heard from heaven spake unto me (John) again, and said, Go and take the little book ... ⁹And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, **Give me the LITTLE BOOK**. And he said unto me, **TAKE IT, AND EAT IT UP; AND IT SHALL MAKE THY BELLY BITTER, BUT IT SHALL BE IN THY MOUTH SWEET AS HONEY**. ¹⁰And I took **the little book** out of the **angel's** hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth **sweet as honey**: and as soon as I had eaten it, **my belly was bitter**. ¹¹And he said unto me, **THOU MUST PROPHECY AGAIN BEFORE MANY PEOPLES, AND NATIONS, AND TONGUES, AND KINGS**." (Revelation 10:1-2, 5-11)*

The "*little book*" (v) given by the angel to John, the writer of the Book of Revelation, contains the "*bitter*" of eternal judgment for the unbelieving, and also the "*sweet*" of eternal blessing upon the believers (v9). John was given to write of the both the *bitter* and the *sweet* as we come to the close of all ages. The "*sweet*" of faith in Christ's cross is the only way of salvation for men of all the ages.

In Revelation "*the Lamb slain*" occupies the center of the glory of the universe. No believer from any age will ever boast of his own righteousness "*in that day*." All, both saved and unsaved, will ultimately acknowledge their unworthiness; the believers will proclaim Him who died that they might live and be justified before God.

The "*mighty angel*" (Rev 10:1) holds a "*little Book open*" (v2), indicating that the information contained therein is from God and that the Apostle John was given access to the book. "*Surely the LORD GOD will do nothing, but (except) He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets*" (Amos 3:7). Both the "*sea, and... earth*" (10:2) are under his feet, indicating that the angel has been given dominion over the entire Earth. The same idea of dominion is portrayed by Psalm 110. "*The LORD (the Father) said*

unto my LORD (Jesus), Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies (brought low as) Thy footstool" (Psalm 110:1).

The "bitter" of the prophesy contained in the Book of Revelation that John records will be evident by its many judgments. Our Lord will put the rebellion down and "**break" the nations** (Gentiles) "**with a rod of iron**" and "**dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel**" (Psa 2:9). Christ will have to "**rule them with a rod of iron**" (Rev 2:27) since there will still be a large number of unsaved unregenerate men born on earth to the end the Millennium. Then "**Satan shall be loosed out of his prison**" to stir up rebellion amongst them and against the Lord's Israel again. It's not strange that we read of **Gog and Magog** once again in the FINAL rebellion on earth.

*"And **when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations ... gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem): and FIRE CAME DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN, AND DEVoured THEM.**" (Rev 20:7-9)*

This final rebellion is followed by "**the Devil**" being "**Cast Into THE LAKE OF FIRE .**"

*"And **THE DEVIL** that deceived them **WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Revelation 20:10)*

ALL THE DEAD LOST, as UNBELIEVERS, will be resurrected from the dead to stand before the Great White Throne in Judgment (v12 below). They will be judged out of the "books," and if their name is not found in the "**book of life**" they too are "**Cast Into The Lake Of Fire .**"

*"¹⁰And **THE DEVIL THAT DECEIVED THEM WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are (already), and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. ¹¹ And (afterward) I saw a **GREAT WHITE THRONE**, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ¹² And I SAW THE DEAD (unbelievers), **SMALL AND GREAT, STAND BEFORE GOD**; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is THE BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. ¹⁴ And **death and hell** (Heb., Sheol = Greek, Hades) **were cast into the lake of fire.***

THIS IS THE SECOND DEATH. ¹⁵ And **WHOSOEVER WAS NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE .**" (Rev. 20:10-15)

All the unsaved will bow their knees and acknowledge Jesus as Lord in that day of the Great White Throne Judgment. Because Jesus Christ humbled Himself and submitted Himself "*even the death of the cross...* **God also hath highly exalted Him (Jesus), and given Him a name which is above every name:**

*"That At **THE NAME OF JESUS EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, OF THINGS IN HEAVEN** (the fallen angels), AND **THINGS IN EARTH** (mankind), And Things **UNDER THE EARTH** (those in "Sheol" (Hebrew), or "hell" (Greek) awaiting judgment);*

*"And That **EVERY TONGUE SHOULD CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, TO THE GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER**" (Phil.2:8-11).*

With the conclusion of the Battle of Armageddon, Christ will "*appear*" (v2 below) to those who had "*pierced*" Him (Zech12:10), and soon then establish His **Kingdom on earth**. He will rule and reign with and through the agency of believing **Israel on earth**. All the Messianic Kingdom believers, including those of Israel , must receive Jesus Christ as Savior to be purified, cleansed of their sin.

*"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. ² But who may abide the **DAY OF HIS COMING?** and who shall stand when HE APPEARETH? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: ³*

And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and HE SHALL PURIFY the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. ⁴ Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. ⁵ **And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.** ⁶ **For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob (Israel) are NOT consumed.** (Malachi 3:1-6)

More than 1,000 years before the Lord's 2nd coming He will have already Raptured the members of "the body of Christ." Christ will have already **presented each member of His body to the Father**, being clothed in His righteousness, thus making them "**Holy and Unblameable and Unreproveable In His Sight**" (Col 1:22 below).

"Which he wrought **in Christ**, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ **FAR ABOVE ALL PRINCIPALITY, AND POWER, AND MIGHT, AND DOMINION**, and every name that is named, **not only in this world, but also IN THAT (world) WHICH IS TO COME:** ²² **And hath put all things under his feet (of His body), and gave him to be THE HEAD** over all things to the church, ²³ **Which is his BODY, THE FULNESS OF HIM that filleth all in all.** (Eph 1:20-23)

"Giving thanks **unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:** ¹³ **Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:** ... ²¹ **And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled** ²² **In the body of his flesh through death, TO PRESENT YOU HOLY AND UNBLAMEABLE AND UNREPROVEABLE IN HIS SIGHT:** (Col 1:12-13, 21-22)

"GOD HATH NOT Appointed Us To Wrath, but to (yet) obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," (1 Thes 5:9)

"To the end he (Christ) may stablish your hearts UNBLAMEABLE In Holiness Before God, Even Our Father, AT THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST WITH ALL HIS SAINTS (believers). (1 Thes 3:13)

Thus, the conclusion of the ages will bring in not only "**the new (renewed) heavens**" occupied by "**the body of Christ**," but also "**the new (renewed) earth**" in which Israel is reconciled to and reigning with Christ for eternity. Thus, at that time ALL believers of all ages will then have been gathered unto Christ. Thus, Christ will reign both **in heaven** and **on earth forever and ever**.

The "**River of Life**" and the "**Tree of Life**" of Revelation 22 which were prefigured in the beginning of Genesis, have their full measure in the Holy City the New Jerusalem at the consummation of the ages in the **eternal kingdom on earth**, as recorded in The Book of Revelations.

"he shewed me A PURE RIVER OF WATER OF LIFE, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. ² **In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.**

³ **And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and HIS SERVANTS SHALL SERVE HIM:** ⁴ **And THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE; and his name shall be in their foreheads.** ⁵ **And there shall be NO NIGHT THERE; AND THEY NEED NO CANDLE, neither light of the sun; for THE LORD GOD GIVETH THEM LIGHT: and THEY SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.**" (Rev 22:1-5, cf. 20:6)

The enthroned "**twelve Apostles**" of Israel and the martyrs of the Tribulation come to reign in the Millennium and eternal kingdoms, while all Israel serves God on the New Earth.)

"THE FULLNESS OF TIMES" will fulfill that which began "**in the beginning**" when God first "**created the heaven and the earth**" (Gen 1:1).

"That In The Dispensation of The Fulness Of Times He Might Gather Together In One All Things In Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth; even In Him" (Ephesians 1:10)

"Then Cometh THE END, when he (Christ) shall have (past tense) delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all (rebellious earthly) rule and all authority and power. ²⁵ For he (Christ) must reign, till he hath put all enemies (in heaven and on the earth) under his feet.

²⁶ **The LAST ENEMY THAT SHALL BE DESTROYED IS DEATH.**

²⁷ **For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. ²⁸ And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son (Jesus Christ) also himself be subject unto him (the Father) that put all things under him, THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL. (1 Cor 15:24-28)**

"For it pleased the Father that IN HIM (Christ) SHOULD ALL FULNESS DWELL; ²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him (Christ), I say, whether they be THINGS IN EARTH, OR THINGS IN HEAVEN. (Colossians 1:19-20)

"Having made known unto us THE MYSTERY OF HIS WILL, according to his good pleasure which HE HATH PURPOSED IN HIMSELF: ¹⁰ That IN THE DISPENSATION of THE FULNESS OF TIMES HE MIGHT GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE (the universe wide "kingdom of God") ALL THINGS IN CHRIST, BOTH WHICH ARE IN HEAVEN, And Which Are ON EARTH; even in him: (Ephesians 1:9-10)

"IN THE BEGINNING God created THE HEAVEN and THE EARTH." (Genesis 1:1)

"And I saw a NEW (Gk. kainos, renewed, refreshed) HEAVEN AND A NEW (Gk. kainos, new, refreshed) EARTH: FOR THE FIRST HEAVEN and THE FIRST EARTH WERE PASSED AWAY; and there was No More Sea." (Revelation 21:1).

"No more sea" (Rev 21:1)? I believe Scripture explains this, referring to the vast oceans on Planet Earth. At the time of the Great Flood the mountains were raised up and the valleys lowered to form the ocean beds that contained the flood waters. When the Earth is restored at the time of the 2nd Coming this will be reversed. The Book of Revelation talks about the *islands and mountains disappearing* (Rev. 16:20). I think the water from the oceans will be taken back up into the atmosphere to restore the water vapor canopy that protected Earth from harmful rays in the days before the flood (Genesis 1:6-8) and permitted the long life spans recorded in the Book of Genesis. This canopy formed the flood when it fell to earth as rain (Genesis 7:11).

In the end... **"The Kingdoms Of This World Are Become The Kingdoms Of Our Lord, And Of His Christ; and He Shall Reign FOR EVER AND EVER. (Rev. 11:15b)**

Israel will co-rule with Christ on earth, while the rewards of a place of service in the heavenly government are given to the members of "the church, which is His body" who "suffered (endured) in life with Him" (2Tim 2:12). These faithful Rapture believers will be *rewarded* according to "how they built upon the foundation" of Christ as their new all-sufficient life supply – they will "reign with Him" in heaven. These are those who "*learned Christ*" (Eph 4:20), they've learned to endure this life by trusting Him in the face of suffering. I believe the *reward* for them includes positions and assignments in the Lord's heavenly government where they shall co-rule with Christ in the heavens, judging the non-believers and fallen angels during the Tribulation.

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³ Know Ye Not That We Shall Judge Angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? (1 Corinthians 6:2-3 (KJV)

Christ authority and blessing will then be fully manifested.

- The **faithful of Israel reigning on earth**. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Revelation (20:6, cf., Rev 5:10).

• Seated in the heavenly realm, ***the faithful of the body of Christ will reign in the heavens. "If we suffer, We Shall Also Reign With Him... (2 Timothy 2:12).***

"that ye may know.... ¹⁹...the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, ²⁰ Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ Far Above All Principality, And Power, And Might, And Dominion, And Every Name That Is Named, Not Only In This World, But Also In That Which Is To Come:

²² And hath put All Things Under His Feet (of His body), and gave him to be the head over all things to 'The Church, ²³ Which Is His Body,' The Fulness Of Him That Filleth All In All. (Ephesians 1:18-23 (KJV)

Being "***His body***" we are His feet that carry Him wherever we go. **We are to bear His life, power, and authority for eternity in the heavenly realm;**

"Far Above All Principality, and Power, And Might, and Dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

<END SERIES>