

THE END TIMES



ASHISH RAICHUR

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. ESCHATOLOGY: THE STUDY OF END TIMES | 1 |
| WHY STUDY ABOUT THE END TIMES? | 1 |
| OUR APPROACH IN STUDYING THE END TIMES | 5 |
| 1) WE TAKE THINGS IN THEIR LITERAL SENSE FIRST, THEN THE FIGURATIVE | 5 |
| 2) WE DO NOT ENGAGE IN SPECULATION OR SENSATIONALISM | 5 |
| 3) OPENNESS YET, UNCOMPROMISING | 6 |
| 4) HAVE A COMPLETE VIEW OF SCRIPTURE | 8 |
| 5) THE OLD TESTAMENT EXPLAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT | 8 |
| 6) USE BIBLICAL TYPOLOGY | 8 |
| 7) RECOGNIZE DIFFERENT TIME FRAMES | 9 |
| 8) RECOGNIZE DUAL (NEAR AND FAR) FULFILLMENT | 10 |
| 9) REMAIN OPEN TO POSSIBLE UNEXPECTED WAYS OF FULFILLMENT | 10 |
| 10) TIMING OF CERTAIN END TIME PROPHECIES NOT DEFINITE | 10 |
| WHAT WE DO NOT SUBSCRIBE TO | 10 |
| PRETERISM | 11 |
| DOMINION THEOLOGY | 12 |
| 2. THE BIBLE: A PROPHETIC BOOK | 14 |
| KEY HISTORICAL EVENTS THAT WERE FORETOLD | 15 |
| 1) EGYPTIAN SLAVERY | 15 |
| 2) BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY (PROPHECIED 80 YEARS IN ADVANCE) | 15 |
| 3) CYRUS OF PERSIA COMMANDING ISRAEL'S RETURN | 16 |
| 4) 483 YEARS FOR CHRIST'S COMING | 17 |
| 5) PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST | 18 |
| 6) DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE (FORETOLD 40 YEARS IN ADVANCE) .. | 19 |
| 7) DISPERSION AND REGATHERING OF ISRAEL (FORETOLD 3,500 YEARS IN ADVANCE) | 19 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| ARE WE LIVING IN THE END TIMES? | 20 |
| ARE WE THE END TIME GENERATION? | 25 |
| BIBLICAL TERMINOLOGY ON THE END TIMES | 25 |
| 3. ISRAEL: THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE IN BIBLE PROPHECY | 28 |
| ABRAHAM AND THE LAND PROMISED TO HIS DESCENDANTS | 28 |
| HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE EAST – AN OUTLINE | 30 |
| THE MIDDLE EAST | 33 |
| CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST | 35 |
| THE LAND | 35 |
| MAJOR EVENTS IN THE CONFLICT | 38 |
| KEY ISSUES IN THE CONFLICT | 40 |
| THE CITY OF JERUSALEM | 43 |
| THE TEMPLE | 44 |
| THE KINGDOM, ISRAEL AND THE CHURCH | 46 |
| THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE | 47 |
| 4. THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH | 49 |
| JESUS IS COMING BACK! | 49 |
| “I AM COMING QUICKLY” | 50 |
| SEQUENCE OF EVENTS – A PICTORIAL | 52 |
| ‘SIMUL RAPIEMUR’ | 55 |
| LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT | 57 |
| THE TRUMPET OF GOD | 58 |
| SEVEN YEARS IN HEAVEN | 59 |
| CROWN REWARDS | 60 |
| REWARDS PROMISED TO THE OVERCOMER | 61 |
| WHY WE BELIEVE IN A PRE-TRIBULATION RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH? | 64 |
| 1) JESUS SAID HE WILL COME AND TAKE US TO HIS FATHER’s HOUSE | 65 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 2) THE TYPOLOGY OF NOAH AND LOT USED IN MATTHEW 24 AND LUKE 17 | 66 |
| 3) JESUS TAUGHT TO PRAY TO ESCAPE THINGS THAT WILL COME TO PASS | 68 |
| 4) THE GREAT ESCAPE – WHAT PAUL TAUGHT THE THESSALONIAN CHURCH | 72 |
| 5) “He” MUST DEPART FOR THE ANTICHRIST TO BE REVEALED | 77 |
| 6) THE PROMISE TO THE CHURCH IN REVELATION 3:10,11 | 84 |
| 7) DANIEL’s 70 TH WEEK FOR ISRAEL, NOT THE CHURCH | 84 |
| 8) THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION | 86 |
| 9) REVELATION 12 – SATAN’s ATTACK FOCUSED ON ISRAEL, NOT THE CHURCH | 88 |
| 10) THE 144,000 JEWS ARE FIRSTFRUITS | 89 |
| 11) ANGELS PREACHING THE ETERNAL GOSPEL | 91 |
| 12) THE SEVEN-YEAR CELEBRATION CULMINATING IN THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB | 91 |
| 13) AT THE END OF THE TRIBULATION, THERE IS A RESURRECTION, NOT A RAPTURE | 93 |
| THE FIRST RESURRECTION | 95 |
| A FEW RELATED QUESTIONS | 95 |
| WHO WILL BE RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD AT THE TIME OF THE RAPTURE? | 95 |
| WHO WILL BE TAKEN UP IN THE RAPTURE? | 99 |
| WILL WE RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN? | 99 |
| 5. DANIEL’s 70TH WEEK: THE FINAL SEVEN YEARS | 101 |
| 70 WEEKS ARE DETERMINED | 101 |
| ONE WEEK, SEVEN YEARS | 102 |
| 69 WEEKS, AND ONE WEEK | 105 |
| 69 WEEKS TILL THE MESSIAH | 106 |
| A COVENANT FOR ONE WEEK – DANIEL’s 70 TH WEEK | 107 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 6. INTRODUCTION (REVELATION 1) | 110 |
| 7. THE SEVEN CHURCHES (REVELATION 2 & 3) | 115 |
| EPHESUS | 116 |
| SMYRNA | 116 |
| PERGAMOS | 117 |
| THYATIRA | 117 |
| SARDIS | 117 |
| PHILADELPHIA | 117 |
| LAODICEA | 118 |
| WHAT WOULD THE LORD JESUS SAY TO US AS A LOCAL CHURCH?... ... | 118 |
| 8. REDEEMED SAINTS, THRONE ROOM WORSHIP | |
| (REVELATION 4 & 5) | 120 |
| THRONE ROOM WORSHIP | 120 |
| ONLY ONE TO OPEN THE SCROLL | 121 |
| 9. THE FIRST THREE AND A HALF YEARS (REVELATION 6-10) ... | 122 |
| REVELATION 6: THE FIRST SIX SEALS | 122 |
| THE ANTICHRIST | 124 |
| A SEVEN-YEAR FALSE PEACE TREATY | 128 |
| THIRD TEMPLE REBUILT; PRIESTHOOD AND SACRIFICES RESTORED .. | 129 |
| REVELATION 7: THE 144,000 JEWISH EVANGELISTS | 130 |
| MANY TRIBULATION-MARTYRS | 132 |
| REVELATION 8: SILENCE IN HEAVEN, INCREASED PRAYER ON EARTH | 132 |
| THE FIRST FOUR TRUMPETS | 133 |
| REVELATION 9: THE FIFTH AND SIXTH TRUMPETS | 133 |
| REVELATION 10: THE MIGHTY ANGEL AND THE LITTLE BOOK | 135 |
| 10. THE SECOND THREE AND A HALF YEARS | |
| (REVELATION 11-19) | 137 |
| REVELATION 11: MID-TRIBULATION, BROKEN PEACE TREATY, | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| TWO WITNESSES | 137 |
| THE TWO WITNESSES | 138 |
| REVELATION 12: THE WOMAN, THE MALE CHILD AND THE DRAGON | 140 |
| TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE – TIMES OF THE GENTILES | 142 |
| REVELATION 13: THE RULE OF THE ANTICHRIST – THE BEAST, THE FALSE PROPHET, THE DRAGON | 143 |
| SEVEN HEADS AND SEVEN KINGS – SEVEN SUCCESSIVE WORLD EMPIRES | 144 |
| 10 HORNS – 10 LEADERS FROM A 10-NATION COALITION | 146 |
| THE ANTICHRIST GAINS GLOBAL INFLUENCE | 147 |
| THE SECOND BEAST – THE FALSE PROPHET | 148 |
| A GLOBAL RELIGIOUS SYSTEM | 150 |
| A GLOBAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM AND THE MARK OF THE BEAST | 150 |
| WHERE WILL THE ANTICHRIST COME FROM? | 151 |
| FROM ONE OF THE FOUR CAME A LITTLE HORN | 153 |
| REVELATION 14: THE ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENTS | 155 |
| THREE ANGELS MAKING PROCLAMATIONS TO THE WORLD | 156 |
| SICKLE AND HARVEST | 156 |
| SICKLE AND WINEPRESS | 157 |
| REVELATION 15: PRELUDE TO THE BOWL JUDGMENTS | 157 |
| REVELATION 16: THE SEVEN ANGELS WITH SEVEN BOWLS OF WRATH | 158 |
| ARMAGEDDON – GATHERING OF KINGS FROM THE EAST AND KINGS OF THE EARTH | 159 |
| THE BATTLE OF GOG AND MAGOG – RUSSIA AND ALLIES INVADE ISRAEL | 160 |
| RUSSIA PUSHED BACK INTO A DESOLATE LAND | 163 |
| REVELATION 17: THE GREAT HARLOT “MYSTERY BABYLON” | 163 |
| REASONS “MYSTERY BABYLON” IS A GLOBAL RELIGIOUS SYSTEM | 164 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| 7 KINGDOMS, 10 LEADERS | 166 |
| REVELATION 18: THE FALL OF BABYLON THE GREAT | 167 |
| COMMON FEATURES OF “MYSTERY BABYLON” AND “BABYLON THE GREAT” | 168 |
| REVELATION 19: THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB AND THE FINAL CONFLICT – ARMAGEDDON | 169 |
| HEAVEN REJOICES OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE GREAT HARLOT ... | 169 |
| THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB | 169 |
| THE KING OF KINGS AND THE LORD OF LORDS | 170 |
| THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON – NATIONS AGAINST ISRAEL | 171 |
| VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT | 171 |
| ARMAGEDDON | 172 |
| THE LORD WILL DEFEND JERUSALEM | 172 |
| WAR AGAINST CHRIST AND HIS ARMY | 172 |
| HIS FEET WILL STAND ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES | 173 |
| BLOOD AS HIGH AS THE HORSE’S BRIDLE | 174 |
| THE SUPPER OF THE GREAT GOD | 174 |
| 11. THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT (REVELATION 20) | 176 |
| SATAN BOUND FOR 1000 YEARS | 176 |
| RESURRECTION OF THE TRIBULATION SAINTS | 176 |
| THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS – SHEEP AND GOATS | 177 |
| A FOUNTAIN OF CLEANSING FOR THE LAND | 177 |
| THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST THE KING | 178 |
| KING DAVID WILL RULE OVER ISRAEL UNDER JESUS | 178 |
| JERUSALEM WILL BE THE WORLD CAPITAL | 179 |
| ISRAEL WILL BE GIVEN ALL THE ORIGINAL PROMISED LAND | 179 |
| JERUSALEM—THE CENTER OF WORSHIP | 179 |
| JOY AND GLADNESS IN JERUSALEM | 180 |
| THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE | 180 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE? | 181 |
| LIFE IN THE MILLENNIUM | 181 |
| THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD ... | 182 |
| SALVATION IN ITS FULNESS WILL BE FOR ALL | 182 |
| THE VERY NATURE OF THINGS WILL BE CHANGED | 183 |
| PEACE AND TRANQUILITY ON THE EARTH – HARMONY IN NATURE ... | 183 |
| BUILDING, PLANTING AND PROSPERITY | 184 |
| PEOPLE WITH IMMORTAL BODIES AND THOSE WITH MORTAL BODIES | 184 |
| NATURAL PEOPLE DURING THE MILLENNIUM | 185 |
| REBUILDING AND REPOPULATING THE EARTH | 185 |
| SINNERS WILL BE TAUGHT TO WORSHIP THE LORD | 185 |
| LONG LIFE AND LONGEVITY | 186 |
| WILL PEOPLE LIVE THE FULL 1000 YEARS? | 186 |
| ISRAEL, EGYPT AND ASSYRIA – FUTURE FORETOLD | 186 |
| AT THE END OF THE MILLENNIUM | 187 |
| SATAN'S TEMPORARY RELEASE AND THE FINAL DESTRUCTION | 187 |
| RESURRECTION OF UNSAVED | 187 |
| THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT | 188 |
| RENOVATION BY FIRE – NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH | 188 |
| 12. NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH (REVELATION 21&22) | 190 |
| REVELATION 21: THE NEW JERUSALEM | 190 |
| REVELATION 22: THE RIVER OF LIFE AND JESUS' SOON COMING ... | 191 |
| 13. BIBLE PROPHECIES AND SIGNS OF THE END TIMES | 193 |
| 1) ISRAEL FORMED AS A NATION | 193 |
| 2) JERUSALEM TAKEN BY ISRAEL AND BECOMING THE EPICENTER OF CONFLICT | 194 |
| 3) THE THIRD TEMPLE – READY TO REBUILD | 195 |
| 4) POSSIBILITY OF THE COALITION OF 10 LEADERS | 195 |
| 5) POSSIBILITY OF A GLOBAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM | 196 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 6) RUSSIA, IRAN, TURKEY, LIBYA, ETHIOPIA, SUDAN | 197 |
| 7) PEACE TALKS AND THE PLAN TO DIVIDE THE LAND | 197 |
| 8) THE CHURCH COMING TO MATURITY | 197 |
| 9) THE GOSPEL TO THE NATIONS | 198 |
| 10) INCREASED PERSECUTION OF THE CHURCH | 198 |
| 11) DECEPTION, GLOBAL SPIRITUALISM AND FALSE SPIRITUALITY ... | 198 |
| 12) KNOWLEDGE AND TRAVEL EXPLOSION | 199 |
| 13) GLOBAL POLITICAL CONDITIONS | 199 |
| 14) THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE – FEAR, HATE, TERROR, DESPAIR | 200 |
| 15) WEATHER AND GEO-PHYSICAL CONDITIONS | 200 |
| 16) PLAGUES, PESTILENCES, EPIDEMICS | 200 |
| 17) MORAL CONDITION OF PEOPLE | 200 |
| ONE GENERATION WILL SEE ALL THESE THINGS | 201 |
| STAY READY BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW WHEN! | 201 |

INTRODUCTION

I first began to read and study this topic on the End Times as a 13-year-old being amazed that the Bible had so much to say on things to come. It was fascinating. I remember in the Summer of 1982, spending many hours each day, through many weeks, studying God's Word on this and many other topics. Over the last almost four and half decades, I've spent numerous hours studying, teaching, discussing and answering questions about End Time Bible prophecy and the End Times. Over time, things have become clearer, my understanding has deepened, my conviction has become stronger and my joy in the Lord continues to abound each time I journey through the Scriptures. And it is such a joy to be able to capture much of this learning in a book and share it with many others. As you read this book and journey through the Scriptures, may you be enriched in your spiritual life, your personal walk with the Lord, and your understanding of End Time Bible prophecy.

Our objective in this book is to provide a framework to help understand and interpret End Time prophetic Scriptures. We also provide an essential Biblical historical background. This is not a verse-by-verse study of Bible prophecy. Instead, our goal is to present the sequence of key events that are waiting to be fulfilled, and their relative timeline as presented in the Scriptures. We also point to key signs of the times to help us understand the nearness of the Lord's return. In most chapters, we address common questions on those topics from the Scriptures.

May our understanding of End Time Bible prophecy help posture us correctly before God in our daily walk, in the way

we live, and in the ministries which He has called us to fulfill. May we be filled with passion for Him, a sense of urgency in our work, and an expectation as we watch the signs of the times unfold before our eyes.

Our intent is to bring out in-depth studies on Daniel and Revelation in separate books so that together this trilogy can serve as an authoritative guide to studying End Time Bible prophecy.

And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” O Lord, come! (Revelation 22:17)

God bless!

Ashish Raichur

1

ESCHATOLOGY: THE STUDY OF END TIMES

Eschatology is the study of End Time events. The word “eschatology” is derived from the Greek word “*eschatos*” meaning “last things”. This book is a study on what the Bible says about the End Time events, coming world events and beyond.

We look around the world today and see so much happening.

Political upheavals.

Fear and unrest due to terrorism, racial and communal intolerance, etc.

Scientific and technological advances with accompanying opportunities as well as challenges.

Environmental and climate changes, and the challenges these present.

Social challenges.

Religious and spiritual challenges.

Why study about the End Times?

Why should we as believers discover what the Bible has to say about the End Times?

Why is this subject important?

We believe studying of the End Times is important...

1) Because God has revealed to us in His Word, truth about creation, redemption, life, death, eternity and things to come. These are given to us to discover and understand. He invites us to do so.

Revelation 1:1-3

¹ The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

² who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

³ Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

Revelation 22:7

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Although some stay away from reading and studying the book of Revelation and other End Time prophetic Scriptures under the pretext that it is difficult to understand or subject to one's interpretation, in the opening and closing chapters, the Lord announces a blessing on those who hear and live by the words of prophecy. Bible prophecy has been given to us to hear, keep and be blessed in our walk with the Lord.

2) Because God has revealed signs of the times that we should be watchful about so that we can order our lives well and live honorably before God and man.

Romans 13:11-14

¹¹ And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

¹³ Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

The Bible calls us to live our lives “knowing the time” in which we live, rather than “sleeping” through life. We recognize the times in which we live and order our lives in a manner that glorifies Jesus Christ.

3) Because God wants us to be a people of hope as we look ahead to that which will be revealed and look past the things of this life.

1 John 3:2,3

² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

We walk with this precious hope through life. “*knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you. For all things are for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal*

4) *Because we affirm that God is unfolding His glorious plan and will redeem all things back to Himself reversing the Fall and works of sin, satan and death. Christ is triumphant overall and everything will be put under His feet.*

1 Corinthians 15:24-26

²⁴ Then *comes* the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

²⁶ The last enemy *that* will be destroyed *is* death.

We live with a sense of triumph and victory because we know how things will unfold. God will make all things new.

5) *Because of such hope, we are active in fulfilling our assignment here on earth – testifying to His grace through the life we live and serving Him actively that the Gospel will be proclaimed to the ends of the earth.*

2 Corinthians 5:10,11

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

We live with holy reverence knowing that we will have to give an account to the Lord Himself.

6) *Because prophecy has to be preached so that people can come to faith in Christ.*

Romans 16:25-27

²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery

kept secret since the world began

²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

²⁷ to God, alone wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

The Bible indicates that mysteries that were once kept secret have now been made known through the Gospel. We must proclaim Jesus Christ and the prophetic Scriptures to all nations so that people can come to faith in Christ.

Our approach in studying the End Times

1) We take things in their literal sense first, then the figurative

We realize that in many Biblical passages on the End Times, there are a lot of figurative elements and imagery. Our approach towards Scripture is to always take a passage in its literal sense unless there is a good reason for doing otherwise. For example, the figurative sense is intended if the literal would involve an impossibility or an absurdity. Next, in order to interpret the figurative, we start with insights and explanation given in the immediate context. Thereafter, if needed, we use meanings assigned to similar figures in the rest of Scripture. Also, we let the New Testament interpret the Old Testament prophecies and understand the Old Testament with the light provided in the New Testament. *All Scripture is interpreted in the context of Scripture starting with the immediate (the chapter), the extended (the book) and the entirety (the Bible) of Scripture.*

2) We do not engage in speculation or sensationalism

While God has revealed things about the End Times in Scripture, we also know that there is much that is not revealed.

Matthew 24:36

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret *things* belong to the LORD our God, but those *things which are* revealed *belong* to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

We believe that God holds certain details of the End Times unknown in order to encourage us to be occupied with the task at hand and yet, live in a constant state of readiness and watchfulness. Hence, we do not attempt to engage in speculations, predictions, hype or sensationalism when speaking of the End Times.

3) *Openness yet, uncompromising*

We are aware of various positions in interpreting Biblical prophecy – dispensational premillennialism, historical premillennialism, postmillennialism, amillennialism. Premillennialists further differ as to *pretrib*, *midtrib*, *posttrib* events. While we give room for variations in eschatological positions, we also understand that there are key elements that cannot be compromised. These include the reality of God's Kingdom, His dealings with the nation of Israel, the Church, His covenant of grace, one hope, one faith, one Lord, one Spirit, the return of Christ, the resurrection from the dead, the judgment of all people, new heaven and new earth. Our focus will always be on the Lord Jesus, His completed work on the Cross, the need to believe in Him as Savior and the Great Commission which we are to be actively engaged in. We interpret Bible prophecy to the best we know how, understand and be open to possible variations and hold on uncompromisingly to the fact that Christ is Savior and Lord. We must endeavor to follow End Time events as they transpire and relate them as applicable to

End Time Bible prophecy.

Our position is closely aligned to dispensational premillennialism where we recognize God's redemptive plan for both Israel and the Church, a literal interpretation of the Book of Revelation, a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church, a seven-year Great Tribulation, a rebuilt Jerusalem temple (the Temple of the Tribulation), a reinstated sacrificial system, the Antichrist, the battle of Armageddon, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the earthly Millennial reign of Jesus with the Millennial Temple.

Dispensationalism is the division of history into dispensations or eras with each dispensation having some change in God's method of dealing with mankind. We agree with the seven classical dispensations that recognize distinct periods of God's working with humanity.

- 1) Innocence (Creation to Fall)
- 2) Conscience (Fall to Flood)
- 3) Human Government (Flood to Babel / Abraham)
- 4) Promise (Abraham to Moses)
- 5) Law (Moses to Christ)
- 6) Grace (Church Age) (Pentecost to Rapture)
- 7) Kingdom (Second Coming to Eternal State)

God is working with Israel (the Jews) and the Church. To His people Israel, He gave a series of covenants – the Abrahamic Covenant, the law or Mosaic Covenant, the royal Davidic Covenant, and a new Messianic Covenant. Through Jesus, salvation is offered to everyone believing in Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles, who make up one new man, part of the one New Covenant.

While our position would be described as **classical dispensational premillennialism**, there are a few elements of **historical premillennialism** that we espouse including ...

- a) the spiritual fulfillment of certain prophecy in the Church and its later literal fulfillment in Israel and
- b) God's kingdom here in a spiritual sense through the Church and its literal establishment later during the Millennial reign of Christ on the earth.

4) *Have a complete view of Scripture*

We consider the Word of God in entirety to understand and interpret End Times prophecy rather than take portions of Scripture in isolation. We interpret Scripture in the context of the rest of Scripture.

5) *The Old Testament explained in the New Testament*

We recognize that the Old Testament prophecies become clearer as we progress into the New Testament, and the New Testament prophecies become more meaningful when read under the light of relevant Old Testament prophecies. These are interconnected. We must be well-versed in the Old Testament prophecies to correctly understand the New Testament prophecies, and vice versa.

6) *Use Biblical typology*

We stay within the confines of Scripture to interpret Biblical typology and prophetic imagery.

For example, we recognize the connection and typology being used in Revelation 12:1 about "*a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars*" and Joseph's dream "*Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I*

have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." (Genesis 37:9) Along with additional information in Revelation 12, we conclude the woman as symbolic of the nation of Israel.

Similarly, symbols like "winds" in Daniel 7:2; the four winds represent various forces (for example, divine judgment) which play upon the "sea". The "sea", or "waters", represents the peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues as explained in Revelation 7:1 and Revelation 17:15.

7) *Recognize different time frames*

We also recognize that there is the possibility of a dramatic change in time frame and perspective within a single verse or from one verse to the next.

For example, in Isaiah 9:6,7, "*For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*" We recognize that part of this verse has been fulfilled, and there is a gap of about 2000 years with the next part of the verse that is still waiting to be fulfilled, although the content is presented as a single sentence or in two sentences.

Another example is Isaiah 65:17-25. In Isaiah 65:17, we see a divine intervention that brings about a new order – new heavens and a new earth. The next few verses, Isaiah 65:18-25, describe what is clearly the Millennium which actually takes place before the new heaven and new earth even though the

verses come after the mention of new heaven and new earth.

8) *Recognize dual (near and far) fulfillment*

There are certain prophecies that are prophetic in both a near and far sense. For example, in Ezekiel chapters 34, 36 and 37, Ezekiel foretells the restoration and regathering of Israel. This has both an immediate (near) fulfillment with Israel brought back to its land after the Babylonian captivity, and a far (end time) fulfillment with Israel being regathered to their own land as a nation after many years of dispersion.

9) *Remain open to possible unexpected ways of fulfillment*

End Time Bible prophecy is exciting, and we will do our best to understand and interpret it the best we know how. However, we must remain open to the possibility that God may just surprise us and choose to bring about the fulfillment in a totally unexpected way.

10) *Timing of certain End Time prophecies not definite*

In some cases, our understanding of the timing of certain End Time prophecies is not definitive. Hence, we look for their fulfillment as time progresses rather than assigning time to their fulfillment and making other decisions based on an assumed timing. It is therefore, better to avoid assigning a fixed time or finalizing the sequence of events for those prophecies where timing is not very definite. We can propose a plausible timing or sequence but keep it that way – a possible timing – and not get rigid or dogmatic about it. Instead, we stay informed of what has been foretold and remain open to when exactly it would be fulfilled.

What we do not subscribe to

Here are some teachings and interpretations which we do not subscribe to ...

Preterism

Preterism holds that many or all the prophecies in the New Testament, particularly those in the Book of Revelation as well as prophetic passages from the Old Testament, were fulfilled in the past. Preterists believe that many of the Biblical prophecies including the Great Tribulation, the Antichrist, and the coming of Christ in judgment were fulfilled in AD 70 with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple.

They support their position primarily by claiming that...

- (A) the book of Revelation was written by the apostle John by AD 68.
- (B) They would also argue that many of the prophecies in the Bible, particularly in Revelation, have already been fulfilled and others are symbolic rather than literal predictions of future events. Preterists would claim that the events described in Revelation are symbolic of spiritual battles and God's judgment on the ancient world.

Dispensational millennialism teaches a Rapture where believers are taken to heaven before the Tribulation – a future, literal, seven-year Tribulation – and a literal Millennial reign of Christ on earth.

We know that the Temple was destroyed in AD 70, while the book of Revelation was given to the apostle John around AD 96. The AD 96 date is strongly substantiated by the fact that ...

- (A) The apostle John was exiled to the island of Patmos (Revelation 1:9) from Ephesus during a period of persecution under the Roman Emperor Domitian, around 94-96 AD. Emperor Domitian ruled from 81-96 AD.

(B) The Early Church father Irenaeus (130-202 AD) and Church historians such as Eusebius (265-339 AD) attest to Revelation being written towards the end of the Domitian reign.

Additionally, let us consider a few points from a simple basic hermeneutical standpoint.

(A) In speaking to the apostle John, the words of Jesus were, *“things which must shortly take place”* (Revelation 1:1) *“the things which will take place after this”* (Revelation 1:19) and *“I will show you things which must take place after this”* (Revelation 4:1). These words are plain and clear that what was revealed to John were events that were yet to happen in the future. To state that Jesus did not mean what He said (He lied?!), and He was only narrating history is simply absurd.

(B) Many of the prophetic events stated in Revelation simply could not have happened during the first Century (Revelation 13,17,18).

(C) Many End Time events have not taken place, and to simply dismiss them as symbolic is not hermeneutically justified and is unacceptable. It is inconsistent with hermeneutical principles, and if we must accept this, then anything and everything else in Scripture could be handled as symbolic and figurative.

Dominion theology

Simply stated, dominion theology is the belief that the Church must take dominion over the earth and usher in the Kingdom before Jesus can come. They believe that “discipling the nations” means Christianizing them from the top down until all the nations are saved and governed by the Church and the “New Apostles.” We do believe that as believers, we are in the

Kingdom, and the Kingdom is in us now, spiritually. We also know the Church is mandated with advancing the Kingdom on the earth spiritually, in bringing people to faith in Christ, being salt and light in our world. However, as we explain in this book, we are very clear that establishing a literal Kingdom where Jesus rules and reigns over the nations is what He will do when He returns. He will then have His saints rule and reign with Him to administer His government over the nations.

2

THE BIBLE: A PROPHETIC BOOK

The Bible claims for itself to be an inspired book, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, ...*” (2 Timothy 3:16). The authors of the Bible wrote of things that they themselves did not understand and things well before their time as they were inspired by the Spirit of God.

1 Peter 1:10-12

¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you,

¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.

¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

2 Peter 1:20,21

²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,

²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were moved* by the Holy Spirit.

The key indicators of divine inspiration of Scripture are the details, accuracy and fulfillment of prophecy – events that were foretold, sometimes hundreds or even thousands of years in advance. Bible prophecy is history written in advance! Fulfilled Bible prophecy is indisputable evidence of its authenticity.

Approximately 2,500 prophecies appear in the pages of the Bible; about 2,000 of which already have been fulfilled to the

letter – no errors. The Bible contains 10,385 verses predicting the return of the Lord.

We will consider a few Bible prophecies to show their accuracy and strength.

Key historical events that were foretold

We present a short list of key historical events that were foretold and then literally fulfilled as foretold in Scripture. Dr. Hugh Ross, an astronomer with a degree in Physics and a PhD in astronomy, has calculated the probability of these prophecies being fulfilled. All probability estimations for prophecies mentioned below are as determined by Dr. Hugh Ross.
[Source: reasons.org]

1) Egyptian slavery

Genesis 15:13,14

¹³ Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is not* theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.

¹⁴ And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

God spoke to Abraham that his people would be slaves for 400 years and then they would come out with great possessions. This was fulfilled as foretold.

2) Babylonian captivity (prophesied 80 years in advance)

Jeremiah 25:11

And this whole land shall be a desolation *and* an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jeremiah 29:10

For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

About 80 years before the Jews were taken into exile, Jeremiah prophesied about Israel being overthrown and the people taken into Babylonian captivity for 70 years. This was fulfilled exactly as foretold.

3) *Cyrus of Persia commanding Israel's return*

Isaiah 44:28

**Who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd,
And he shall perform all My pleasure,
Saying to Jerusalem, “You shall be built,”
And to the temple, “Your foundation shall be laid.”’**

Isaiah 45:1

**“Thus says the LORD to His anointed,
To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—
To subdue nations before him
And loose the armor of kings,
To open before him the double doors,
So that the gates will not be shut:**

About 150 years before Cyrus king of Persia was born, Isaiah called out his name and declared what this man would do. About 180 years later, Cyrus performed all of these as Isaiah had foretold. Ezra records this prophecy being fulfilled.

Ezra 1:2

¹ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,

² Thus says Cyrus king of Persia:

All the kingdoms of the earth the LORD God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. (See also Ezra 5:13,14)

Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^{15} .

4) 483 years for Christ's coming

Daniel prophesied that after 483 years (69 weeks, each week = 7 years) from the time of the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, the Messiah would come, be rejected and die (Daniel 9:25,26). This happened precisely as given. Jesus came and was rejected and crucified.

The first seven weeks (49 years) for the rebuilding of the Temple and the city, and from then on, another 62 weeks (434 years) till Christ is crucified.

Daniel 9:25,26

²⁵“**Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (total of 69 weeks);
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.**

²⁶“**And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; ...**

The decree regarding the restoration of Jerusalem was issued by Persia's King Artaxerxes I to the Hebrew priest Ezra in 458 BC; 483 years later, the ministry of Jesus Christ began in Galilee. (Remember that due to calendar changes, the date for the start of Christ's ministry is set by most historians at about AD 26. Also note that from 1 BC to AD 1 is just one year.) Jesus' crucifixion occurred only a few years later, and about four decades later, in AD 70, came the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

This is explained in detail in this book's Chapter 5 “*Daniel's 70th Week – the Final Seven Years*”.

Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^5 .

5) Prophecies concerning Christ

Some prophecies concerning Christ which were fulfilled literally...

- He would be the seed of a woman (Genesis 3:15).
- He would come through the lineage of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 12:3,17-19).
- He would be a descendant of Judah (Genesis 49:10).
- He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). In approximately 700 BC, the prophet Micah named the tiny village of Bethlehem as the birthplace of Israel's Messiah (Micah 5:2). The fulfillment of this prophecy in the birth of Christ is one of the most widely known and widely celebrated facts in history.

Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^5 .

- He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14).
- He would be in Egypt for some time (Hosea 11:1).
- He would grow up in Nazareth and be called a Nazarene (Matthew 2:23).
- He would be betrayed by His close friend (Psalm 41:9).
- He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver and that this money would be used to buy a burial ground (Zechariah 11:12,13; Matthew 27:3-10). Prophesied about 500 years beforehand.

Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^{11} .

- He would be crucified (Psalm 22:14-16; Isaiah 53).

- He would suffer no broken bones at His crucifixion (Psalm 34:20).
Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^{13} .
- He would observe men casting lots for His clothing (Psalm 22:18).
- He would live again (Psalm 16:10).

6) *Destruction of the Temple (foretold 40 years in advance)*

Matthew 24:2

And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

About 40 years later, in AD 70, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by Titus, the Roman General.

7) *Dispersion and regathering of Israel (foretold 3,500 years in advance)*

The prophets foretold that the ancient Jewish nation would be conquered and dispersed to all parts of the world. These were fulfilled to the letter, first in 607 BC (by the Babylonians) and next in AD 70 (by the Romans). The prophecies stated that the Jews would remain scattered throughout the entire world for many generations without being assimilated, and that the Jews would one day return to the land to be re-established there (Deuteronomy 29; Isaiah 11:11-13; Jeremiah 25:11; Hosea 3:4,5 and Luke 21:23,24). This prophetic statement spans 3,500 years of history and each aspect of it has been literally fulfilled with Israel being established in 1948.

Probability that this prophecy would have been fulfilled by chance = 1 in 10^{20} .

Like these, there are literally hundreds of other Bible prophecies. Bible prophecy is accurate and reliable.

Are we living in the End Times?

The Bible presents to us the signs of the End Times. There are about 500 fulfilled End Time prophecies making it clear that the return of the Lord is near.

Jesus commanded us to watch for His return and desire it. This is the generation that could see the return of the Lord, and it is crucial we be prepared.

Matthew 24:1-51 and Luke 21:5-36 are parallel passages where the Lord Jesus describes the signs of the End Times. This is often referred to as “the Olivet prophecy” spoken from the Mount of Olives. We present this chapter here with a few brief comments. We will look at these passages in detail in later chapters.

Matthew 24:1,2

¹ Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

² And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.”

Jesus prophesied about the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem which was fulfilled in AD 70.

Matthew 24:3-5

³ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will

deceive many.

One of the first signs Jesus gave was of deception; people being drawn away to what is false – to people and systems that take them away from the truth.

Matthew 24:6-8

6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Some of the signs He gave refer to events that would be unique, occurring at a point in time, for example, the destruction of the Temple.

Several of the signs Jesus mentioned would be periodic repetition of trends and devastating events. These would recur over time but intensify (increase in magnitude and frequency) as we approach His Second Coming. Examples of these would be wars, rumors of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, etc. Another example, the “many antichrists” who have come are only precursors to “the Antichrist” who is coming – “*Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.*” (1 John 2:18)

Matthew 24:9

“Then they will deliver you up to Tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.

The Lord Jesus warned of intensified persecution of believers.

Matthew 24:10

And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Hate, betrayal and offense between people will be on the rise. Increased breakdown in interpersonal relationships.

Matthew 24:11

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

Once again, He foretold of increasing deception that would take people away from the faith.

Matthew 24:12,13

¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Sin, breakdown in morality, and unrighteousness will increase such that even many who believed would grow cold. But those who endure to the end will be saved.

Matthew 24:14

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

As never before, the Gospel message is being proclaimed all over the world.

Matthew 24:15

“Therefore when you see the ‘Abomination of Desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand),

The Lord Jesus refers to Daniel’s prophecy thus validating what Daniel prophesied (Daniel 9:27) and the fact that there needs to be “the holy place” where “sacrifice and offering” will be made which will be stopped by the Antichrist. This would, therefore, necessitate the Temple being in place on the Temple Mount. (More on this later.)

Matthew 24:16-22

¹⁶ “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house.

¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.

¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.

²¹ For then there will be great Tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Jesus Christ Himself talked of a future time so horrendous where increasingly cataclysmic events will occur before God's direct intervention in human affairs.

Matthew 24:23-34

²³ “Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it.

²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.

²⁶ “Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘Look, He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it.

²⁷ For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

²⁸ For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.

²⁹ “Immediately after the Tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

³⁰ Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

³¹ And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

³² “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

The Lord Jesus indicates here that one generation will see all the End Time events He has spoken of.

Matthew 24:35,36

³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Jesus made it clear that no one could know the exact time of His return (Matthew 24:36) but we can watch for the signs as we approach toward the end.

Matthew 24:37-51

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

45 “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?

46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’

49 and begins to beat *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,

50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him* and at an hour that he is not aware of,

51 and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Are we the End Time generation?

Luke 21:32

Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.

We need to stay watchful about the signs of the End Times to see if we would be the End Time generation. We always live in a state of consecration and readiness before God while we go about our earthly assignments. Our responsibility is to carefully observe the signs of the times and always be prepared for His return.

Biblical terminology on the End Times

Bible prophecy speaks of the **latter times** and **latter years**, the **last day and latter days**, the **end of time** and the **time of the end**.

It is useful to understand the usage of various terminology (phrases) used in Scripture in reference to the End Times.

“last days” (Genesis 49:1; Acts 2:17; 2 Timothy 3:1; Hebrews 1:2; James 5:3; 2 Peter 3:3)

“the time of the end” (Daniel 8:17; Daniel 11:35,40; Daniel 12:4,9)

“the latter days” (Numbers 24:14; Deuteronomy 4:30; Deuteronomy 31:29; Job 42:12; Proverbs 19:20; Isaiah 2:2; Jeremiah 23:20; Jeremiah 30:24; Jeremiah 48:47; Jeremiah 49:39; Ezekiel 38:16; Daniel 2:28; Daniel 10:14; Hosea 3:5; Micah 4:1)

“day of the Lord” (Isaiah 2:12; Isaiah 13:6,9; Isaiah 34:8; Isaiah 58:13; Jeremiah 46:10; Lamentations 2:22; Ezekiel 13:5; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1,11,31; Joel 3:14; Amos 5:18,20; Obadiah 1:15; Zephaniah 1:7,8,14,18; Zephaniah 2:2,3; Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:5; Acts 2:20; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; 2 Peter 3:10)

“day of wrath” (Job 21:30; Proverbs 11:4; Zephaniah 1:15; Romans 2:5)

“last day” (Nehemiah 8:18; John 6:39,40,44,54; John 7:37; John 11:24; John 12:48)

“end of the age” (Matthew 13:39,49; Matthew 24:3; Matthew 28:20)

“ends of the ages” (1 Corinthians 10:11)

“end of the ages” (Hebrews 9:26)

“last hour” (1 John 2:18)

“coming of the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; James 5:7,8)

“appearing” (1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy

4:1,8; Titus 2:13)

“revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:12; 1 Peter 1:7,13; Revelation 1:1)

“when He appears” (Malachi 3:2; 1 John 2:28)

“His coming” (1 Samuel 16:4; Malachi 3:2; Matthew 24:48; Luke 12:45; Acts 13:24; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 2 Corinthians 7:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 2 Peter 3:4; 1 John 2:28)

We learn that these phrases are used to refer to any duration of time in the future. In some cases, these are used to refer to a particular day / event in the future while in other cases, they may refer to an entire period, for example, the time starting with the first coming of Christ. Hence, these phrases must be understood within the context in which they are used. For instance, the “*last days*” or the “*ends of the age*” began in the New Testament and is ongoing now over a period of about 2000 years.

3

ISRAEL: THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE IN BIBLE PROPHECY

Abraham and the land promised to his descendants

Both Ur and Haran were cities in Mesopotamia, which refers to the area between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.



Abraham was called out of Haran with God giving him a promise of a land, descendants and blessing to the nations.

Genesis 12:1-4

¹ Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show

you.

² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

⁴ So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram *was* seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

The promise was first made to Abraham (Genesis 15:18-21), then confirmed to his son Isaac (Genesis 26:3), and then to Isaac's son Jacob (Genesis 28:13), Abraham's grandson. The Promised Land was described in terms of the territory—from the River of Egypt (the river Nile) to the Euphrates river (Exodus 23:31).

Genesis 15:18

On the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates –

Deuteronomy 11:24

Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the River Euphrates, even to the Western Sea, shall be your territory.

Joshua 1:4

From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

The land promised to Abraham and his descendants is from the river Nile to the river Euphrates, the Mediterranean on the West and “*all the land of the Hittites*”. This is the part that is unclear, and most likely included parts of Lebanon and Syria till the Euphrates river. The Hittites are mentioned more than 50 times in the Bible. They were descendants of Heth, the

son of Canaan (and great-grandson of Noah, Genesis 10:15). They ruled the area of Syria and eastern Turkey and battled with Egypt and Babylon for territory.

Over time, God gave to His people Israel, a series of covenants – the Abrahamic Covenant, the law or Mosaic Covenant, the royal Davidic Covenant, and a new Messianic Covenant. Following Moses, Joshua, judges and the kings, the Jewish people were completely scattered from their land. From that time, about 14 different peoples have possessed the land of Israel. The idea that Israel would ever become a nation again was absurd.

History of the Middle East – an outline

The history of the Middle East, especially the region around Israel, is marked by a succession of empires and civilizations that have ruled the area over many millennia.

Below is a list of key historical periods along with approximate start and end dates for each.

1) Early Bronze Age (3300-2000 BC) years

Emergence of urban culture, development of city-states, early writing systems, and trade networks.

2) Middle Bronze Age (2000-1550 BC) years

Rise of Canaanite city-states, development of fortifications, and influence of surrounding empires (for example, Egyptian and Mesopotamian).

3) Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC) years

Dominance of the Egyptian New Kingdom over Canaan, increased trade, and cultural exchanges across the eastern Mediterranean.

4) Egyptian Period (c. 1550-1200 BC) years

New Kingdom influence

Egyptian control over Canaan, construction of temples, and extensive trade.

5) Iron Age I (1200-1000 BC) years

Period of the Israelite settlement and the Judges, decline of Egyptian influence, and the rise of small kingdoms in Canaan.

6) Iron Age II (1000-586 BC) years

The United Monarchy (Saul, David, Solomon), the division into the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Assyrian and Babylonian invasions.

7) Assyrian Period (c. 900-609 BC) years

Assyrian Empire's dominance over Israel and Judah, destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (722 BC).

8) Babylonian Period (609-539 BC) years

Babylonian conquest of Judah, destruction of Jerusalem and the First Temple (586 BC), the Babylonian Exile.

9) Persian Period (Achaemenid Empire) (539-332 BC) years

Cyrus the Great conquers Babylon, Jews return from exile, rebuilding of the Second Temple, relative autonomy under Persian rule.

10) Hellenistic Period (Greek) (332-63 BC) years

Alexander the Great conquers the region, spread of Hellenistic culture, the rise of the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms, Maccabean Revolt, Hasmonean dynasty.

11) Roman Period (63 BC-AD 324) years

Roman conquest under Pompey, Herodian dynasty, birth and ministry of Jesus, destruction of the Second Temple (AD 70), the Jewish-Roman wars, Early Christian period.

12) Byzantine Period (AD 324-638) years

Eastern Roman Empire control, Christianization of the region, construction of significant churches, flourishing of monasticism.

13) Early Islamic Period (638-1099) years

Muslim conquest under Caliph Umar, establishment of the Umayyad and Abbasid Caliphates, construction of the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

14) Crusader Period (1099-1291) years

Establishment of the Crusader states (Kingdom of Jerusalem), Christian-Muslim conflicts, and eventual Muslim reconquest by the Mamluks.

15) Mamluk Period (1291-1517) years

Mamluk Sultanate control, defense against Mongols and Crusaders, development of trade routes.

16) Ottoman Period (1517-1917) years

Ottoman Empire's control, administrative divisions, integration into global trade, relative peace, and prosperity in some periods.

17) British Mandate Period (1917-1948) years

British control after World War I, Balfour Declaration, increased Jewish immigration, rising tensions between Jews and Arabs, the struggle for independence.

18) Modern Period (1948-Present) years

Establishment of the State of Israel (1948), Arab-Israeli conflicts, Six-Day War (1967), ongoing regional tensions, peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, continued conflict and peace efforts.

This timeline highlights the complex and layered history of the Middle East, particularly around Israel, with each period contributing to the region's cultural and religious heritage.

The Middle East

As we are aware, much of Scripture and its records of God's dealings with people is located around the Middle East. The Garden of Eden was located somewhere between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates (Genesis 2:8-14).

Much of what the Bible foretells about coming world events center around Israel and what will take place in this region. Hence, a brief Biblical and historical background is useful.

Daniel prophesied (Daniel 2) of the rise of the three empires following the Babylonian empire – the Medo-Persian empire that began with king Cyrus, followed by the Greco-Macedonian empire established by Alexander the Great, and then the Roman empire. In Daniel 7, Daniel once again describes these four empires were represented by four beasts – a lion (Babylonian empire), a bear (Medo-Persian empire), a leopard (Greco-Macedonian empire) and a fourth beast described as “terrible” and unlike the other three, which was the powerful Roman empire. All of them operated in and around the Middle East.

| | Babylonian | Medo-Persian | Greek | Roman | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|---------|-------|-------------------|----------|
| Daniel 2 | gold head | silver | brass | iron | iron + clay | 10 toes |
| Daniel 7 | lion | bear | leopard | beast | | 10 horns |
| Daniel 8 | | ram | goat | | | |

After the Roman empire, the Islamic empire rose to power and dominated the Middle East for several centuries. Islam spread throughout the Middle East, North Africa and Southern Asia in two great waves of expansion, first in the seventh century and again in the 12th and later centuries.

Today, 57 countries are in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) [**Source: oic-oci.org**]. Of these, 22 of them are Arab nations spread across the Middle East and North Africa. In comparison, Israel is a tiny piece of land snuggled among these Arab nations and yet, the hot bed of conflict and a center of the world's attention.

The Arab countries hold most of the world's known reserves of oil – the lifeblood of the global economy. Hence, the Middle East remains at the forefront of global affairs.

Many of the nations in the Middle East – Israel (1948), Egypt (1922), Iraq (1932) and Syria (1945) – did not exist about a century ago.

Israel, with Jerusalem as its capital, is bordered by Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, West Bank, Egypt, etc. On **May 14, 1948**, the State of Israel was founded by the efforts of the

World Zionist Organization. Israeli independence in 1948 was marked by massive migration of Jews from both Europe and the Muslim countries to Israel, and of Arabs from Israel, followed by the extensive Arab-Israeli conflict. About 42% of the world's Jews live in Israel today – the largest Jewish community in the world. Since inception, Israel has been in bitter conflict with the neighboring Arab nations. The Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have engaged in violent conflicts for many decades now.

The formation of these nations is important to fulfill End Time Bible prophecy as we shall see in later chapters.

Conflict in the Middle East

The conflict in the Middle East has continued for many decades. In order to understand End Time Bible prophecy, we must be aware of a few aspects of this conflict. We will address the Middle East conflict by considering **the Land, the City and the Temple**. The Land referring to the nation of Israel. The City referring to the city of Jerusalem. The Temple referring to the present Temple Mount and the future Third Temple as mentioned in the Bible.

The Land

Here is a brief overview of the history of the Jewish people beginning with Abraham, their dispersion, and regathering, culminating in the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948.

Abraham and the Covenant (~2000 BC): Abraham, originally from Ur (in modern-day Iraq), was called by God to leave his homeland and journey to Canaan, where God promised to make his descendants into a great nation. This covenant established the Jewish people's connection to the land of Canaan, later known as Israel.

The Egyptian sojourn and Exodus (~1700-1200 BC): Jacob, Abraham's grandson, and his family migrated to Egypt during a famine. Over time, the Israelites were enslaved. Moses led the Exodus out of Egypt, a foundational event in Jewish history. The Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years before entering Canaan under Joshua's leadership.

Kings Saul, David and Solomon and the First Temple (~1000-586 BC): The united monarchy of Israel under the kings Saul, David, and Solomon was a time of territorial expansion and the building of the First Temple in Jerusalem. After Solomon's reign, the kingdom split into Israel (northern kingdom) and Judah (southern kingdom). The northern kingdom fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC, and the 10 tribes were dispersed.

Babylonian exile and return (586-516 BC): In 586 BC, the Babylonians conquered Judah, destroyed the First Temple, and exiled many Jews to Babylon. This marked a significant dispersion. However, in 538 BC, king Cyrus of Persia allowed the Jews to return to their land and rebuild the Temple leading to the Second Temple period.

Roman conquest and the Great Diaspora (63 BC-AD 135): Rome conquered Judea in 63 BC. In AD 70, following a Jewish revolt, the Romans destroyed the Second Temple, leading to widespread dispersion of Jews throughout the Roman Empire. A further revolt in AD 135 resulted in the final destruction of Jewish sovereignty, and the Jews were expelled from Jerusalem beginning a long period of diaspora.

The Middle Ages and Early Modern Period (AD 500-1800): During the Middle Ages, Jewish communities spread across Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East experiencing periods of relative peace and prosperity as well as severe persecution,

such as the Spanish Inquisition (AD 1478-1834) and expulsions from various countries. Despite the dispersion, Jewish cultural and religious life flourished in many regions, particularly in Spain, Poland, and the Ottoman Empire.

The Zionist movement and Modern Return (AD 1800-1948): In the late 19th century, the Zionist movement emerged advocating for the return of the Jewish people to their ancestral homeland. The movement gained momentum after the horrors of the Holocaust (1941-1945) which were carried out by Nazi Germany during World War II targeting Jews across Europe. Under the leadership of Adolf Hitler, the Nazis sought to annihilate the Jewish population leading to the murder of six million Jews including men, women, and children. After the Holocaust, increasing numbers of Jews emigrated to Palestine. The British government, which controlled the territory, issued the Balfour Declaration in 1917 supporting the establishment of a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine.

The Establishment of Israel (AD 1948): On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel was declared, and the modern Jewish state was established. This marked the culmination of the centuries-long dream of Jewish return to their homeland fulfilling the Zionist vision of regathering the Jewish people. The declaration of independence led to the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, but despite the conflict, Israel maintained its sovereignty and became a home for Jews from around the world.

Israel is surrounded by several Arab nations such as Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories. Several attempts have been made to establish peace between Israel and especially its Palestinian neighbors. Despite efforts to finalize the peace agreement, the conflict continues to play a major role in Israeli and international political, social and economic life.

In Israel, the two major political parties are the Labor Party and the Likud party. The Labor party leans to socialist policies, often giving up land for peace. It held power from 1948 to 1977. The Likud party is conservative, nationalist, free-market, and is less willing to make territorial compromises or negotiate for peace during times of violence.

The Israel-Palestinian conflict is rooted in competing national movements and territorial claims in the region historically known as Palestine, now encompassing modern-day Israel and the Palestinian territories (West Bank, Gaza Strip). The conflict's origins trace back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries during the rise of both Jewish nationalism (Zionism) and Arab nationalism. The conflict intensified around the time of the Balfour Declaration in 1917 in which the British government expressed support for a “national home for the Jewish people” in Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire.

Zionism: Jewish immigrants began arriving in Palestine seeking to establish a Jewish homeland. This movement grew especially after World War I and during the interwar period driven by persecution in Europe and the Holocaust.

Arab nationalism: Arab residents of Palestine opposed the large-scale immigration of Jews and the idea of a Jewish state fearing it would lead to their displacement and loss of their own national aspirations.

Major events in the conflict

1920s-1940s: Tensions and the British mandate

Violence between Jewish and Arab communities increased under the British rule in the 1920s and 1930s. The British struggled to manage the conflicting aspirations of Jews and Arabs.

1947: The United Nations proposed a partition plan to divide Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states with Jerusalem under international control. Jewish leaders accepted the plan but Arab leaders rejected it.

1948: Creation of Israel and the First Arab-Israeli War. On May 14, 1948, Israel declared independence. The following day, Arab states (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon) attacked Israel leading to the First Arab-Israeli War. Israel survived the war and expanded its territory beyond the UN partition plan borders. Approximately 700,000 Palestinian Arabs fled or were expelled, leading to a long-standing refugee crisis.

1948-1967: Armistice and continued tensions. Israel and the surrounding Arab states remained in a state of hostility with several border conflicts and ongoing refugee issues.

1967: The Six-Day War resulted in Israel capturing the West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights – territories with significant Palestinian populations.

1987-1993: The First Intifada. A Palestinian uprising (Intifada) against Israeli occupation began in 1987 marked by widespread protests, civil disobedience, and violence.

1993: The Oslo Accords were signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) creating a framework for future peace and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, which would govern parts of the West Bank and Gaza.

2000-2005: The Second Intifada. The Second Intifada erupted in 2000 after failed peace negotiations leading to more intense violence including suicide bombings and military operations. The conflict during this period deepened mistrust and led to significant casualties on both sides.

2005-Present: Ongoing conflict and political stalemate. Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip, but the region has since been controlled by Hamas, a Palestinian Islamist group. Recurrent conflicts between Israel and Hamas have resulted in multiple wars and blockades.

The West Bank remains under Israeli military occupation with the expansion of Israeli settlements which are considered illegal under international law, thus further complicating peace efforts. Efforts at peace negotiations including those brokered by the U.S. and other international actors have repeatedly failed to resolve the core issues of borders, security, refugees, and the status of Jerusalem.

Key issues in the conflict

- 1) **Territorial disputes:** The future borders between Israel and a potential Palestinian state, and control over the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- 2) **Jerusalem:** Both Israelis and Palestinians claim Jerusalem as their capital. The city holds religious significance for Jews, Muslims, and Christians.
- 3) **Refugees:** The right of return for Palestinian refugees displaced during the 1948 war and their descendants.
- 4) **Security concerns:** Israel's security concerns over terrorism especially from groups like Hamas and Palestinians' security concerns under Israeli military occupation.

The conflict remains unresolved with intermittent violence and no clear path to a lasting peace. The situation is characterized by a political stalemate, humanitarian challenges, and deep-seated mistrust between the parties involved. The international community continues to advocate for a two-state

solution though progress has been limited.

The Israel-Palestinian conflict remains one of the world's most complex and protracted conflicts with deep historical roots and significant geopolitical implications.

There has been, and currently is, an ongoing conflict between Israel and its neighbors, most notably several Iran-backed-militant groups.

Israel and Hamas: The Palestinian group Hamas controls Gaza. Hamas launched its deadly attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, prompting the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to engage in aerial campaigns and ground operations within the Gaza Strip.

Israel and Fatah: The Palestinian faction Fatah controls the West Bank. Hamas and Fatah are two rival Palestinian factions.

Israel and Hezbollah: The Iran-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah operate out of Lebanon.

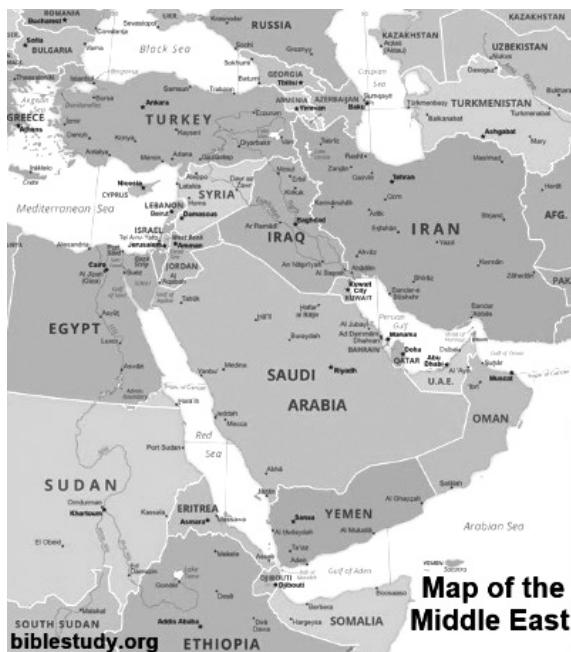
Israel and Houthi rebels: Operating out of Yemen, who back Hamas.

Israel and Iran: Iran carried out its first-ever direct attack on Israeli territory on April 13, 2024.

Hamas, Fatah, Hezbollah and Houthi are all in many ways backed by Iran.

All these conflicts could potentially blow up into a large-scale conflict in the Middle East.

ISRAEL: THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE IN BIBLE PROPHECY



Source: <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/israeli-palestinian-conflict>

The city of Jerusalem

Jerusalem remains the most contested city on earth having fallen to invading forces more than 20 times throughout its recorded history. The land to which God sent Abraham some 4,000 years ago lies at the very crossroads of three continents. It is also holy to three religious groups – Muslims, Jews and Christians.

Jerusalem as a city is of great significance in the Bible.

Jerusalem is called by the following names – the City of David, the City of God, the City of Judah, the City of Joy, the City of Peace, the City of Praise, the City of Righteousness, the City of Solemnities, the City of the Great King, the City of the Lord, a City of Truth, the Faithful City, the Gate of My People, the Holy City, Hephzibah, the Holy Mountain, Holy Temple, the Mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the Perfection of Beauty, Princess among the Provinces, the Throne of the Lord, Zion, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel, the Eternal City, the Heavenly City

Jerusalem in the Bible has served as...

The Place of David's capital by divine appointment;
The Place that became the home of the Levites;
The Place that became the home of the High Priests;
The Place where the Feasts were observed;
The Place toward which God's people prayed;
The Place God's people have always loved;
The Place that was home to Melchizedek, the Ancient King and Priest;
The Place that became home to the Ark of the Covenant;
The Place that David purchased and built an altar to God;
The Place where the Temple was built;

The Place from which the Word would go forth;
The Place where the Holy Spirit was outpoured;
Jerusalem will be the future capital of Messiah's eternal Kingdom.

The Temple

The Temple Mount ("Mount of the House of God"), known to Muslims as the Haram al-Sharif ("the Noble Sanctuary"), a hill (Mt. Moriah) located in the Old City of Jerusalem, is one of the most important religious sites in the world.

Mt. Moriah is where Abraham brought Isaac to sacrifice. Later Israel's King David purchased this site on Mt. Moriah, which was a threshing floor and built an altar on it, offered his sacrifice intending it to be the site of the Temple (1 Chronicles 21-22). King Solomon built the first Temple (2 Chronicles 3:1) here. The Temple Mount is so named because it is the location of the temple built by David's son Solomon.

The Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. Zerubbabel rebuilt the temple (called the second Temple). Herod the Great refurbished and enlarged the temple (called Herod's Temple). This temple was destroyed by the Roman general Titus in AD 70.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock were constructed from AD 685 to 691 atop the temple platform erected centuries earlier by the Biblical King Herod the Great. This site remains a major flash point between Israelis and Arabs.

The Temple Mount (or as Muslims call it the Haram al-Sharif) is sacred to Muslims and Jews. Muslims believe that Muhammed stepped off his horse and went into heaven from this point. After the Muslim conquest of Jerusalem in AD 637,

Umayyad Caliphs commissioned the construction of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock on the site in AD 691. The Dome was completed in AD 692 making it one of the oldest extant Islamic structures in the world, after the *Kaaba*. The Dome of the Rock currently sits in the middle occupying, or close to, the area where the Holy Temple previously stood. The Al-Aqsa Mosque rests on the far southern side of the Mount facing Mecca.

On June 07, 1967 (Six Day War), the Temple Mount was captured by Israel. On Saturday June 17, 1967, shortly after the end of the Six Day War, Defense minister Moshe Dayan entered the Al-Aqsa Mosque for a historic meeting. In a gesture of goodwill, Dayan sat down on the prayer carpet with five leaders of the Supreme Muslim Council (the Waqf) of what had been Jordanian-controlled Jerusalem. That discussion fixed Israel's policy regarding the Temple Mount, a policy that remains unchanged to this day.

Dayan had ordered the Israeli flag removed from on top of the Dome of the Rock on the afternoon of the Old City's liberation. His discussion with Muslims led to further concessions. The administrative control over the Temple Mount was to be the sole responsibility of the Supreme Muslim Council – the (Jordanian) Waqf. Though Jews would be permitted free access to the Mount, prayer by Jews was prohibited. Dayan refused to permit any Jewish identification with Judaism's holiest site. To him, the Temple Mount held only historic interest.

The government of Israel then allocated responsibility of the Temple Mount area to different groups. Israel's Department of Antiquities were given the south, southeast, and southwest area of the Temple Mount to explore archaeologically. The top

of the Temple Mount, however, site of the First and Second Temples, was given over to Muslims to administrate.

Even though the Temple Mount has been regained and is officially part of the State of Israel, it is still being profaned as far as the God of Israel is concerned. When the Mount fell into Jewish hands after the Six Day War, Israel took the Western Wall Area but left administration of the Mount to the Muslim Council of Elders. Israel also banned Jewish worship. The secular Jews did not care and many of the Orthodox Jews believe that the Third Temple would have to await the arrival of the Messiah. These issues remain stalemated to the present day.

A vast majority of Jews believe that the Holy of Holies stood where the Dome of the Rock currently stands.

The Kingdom, Israel and the Church

The Kingdom of God is God's rule and dominion. God is King and He rules among His people. At present (this Church age), His Kingdom is spiritual in nature extending in the hearts and lives of His people, and through them, His Kingdom is manifested in literal (natural) ways in this world as we see in changed lives, kingdom values, kingdom power, etc. The Church is called to be salt and light bringing Kingdom influence into this world.

The literal Kingdom is God's physical rule and reign on the earth which we know will begin at the Millennium.

Israel was part of God's spiritual Kingdom, raised up as a Kingdom of priests. *“And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel”* (Exodus 19:6). Following Christ's death and resurrection, God opened the door of the faith to the Gentiles (Romans 9-11).

God is working with Israel (Jews) and the Church. Through Jesus, salvation is offered to everyone believing in Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles, who make up one new man part of the one New Covenant.

Ephesians 2:11-16

¹¹ Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

¹² that at that time you 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 you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

¹⁵ having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,

¹⁶ and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

The Church is presently part of the spiritual extension of God's Kingdom, and we are advancing against the powers of darkness (Matthew 16:16-18). The Old and New Testament saints will be part of God's literal Kingdom administering His rule and reign on the earth.

The Church's response

We must understand that God has a covenant with Israel that will never be broken (Jeremiah 31:35-37; Romans 9-11). He has revealed a physical and spiritual destiny for the nation of Israel which will soon be completed. We embrace God's heart for the Jewish people, their land, their nation and destiny in God. We pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6). We bless the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. We pray for the

Jewish people and proclaim Christ to the Jews that they too can believe and be saved (Romans 1:15,16; Romans 10:1; Romans 11:14,26).

We love and pray for the Muslim people and the Arab nations that they have divine encounters and know Jesus as Lord and Savior. God loves them and cares for their well-being. We must bring the Gospel to them and care for their physical well-being (Matthew 5:43-48).

4

THE RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH

In this chapter, we provide a brief overview of the sequence of key events starting with the Rapture of the Church all the way into the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. Following this overview, we provide our reasons on why we believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church.

Jesus is coming back!

Acts 1:6-12

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

7 And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

11 who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey.

After the Lord Jesus presented Himself alive for 40 days following His resurrection with many infallible proofs, His disciples saw Him ascend into heaven from the Mount of Olives. As He ascended, two “men”, most likely angels, announced His return – “*This same Jesus, who was taken up from you*

into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11). They were announcing His Second Coming when Jesus would return *“coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory”* (Matthew 24:30; Matthew 26:64).

Interestingly, the prophet Zechariah prophesied sometime around 520-518 BC, about the *“day of the LORD”* and spoke of the His feet standing on the Mount of Olives. This same Jesus who ascended from the Mount of Olives will descend in similar manner onto the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:1-4

¹ Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst.

² For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

³ Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

⁴ And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.

Given the details described in Zechariah 14:1-4, this parallels Revelation 19:11-21 at the battle of Armageddon. Hence, the Lord Jesus returning onto the Mount of Olives in like manner references His coming at the end of the Tribulation at the battle of Armageddon.

“I am coming quickly”

Revelation 22:6,7,12,13,20,21

⁶ Then he said to me, “These words *are* faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things

which must shortly take place.

⁷ “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”

¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.”

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming quickly.” Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

²¹ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

In the closing chapter of Revelation, at least three times, the Lord Jesus stated, “*I am coming quickly*”. These words were given to the apostle John about the end of the First Century. It has been over 2000 years since that time. Of course, from our perspective, this can leave us wondering why the Lord Jesus has not come yet.

The apostle Peter, foreseeing by the Spirit that a time would come when people would ask “*Where is the promise of His coming?*” wrote the following for us – we reference only one portion of that passage...

2 Peter 3:3,4,8,9

³ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,

⁴ and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.”

⁸ But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Peter reminds us that 1000 years is like one day with the Lord. Simply put, God dwells outside time, and although for

us, these 2000 years seems like a very long time, for God, it is just like two days; it really does not matter to Him. Hence, we understand Jesus' statement "*I am coming quickly*" from this perspective and remain ready for His coming as we see the signs being fulfilled in our times.

Sequence of events – a pictorial

We now present a pictorial overview of the sequence of key events that are about to unfold. These are based on the book of Revelation and other Scriptures. We present these as an overview, and then as we progress, in the upcoming chapters, we will substantiate this overview with relevant Scripture texts.

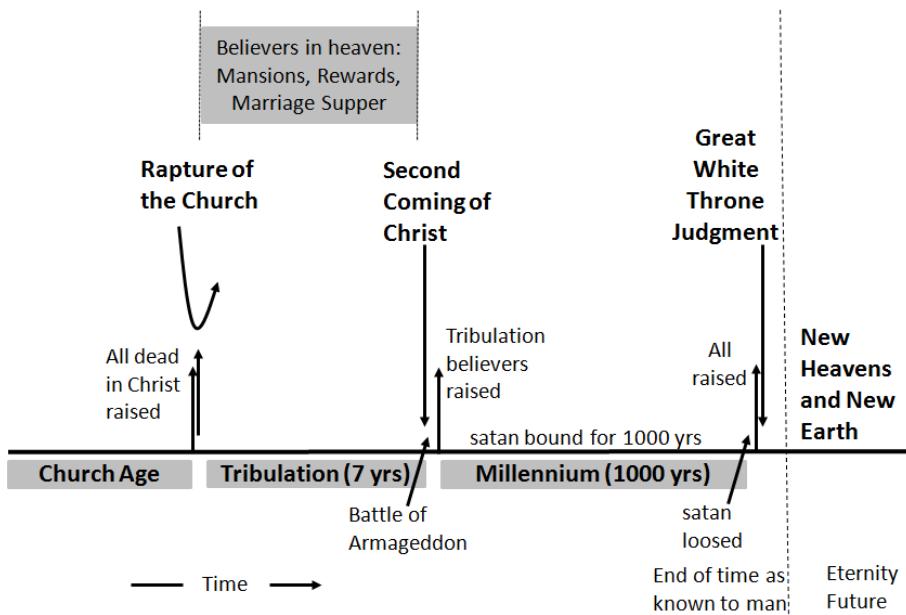
The “Church age,” or dispensation of grace, began on the Day of Pentecost and continues till now. We are living in the “Church age”, a term that simply indicates that God is working primarily in and through the Church currently in order to bring the message of Christ to the nations.

The 7 Classical Dispensations that recognizes distinct periods of God’s working with humanity are...

- 1) Innocence (Creation to Fall)
- 2) Conscience (Fall to Flood)
- 3) Human Government (Flood to Babel / Abraham)
- 4) Promise (Abraham to Moses)
- 5) Law (Moses to Christ)
- 6) Grace (Church Age) (Pentecost to Rapture)
- 7) Kingdom (Second Coming to Eternal State)

The next major work of God that we are expecting is the Rapture of the Church which will close out this dispensation

of grace or the Church age. The Rapture of the Church is often referred to as the secret coming of the Lord – when He comes to take the Church out of the world and we will meet Him in the air. In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, the saints who have died before us (believers in Christ as well as the Old Testament saints) will be raised with glorified bodies. Those of us who are alive at that time will have our bodies changed in a moment, and all of us with glorified bodies will be caught up to meet the Lord Jesus in the air and taken to be with Him in heaven. During this time, we will be ushered into our mansions, given our rewards, and engage in glorious worship. This will go on for seven years (earth years) and culminate with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb at the end of the seven years.



The Rapture of the Church will be the start of seven years of Tribulation on the earth, also referred to as Daniel's 70th Week. During these seven years, the Antichrist will first

come as a man of peace. But in the middle of the seven years, this man, the Antichrist will break his promises, demand to be worshipped, and exert control using a global financial system and a global religious system, assisted by another man, referred to as a False Prophet. During these seven years, God will pour out His judgment on the earth. There will be many who will believe and turn in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ and many who will be martyred for their faith.

At the end of these seven years, there will be the battle of Armageddon where armies of many nations will gather against Israel and attack Jerusalem. At this time, the Lord Jesus will return breaking through the clouds of glory with thousands and thousands of His saints. This is the Second Coming of the Lord. He will destroy the armies and save Israel, send the Antichrist and the False Prophet into the lake of fire, and setup His kingdom here on earth. All those martyred for Christ during the seven years of Tribulation will be resurrected. The judgment of the nations (also referred to as the-sheep-and-the-goats judgment) will take place, where all those who have rejected Jesus will be sent to hell, into everlasting punishment. Satan and his demons will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit. This begins the 1000-year reign (Millennial reign) of Jesus Christ when He will rule the nations from Jerusalem. All His saints will rule the nations with Him for 1000 years.

At the end of the Millennium, satan will be released for a brief period making his final attempt to deceive people and go against Jesus Christ. Satan will be removed and forever sent away into the lake of fire. Following this, every person who ever lived will be raised up, and everyone will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment. The saints are forever separated from those who are not saved and taken up into heaven.

After this, the current heavens and earth (this universe) will be destroyed by fire, and God will create a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness dwells. The Holy City, the heavenly Jerusalem, will be relocated to the new earth. God will dwell with man eternally.

Now, let's turn our attention to the Rapture of the Church, explore events surrounding and following the Rapture and present reasons as to why we believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church.

'Simul Rapiemur'

The apostle Paul described the Rapture (the secret coming) of Christ when He returns to receive believers in mid-air and take them to be with Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³ **But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.**

¹⁴ **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.**

¹⁵ **For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.**

¹⁶ **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.**

¹⁷ **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

1 Corinthians 15:51-58

⁵¹ **Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—**

⁵² **in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we**

shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has 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 YOUR STING? O HADES, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?**”

⁵⁶ The sting of death *is* sin, and the strength of sin *is* the law.

⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

The word “rapture” does not appear in the English Bible. The word “rapture” is not in the ancient Greek text, but comes from the Latin Vulgate, which translates the phrase ‘caught up’ in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 with ‘*rapiemur*’, from which we get our English word “rapture”.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 (Latin Vulgate)

deinde nos qui vivimus qui relinquimur simul rapiemur cum illis in nubibus obviam Domino in aera et sic semper cum Domino erimus

‘*simul rapiemur*’ = we shall be Raptured together

This Rapture signals the end of the Church age as the Church is taken out of the earth. The Rapture precedes the Tribulation period which will go on for seven years.

At Rapture, the spirits of all people who have died and gone to heaven will come with the Lord Jesus and receive glorified bodies. Those believers who are alive at that time will have their bodies changed instantly to become glorified (immortal bodies), and we will all be taken up to meet the Lord in the air.

Philippians 3:20,21

²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Our glorified bodies will be like the glorified body that the Lord Jesus had after His resurrection. Our glorified bodies will be of a spiritual, heavenly, immortal, incorruptible material. It passed through walls (John 20:26), could be touched and felt (John 20:27), could eat (Luke 24:41-43), could ascend into heaven (John 20:17, Acts 1:9), etc.

Like a thief in the night

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.

² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.

³ For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.

⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober.

⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.

The day of the Lord comes like “*a thief in the night*” (v.2), at a time when it is least expected. The apostle Paul has just completed describing the Rapture of the Church and then mentions the “*day of the Lord*”, which he refers to with terms such as “*sudden destruction*” (v.3), “*labor pains*” (v.3), and “*wrath*” (v.9). The Rapture happens suddenly, and then immediately and unexpectedly, the “*day of the Lord*” has come. Hence, given this context, we can deduce that the “*day of the Lord*” being referred to here begins immediately after the Rapture, which we know as the seven-year Tribulation period.

The trumpet of God

Trumpets in Scripture were used to assemble people and direct their movements (Numbers 10:2). We also see the manifest presence of God was ushered in with the sound of the trumpet (Exodus 19:16). Along with the shout and the voice of the archangel, the trumpet will sound at the Rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Some refer to this as a secret exodus as only believers will hear this “call” and be caught up instantly.

Both 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:52 indicate that a trumpet will sound at the time of the Rapture. This trumpet is not the same as the 7th trumpet of Revelation 11:15 to Revelation 13:18. The trumpet at the Rapture is the “*trumpet of God*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16) announcing the resurrection of the saints and calling them together to be caught up to heaven. The other is the trumpet of the 7th angel (Revelation 11:15) part of the seven trumpets announcing woe to men on earth after the seven seals and before the seven bowls. There will also be another “*great sound of a trumpet*” (Matthew 24:31) at the Second Coming of Christ as He steps out of heaven to

engage in the battle of Armageddon and thereafter, gather the Tribulation saints (Jews and Gentiles) to Himself (Matthew 24:30,31; Revelation 19:17-21).

It appears from 1 Thessalonians 4:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:52 that there will be two trumpet sounds at the time of Rapture. The first trumpet announcing the Lord's descent, *“for the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, ...with the trumpet of God...”* (1 Thessalonians 4:16), similar to Exodus 19:16. The second or *“last trumpet”* is to announce the instant resurrection, glorification and catching up of the saints... *“in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed”* (1 Corinthians 15:52).

Seven years in heaven

Let us put together what the Scriptures reveal will happen during the seven years in heaven right after the Rapture.

- 1) We will be with Him in glory (Colossians 3:4).
- 2) We will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).
- 3) We will be like Him living in glorified bodies (1 John 3:2).
- 4) We will know God as we are known, or as the Message Bible renders—*“knowing Him directly just as He knows us”* (1 Corinthians 13:12).
- 5) We will be welcomed into our mansions in heaven (John 14:1-3).
- 6) Each of us believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive rewards for the work we have done. These include crowns (see below) and the rewards Jesus promised to those who overcome (Revelation 2 and 3, see below). All work done in the flesh will be destroyed (2 Corinthians 5:10;

Romans 14:10,12; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15). This is often referred to as the “believers’ judgment” or “Bema seat” judgment because the Greek word used in 2 Corinthians 5:10 for “judgment seat” is the Greek word ‘*bema*’.

- 7) We will engage in worship as redeemed kings and priests (Revelation 5:8-10).
- 8) We will be joined in worship by spirits of the Tribulation martyrs – those martyred for their faith during the Tribulation (Revelation 6:9-11; Revelation 7:9-17).
- 9) We will be part of the Marriage of the Lamb that takes place at the end of the seven years (Revelation 19:7,8).

Crown rewards

The New Testament refers to several crowns which will be given to believers for their life, testimony and service.

A crown of righteousness: “*Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*” (2 Timothy 4:8)

An imperishable crown: “*And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.*” (1 Corinthians 9:25)

A crown of rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19; Philippians 4:1) at seeing people whom you ministered to in heaven.

A crown of life: “*Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*” (James 1:12) “*Do not fear any of those things which you are about*

to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have Tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Revelation 2:10)

A crown of glory: *“and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away”* (1 Peter 5:4)

Revelation 3:11

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

Rewards promised to the overcomer

Here is a list of Scripture texts from Revelation 2 and 3 where the Lord Jesus promised rewards to the overcomer. While He mentioned different rewards to the overcomer when speaking to each of the seven churches, we understand that these rewards are for all believers during the Church age who overcome and stand firm in their faith till the end.

Revelation 2:7

To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

The Tree of Life represents full restoration to eternal life and fellowship with God, thus reversing the loss of life in the Garden of Eden. Overcomers are granted unhindered access to God’s life-giving presence in Paradise.

[Side note: This shows that the Tree of Life was moved to heaven after the Fall and that Paradise was also moved to heaven at Christ’s resurrection.]

Revelation 2:11

He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.

The second death refers to the Final Judgment and eternal separation from God in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:6,14; Revelation 21:8). Overcomers are secure from this judgment and share in everlasting life with Christ.

Revelation 2:17

... To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.

The hidden manna symbolizes Christ as the believer's eternal spiritual nourishment (John 6:48,49,58) and intimate provision from God. The white stone with a new name signifies personal acceptance, vindication, and a unique identity known fully only to Christ and the believer.

In the first-century Greco-Roman world, a “white stone” carried several well-recognized cultural meanings.

- 1) Jury stones indicating acquittal and vindication. In Roman courts, jurors cast stones to register a verdict – white stone meant “not guilty” (acquittal), whereas black stone meant “guilty” (condemnation). In this context, Christ’s promise of a white stone communicates divine vindication; the believer has been publicly declared righteous by God’s verdict as opposed to the condemnation of the world.
- 2) Admission tokens indicating acceptance and access. White stones were commonly used as entry tokens for banquets, festivals, theater events, special feasts, etc. A person received a white stone engraved with their name to permit entry. Hence, in this context, the white stone represents acceptance and invitation into God’s eternal feast symbolizing authorized access to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and heavenly fellowship.

- 3) Athletic victory trophies. Victorious athletes were sometimes given commemorative stones engraved with their name as proof of triumph and to secure privileges or prizes. The promise reinforces the idea of the believer as a spiritual victor, recognized by Christ and eternally rewarded for faithfulness.
- 4) Personal identity symbolizing intimate recognition. Stones bearing a name served as personal tokens of recognition granting special status or privileges to the bearer. The promise of a new name known only to the receiver reflects an intimate relationship where Christ affirms the believer's unique identity as the redeemed of the Lord.

Revelation 2:26-28

²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations —

²⁷ 'HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON; THEY SHALL BE DASHED TO PIECES LIKE THE POTTER'S VESSELS' —

as I also have received from My Father;

²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.

Overcomers will share Christ's righteous rule over the nations during His Millennial kingdom reign exercising delegated authority under the King of kings. The "morning star" represents participation in Christ's glory and the gift of Christ Himself as the dawn of the eternal kingdom (2 Peter 1:19). "*I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star*" (Revelation 22:16).

Revelation 3:5

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

White garments represent purity, righteousness, and honor before God confirming the believer's salvation and victory. Christ's confession of the overcomer's name in heaven affirms their eternal belonging and public vindication before God and the angels.

Revelation 3:12

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

Being made a pillar represents permanent belonging, stability, and honor in God's eternal dwelling. The inscribed names signify secure citizenship in the New Jerusalem and personal intimate identification with God and Christ forever.

Revelation 3:21

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Overcomers are promised shared authority with Christ in His glorious reign just as He reigns with the Father (Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 6:2). This expresses the believer's ultimate exaltation – co-reigning with Christ as faithful partners in His eternal kingdom.

Why we believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church?

We believe that the Rapture of the Church will take place before the seven years of Tribulation, and hence, the Church will not go through the Tribulation. This is referred to as pre-Tribulation Rapture. We now state several reasons why we believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church.

[Side note: We are aware that there are those who hold the view of a mid-Tribulation or a post-Tribulation Rapture. We are not engaging in discussions directly on these other views, but as we present reasons for a pre-Tribulation Rapture, we will indirectly be addressing these. We leave it as an exercise for the reader to conduct a study on these differing views and arrive at their own conclusions should they feel so inclined to do so.]

1) Jesus said He will come and take us to His Father's House

John 14:1-4

¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

² In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

The Lord Jesus specifically stated, “*I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also*” (John 14:3). We will be with Him in His Father’s house and ushered into the mansions He has prepared for us. The “coming again” and “receiving you to Myself” is clearly described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-58, which we referred to as the Rapture of the Church. We go through a process of elimination to determine when and how John 14:1-3 could be fulfilled.

At the end of the seven years of Tribulation, Christ comes to defeat the Antichrist and the False Prophet, and right after, we are ushered into the Millennial reign of Christ as clearly outlined for us in Revelation 19:11-21 and Revelation 20:1-6. So, John 14:1-3 cannot be fulfilled at the end of the 7 years of Tribulation since the Millennial reign happens here on earth, and we do not have a chance to be in the Father’s House.

Could John 14:1-3 happen in the middle of the Tribulation? Reading through the events given to us in Revelation, there is no indication of this happening. There is no record in Revelation chapters 6 through 19 of Christ coming and receiving believers to Himself and taking them to the Father's House. We do see those who are martyred for Christ during the Tribulation appearing in heaven (Revelation 6:9-11; Revelation 7:9-14). We see the 144,000 Jews in heaven (Revelation 14:1-5).

Hence, it is right to conclude that John 14:1-3 will be fulfilled just before the start of the Tribulation and will take place as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

2) The typology of Noah and Lot used in Matthew 24 and Luke 17

We see Christ's Olivet discourse in Matthew 24 (and Luke 17 and 21) clearly demarcating distinct time periods.

- Matthew 24:4-14 reveals the signs of the End Times leading up to the Tribulation (see also Luke 21:7-19).
- Matthew 24:15-19 describes the Tribulation period (see also Luke 21:20-26).
- Matthew 24:30,31 depicts the Second Coming with the gathering of the Tribulation saints (Jews and Gentiles who have believed in Jesus) at the end of the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19:17-21). (See also Luke 21:27).
- Matthew 24:32-51 is Jesus' exhortation to all believers (the Church) to be always ready for the Rapture. (See also Luke 21:28-36).

Based on the typology Jesus used in this discourse in Matthew 24 and Luke 17 as explained below, the Rapture will take place between Matthew 24:14 where the Lord Jesus stated

“*then the end will come*” and Matthew 24:15 where the Lord Jesus started talking about the Antichrist. Matthew 24:15 is the beginning of the end, the start of the final seven years of Tribulation.

Noah entered the ark, Lot left Sodom

Matthew 24:36-42

³⁶ “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

⁴⁰ Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴¹ Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.

⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

As the Lord Jesus exhorts His believers to be always ready, He then draws from the Old Testament and uses Noah, the days of Noah and the ark to illustrate the taking away of people. The ark was a place of safety that kept the people from the flood (judgment) that came upon the rest of those who did not enter the ark. Once the judgment was over, the people who had been kept safe were back on the earth. The ark then is a type which represents to us the taking away (or the Rapture) of those who are saved to safety.

Notice how Jesus placed the sequence of events in relation to His coming to take people away. “*Noah entered the ark*” (Matthew 24:38) and then “*the flood came and took them all away*” (Matthew 24:39). Noah and his family were taken into safety and then, judgment was poured out on the earth. The

coming of the Son of Man will be similar to Noah being taken into the ark, and it will involve “*one will be taken and the other left*” (Matthew 24:40) which is very descriptive of what will happen at the Rapture. Hence, this typology clearly indicates that not only will the Church be taken away to safety before the Tribulation, but also how, that is, by believers being taken away in the Rapture.

Luke 17:26-30

²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man:

²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.

²⁸ Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built;

²⁹ but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all.

³⁰ Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

In Luke 17, the Lord Jesus uses Lot leaving Sodom and Gomorrah. He stated “*the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire...*” (Luke 17:29). Lot was taken away to safety and then, judgment came upon those left behind in Sodom and Gomorrah.

The typology of Noah and Lot mean that those who belong to God will be kept from the judgment of God that will be poured out. Additionally, we note in Abraham’s prayer in Genesis 18, in the context of Sodom and Gomorrah, that God will not destroy the righteous with the unrighteous.

3) Jesus taught to pray to escape things that will come to pass

Luke 21:5-36

⁵ Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful

stones and donations, He said,

⁶“These things which you see—the days will come in which not *one* stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

⁷ So they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, but when will these things be? And what sign *will there be* when these things are about to take place?”

⁸ And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am *He*,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them.

⁹ But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end *will not come* immediately.”

¹⁰ Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

¹¹ And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

¹² But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.

¹³ But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

¹⁴ Therefore settle *it* in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer;

¹⁵ for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.

¹⁶ You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put *some* of you to death.

¹⁷ And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake.

¹⁸ But not a hair of your head shall be lost.

¹⁹ By your patience possess your souls.

²⁰ “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

²² For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

²⁵ “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;

²⁶ men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

²⁹ Then He spoke to them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees.

³⁰ When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.

³¹ So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.

³² Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.

³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

³⁴ “But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly.

³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.

³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Luke 21:5-36 is a parallel passage to Matthew 24:1-52, Mark 13:1-37 and Luke 17:20-37. In all three passages, Jesus foretells events that are in the near future and then speaks of things that are at the very end of the Church age.

Near future:

Matthew 24:1,2 – The Temple will be destroyed and not one stone will be left on top of another.

Luke 17:25 – The Son of Man must be rejected and suffer at the hands of this generation.

Luke 21:5-7 – The Temple will be destroyed and not one stone will be left on top of another.

These were fulfilled. Christ was rejected and crucified. The Temple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans.

The remaining section in all three passages speak of events at the very end of the Church age.

“...And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (Luke 21:24) – this clearly speaks of what will happen in the middle of the Tribulation as mentioned in Revelation 11:1,2 – *“Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there. But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months”*. The 42 months is 3 ½ years, which is the second half of the seven-year Tribulation period. So, it is very clear that Jesus has referenced the Tribulation period.

At the end of this, the Lord Jesus teaches us...

Luke 21:36

Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The things we should pray to escape are all the terrible events of Luke 21:7-28 happening at the beginning and during the Tribulation. Why would He tell us to pray to escape these things if it were not possible in the first place? If God wanted believers (the Church) to go through the seven-year Tribulation, then Jesus would not have taught us to pray that we would escape all these things. Hence, the only conclusion we arrive based on His instruction to pray that we would escape is that, indeed, we will escape all these things (the Tribulation) that will come to pass, and we will be before the Son of Man instead of being here on earth to go through these things.

4) *The great escape – what Paul taught the Thessalonian church*

In both of Paul's epistle to the Thessalonians, one important theme is the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must carefully observe how Paul unfolds the events around the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Keep in mind that each letter was written as a letter – not in chapter and verse format but as a logically arranged sequence of thoughts (truths, insights from the Holy Spirit) that needed to be communicated to the audience, and later to us as the Church.

We state Scripture references from 1 Thessalonians here, and we will look at 2 Thessalonians in the subsequent point.

1 Thessalonians 1:9,10

⁹ For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,

¹⁰ and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

Paul clearly states that we wait for Jesus and His return

because we expect Him to deliver us from the wrath to come. The term “*wrath to come*” obviously refers to God’s judgment but it is not evident what judgment Paul is referring to specifically, for example, is it the judgment as poured out during the Tribulation, or is it judgment as at the battle of Armageddon, or is it the Great White Throne Judgment, or is it in general referring to eternal punishment in hell? So, we keep this open and wait to see if more specifics are given later in the letter(s).

Next in chapter 2, Paul states...

1 Thessalonians 2:19,20

¹⁹ **For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?**

²⁰ **For you are our glory and joy.**

The next time Paul mentions the coming of the Lord, He speaks of being in His presence along with the saints declaring that they would be his glory, joy, and crown of rejoicing. This is indicative of a time of rewards and celebration for faithful service right after the coming of the Lord. As we discussed in reason 1) earlier, if the Church had to go through the Tribulation and the Lord Jesus came only at the end of the Tribulation, then there would be no opportunity to experience this “*glory and joy*” “*in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming*” because we would be ushered right into the Millennial reign.

Taking this further in chapter 3...

1 Thessalonians 3:12,13

¹² **And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,**

¹³ **so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.**

As we follow Paul in his writing about the coming of the Lord, now we see that this coming happens “*with all His saints*” (1 Thessalonians 3:13). So, piecing these three references together, we see that the Lord Jesus, at His coming, will deliver us from the wrath to come. Following His coming, we will rejoice with saints, receive rewards for the lives we have helped usher into eternity. And when Jesus comes, He will do so with all His saints.

Continuing this thought in chapter 4...

1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

¹⁵ **For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.**

¹⁶ **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.**

¹⁷ **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

¹⁸ **Therefore comfort one another with these words.**

Paul goes on to elaborate further and provide additional insight about “the coming of the Lord”. He describes what we refer to as the Rapture or catching away of all saints with their glorified bodies to be with the Lord.

So now, let us tie together all that Paul has stated thus far in 1 Thessalonians chapters 1-4. We see that the Lord Jesus at His coming will deliver us from the wrath to come (1 Thessalonians 1:10). Following His coming, we will rejoice with saints, receive rewards for the lives we have helped usher into eternity (1 Thessalonians 2:19). And when Jesus comes, He will do so with all His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13). These saints who come with the Lord will be the spirits of those who

have been “*dead in Christ*” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Their spirits will receive their glorified bodies. Then those who are alive on the earth at the time of His coming will have their bodies instantly changed to glorified bodies, and we will all be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, to be taken to heaven to be with Him there (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

And then in chapter 5, Paul continues about the coming of the Lord...

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11,23

- ¹ But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you.**
- ² For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.**
- ³ For when they say, “Peace and safety!” then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape.**
- ⁴ But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.**
- ⁵ You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.**
- ⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober.**
- ⁷ For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.**
- ⁸ But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.**
- ⁹ For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,**
- ¹⁰ who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.**
- ¹¹ Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.**
- ²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

In the opening of his letter, Paul stated that the Lord Jesus delivers us from the wrath to come. Then after having described the catching away of the believers to meet the Lord in the air and having instructed them to encourage each other with this hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), Paul affirms to the believers that God “*did not appoint us to wrath*” (1 Thessalonians 5:9) but has called us to experience salvation through Jesus and live with Him. The context of the term “wrath” here has to do with the day of the Lord, and hence, we conclude that the “*wrath to come*” referred to in 1 Thessalonians 1:10 has to do with the wrath coinciding with the Tribulation period, “the sudden destruction” and “labor pains” which the ungodly will not escape from (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

Look closely at 1 Thessalonians 5:3 – the ‘them’ and ‘they’ in this verse are referring to the unsaved, those who do not believe (as Paul refers to them in subsequent verses those in darkness, those who are of the night). In verse 3 Paul states, “*then sudden destruction comes*”, obviously referring to the time of Tribulation, time of wrath or judgment (1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:9). Paul states “*they shall not escape*” (1 Thessalonians 5:3) implying that what has happened to the believers in being caught up together (1 Thessalonians 4:17) is the great escape from the sudden destruction that comes upon the unsaved. So, we see in the context of the Lord’s coming, it is the joy of believers to experience God’s saving and delivering work and not be under the wrath of God that will be poured out on the earth. Once again, this should bring us comfort and hope (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Hence, Paul’s teaching through 1 Thessalonians is a clear statement that the Rapture will happen before the Tribulation causing believers to escape the destruction and judgment that will come upon the earth. In view of this, Paul prays that

the believers will be wholly sanctified and guarded that way ('preserved blameless') in spirit, soul and body at the coming of our Lord Jesus (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

5) "He" must depart for the Antichrist to be revealed

2 Thessalonians 2:1-10

¹ Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

² not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

³ Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not* come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

⁶ And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.

⁸ And then the *lawless one* will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

⁹ The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

¹⁰ and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

This passage can be confusing because of the multiple references to "His coming" and "the day". So, let's include explanatory comments alongside the original Scripture text to help us.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-10 (explanatory notes added to the text)

¹ Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and

our gathering together to Him (this is the Rapture as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), we ask you,

2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ (the day of Christ referring to the day Christ comes to destroy the Antichrist and establish His rule and reign on the earth mentioned below in v.8; this day has still not come) had come.

3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day (the day Christ comes to destroy the Antichrist and establish His rule and reign on the earth mentioned below in v.8) will not come unless the falling away comes first (so there will be a big departure from the faith due to large scale deception happening just before the Tribulation – Matthew 24:4,5; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-4), and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time (What is holding back the man of sin from being revealed?).

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way (lawlessness is already at work, but the one who is restraining the Antichrist from being revealed, will continue to restrain him and keep him from being revealed, until the time comes for this one to be taken out of the way. As we explain below, the one who now restrains is the Church).

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed (after the one who restrains is taken out of the way, the lawless one, the man of sin, the Antichrist will be revealed to do his work for the seven years), whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming (This is “the day of Christ” referred to in v.2, and “that Day” referred to in v.3. It is the day when He comes to consume the Antichrist with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming, aligning to Revelation 19:11-21).

9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders (the Antichrist will come with display of lying signs and wonders; this concurs with Revelation 13),

10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

The “*He who now restrains*” (2 Thessalonians 2:7) could refer to the Church or to the Holy Spirit. We state that the “*He who now restrains*” refers to the Church. The Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, is the one restraining force on the earth today. Once the Church is taken out of the way, then the lawless one will be revealed (vv.7,8).

Why do we say that “*He who now restrains*” refers to the Church and not the Holy Spirit?

For the following reasons...

- a) Jesus clearly stated that the Holy Spirit will abide with us forever (John 14:16). So, it will be a contradiction to Jesus’ statement to say that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the earth, and that those who become believers in Jesus Christ during the Tribulation will be left without the Holy Spirit to go through the Tribulation.
- b) The apostle Paul in His writing to the Thessalonians had already informed them about the Church – the entire body of believers – being taken into heaven (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). He is now writing specifically about “*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him*” (2 Thessalonians 2:1). He had stated in 1 Thessalonians 4 that the Church would be taken out of the earth. Hence, it is only right to interpret 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10 in a manner consistent with what he had already written earlier.
- c) The Church is called “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13,14; Ephesians 5:8), empowered to advance the Kingdom against the works of darkness. Hence, it is the Church that acts as a restraint to evil at this present time on the earth.
- d) While we understand that the Church is referred to as the “Bride” of Christ (feminine), since the Church is the “Body”

of Christ (masculine), it is perfectly right for the “He who now restrains” (masculine) to also refer to the Church, “His Body”, the Body of Christ.

Instances in the Bible where the Church is referred to with the “bride” metaphor...

- In the Gospels (Matthew 9:15; Mark 2:19,20; Luke 5:34,35) where Jesus refers to Himself as the Bridegroom implying the Church as the betrothed Bride.
- In the epistles (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-27,31,32) where Church is depicted as an espoused bride kept in purity for Christ. Human marriage is modeled after Christ’s spousal relationship with the Church.
- In Revelation (Revelation 19:7-9; Revelation 21:2,9; Revelation 22:17) where the Church is presented publicly as Christ’s Bride at the wedding supper. The Bride is equated with the redeemed community manifested in eternal glory. The Bride (the Church) working in fellowship with the Spirit.

Instances in the Bible where the Church is referred to with the “body” metaphor...

- Epistles (Romans 12:4,5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,17; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22,23; Ephesians 2:16; Ephesians 4:4,12,15,16; Ephesians 5:23,29,30; Colossians 1:18,24; Colossians 2:19)
- e) Here are several reasons why we state from Scripture that the Holy Spirit will be at work in and through people on the earth during the Tribulation.
 - (i) We know that the Holy Spirit is God and so is omnipresent (present everywhere at all times, Psalms 139:7-11) and

hence, will continue in some way to move upon the earth.

- (ii) We know that the outpouring of the Spirit which began on the Day of Pentecost continues through the entire period of the Last Days until the great and terrible day of the Lord as stated in Joel 2:28,29 and Acts 2:17. This was spiritually fulfilled in the Church and will also be fulfilled for Israel during the Tribulation.
- (iii) During the Tribulation, the 144,000 Jews (Revelation 7:1-17) are sealed (marked) by God. As far as the New Testament is concerned, this seal is the presence and work of the Holy Spirit (John 6:27; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 4:30). These Jews are thus empowered to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ to the whole world (Revelation 14:1-5).
- (iv) During the Tribulation, people will be saved and turn to the Lord when they see the signs (Acts 2:16-21, Revelation 6:9-11; Revelation 7:13-17, Revelation 15:2-4; Revelation 20:4-6). People cannot be saved apart from the work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9; Titus 3:5). Many of them will be martyred during the Tribulation. These Tribulation believers will need the work and empowering of the Holy Spirit more than ever (John 14:16,17).
- (v) We also know that during the Tribulation, there will be people who will bear the testimony of Jesus as stated in Revelation 12:17 – *“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”* We also know that the Holy Spirit is the testimony of Jesus as stated in Revelation 19:10 – *“And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and*

of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

- (vi) The two witnesses, one of whom we know is Elijah (Malachi 4:5,6) will come in the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 17:11; Luke 1:17) just as Elijah did in the Old Testament times and will perform signs and wonders in the power of the Spirit (Revelation 11:3-6).
- (vii) Ezekiel 38 and 39 depict a military invasion of Israel (in the mountains of Israel) by a Northern coalition occurring during the Tribulation sometime before the battle of Armageddon. God cleanses and restores Israel. (This invasion could be part of Revelation 12:13-17 when satan goes all out against the woman – the nation of Israel).

God foretold...

Ezekiel 39:29

And I will not hide My face from them anymore; for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel,' says the Lord God.

Here again, we see a clear indication of an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Israel during the Tribulation.

- (viii) Zechariah foretold Jerusalem being besieged by the nations (Revelation 12:2-9). Jerusalem will not be saved by military power but by direct divine protection. At this time, Israel will recognize Jesus as the crucified Messiah, and God pours out His Spirit of grace and supplication on them resulting in a massive harvest of souls. This outpouring happens at the end of the Tribulation.

Zechariah 12:8-10

⁸ In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house

of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them.

⁹ It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

¹⁰ “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

This leads to the benefits of the Cross being applied to repentant Israel – *“In that day a fountain shall be opened...for sin and uncleanness”* (Zechariah 13:1) and Israel being saved (Romans 11:26). The nation enters into covenant restoration.

These eight (i)-(viii) references in Scripture clearly indicate to us that the Spirit of God will be at work on the earth through the Tribulation.

The Antichrist cannot be revealed until the Church departs from this world. This does not mean that the Holy Spirit must be removed from the earth. We do not have a definitive indication of the Holy Spirit being taken out of the earth in Scripture at any point.

[Side note: Genesis 6:3 is not a clear statement that the Holy Spirit will be taken out of the world. Instead, it is referenced in the context of righteous living as in James 4:5].

We recognize that the focus of the Holy Spirit’s work during the Tribulation would differ from the ways in which He worked in the Old Testament and during the Church age. Briefly stated, the Holy Spirit’s work during the Old Testament was to primarily point to the Messiah through the prophets; during the Church age, His work was primarily equipping the Church to fulfill the Great Commission and bringing the Church to become a glorious Church. His work during the Tribulation

would be to strengthen those coming to Christ to endure in faith bearing the testimony of Jesus.

Let's consider another reason why we believe in a pre-Tribulation Rapture of the Church.

6) *The promise to the Church in Revelation 3:10,11*

Revelation 3:10,11

¹⁰ **Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from (*ek*) the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.**

¹¹ **Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.**

Speaking to the Church in Philadelphia, the Lord Jesus promised those who keep His Word and persevere that He will keep them from “the hour of trial” that will come upon the whole world. The trial that comes upon the whole world could only refer to the Tribulation, which is described for us in the coming chapters Revelation 6-19. This is a clear indication that the Church will be kept away from the time of Tribulation that comes upon the whole earth. Revelation 3:10 indicates that the Church is kept from (*ek*) the hour of temptation. ‘*ek*’ means “out of” or “evacuation”. John would have used ‘*dia*’ if he intended to tell us “through” the hour of trial.

7) *Daniel's 70th week for Israel, not the Church*

Daniel 9:24-27

²⁴ **“Seventy weeks are determined**

**For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,**

And to anoint the Most Holy.

**²⁵ “Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.**

**²⁶ “And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.**

**The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.**

**²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate.”**

This passage is explained in detail in the next chapter.

The 70 weeks of Daniel are a period of 490 years that are specifically concerning the people of Israel and the holy city of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24). 69 weeks (62+7), that is, 483 years have already been fulfilled from the time king Cyrus issued his decree for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple till the crucifixion of the Messiah. One last week, referred to as the 70th week – a period of 7 years – is remaining to be fulfilled. Hence, this 70th week (the 7 years of Tribulation) has to do with the people of Israel and the city of Jerusalem as already stated in Daniel 9:24 and is not about the Church. The Church is on the earth between the 69th and 70th week – that is, after the Messiah was crucified – and will be “Raptured” (taken out of

the way) before the start of the 70th week. Therefore, we state confidently that the Church will not go through the Tribulation (Daniel's 70th week, a period of 7 years).

8) *The chronology of the book of Revelation*

For the most part, the book of Revelation is a chronological sequence of events that were to unfold. Revelation 1:19 says, “*Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this*” (past, present and future). Revelation 1 speaks of the past, Revelation 2 and 3 speak of the present, and Revelation 4 to 22 speak about the future.

In Revelation 4 and 5, we read about “*twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads*” (Revelation 4:4). These elders are believers like the others who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and made kings and priest to our God (Revelation 5:9,10; Revelation 19:9,10). So, for these elders to have received their crowns, all believers must have been already brought to heaven, and the Judgment seat of Christ must have already taken place. This would mean that the Rapture had taken place.

Next, in Revelation 5, we see Christ receiving the scroll and Revelation 6 begins with Christ opening its first seal. When the first seal is opened, the details move from heaven to earth indicating the start of the Tribulation with the arrival of the Antichrist, the rider on the white horse.

Revelation 5:1,2,5,7

¹ **And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.**

² **Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?”**

⁵ **But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the**

tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

7 Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

Revelation 6:1,2

1 Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see.”

2 And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

After Revelation 4 and 5, where we have the elders worshipping along with the saints, comes Revelation 6:1,2 with the start of the Tribulation. The picture clearly indicates that the saints have been Raptured and are in heaven while on earth, the Tribulation begins. Hence, this is another strong reason for us to conclude that the Rapture does take place before the Tribulation.

The scroll represents God’s complete plan for human history including His plan of redemption, His judgments on evil, and Christ’s Kingdom reign. The scroll is written on both sides indicating fullness and completion. The scroll is in God’s right hand indicating divine authority, divine intent and divine control. The scroll is sealed with seven seals indicating that it is perfectly secured, hidden, and awaiting God’s authorization for execution. The imagery echoes Daniel 12:4 where the angel Gabriel told Daniel, *“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end;”*.

Christ alone is worthy to receive and open the scroll. The opening of the seals means the time has come for these prophecies to be fulfilled. It announces the initiation and the execution of what the scroll contains releasing divine judgments

that God had determined in advance.

The moment when the Father will hand the scroll over to Christ to open it is known only to the Godhead. When Jesus walked on the earth as the incarnate Son of God, He said, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father”* (Mark 13:32). We must avoid speculating on the day or year – *“It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority”* (Acts 1:7). However, we must recognize the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3) and understand what He has revealed to us so we live in a state of readiness.

9) *Revelation 12 – satan’s attack focused on Israel, not the Church*

We know that Revelation 12 takes place mid-way during the Tribulation.

| Scripture | Mentions | Total in years |
|---|---|----------------|
| Revelation 11:2 | 42 months | 3 ½ years |
| Revelation 11:3 | 1,260 days | 3 ½ years |
| Revelation 12:14 (echoing Daniel 7:25 and Daniel 12:7) | a time (1 year), and times (2 years) and half a time (½ year) | 3 ½ years |

During this 3 ½ years is when the devil is forced back to the earth and knows that he has but a short time (Revelation 12:6,12,14).

Revelation 11 and 12 are clearly at the mid-point of the seven-year Tribulation. At this time, the Scripture indicates that the devil attacks the woman (the nation of Israel) and her offspring (the people of Israel) and those who believe in Jesus. We do know that there will be believers in Jesus from both Jews and Gentiles during the Tribulation. *“And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Revelation 12:17). The emphasis is on Israel and not the Church. This would indicate that the Church in its full sense has already been Raptured and is absent from the earth.

10) The 144,000 Jews are firstfruits

Revelation 14:1-5

¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads.

² And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.

³ They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth.

⁴ These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are 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.

⁵ And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

The New Testament term “*firstfruits*” is rich with Old Testament meaning, and essentially speaks of priority, holiness, dedication to God, and guarantee of a greater harvest to follow. In the Old Testament, the first portion of the harvest, which was the best and earliest produce, was offered to God (Exodus

23:19; Leviticus 23:9-14; Deuteronomy 26:1-11).

The term is also used to describe those who were among the first to believe in Christ and be saved (James 1:18), the initial believers in a region (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:15). The term is also used of Christ as the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:20,23). Hence, the New Testament usage includes salvation and resurrection.

The 144,000 Jews are redeemed from the earth, from among men (Revelation 14:3,4) to God during the Tribulation. They are called “firstfruits” because they are the first to be redeemed from the nation of Israel from the Tribulation period. We know there are many Jews who have been saved and redeemed from the Day of Pentecost onwards. So, these “firstfruits” are those Jews first to be redeemed from the Tribulation period. Although not stated in Revelation 14:1-4, given that the term “firstfruits” is also used in connection with resurrection, we could safely assume that these 144,000 Jews have been taken to heaven with their resurrected, glorified bodies. It is likely that they were directly Raptured into their glorified bodies because they were divinely marked by God to be protected. Hence, although the Scriptures do not state this, it is safe to infer that they were not martyred but directly Raptured with glorified bodies. They are called “firstfruits” because they precede the larger numbers of Jewish people who will be saved at the end of the Tribulation as prophesied in Zechariah 12:10. The 144,000 Jews are firstfruits; first to be resurrected from those in the Tribulation.

The Rapture of the Church is not mentioned in the middle of the Tribulation, or at the end of the Tribulation, or anywhere in Revelation 6 to 19. Hence, we conclude that the Church has already been taken out of the way before the seven years of Tribulation.

11) Angels preaching the eternal Gospel

Revelation 14:6-9

6 Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

7 saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.”

8 And another angel followed, saying, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

9 Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives *his* mark on his forehead or on his hand,

During the Church Age, angels served only as messengers to believers and minister to believers. The responsibility to proclaim the Gospel is upon the Church. During the Tribulation, now that the Church is out of the way, God assigns three angels to proclaim the Gospel to “*every nation, tribe, tongue and people*” (Revelation 14:6) in order to warn the people and declare what is yet to come. Once again, this is indicative of the Church not being present on the earth during the seven years of Tribulation.

12) The seven-year celebration culminating in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:6-9

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

9 Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the

marriage supper of the Lamb!” “And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb takes place at the end of the seven years of Tribulation. It takes place in heaven. The Bride (the Church) must be in heaven for this Marriage Supper to take place. As we have seen, there is no mention in Revelation 6-19 of the Rapture of the Church fulfilling 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and 1 Corinthians 15:51-58. Yet, Revelation 19:6-9 clearly indicates the Bride already in heaven, prepared and ready. Hence, it is safe to conclude that the Bride has already been ushered into heaven in Revelation 4 and 5 as mentioned earlier.

Additionally, in this context, it is significant to note the importance of “seven” in Jewish wedding celebration. The imagery of “seven” in Jewish wedding celebration and the Church being in heaven for seven years as the Bride draw directly from first-century Jewish marriage customs giving the passage deep cultural meaning. In Jewish culture and in Biblical context, seven symbolized completeness, covenant fulfillment, and divine blessing rooted in the creation week (Genesis 1 and 2) and recurring throughout Israel’s worship cycle.

In a wedding context, a typical Jewish wedding included...

- Betrothal (engagement) – a legally binding covenant agreement.
- Preparation period – the groom prepared a place for the bride and the bride prepared herself.
- Wedding procession and feast – when the groom came to receive the bride and bring her to the celebration which typically lasted seven days.

During the wedding itself, the marriage celebration lasted seven days known as the *Sheva Brachot* (Seven Blessings). Each day included blessings pronounced over the bride and groom emphasizing covenant joy, fruitfulness, faithfulness and fulfillment of God's promises. Seven days were the standard wedding duration. Seven conveyed fullness and perfected joy. Seven sealed the marriage celebration as a complete covenant event.

So, to have the Church in heaven for the entire seven years celebrating her union with Christ and culminating in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is consistent with Biblical and Jewish understanding. This is completely consistent with what Jesus stated in John 14:1-3.

13) At the end of the Tribulation, there is a resurrection, not a Rapture

Revelation 20:1-6

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the Devil* and *Satan*, and bound him for a thousand years;

³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of

Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Those martyred for their faith in Christ during the Tribulation are raised up at the end of the Tribulation in Revelation 20:4. Firstly, there is no mention of the resurrection of all the saints who died before the Tribulation period. However, all these saints should be present to rule and reign during the Millennium. Secondly, there is no mention of the Rapture as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 or 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 or fulfillment of John 14:1-3 given at the end of the Tribulation in Revelation 20:1-6.

What about the saints from the Old Testament and the saints who lived and died before the Tribulation? When will they be raised to rule and reign with Jesus? Since in Revelation 20:4, at the end of the Tribulation, it is the saints who died during the Tribulation who are resurrected, then it is safe to conclude that all the other saints who died previously have been resurrected some time earlier. The logical conclusion is that all of them were raised before the Tribulation along with the Church as described in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 or 1 Corinthians 15:51-58. We state this because Hebrews 11 states that we (the Old and New Testament saints) will be perfected together. *“And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us”* (Hebrews 11:39,40).

All the saints, the Old Testament saints, the New Testament saints, and the saints from the Tribulation period will be there to rule and reign with Jesus during His Millennial reign fulfilling Daniel 7:18,22,27; Luke 19:17,19; and 1 Corinthians 6:1-6.

The first resurrection

Why is this called “the first resurrection” in Revelation 20:4,5? This resurrection of the Tribulation saints is called “the first resurrection” in contrast to the second resurrection which happens at the end of the Millennium. This first resurrection ushers every saint (every person who was saved from the time of Adam till that moment) into the Millennium. Mortal believers who survive the Tribulation enter the Millennium in natural bodies. Every other human person who lived and died will be raised in the second resurrection, and this will be for the Great White Throne Judgment. Hence, the contrast and emphasis on the first resurrection. However, this does not mean that there is no resurrection with the Rapture of the Church. In fact, at the end of the Tribulation, there is no mention of the Rapture, and we only see the first resurrection, once again emphasizing the Rapture having taken place earlier in Revelation 4 and 5.

A few related questions

We now address briefly a few questions related to the Rapture of the Church and life in heaven. This of course is not an exhaustive list of questions.

Who will be raised up from the dead at the time of the Rapture?

“...God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus...the dead in Christ will rise...Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them...” (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17) “...the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:52)

It is clear from both these passages that all believers in Jesus – those who have died along with those who are alive – will be caught up at the time of the Rapture.

But what about the Old Testament saints and those who believed and died before the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

We know that the Old Testament saints believed in the resurrection and that they would be raised up “at the last day” or “the end of the days” (Job 19:25-27; John 11:24; Daniel 12:2,3,13; Isaiah 26:19; Hosea 13:14). They believed in individual judgment and reward (Isaiah 40:10; Ezekiel 11:21; Ezekiel 20:33-44; Ezekiel 22:17-22; Zechariah 3:7; Zechariah 13:9; Malachi 3:16-18; Malachi 4:1), and also in the new heavens and new earth (Isaiah 65:17,18; Isaiah 66:22; Hebrews 11:10,16,39,40). Those who heeded the message of God died and went to a place called **Paradise**.

Hades was the place where the souls and the spirits of all humans went until the time of Christ’s death and resurrection. **Sheol** (the Old Testament) and **Hades** (the New Testament) are one and the same. In Sheol or Hades, there were two compartments, one for the wicked and the other for the righteous (Luke 16:22,23). The thief on the cross went down to Paradise (also called Abraham’s Bosom) (Luke 23:43). This is where Christ went upon His death (Acts 2:27,31). There He ministered to His people and led captivity captive (Ephesians 4:8-10), releasing and transporting them into the third heaven of 2 Corinthians 12:2. That is why Paradise is referred to as “up” (Revelation 2:7; 2 Corinthians 12:4). So presently, the Paradise side of Hades has been emptied by Him who has the keys of death and Hades (Revelation 20:13). The spirits of the Old Testament saints are now in the third heaven with Christ. They are called “saints” because of their position “in Christ.” They were saved by looking forward in faith to the coming Messiah just as people are saved today by looking back in faith to the Savior.

Some position the resurrection of the Old Testament saints right at the end of the Tribulation, before the start of the Millennium. We differ from this in our viewpoint and believe that the Old Testament saints will be part of those whom “...*God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus...*” (1 Thessalonians 4:14) and who will be raised at the Rapture.

Why we believe the resurrection of the Old Testament saints will happen during the Rapture

We believe this for the following reasons.

- 1) It is clearly stated that the first resurrection in Revelation 20:4 is for “*the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands*”.
- This does not include the Old Testament saints or the New Testament saints who have died before the Tribulation.
- Hence, the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints who died before the Tribulation must be resurrected at the Rapture.

Consider a specific example...

During the Millennium, king David will rule over Israel (Ezekiel 37:24,25; Jeremiah 30:9). For king David to have his resurrected body, there are only two possible options...

- a) the resurrection at the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50-58) or
- b) the first resurrection at the end of the seven-year Tribulation just before the start of the Millennium (Revelation 20:4-6).

It is clearly stated that those who have died during the Tribulation for their faith in Jesus and refusal to receive the mark of the beast are the ones raised in the first resurrection at the end of the seven-year Tribulation. This leaves us with only option a) at which time, David and all the Old Testament saints are resurrected receiving their glorified bodies.

- 2) While God has made provision for the Church, we (both the Old Testament saints and us, the New Testament believers) will be made perfect together as indicated in Hebrews 11. *“But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them... And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us.”* (Hebrews 11:16,39,40)
- 3) The great cloud of witnesses, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn, *“the spirits of just men made perfect”* in Hebrews 12:1,22-24 includes the Old Testament saints taken up into heaven by Jesus Christ. Hence, these *“spirits of just men”* will be brought back with Jesus in 1 Thessalonians 4:14.
- 4) The whole family in heaven and earth mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 3:15 includes the Old Testament saints who are now part of the family of God.

All of us, believers who have died, believers who are alive, and the Old Testament saints will have glorified bodies at the Rapture and will be in heaven with glorified bodies during the seven-year period. These along with the resurrected Tribulation saints, as well as the saints who made it alive through the

Tribulation, will be the saints who administer Christ's Kingdom during the Millennium here on earth.

Who will be taken up in the Rapture?

Is there something more to be done to be "Rapture ready" other than being born again / saved and living as believers?

All those who are "in Jesus," that is, those who are saved (or born again into God's family) will be taken up in the Rapture. This is the only qualification. The Parables the Lord Jesus gave us in relation to His coming, for example, parable of the 10 virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), the 10 talents (Matthew 25:14-30) and others, are intended to teach us how to live in a state of readiness, and not as a means of "earning our ticket" for the flight out. Salvation is always by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8,9).

A hypothetical question often asked is – *"What if a believer is committing a sin and at that moment, in a twinkling of an eye, the Rapture happens, and the believer does not have time to repent and receive the cleansing of the blood of Jesus? What will happen? Will this believer be taken up in the Rapture or will they be left behind?"* We can only point to the fact that we are all saved by grace through faith, and on this basis, we can affirm that in this situation, the believer will be raptured and taken up to be with the Lord.

Will we recognize each other in heaven?

During our time in heaven, we will have glorified bodies like Christ and will know one another. Consider what happened at the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-4) where Moses and Elijah appeared. Although the disciples had never seen them in the flesh, they were able

to immediately “know” who these men were. Similarly, there will be a “knowing” where we will “know even as we are known” (1 Corinthians 13:12) and this would include the recognition of others in heaven. There will be no marriages in heaven (Matthew 22:23-30).

5

DANIEL'S 70TH WEEK: THE FINAL SEVEN YEARS

70 weeks are determined

In this chapter, we focus on a key passage from the book of Daniel.

The angel Gabriel stated the following to Daniel.

Daniel 9:24-27

²⁴ “Seventy weeks are determined

For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.

²⁵ “Know therefore and understand,

*That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;*
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.

²⁶ “And after the sixty-two weeks

Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it *shall be with a flood,*
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
 But in the middle of the week
 He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
 And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
 Even until the consummation, which is determined,
 Is poured out on the desolate.”

The angel Gabriel spoke of “*seventy weeks*” (Daniel 9:24) that are specific to “*your people*” – the Jewish people and the nation of Israel, and “*your holy city*” – the city of Jerusalem.

This period will eventually result in the following:

- **To finish the transgression** – to put an end to sin
- **To make an end of sins** – bring an end to sin and rebellion
- **To make reconciliation for iniquity** – make atonement for all sin
- **To bring in everlasting righteousness** – establish righteousness in Israel and Jerusalem
- **To seal up vision and prophecy** – confirm and fulfill prophecy
- **To anoint the Most Holy** – or anoint the Holy of Holies, that is, to cleanse the Temple of all uncleanness, sacrilege; anoint and establish the Temple (the Millennial temple)

All of the above will be completed in “seventy weeks”.

One week, seven years

Daniel 9:24

“Seventy weeks are determined
 For your people and for your holy city,
 To finish the transgression,
 To make an end of sins,
 To make reconciliation for iniquity,

**To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.**

The “*seventy weeks*” literally means “*seventy sevens*” (Hebrew for “week” is ‘*shabuwa*’ = seven).

The “weeks” simply refers to a unit of seven and it could refer to a grouping of seven of anything. The Hebrew word used here can mean a unit of seven days, or a unit of seven years.

Immediate context

In Daniel 9:1-3, Daniel is actually praying about the **70 years** that the prophet Jeremiah had prophesied about.

Daniel 9:1-3

¹ In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—

² in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

³ Then I set my face toward the LORD God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Jeremiah 25:11-13

¹¹ And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

¹² ‘Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,’ says the LORD; ‘and I will make it a perpetual desolation.

¹³ So I will bring on that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied concerning all the nations.

Jeremiah 29:10

For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I

will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

Hence, when the angel Gabriel announces “seventy weeks” or “seventy sevens” are determined for your people (Daniel 9:24), it is safe to infer that Gabriel is speaking to Daniel in the same context of “years”.

Extended Biblical context

Israel already used “weeks of years” in Scripture.

Leviticus 25:8

And you shall count seven sabbaths of years, seven times seven years; and the time of the seven sabbaths of years shall be forty-nine years.

This phraseology “seven sabbaths of years” equaling 49 years means each week of years is a seven-year period. Daniel would be familiar with this concept.

In Genesis 29:27,28 is an example of using this ancient Hebrew word ('shabuwa') for both “seven days” and “seven years” in the same context.

Genesis 29:27,28

²⁷ **Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years.”**

²⁸ **Then Jacob did so and fulfilled her week. So he gave him his daughter Rachel as wife also.**

Confirmation in Revelation

Revelation 11:2 mentions 42 months which is 3 ½ years. Revelation 11:3 mentions 1,260 days which is 3 ½ years. Revelation 12:6 mentions 1,260 days which is again 3 ½ years. Revelation 12:14, echoing Daniel 7:25 and Daniel 12:7, mentions *a time (1 year), times (2 years) and half a time (½ year)*, which is 3 ½ years when the devil is forced back to

the earth and knows that he has but a short time (Revelation 12:6,12,14). The 3 ½ year-period fits exactly with the middle of the week spoken of in Daniel 9:27, “*Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.*” So, if the middle of the week is 3 ½ years, then one week is seven years.

Hence, based on these deductions, we conclude that in Daniel 9, each week is a period of seven years. The “weeks” represent 7 years. Then we have 70-weeks, which is 70×7 years = 490 years.

69 weeks, and one week

However, this “seventy weeks” is broken into two parts – a 69-week period, and then one week, the 70th week.

Daniel 9:25

“**Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.**

The decree that fulfills Daniel 9:25 in detail was issued by king Artaxerxes I of Persia in 445 BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8) authorizing Nehemiah to restore and rebuild Jerusalem’s walls and city infrastructure. Prior to Nehemiah, king Cyrus the Great in 538 BC authorized rebuilding the Temple, not the city (Ezra 1:1-4; Isaiah 44:28). King Darius I (520-519 BC) confirmed king Cyrus’s Temple decree (Ezra 6:1-12). King Artaxerxes I of Persia, initially in 457 BC during Ezra’s time, permitted religious reforms and Temple administration, but no city rebuilding authorization (Ezra 7:11-26). It was later in 445

BC (Nehemiah 2:1-8), king Artaxerxes I authorized Nehemiah to restore and rebuild Jerusalem's walls and city, most closely fulfilling Daniel 9:25. The walls and the streets of the city will be rebuilt in troublesome times. We observe this in the book of Nehemiah.

From the time the decree was issued for the rebuilding of Jerusalem till the Messiah, there would be 7 weeks and 62 weeks. This totals to 69 weeks.

69 weeks till the Messiah

Daniel 9:26

After the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

This verse describes three major events that occur after the completion of the 69 weeks (7 + 62 weeks from verse 25).

“After the sixty-two weeks the Messiah shall be cut off...”. The “Messiah” is the Anointed One (Jesus) who will be “cut off” meaning violently killed, executed, removed, and judged. This occurs after the 7 weeks, plus 62 weeks, that is the 69th week ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years) and exactly fits the timeline leading to the public appearance of Messiah and His death. This was fulfilled exactly as foretold.

“But not for Himself”. This is one of the clearest substitutionary atonement statements in the Old Testament. Jesus died for others, not for Himself.

“The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”. Jerusalem and the Temple was destroyed in AD 70 by the Romans under Titus.

Who is “*the prince who is to come*”? This prince is not Titus. Titus fulfilled the people part, but the verse does not call him “the prince.” He merely foreshadowed the final figure still to come. The “*prince who is to come*” is the one referenced in the next verse “*Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;*” (Daniel 9:27). So, the “*prince who is to come*” is the one who confirms a covenant for a week. He is an End-Time ruler (Antichrist) from the Roman lineage / territory who is referenced in Daniel 9:27 when he confirms a seven-year covenant. This interpretation harmonizes Daniel 7, Daniel 9, Matthew 24, and Revelation 13.

“*The end of it shall be with a flood...*” This is metaphorical with “flood” meaning overwhelming destruction and judgment.

“*Till the end of the war desolations are determined*” meaning Jerusalem would continue to experience war, destruction, and displacement. This condition continues until the end of the age and the start of the Millennium.

A covenant for one week – Daniel’s 70th week

Daniel 9:27

**Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate.”**

And then in Daniel 9:27, Daniel referred to the final one week. This one-week period of time is also called “Daniel’s Seventieth Week”, which is a period of seven years.

Gabriel had announced that the 70 weeks were about Israel and Jerusalem. The first 69 weeks (483 years) have already

been completed. In between the 69th week (483 years) and 70th week (last 7 years), we have the Church age. The Church was born after the Messiah was crucified and resurrected, and will continue on the earth till the beginning of the 70th week. So, Daniel's 70th week – the last seven years – is waiting to be fulfilled.

In this last week, we have the “*prince of the people*”, the Antichrist setting up a “covenant” – a false peace treaty – with many, but in the middle of the week, he will cause the sacrifice to stop (same as in Daniel 8:13,14,26).

“***Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week***”. Who is “he”? Grammatically, the nearest antecedent is “*the prince who is to come*” (Daniel 9:26), and this refers to a future ruler, identified as the Antichrist.

“***confirm a covenant***” meaning “to enforce,” “strengthen,” or “make binding” implying confirming or imposing an agreement rather than initiating righteousness.

“***with many***” not necessarily “all,” and given the context suggests a political treaty or security pact involving Israel.

“***for one week***”, a seven-year period, referred to as Daniel's 70th week.

“***but in the middle of the week***”, meaning 3½ years after the covenant begins. This matches Revelation's timelines – 42 months (Revelation 11:2; Revelation 13:5); 1,260 days (Revelation 11:3; Revelation 12:6) and “*a time, and times, and half a time*” (Revelation 12:14).

“he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering”. This has two crucial implications. 1) The Jewish Temple must be functioning again with sacrifices being offered in the sanctuary. 2) This Antichrist breaks the covenant, forcefully stops worship, and turns against Israel.

“And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate” This moment corresponds to “the Abomination of Desolation” the Lord Jesus Himself referenced (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14). Paul the apostle also referred to this in 2 Thessalonians 2:4. This shows Daniel 9:27 is not completely fulfilled yet.

“On the wing...” which in idiomatic Hebrew meant “upon the heights” or “overspreading influence”. This signifies rapid spread of idolatry, desolation and abomination. The Antichrist sets himself up as God (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4) and enforces worship of himself (Revelation 13).

“even until the consummation, which is determined...” This means that God has set a fixed endpoint for such wickedness, the end of these seven years. *“Unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved...”* (Matthew 24:22).

“is poured out upon the desolate”. This refers to God’s judgment, the full and final destruction of the Antichrist.

This passage in Daniel 9:24-27 is an amazing prophecy of the End Times that must be well understood.

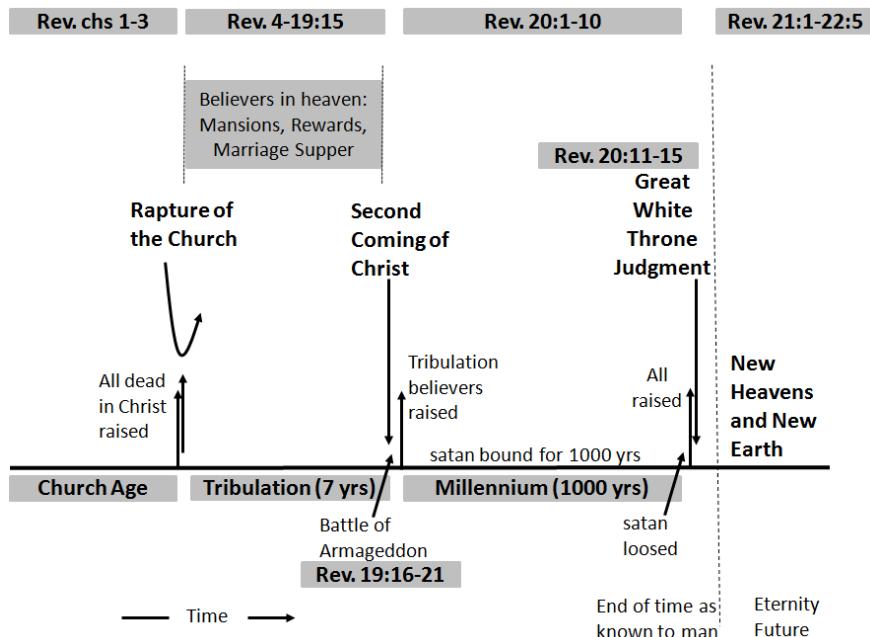
6

INTRODUCTION (REVELATION 1)

The apostle John received and wrote the book of Revelation around **95 AD**. He had been living in Ephesus, after which he was exiled to the tiny island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea by the Roman Emperor Domitian, who had begun persecuting Christians in 81 AD. In the book of Revelation, the Lord Jesus reveals Himself to John, addresses the seven churches that existed at that time, and then unveils things that are yet to come.

Revelation 1:19

Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.



Revelation 1 is an introduction, and John records things he saw (“*the things which you have seen*”) unveiling the resurrected and triumphant Christ to us.

Revelation 2 to 3 speak about “the things which are”, where the Lord Jesus addresses seven churches in that region. The Lord’s message to each of the seven churches carries instruction to the Church today as well.

Revelation 4 to 22 speak about “the things which will take place” indicating that these are yet to happen in the future.

These can be further divided into the following sections.

Revelation 4 and 5 unveil the redeemed elders, saints and angelic beings in worship in the Throne Room. At this time, Christ is authorized to receive the scroll and open the seals, to mark the initiation of things foretold. Since the receiving of the scroll and the opening of the seals are still future events yet to take place, we conclude that Revelation 4 and 5 are a picture of the Raptured Church and glorified Old and New Testament saints in worship in the Throne Room (as established in detail in the previous chapter).

Revelation 6 to 19 primarily detail the sequence of events on earth during the Tribulation. There are times we are given a glimpse of what is happening in heaven as the judgments – three sets of seven each – are poured out on the earth. There are some sections that record John’s own personal experience while he is receiving the revelation. There are some sections, especially in Revelation 11, 12 and 13 which although given in respective chapters, indicate what is being done over a 3-½-year period. Revelation 11 informs us of the Two Witnesses who will be ministering for 3 ½ years. Revelation 12 takes us

back to the origin of satan and his demons, informs us of his final attempt to intrude into heaven, and his push back to the earth, and his desperate effort for the second 3 ½ years of the Tribulation. Similarly, Revelation 13, gives us information on what the Antichrist and False Prophet do for the second half of the Tribulation period. Revelation 19 details the end of the Tribulation period with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in heaven and the battle of Armageddon here on earth.

Revelation 20 gives us insight into the Millennium.

Revelation 21 and 22 take us into the new heaven and the new earth with the heavenly city Jerusalem being relocated to the new earth.

For the most part, the events described in Revelation are given sequentially as shown in the picture above. We understand that there are some events that are a look back, or sometimes, a look ahead in time when presented in certain chapters. While the precise timing of these events is not given, we have a general sense of approximate periods within the seven-year Tribulation when these events are most likely to occur.

We now embark on a bird's eye view – a high-level chapter overview – through the book of Revelation. This is not a verse-by-verse study. We will leave that for another book. Our intent is to gain an understanding of the key events and the sequence in which these events will unfold.

Revelation 1:7

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.

Revelation 1 introduces the entire book as God's unveiling of future events through Jesus Christ, presents the risen Lord in overwhelming glory walking among His churches, affirms His total authority over life and death, and commissions John to record what has been seen, what is present, and what will soon occur.

There is a special blessing for those who read the prophecy, those who hear it, and those who keep or obey what is written (Revelation 1:3). The book of Revelation is intended to lead us into living boldly and faithfully for Jesus Christ with a sense of victory and triumph knowing that our Lord is the triumphant King.

The Lord Jesus, through John, addresses seven real churches that existed at that time in Roman Asia.

The vision of the glorified Christ (Revelation 1:12-16) standing among seven golden lampstands representing the seven churches is powerful. There is powerful symbolism as well in this vision of the glorified Christ.

- **Long robe and golden sash:** Our Priest and Judge
- **White hair:** Wisdom and purity
- **Eyes like fire:** The omniscient One
- **Feet like bronze:** Absolute authority
- **Voice like many waters:** Powerful command
- **Seven stars in His right hand:** Keeper of His messengers
- **Sharp two-edged sword from His mouth:** Powerful conquering Word
- **Shining face like the sun:** Absolute glory

He is the First and the Last, the Eternal One, the Living One, and the One with absolute mastery of death and hell.

He walks among the churches (seven lampstands representing the seven specific churches) watching and examining all that is happening. He holds the leaders / messengers of each church in His hand (seven stars in His right hand) keeping them as well as holding them accountable for what is happening in the church which He has placed in their care. He has a message to each church speaking to their appointed leader / messenger.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES (REVELATION 2 & 3)

These seven churches were in, what today is, modern day Turkey. The Lord Jesus had a message for each of the seven churches. He examined them, affirmed their strengths and addressed their weaknesses and faults. To almost every church, He called them to repentance and instructed them to address what was wrong. To each, He promised a reward for overcoming.

During his third missionary journey, the apostle Paul spent close to three years at Ephesus. From his work at Ephesus, western Asia was evangelized. *“And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks”* (Acts 19:10). It is likely that all these seven churches starting with Ephesus were established under the ministry of the apostle Paul through people he had directly trained or impacted.



There is much to learn from the Lord's message to each of these seven churches. For those of us in leadership in a local church, we must recognize that the Lord holds us responsible for the spiritual well-being of the people / community He has entrusted to us.

These were seven literal historical churches present in the first Century AD. Hence, we should not allegorize these seven churches to represent seven church ages. This is not indicated anywhere in Scripture.

Ephesus

Ephesus as a local church has a rich history with Paul the apostle and Timothy having served in this location. The apostle John was an elder here at Ephesus before being sent out into exile. The Lord Jesus commended this church for their works, labor and endurance. But they had left their first love. The Lord Jesus called them to repent and do the first works. The first works are an expression of first love, which is our love and devotion to the Lord Himself. The Lord commended them for their posture toward the Nicolaitans who were a group of people who promoted sexual immorality under spiritual pretense and possibly exercised strong authority and control over people.

Smyrna

The synagogue of satan were a group of people who claimed to be Jews but were strong persecutors and opponents of the Christian church. The Lord recognized that the believers in Smyrna were materially poor and going through hardships but spiritually, they were rich. They were about to face intense persecution, and the Lord calls them to fear nothing, be faithful, and they will receive their eternal reward.

Pergamos

Pergamum was a city given to temples and emperor worship, and the Lord Jesus called it a place where satan had his throne indicating a spiritually dark place. While this church was strong, yet they tolerated people who held on to wrong doctrine – the doctrine of Balaam (moral compromise and idolatry) and the doctrine of the Nicolaitans (sexual immorality under spiritual pretense). The Lord called them to repent.

Thyatira

The Lord's message to them was that He knew that they were increasing in their works, love, service, faith and endurance. But they were tolerating a false prophetess who seduced people into immorality and idolatry. Judgment was coming on her and those who embraced her teaching. The Lord encouraged those who refused to follow this false prophetess to hold on to what they had.

Sardis

One of the strongest rebukes was given to the church at Sardis when the Lord Jesus told them "*I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.*" (Revelation 3:1) Their works – whatever they were doing now – were not perfect before God. He called them to hold fast to what they had received and heard, repent and be watchful.

Philadelphia

The church in Philadelphia was a church that did not receive a rebuke or a call to repent. The Lord commended them for their works, and that even with their little strength, they kept His Word, did not deny His name, and persevered. They were going to see their opponents come and humble themselves at their feet recognizing that these believers were loved by God.

Laodicea

Perhaps the strongest rebuke from the Lord Jesus was given to this church. Laodicea was a self-deceived church that thought everything was great, and yet, the Lord Jesus called them out as spiritually “*wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*” (Revelation 3:17). This is a dangerous place to be, and the Lord invited them to pay the price to receive from Him refined gold (what is truly of Him) – righteousness and anointing. He wanted to come in and enjoy true fellowship with His people.

What would the Lord Jesus say to us as a local church?

There is so much we can learn and apply to our own lives as leaders as well as a church community from these seven churches. We must maintain our first love and our first works. We must persevere through all opposition and persecution. We must carefully watch over the doctrine we embrace. We must not allow people who promote ungodly doctrine to continue among His people. We cannot live by the reputation we have or what people say about us. Instead, we must be concerned about the Lord’s estimation of our spiritual lives and works. We must stay faithful to His Word, His name and be firm. And most of all, we must not become self-deceived into thinking all is well but keep our passion for God red-hot, continually paying the price for what comes truly from Him, walking in righteousness and under His anointing that gives us the light and revelation we need.

Consider these...

When a church receives warning and does not repent, its candlestick is removed out of His presence (Revelation 2:5). If a church has its candlestick removed out of its place before the presence of the Lord, the people on earth may continue “having church” but they do not have a real connect with the Head of the

Church, the Lord Himself.

Why is it that when both the church in Smyrna and the church in Philadelphia were facing the synagogue of satan (Revelation 2:9; Revelation 3:9), to one – the church in Smyrna – the Lord said that they would have to go through intense persecution and to the other – the church in Philadelphia – the Lord said, *“Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you”* (Revelation 3:9)? Why did one local church have to endure and the other move triumphantly over the same opponents? Was God being unjust, partial, unfair? Was God’s Word and promises not the same to people in both local churches? Were God’s angels not available to minister and protect believers from both local churches? Or would this have more to do with where the people were in their spiritual journey and the battles they had to fight?

Revelation 2 and 3 had to do with things that are, meaning, these things were happening at that time in the first century. With Revelation 4, we begin to see things that will take place in the future.

8

REDEEMED SAINTS, THRONE ROOM WORSHIP (REVELATION 4 & 5)

Throne Room worship

Revelation 4:1

After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard *was* like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.”

John the apostle is caught up in the spirit into the Throne Room and is shown things that will take place in the future. As explained earlier in chapter 6 of this book, Revelation 4 and 5 depict heaven after the Rapture of the believers. One reason we state that the Rapture has happened is because we see 24 elders seated on thrones in white raiment (robes of righteousness) with their crowns (rewards), all of which are promised to believers (Revelation 3:5,11,21) and one of these elders who speaks with John identifies himself as being a fellow servant and of the prophets (Revelation 1:1; Revelation 5:5-7; Revelation 7:13-15; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:8,9). These 24 elders are redeemed saints of God who have received their crowns and rewards and are now given their special place around the throne of God.

The Holy Spirit is referred to as the “*seven Spirits of God*” (Revelation 1:4; Revelation 4:5). He is represented by seven lamps (Revelation 4:5), seven horns and seven eyes (Revelation 5:6). Seven Spirits indicating the Perfect Spirit. The seven lamps denoting His omnipresence (all knowing, “lamps” representing

light that fills everything everywhere), seven horns denoting His omnipotence (“horns” represent power, dominion, rule), and the seven eyes denoting His omniscience (eyes that see and know everything everywhere).

There are four beasts or living creatures connected with the Throne Room of heaven with eyes before and behind to see all things clearly and accurately. These seem to be the same as the living creatures in Isaiah 6:1-3, the seraphim, angels of God created to praise and exalt the Lord.

The 24 elders and the four living creatures engage in continuous worship of the Lord declaring His holiness and Him as the Lord of all creation.

Only One to open the scroll

Revelation 5:1,5

¹ And I saw in the right *hand* of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.

⁵ But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

The scroll and the seals have been explained in detail in chapter 4 of this book (see 8. The chronology of the book of Revelation). The Lord Jesus is the only One who is qualified to open the seven seals and unlock the scroll, announcing that it is time for these prophecies that were foretold to begin their fulfillment. Hence, the Lord Jesus Himself is the One who sets these events that were foretold into motion. The four living creatures, the 24 elders, a host of angels, and the redeemed saints, all worship before the throne.

9

THE FIRST THREE AND A HALF YEARS (REVELATION 6-10)

The view now shifts from the Throne Room to the earth below. We will observe that during the seven-year Tribulation period, God has three sets of seven judgments that will be poured out on the earth. There are seven seals, seven trumpets and seven bowls, each revealing what the world experiences during the Tribulation. The Lord Jesus referred to the second half of the Tribulation, after the abomination of desolation (the Antichrist) stands in the Holy Place, as a time of “great Tribulation”. *“For then there will be great Tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be”* (Matthew 24:21). This implies that the second half of the seven years will be even more difficult and intense for people on the earth than the first half.

Revelation 6: The first six seals

Revelation 6 describes the opening of the first six seals of the Lamb’s scroll initiating a series of escalating judgments upon the earth that mark the beginning of the Tribulation.

The six seals opened (the seventh seal is opened in Revelation 8:1)

The first four seals release the Four Horsemen bringing conquest, war, famine, and death resulting in widespread global devastation.

First seal: (the white horse) The Tribulation commences with

the opening of the first seal in Revelation 6:1,2, which reveals the rise of the Antichrist. The Antichrist arrives on the world scene riding on a white horse, counterfeits the return of Christ and establishes a fraudulent seven-year peace treaty. (More on this below...)

Second seal: (the red horse) War and destruction

Third seal: (the black horse) Great famine and scarcity of food

Fourth seal: (the pale horse) Great death and destruction due to war, famines, disease and plagues.

The Four Horsemen in Revelation 6 are symbolic, and the horses indicate the arrival of something that comes with strength and speed. Similarly, we see many horses being used in Revelation. For example, the armies of Armageddon come on horses as the blood rises to their bridles (Revelation 14:20) and Christ himself will return, mounted on a white horse, followed by His armies also riding white horses (Revelation 19:11-14). While the horses could well be literal, we also recognize their prophetic symbolism of speed and strength.

Fifth seal: A time of great persecution with many martyred for their faith in Jesus. The souls of martyred believers are seen in heaven crying out for divine justice. They are given white robes and told to rest until the full number of martyrs is complete.

Sixth seal: The sixth seal unleashes massive cosmic disturbances, ecological disasters, earthquakes, and other phenomena – a great earthquake, darkened heavens, and falling stars – causing worldwide terror as people recognize that the day of God’s wrath has begun and attempt to hide from the Lamb’s judgment.

There will be a recognition that the great day of God's wrath has come. This is the beginning of the Tribulation. *"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"* (Revelation 6:15-17)

The key events that happen at the start of the seven-year Tribulation include...

- The rise of the Antichrist
- The seven-year false peace treaty
- The Third Temple rebuilt, and priesthood and sacrifices restored

We describe these now.

The Antichrist

The opening of the first seal (Revelation 6:1,2) reveals the rider on the white horse who has power and leadership-influence, who goes about gaining influence over many nations. He comes as a conqueror with a bow, but no arrows, symbolizing victory without warfare. The world will witness the rise of this leader (later called "the Antichrist" or "the beast" in Scripture) from a confederacy of 10 western nations. These 10 nations were once part of the Roman empire.

Based on the following Scripture texts, we create a biographical sketch of the rise, reign, work, and the final end of the Antichrist – Daniel 7:8,11,20,24,25; Daniel 8:8-12,22-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:11-13; Matthew

24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8; Revelation 13:1-18; Revelation 14:9-13; Revelation 17:8,11-18; Revelation 19:19-21.

The Antichrist emerges from a restored form of the final Gentile empire described in Daniel 7 (often identified as the revived Roman empire, a loose coalition of nations from the former Roman empire, covering modern Europe and the Mediterranean). Daniel pictures him as a “*little horn*” rising among 10 kings (leaders), uprooting three of them to gain dominance (Daniel 7:8,20,24). He begins as a politically insignificant figure but rapidly ascends to global leadership through cunning, diplomacy, and deception (Daniel 8:23-25). Satan himself empowers his ascent (Revelation 13:2). His public rise is characterized by peaceful diplomatic conquest rather than immediate military force (Revelation 6:2) presenting himself initially as a political genius and problem-solver.

Critically, his rise to world prominence is sealed by his role as the broker of a seven-year peace covenant with Israel with many other participating nations at the start of the Tribulation – “*He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week...*” (Daniel 9:27). This covenant likely offers security guarantees for Israel pacifying the Israeli-Arab conflict and allowing the Jews to rebuild their Temple and resume sacrifices – an achievement that propels him onto the world stage as a global peacemaker.

The first 3½ years: During the first half of the Tribulation, the Antichrist positions himself as a political savior. He consolidates political control over nations (Daniel 7:24; Revelation 13:7). He achieves widespread admiration (Revelation 13:3,4). He rules through diplomacy and deceptive charm (Daniel 8:25). He avoids open blasphemy of God appearing as a man of peace rather than a tyrant. He allows Jewish worship to continue in the rebuilt temple (Daniel 9:27).

Midpoint of the seven years (after 3 1/2 years): He suddenly changes his peace treaty and stops the worship in the Jewish Temple. *“He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering...”* (Daniel 9:27). The Antichrist enters the Jewish Temple and commits what Jesus called, *“the abomination of desolation”* (Matthew 24:15). Paul explained, *“... he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God”* (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He sets up an image of himself and publicly claims to be deity. Satan openly empowers him (Revelation 13:2). This event transforms him from political peacemaker to open dictator and blasphemer. The Antichrist is assisted by a False Prophet who extends his reach of worldwide deception through lying signs and wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

The final 3 1/2 years: The final 3 1/2 years, described as *“the Great Tribulation”* (Matthew 24:21), marks the height in his influence of control, deception and terror. He exercises global influence through...

- Religious control assisted by the False Prophet
- Economic control through the mark of the beast
- Military control through war and assault on Israel and believers in Jesus

Religious control: The Antichrist demands worship – *“All who dwell on the earth shall worship him...”* (Revelation 13:8). His associate, the False Prophet, enforces religious submission by performing counterfeit miracles, requiring worship of the Antichrist’s image or face death.

Economic control: The Antichrist establishes total economic domination using the mark of the beast (666) (Revelation 13:16-18). Without the mark of the beast, people cannot buy,

sell, have employment and cannot participate in any form of trade or commerce. This would be the most absolute financial dictatorship in history.

Military control: He wages violent war against believers making “*war with the saints*” (Revelation 13:7), against Israel (Daniel 11:41) and against opposition leaders / kings (Daniel 11:44). His cruelty peaks as he “*shall wear out the saints of the Most High*” (Daniel 7:25, KJV). Many believers are martyred during this time (Revelation 12:17; Revelation 14:9-13).

His character: Scripture provides details of his traits, some of which include him being a political genius (Daniel 8:23), a deceptive peacemaker (Daniel 8:25), a blasphemer (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:6), a military oppressor (Daniel 11:40-45), a false miracle worker (Revelation 13:13-15), a self-declared god (2 Thessalonians 2:4) and a persecutor of Israel and believers (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:7).

The Final campaign – Armageddon: The Antichrist rallies armies against Jerusalem in the final confrontation – “*And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain;*” (Daniel 11:45). *And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon*” (Revelation 16:16).

His destruction: As Christ returns visibly, “*the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and bring him to an end by the appearance of His coming*” (2 Thessalonians 2:8, APM). On the battlefield, “*The beast was captured, and with him the false prophet... These two were cast alive into the lake of fire*” (Revelation 19:19,20). The Antichrist and the False Prophet are immediately and eternally judged at Christ’s return.

A seven-year false peace treaty

The Antichrist will come into prominence and power by presenting a “peace program” to the nations. *“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering...”* (Daniel 9:27). While the details of this “covenant” are not described specifically in Scripture, we can piece together what this would most likely include.

Security guarantee for Israel. The treaty almost certainly includes a formal international security guarantee protecting Israel from military aggression – especially from surrounding hostile nations. Israel is dwelling “securely” before a future invasion (Ezekiel 38:8,11) that will take place during the second half of the Tribulation.

Legal permission for Jews to reconstruct the Temple on the Temple Mount. The peace plan would include the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple with permission to have worship and offerings. This is the clearest implication of Daniel 9:27. That means sacrifices must be ongoing before the midpoint requiring a rebuilt Temple, a functioning Levitical priesthood and renewed Mosaic worship. Somehow, the Antichrist is able to pacify both Jews and Arabs into agreeing to this. This is unheard of. Perhaps there could be the Temple on the Temple Mount on one side and the Dome of the Rock on the other side.

Multinational political alliance. Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 17:12 point to a 10-king coalition that supports the rise of the Antichrist. Thus, the treaty likely establishes a new international political bloc or peace framework, reinforces cooperative governance structures under the Antichrist’s leadership, and solidifies economic alliances. Israel becomes one signatory among “many” (Daniel 9:27), not the sole

participant.

A compromise of land belonging to Israel. Joel prophesied that they, the nations, have divided up the land. Perhaps this could be part of the peace treaty – Israel having to give up land in order to have the Temple restored. *“For behold, in those days and at that time, When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; And I will enter into judgment with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations; They have also divided up My land”* (Joel 3:1,2).

Third Temple rebuilt; priesthood and sacrifices restored

The details provided for us in Scripture lead us to conclude that there must be a third temple which will be built in Jerusalem with the Old Testament style temple worship restored, with Jewish attendants. We know based on these Scriptures that this Third Temple or Tribulation Temple must be in place for prophecy to be fulfilled (Daniel 8:11,12; Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-8; Revelation 11:1,2; Revelation 13:5,6). This Antichrist will sit as god in the Temple of God. So, there must be a Temple in place for this to be fulfilled. It is possible that the permission to erect this temple in Jerusalem will be part of the peace agreement between the Antichrist, Israel and other nations who agree to this “covenant”. (The first was Solomon’s Temple – destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, the second was the rebuilt temple during Ezra’s time which was destroyed in AD 70 by Titus the Roman general).

We refer to the Third Temple as the “Tribulation Temple”. Interestingly over the years, significant preparations have been made to rebuild a Temple on the Temple Mount and re-institute

ceremonial worship once the Third Temple comes up on the Temple Mount.

Since 1987, a group of rabbinical researchers, designers, and craftsmen, under the direction of Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, have been creating in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem what they call a “Temple-in-waiting.” Their efforts have resulted in computerized visualization and blueprints for the Third Temple and the production of ritually qualified vessels, garments, and other items necessary for a restoration of the Temple services. Known as the Temple Institute (www.templeinstitute.org), this organization has been at the forefront of the publication of Third Temple research.

According to Temple Institute, detailed blueprints for the Third Temple have existed for the last several years. The plans were necessarily drawn according to the primary sources for this information – the Bible, Josephus, and Middot. Additions to these ancient specifications have included the use of electricity and other modern improvements that agree with Halacha (the Law). Other structures pertaining to the Temple’s function have also been planned or actually built. Several thousand priests are prepared and ready to serve ceremonially in the soon-to-be Temple.

Revelation 7: The 144,000 Jewish evangelists

Revelation 7 begins with a short time of calm as four angels hold the four winds of the earth. In Biblical symbolism, “the winds” in this context represent the forces of divine judgment that bring destruction and devastation (see also Jeremiah 49:36; Daniel 7:2; Zechariah 6:1-5; Ezekiel 13:13). Holding the four winds of the earth means that God temporarily restrains worldwide judgment to seal His servants (144,000 Jews) and prepare their protection and mission before allowing the next

phase of the Tribulation to proceed.

We see the 144,000 Jews, a distinct group, sovereignly chosen and sealed by God during the Tribulation to serve as protected witnesses for Christ. They are drawn specifically from the 12 tribes of Israel, 12,000 from each tribe, affirming their literal Jewish identity, and are marked with God's seal to preserve them from the devastating judgments afflicting the earth.

144,000 Jews were sealed with the Father's name on their foreheads (Revelation 14:1, see also Ezekiel 9). These would be Jews who are saved by faith in Christ after the Rapture, possibly by a great outpouring of the Spirit as in Acts 2:16-21 and Joel 2:28-32. Joel's prophecy was fulfilled in the Church in Acts 2 and must also be literally fulfilled with Israel.

The tribe of both Dan and Ephraim are missing and do not get to preach the Gospel during the Tribulation, possibly because they were guilty of going into idolatry and spiritual rebellion (Judges 18; 1 Kings 11:26; Hosea 4). The tribes of Levi and Manasseh here take their place. However, both tribes are listed in Ezekiel's Millennial Temple, and so their exclusion or omission is not permanent (Ezekiel 48).

The 144,000 Jews (some refer to them as 'Jewish Evangelists') are sealed, possibly marked by the Spirit. For the New Testament believers, we know we are sealed with the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the Father (Matthew 10:20) and proceeds from the Father (John 15:26) and **could be** the seal of the Father's name on the foreheads of these 144,000 Jews. From what we see in the ensuing passage of Revelation 7:9-17, we can infer that the 144,000 Jews will proclaim the message

of Jesus Christ to the whole world (See also Revelation 14:1-5). This will result in a worldwide revival causing many people to be saved. However, this will also result in a huge number dying as martyrs for Jesus.

Many Tribulation-martyrs

We see “*...a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb...*” (Revelation 7:9) implying things are happening on a global scale. These people who have been martyred for the faith during the great Tribulation (Revelation 7:14) are seen worshipping before the throne of God in heaven. While death is not specifically mentioned in this passage, this multitude is similar to what we see in Revelation 6:9-11 and hence *infer* that they too were martyred.

Revelation 8: Silence in heaven, increased prayer on earth

Seventh seal: There is silence in heaven indicating awe and reverence in anticipation of God’s righteous acts and what is about to take place (Habakkuk 2:20; Zephaniah 1:7). The seven trumpets are handed over to seven angels, and it is time to transition into the next set of seven trumpet judgments.

It is possible that a great prayer movement is happening on earth from the start of the Tribulation (Revelation 5:8), and here again (Revelation 8:3-6) as the prayers of the Tribulation saints ascend before God.

“*And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake*” (Revelation 8:4,5). As the prayers of the Tribulation saints ascend before God, as an answer to their

prayers, fire from the altar is thrown to the earth, perhaps stirring up more prayer, and also as a sign of greater judgment to come.

The first four trumpets

First trumpet: Hail, fire, mingled with blood. One-third (1/3) of vegetation destroyed.

Second trumpet: Mountain of fire thrown into the sea, one-third (1/3) of sea becomes blood, destroying one-third (1/3) of sea creatures and ships at sail.

Third trumpet: Wormwood cast on water bodies making one-third (1/3) of all water bodies bitter and many lives lost.

Fourth trumpet: One-third (1/3) of the light from sun, moon and stars cut off, darkening one-third (1/3) of day and night, a total of 8 additional hours of darkness each day.

After the four trumpets, an angel announces that greater judgments are to come – *“And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”* (Revelation 8:13)

Revelation 9: The fifth and sixth trumpets

Fifth trumpet: Release of a host (like locusts) of demonic beings (fallen angels) that have been held in the bottomless pit (in Genesis 6, 2 Peter 2:4) that trouble humans (excluding the 144,000 Jews) for five months. These demons are led by a demonic being called Abaddon or Apollyon, both meaning destruction and torment (perdition). They torment people so much that people want to die but are unable to self-destruct.

“In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them” (Revelation 9:6).

Sixth trumpet: The “*four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates*” (Revelation 9:14) are not holy angels but fallen angels restrained until the precise moment God permits their release. The reason we state these are demonic fallen angels is because we know holy angels are never described as “*bound*” in Scripture. Binding is language applied to demonic spirits awaiting judgment (Luke 8:31; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6). At the precise moment ordained by God, four bound fallen angels are released from the Euphrates to initiate a judgment that results in the death of one-third of humanity, marking the most devastating loss of life in history up to that point. At their work, an army of 200 million troops with fire, smoke, brimstone kill one-third (1/3) of humans.

What is the significance of these fallen angels being bound at the river Euphrates? We know demonic beings are territorial. We read about the prince of Persia, the prince of Tyre, etc. Perhaps these angels were restrained to this region / river. The Euphrates River historically formed Israel’s eastern boundary. It also marked the origin of hostile invasions (Assyria, Babylon) and symbolically serves as the gateway for judgment from the east.

[Side note: We should not, therefore, conclude that all rivers, waterways, etc. have demonic beings bound to them].

At their work, we see an army of 200 million (Revelation 9:16-19) who destroy with fire, smoke and brimstone. What is clear is that the 200 million are probably led or directly instigated by the four fallen angels released from the Euphrates. What is not very clear is if the 200 million are demonic beings unleashed on the earth (as in Revelation 9:1-12) or are they a human army with modern weaponry. The logical thought is to consider these as an extension of the earlier judgment – as

demonic beings as in Revelation 9:1-12. However, we cannot rule out the possibility of this kind of destruction being caused by modern weaponry as well.

Despite the severity of these judgments, there are people who continue in their sin and rebellion unrepentant and worship devils, idols, and continue in wickedness (Revelation 9:20,21).

Revelation 10: The mighty angel and the little book

The description of the mighty angel is that of a majestic being “*...clothed with a cloud...a rainbow was on his head, ...face was like the sun, ...feet like pillars of fire...his right foot on the sea...left foot on the land, ...a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices*

” (Revelation 10:1-3). What the mighty angel and the seven thunders announced remains hidden.

Revelation 10:7 announces that “*in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets*,” that is, God’s long-revealed redemptive plan for history will reach its final fulfillment. This verse is a transition statement summarizing what the trumpet and bowl judgments are ultimately working toward – the complete establishment of God’s kingdom and the public vindication of His purposes. “*In the days of the sounding of the seventh angel*” indicating that this is a time period, not an instantaneous event. The seventh trumpet does not complete everything instantly but begins the final phase that leads to completion. Later we see that when the seventh trumpet is sounded, there is the great proclamation, “*The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!*” (Revelation 11:15) This is the culmination, the fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan for people.

The little book (scroll) that John was instructed to eat were the prophetic utterances that John was going to release, both sweet (rewards, mercies) and bitter (judgment) “*about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings*” (Revelation 10:11).

10

THE SECOND THREE AND A HALF YEARS (REVELATION 11-19)

Revelation 11: Mid-Tribulation, broken peace treaty, two witnesses

Revelation 11:1,2

¹ Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, “Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

² But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.

Revelation 11:1,2 clearly indicates to us that this is the mid-point of the seven-year Tribulation. This also indicates to us that the covenant or peace treaty has been broken, the Temple desecrated and the city has come under the control of the Gentiles.

measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there – A clear statement about the existence of the Third Temple or the Tribulation Temple. The inner sanctuary (holy place + altar) is measured and protected spiritually.

the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles – The outer court is exposed to Gentile domination. Historically, the outer courts were areas accessible to Gentiles in Herod’s Temple making this similar and confirming once again that there will be a physical Third Temple.

they will tread the holy city underfoot – As Daniel foretold, “*He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time*” (Daniel 7:25, also Daniel 12:7). Jesus said, “*And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled*” (Luke 21:24).

for forty-two months – The second half of the Tribulation, the second half of Daniel’s 70th week. 42 months (Revelation 11:2; Revelation 13:5) = 1,260 days (Revelation 11:3; Revelation 12:6) = 3.5 years = “*time, times, and half a time*” (Daniel 7:25; Daniel 12:7; Revelation 12:14).

The two witnesses

Revelation 11:3-14 describes God’s sending of two prophetic witnesses to Jerusalem during the final 1,260 days (3 ½ years) of the Tribulation, clothed in sackcloth as a sign of repentance, empowered to preach with miraculous authority like Moses and Elijah – calling down fire on opponents, shutting the sky from rain, turning waters to blood, and striking the earth with plagues. They are symbolized as the two olive trees and two lampstands (from Zechariah 4) representing Spirit-empowered testimony, and they remain supernaturally protected until their mission is complete, at which point, the beast (Antichrist) kills them, and their bodies lie unburied in Jerusalem (“the great city”) as the unbelieving world celebrates; after three and a half days, God resurrects them publicly and catches them up to heaven as the world watches terrified – signaling the end of the second woe and the imminent arrival of God’s final judgments.

Malachi 4:5,6

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet

Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

Of the two witnesses, one is Elijah as stated in Malachi 4:5,6 and the other possibly Enoch or Moses. Malachi 4:5,6 foretell that Elijah will come as one of those witnesses, and this is corroborated by the fact that Elijah did not die a physical death but was taken up into heaven by a whirlwind and a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:9-11). Moses appeared with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:3) which was a picture of future events. Many of the plagues of the Time of Jacob's Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7) are similar to those brought by Moses in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. The Bible also tells us that Moses' body was preserved by God (Deuteronomy 34:5,6; Jude 9). On the other hand, like Elijah, Enoch did not die (Hebrews 11:5), and some think that his exemption from death was in view of his coming martyrdom during the Great Tribulation. His message must also be considered. Evidently Enoch had been given a revelation of the Second Coming of Christ and had announced it to his generation (Jude 1:14,15).

For 3 ½ years, these two witnesses will proclaim the truth of the kingdom message, corroborating the preaching of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists. The message of Christ's return will be preached throughout the world. All will be made aware of the timetable of the end, the eventual fall of Antichrist, and the coming kingdom of Christ.

These two witnesses will be miraculously protected for three and a half years. Their power to bring plagues will draw the attention of the world (Revelation 11:6). When they have

concluded their work, they will be slain by the beast from the bottomless pit (the Antichrist) and the whole world will see their dead bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem. Spiritually, there is sexual perversion (Sodom) and religious perversion (Egypt) in Jerusalem at this time, and hence, this comparison. After three and a half days of the earth's rejoicing (Revelation 11:10), they will be resurrected, and they will ascend to heaven in a cloud while their enemies watch, paralyzed with fear.

Olive trees and candlesticks are used as prophetic images of servants / prophets of God (see also Zechariah 4:11-14). These two witnesses will be miraculously protected for three and a half years. Interestingly, we are living in a day and time when technology can fulfill Revelation 11:8-10, where the whole world can see live, in real time, what is happening in the streets of the city of Jerusalem.

The seventh trumpet: The triumphant announcement— “*The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!*” (Revelation 11:15) – which will be fulfilled at the end of the Tribulation period when Christ comes to set up His Kingdom and government on the earth. This is once again repeated in Revelation 19:11-16.

Revelation 12: The woman, the male Child and the dragon
 Revelation 12 is another chapter like Revelation 11 that is clearly pinned to the second half of the Tribulation. It begins at the middle of the seven-year Tribulation and continues till the end.

Revelation 12 presents Israel as the woman, Christ as the male Child, and satan as the great red dragon.

The woman depicts the nation of Israel, similar to Jacob's dream of the sun, moon and the 11 stars (Genesis 37:9-11). In Jacob's (Israel) dream, the sun represented his father, the moon his mother, and the 11 stars his brothers.

The male Child represents the Lord Jesus, who was Jewish, born of the nation of Israel and the One who will rule all nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 12:5; Revelation 19:15; Romans 9:4,5; Psalm 2:8,9)

The red dragon represents the devil, satan, as explained in Revelation 12:9. The dragon had taken one-third (1/3) of "the stars of heaven", angels who rebelled with the devil (even sinful men are pictured as "*wandering stars*" in Jude 1:13). The seven heads ("heads" represent kingdoms or empires) with their seven crowns ("crowns" represent rule, authority, influence) and the 10 horns ("horns" represent leaders or rulers) represent the seven kingdoms and the 10 leaders through whom satan extends his influence (see Revelation 13:1; Revelation 17:9-13 – the beast, the Antichrist).

The chapter depicts...

- satan's fall with a third of the angels (Revelation 12:4)
- satan's failed attempt to kill the Messiah (Revelation 12:4,5)
- Christ's exaltation to heaven (Revelation 12:5)
- God's protection of Israel for 1,260 days, "*a time and times and half a time*", the second half of the Tribulation (Revelation 12:6,14)

At the middle of the Tribulation, satan makes one final attempt to invade heaven but is kept out and sent back to the earth. A great conflict takes place in the heavenlies (some

scholars feel that this is in the aerial heaven or “heavenlies” where satan and his demons operate and not in the third heaven where God resides) similar to what we see in Daniel 10. Satan is cast out onto the earth and comes back to the earth with fury knowing his time is short (Revelation 12:7-12).

With this rage, satan goes against Israel and all who hold the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 12:13-17) (see Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:22). Satan persecutes the Jewish people (Israel), but God protects them supernaturally for 3 ½ years (Revelation 12:14). What is meant by the “*two wings of a great eagle*” (Revelation 12:14) is not very clear but clearly denotes a powerful means of escape. The “flood” that the serpent spews out of his mouth against Israel could be a wave of antisemitic propaganda, opposition from many people / nations. Yet, somehow, even this wave of persecution is divinely nullified (earth swallows this up, Revelation 12:16). The testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17) is also used to refer to the work of the Holy Spirit (Revelation 19:10). Believers overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, not loving their lives, even if it means death for their faith in Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:11).

Time of Jacob’s trouble – times of the Gentiles

Matthew 24:21,22

²¹ For then there will be great Tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.

Zechariah 13:8,9

⁸ And 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:

⁹ I will bring the *one-third* through the fire, Will refine them 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.’”

The second half of the Tribulation is called the great Tribulation (Matthew 24:21) and is also referred to as the “time of Jacob’s trouble” because of Jeremiah’s prophecy – *“Alas! For that day is great, So that none is like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, But he shall be saved out of it”* (Jeremiah 30:7). He was speaking of the second half of this seven-year period known as the great Tribulation. The earth is plunged into its most horrendous hour. The angel Gabriel told Daniel, *“... And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time ...”* (Daniel 12:1) Jeremiah 30-31 summarize Israel’s endurance in the hour of Tribulation. In Ezekiel 38 and 39, 17 different passages mark Israel as the victim of Gog and Magog’s deadliest war. More on this in Revelation 16.

Revelation 13: The rule of the Antichrist – the beast, the False Prophet, the dragon

Revelation 13 describes the rise of satan’s final counterfeit kingdom during the Tribulation, centered on two empowered agents – the beast from the sea (the Antichrist) and the beast from the earth (the False Prophet). The first beast – the Antichrist – receives satanic authority, suffers a dramatic pseudo-resurrection that amazes the world, blasphemes God, persecutes believers, and exercises global political rule for 42 months. The second beast – the False Prophet – performs miraculous signs to deceive humanity, promotes worship of the Antichrist (global religious system), animates his image, and enforces the mark of the beast (666) as the economic loyalty test controlling buying and selling (global currency system); together, they create a unified system of political power, false religion, economic control, deception, and persecution that dominates the world until Christ returns to destroy them.

Seven heads and seven kings – seven successive world empires

Revelation 13:1,2

¹ Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.

² Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like *the feet of* a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

Revelation 17:9-13

⁹ “Here *is* the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

¹⁰ There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, *and* the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

¹¹ The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition.

¹² “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

Revelation 13:1,2 introduces the rise of the Antichrist as the visible political ruler of the final Gentile world empire. John sees a beast rising out of the sea (multitudes of people symbolizing the restless, godless nations of humanity – Isaiah 17:12; Daniel 7:2,3) having 10 horns (10 kings / kingdoms forming a confederation) who have their own kingdoms (crowns) and seven heads (representing successive world empires culminating in the final revived empire) with blasphemous names showing its open rebellion against God. The beast's primary assignment and identity (“a blasphemous name”, name = identity) is blasphemy against the Most High God.

The beast's composite appearance – leopard (Grecian),

bear (Medo-Persian), and lion (Babylonian) – directly reflects Daniel 2 and 7. It signifies that this final empire will combine the qualities of Greece's speed, Medo-Persia's strength, and Babylon's brutality, while the dragon (Satan) gives the beast his power, throne, and authority revealing that the Antichrist's rule is not merely political but openly satanic, energized and directed by demonic power to oppose Christ and dominate the world during the Tribulation.

The seven heads represent seven successive world empires (kings / kingdoms). They represent the dominant Gentile powers that oppressed Israel through history culminating in the final Antichrist system (a political system). This interpretation is grounded in the book of Daniel where empires are symbolized as beasts (Daniel 2; Daniel 7).

The seven successive world empires are as follows:

- 1) **Egypt:** Enslaved Israel (Exodus).
- 2) **Assyria:** Destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel (722 BC).
- 3) **Babylon:** Destroyed Jerusalem and the First Temple (586 BC).
- 4) **Medo-Persia:** Ruled during the restoration period (Daniel in Persia).
- 5) **Greece:** Alexander and the Seleucid oppression (Daniel 8).
- 6) **Rome:** World empire at Christ's first coming and when John was writing Revelation.
- 7) **Future revived Roman empire:** The final world empire (political system) which forms the End-Times Antichrist kingdom. These are a loosely held collection of countries that are situated in the region that was part of the former Roman empire located across modern-day Europe and the Mediterranean.

Rome is the sixth kingdom in John's day, which is why Revelation 17:10 says, "*Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come.*"

John wrote during Roman rule (about AD 95) therefore, from John's perspective...

Five have fallen: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece

One is: Rome (current empire)

the other has not yet come: Antichrist's revived empire

This confirms that both passages (Revelation 13:1,2 and Revelation 17:9-13) refer to the same prophetic outline.

The Antichrist is identified as the 8th king (Revelation 17:11). This means that the Antichrist's kingdom is rooted in the 7th empire (revived Rome), yet he personally becomes an 8th king, distinct as a unique satanic ruler / leader. He is "of the seven" emerging from the same imperial line. The seven heads and seven kings represent the same line of Gentile world empires that successively oppressed Israel culminating in the final revived Roman empire ruled by the Antichrist, who becomes the unique "eighth king" emerging from that seventh kingdom.

10 horns – 10 leaders from a 10-nation coalition

Revelation 17:12,13 identifies the 10 horns as a future coalition of rulers (leaders) who will rise simultaneously with the Antichrist and voluntarily surrender their authority to him. They are literal End-Time political leaders. John explicitly calls them "ten kings." They rule at the same time as the beast (their authority lasts "one hour", implying a short duration). They willingly yield to the Antichrist. This matches the prophecy of Daniel 7:24, "*The ten horns are ten kings Who shall arise from*

this kingdom. And another shall rise after them; He shall be different from the first ones, And shall subdue three kings.”

The 10 horns represent a 10-nation coalition (confederation or bloc) of political leaders (“kings”) emerging out of the final form of the revived Roman world empire. This is not 10 random leaders scattered globally; it is a regional power alliance functioning as the governing structure of the Antichrist’s empire. The region identified by Daniel is Rome’s historic geographical footprint which would be across Europe and the Mediterranean, a loosely held collection of modern-day countries that are situated in the region that was part of the former Roman empire. The 10 horns represent 10 future political leaders who will form a short-lived End-Time confederation emerging out of this region. They will unite under the Antichrist and hand him their authority and serve as the governing enforcement arm of his global regime until their destruction by Christ at His return.

The Antichrist gains global influence

Revelation 13 details much of what the beast (the Antichrist) and the False Prophet would do during the second half of the Tribulation. There seems to be an attempt to imitate Jesus Christ through a death-and-resurrection like experience. The beast (Antichrist) was mortally wounded perhaps through an assassination attempt, but was healed. The world is impressed, and they follow this man (Revelation 13:3). In following and worshipping the beast, people of the earth actually follow and worship the dragon, that is, satan, who gives power to the Antichrist.

His name is blasphemy and so what he does is speak blasphemy against God. This is exactly what Daniel mentioned (Daniel 7:8,11,20,25; Daniel 8:11,25; Daniel 9:27). The

Antichrist did this for 42 months which is 3 ½ years. This corresponds to Daniel’s “*a time and times and half a time*” (Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12:14).

Daniel foretold that the Antichrist will make war with the saints (Daniel 7:25) which refer both to the Jewish people and to those who believe in Jesus Christ and have the testimony of Jesus Christ during the Tribulation (Revelation 12:13,17).

The Antichrist’s influence will spread globally. People globally will embrace and worship the beast, the Antichrist.

Given that this (the second half of the Tribulation) will be the “Great Tribulation”, the saints have this assurance that gives them endurance and faith. Those who lead them into captivity will themselves go into captivity one day. Those who kill them (the saints) with the sword, will themselves be killed with the sword – by the Lord and the sword of His mouth. Knowing this gives the saints (those who become believers during the Tribulation) endurance and faith during the Tribulation.

The second beast – the False Prophet

Then, there is a second man, referred to as “another beast”. In Revelation 16:13, Revelation 19:20, and Revelation 20:10, this second beast is referred to as the False Prophet – this beast with two horns like a lamb (opposite or imitation of the true Lamb of God). This False Prophet is focused on matters of religion and faith. He speaks like a dragon – deceptive, cunning and persuasive words that move people to evil. The False Prophet is a man who comes as a religious leader (like a lamb) but speaks like a dragon – deceiving people. His goal is to deceive people with signs and wonders and get them to worship the Antichrist or an image of the Antichrist.

“out of the sea” and “out of the earth” – what is the difference?

The first beast, the Antichrist comes “*out of the sea*” (Revelation 13:1). The second beast, the False Prophet, comes “*out of the earth*”. Is there a significance?

In Daniel 7, as Daniel sees the vision of coming empires, he sees “... *four great beasts came up from the sea* ...” (Daniel 7:3) and also these same “...*four kings which arise out of the earth*” (Daniel 7:17). Rising out of the sea and rising out of the earth are used in a synonymous manner in Daniel 7. Hence, we should not make too much distinction between coming from the sea or coming from the earth. The sea emphasizes nations and people. What comes from the sea has influence over nations and people. The earth represents what is natural, human and earthly. What comes from the earth does not have anything divine. Nothing in it is from God.

Consider Revelation 17 that speaks of the great harlot, Mystery Babylon, referring to the false religious system set up by the Antichrist and the False Prophet. Here we see the typology of waters and mountains used. “... *the great harlot who sits on many waters*” (Revelation 17:1). “...*seven mountains on which the woman sits*” (Revelation 17:9). “*The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues*” (Revelation 17:15). “...*the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 17:18). This false religion exerts its influence on “many waters” representing peoples and nations. This false religion exerts its influence on the “seven mountains” representing kingdoms and their kings. In fact, this false religion exerts its influence over “the kings of the earth”, that is, many leaders embrace it. Here again, “waters” and “mountains” are

used to specify the influence of Mystery Babylon.

A global religious system

The False Prophet (the second beast) works with the Antichrist (the first beast) and works to get people to worship the Antichrist. The False Prophet introduces a global religious system getting people to worship the Antichrist. The False Prophet works signs and wonders empowered by satan (2 Thessalonians 2:9). He deceives people. He gets people to practice idolatry by setting up an image of the beast and worshipping it. The image of the beast seems to be lifelike – able to speak and able to kill. This could be achieved with modern technology (for example, lifelike robots) or demonically empowered with supernatural power. The image of the beast is part of this global religious system promoted by the False Prophet.

A global economic system and the mark of the beast

The False Prophet working along with the Antichrist also introduces a global economic system (or a global currency or global financial system). People must receive a mark on their right hand or forehead. Only with this identification (or ID) they can transact. This affects all people. Everyone is obliged to use this system to transact financially. Receiving the mark on the hand or forehead can be achieved using modern technology. Something that would not have been possible before the 2000's. This kind of financial infrastructure to affect people globally can also be achieved today through global financial networks. Again, something that would not have been possible before the 2000's. We are living in a time when all these things can be fulfilled. The technology and the means for these things to actually happen is in place.

There will be three forms of identification (or ID) – the mark of the beast, the name of the beast or the number of his name.

The number of the beast, which can be calculated as the number of the name of the Antichrist (which adds up to 666) becomes one of the identifications for a global financial system. People are required to have the mark, name or number of the beast to transact. The mark of the beast is something that we can calculate. The calculation is the number of his name. In Greek, the Greek alphabets were associated with numbers. So, the Antichrist has a name, and the number equivalent of his name will give 666. However, we do not need to worry about this because as we learned, the Antichrist will only be revealed after the Church has been taken out of the way. So, Revelation 13:16-18 has been written for the benefit of those who will be there during the Tribulation to know and identify the Antichrist so that they can refuse the mark of the beast.

We also see that the Antichrist is a man, as stated in Revelation 13:18, it is the number of a man.

We observe from Revelation 13 that the Antichrist and the False Prophet, working together, empowered by satan, have global leadership influence, establish a global religious system, and a global financial system.

Where will the Antichrist come from?

We now present in brief what God revealed to Daniel on where the Antichrist would come from.

Daniel, whose name means “God is judge,” ministered between 605 BC and 535 BC, from the time the Jews were deported to Babylon until Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem to begin building the temple. He served in the courts of 3 empires – the Babylonian, the Medes and the early part of the Persian empire.

What is amazing is that Daniel prophesied about future world empires. He prophesied ahead of time about the future of the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Greek, the Roman, the Messiah, the present-day region that were part of the former Roman empire, and what would happen during the latter days, the time of the Antichrist, and beyond.

We highlight some of Daniel's prophecies and focus in on what Daniel said where the Antichrist would come from.

Daniel narrated and interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2. This was during the second year of King Nebuchadnezzar's reign over the Babylonian Empire, which would have been about 603-602 BC. Although in chapter 2 Daniel does not mention the names, he foretold the coming empires. Chapter 2 serves as a framework upon which further information is given in Daniel 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12.

Starting with the image in Daniel 2 and tracing through what was revealed in subsequent chapters, we can identify the following:

The first kingdom (the head of gold) was identified as the Babylonian kingdom – “*you are this head of gold*” (Daniel 2:38). Daniel 7:17,23-25 reveals that there are four kingdoms. In Daniel 2:38, we know that the first kingdom (head of gold, lion) is that of Babylon. In Daniel 8, he identifies the second kingdom (breast of silver, bear, ram) as kings or kingdom of Medes and Persia (Daniel 8:20) and the third kingdom (waist of brass, leopard, goat) as the kingdom of Greece (Daniel 8:21). The fourth kingdom (legs of iron, beast), which we know from history and based on Revelation 17:10 “*one is*” the kingdom prevalent during the time of John the beloved, is the Roman empire. The feet, which is iron mixed with clay (people of

the Roman empire – iron – mixed with races of people from all over the world). This is what we find in Europe and the Mediterranean countries that were part of the former Roman empire mixed with races from all over the world.

From this region – the loosely held region that was part of the former Roman empire, modern-day Europe and the Mediterranean, Daniel said there will be 10 leaders (10 toes, 10 horns) who will emerge (Daniel 7:24). Then there will be another leader who will overpower 3 of these 10 leaders. This man will be the Antichrist who will speak blasphemies against God for 3 ½ half years, “*a time and times and half a time*” (Daniel 7:24,25).

From one of the four came a little horn

Daniel 8:8-11

8 Therefore the male goat grew very great; but when he became strong, the large horn was broken, and in place of it four notable ones came up toward the four winds of heaven.

9 And out of one of them came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land.

10 And it grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down *some* of the host and *some* of the stars to the ground, and trampled them.

11 He even exalted *himself* as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily *sacrifices* were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down.

Daniel provided additional details from where the Antichrist would come from in Daniel 8:5,8,9,11,19-25. This prophecy was given to Daniel in 551 BC. Daniel saw the kingdom of Greece (male goat) overthrow the kingdom of the Medo-Persians (ram). The large horn on the male goat is the first king Alexander the Great (Daniel 8:21). Alexander the Great started ruling at the age of 20 (356-323 BC) and expanded the Greek empire to its greatest extent. He conquered the Persian empire

and extended Greek influence as far as India. He accomplished this in about 10 years. He died in 323 BC at the age of 32. At its peak under Alexander the Great, the Greek empire was one of the largest empires in the ancient world stretching over three continents.

As Daniel prophesied in Daniel 8:22, after Alexander the Great died, his four generals took major parts of his kingdom and ruled over time.

- 1) Ptolemaic Kingdom, the southern part of the empire including present day countries – Egypt, Libya, Sudan, Israel, Lebanon, Cyprus, Jordan, and Syria.
- 2) Seleucid empire, the eastern part of the empire covering vast territories including modern-day countries – Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kuwait, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Bahrain, and Qatar
- 3) Kingdom of Lysimachus, the northern part of the empire covering present day countries – Turkey, Thrace, Anatolia, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Macedonia, and Moldova
- 4) Antigonid Kingdom, the western part of the empire including present day countries – Greece, North Macedonia, Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Montenegro, and Serbia

These kingdoms emerged as the most powerful states following the fragmentation of Alexander's empire, and they played crucial roles in the Hellenistic world until they were gradually absorbed by the Roman Republic.

The reason these areas are of interest is because Daniel prophesied that after the big horn representing Alexander the Great, “*...in place of it four notable ones came up toward the*

four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came a little horn ..." (Daniel 8:8,9). This means that the Antichrist comes out of one of the countries that lie in the regions occupied by the four kingdoms. Hence, these countries are of interest to us to see what is happening in this part of the world. The "little horn" is likely to come from one of these countries.

The "*little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land*" (Daniel 8:9). The Antichrist extends his influence toward the south (nations lying south of his land), towards the east (nations lying east of his land) and toward the Glorious land (the land of Israel).

Revelation 14: The angelic announcements

In chapter 14, we see the 144,000 Jews in heaven with the Lamb of God on Mount Zion. Although the Scriptures do not state this, it is safe to infer that the 144,000 Jews were not martyred but directly Raptured with glorified bodies because they were divinely marked and protected by God. It is likely that these 144,000 have been Raptured into heaven, sometime after the mid-point of the seven-year Tribulation. They are referred to as the "*firstfruits to God and to the Lamb*" (Revelation 14:4), being the firstfruits from Israel post the Rapture of the Church. The term "firstfruits" is also used in reference to resurrection / receiving glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15:23).

In Revelation 14, the 144,000 are seen standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, indicating their survival and spiritual triumph through the Tribulation, bearing the name of the Father and the Lamb on their foreheads. They are described as morally pure ("*not defiled with women*"), spiritually loyal ("*they follow the Lamb wherever He goes*"), truthful ("*no lie was found in their mouth*"), and blameless before God. They

are called “*firstfruits to God and to the Lamb*,” (Revelation 14:4) meaning they represent the beginning of a much greater harvest of Jewish salvation yet to come, pointing forward to Israel’s national restoration at Christ’s return.

Three angels making proclamations to the world

With the Church and the 144,000 Jews no longer on the earth, God engages three angels to make proclamations to people on the earth.

One angel is assigned “*having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people*” (Revelation 14:6). This is again a clear indication that the Church is no longer on the earth because during the Church age, it is the Church that was commissioned to preach the Gospel to all nations.

A second angel announces the fall of Babylon (the ungodly religious and economic world systems prevailing on the earth) further elaborated in Revelation 17 and 18 (see also Isaiah 13 and 14). This is a proleptic declaration – a future certainty announced as already accomplished. In Scripture, God often declares a coming judgment as completed because His word guarantees its fulfillment (Isaiah 46:10; Isaiah 55:11).

A third angel is tasked with warning people not to take the mark of the beast.

Sickle and harvest

John then sees a sickle that reaps the harvest. This indicates a great harvest of souls (Revelation 14:14-16) – many turning to God and becoming believers during the Tribulation. This is likely the direct result of the three angels who are making their proclamations all over the world.

Sickle and winepress

Another angel has a different sickle to gather the vine for the winepress of God's wrath (Revelation 14:17-20). The winepress where the grapes were crushed, usually by being tread upon, represents a place of judgment (Isaiah 63:1-6; Joel 3:12,13; Lamentations 1:15). This indicates the start of the final events of God's ultimate wrath leading to the battle of Armageddon.

Revelation 14:20 also indicates that this final judgment (which we learn later in Revelation 19, is the battle of Armageddon) will result in blood flowing outside the city of Jerusalem at the height of a horses bridle for 180-200 miles (Revelation 14:20; Zechariah 14:2-5). We are not sure if this is literal or if this is apocalyptic hyperbole conveying a vast extent of slaughter and overwhelming divine judgment. Thousands of bodies across the valley cause blood to flow freely. This covers about 180-200 miles north-south length of Israel, from the Jezreel Valley (Armageddon staging area) down to Edom / Bozrah (Isaiah 63). This implies the scope of the slaughter covers the entire Israeli battle corridor and the destruction is not confined to Megiddo alone but extends across the nation.

Revelation 15: Prelude to the Bowl judgments

The events of Revelation 15 and 16 are the last things to happen on earth prior to the second return of Christ in Revelation 19:11. Revelation 17 and 18 are simply a detailed explanation of the fall of Babylon that happens toward the end of the seven-year Tribulation period.

Those who had “*victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name,*” (Revelation 15:2) sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb (Revelation 15:1-4). The “*sea of glass*” in Revelation 15:2 is a crystal-like expanse of God's presence and glory before God's

throne. The martyred saints are upheld in His glorious presence by Himself, and their suffering at the hands of the beast has been transformed into heavenly triumph as they engage in glorious worship before the Throne of God. Seven angels prepare to release the seven bowls of wrath, which are seven plagues.

Revelation 16: The seven angels with seven bowls of wrath

Revelation 16 describes the pouring out of the seven bowl judgments, the final and most severe outpouring of God's wrath during the Great Tribulation. Painful sores afflict beast-worshippers – the seas and fresh waters become blood, the sun scorches humanity with extreme heat, darkness envelops the Antichrist's throne, demonic spirits gather the kings of the world to the battlefield of Armageddon, and finally, a cataclysmic global earthquake accompanied by unprecedented hail collapses cities and splits islands and mountains, culminating in the divine declaration "*It is done!*" (Revelation 16:17), signaling that God's judgment is complete and the stage is set for Christ's appearing and the destruction of the Antichrist's armies.

First bowl: Loathsome sores "*came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image*" (Revelation 16:2).

Second bowl: Sea turns to blood.

Third bowl: Rivers and springs turn to blood.

Revelation 16:5-7 – Heaven declares the vengeance of God for the blood of His saints and prophets and that God's judgments are true and righteous.

Fourth bowl: Men scorched with intense heat yet "*they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues;*

and they did not repent and give Him glory” (Revelation 16:9).

Fifth bowl: Darkness and pain on the Antichrist’s kingdom yet *“blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds”* (Revelation 16:11).

Sixth bowl: River Euphrates dried up in preparation for the battle of Armageddon.

Armageddon – gathering of kings from the east and kings of the earth

Revelation 16:12-16

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.*

¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

¹⁵ “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

Satan, through the Antichrist and the False Prophet, issues a call to the nations to gather them to the battle of Armageddon. This call is demonically empowered and the nations respond. This is the final supernatural mobilization of the world’s armies for their doomed confrontation with Christ at Armageddon. The sixth bowl judgment dries up the Euphrates River removing the geographic barrier that allows the kings of the East to march westward, while three demonic spirits, proceeding from satan (the dragon), the Antichrist (the beast), and the False Prophet, perform deceptive signs to influence and unite global rulers

under satanic delusion for war against God. In the midst of this gathering, Christ interjects a warning about His sudden return. The armies assemble at the place called “Armageddon” (Mount Megiddo), setting the stage for the final battle.

Seventh bowl: Great earthquakes and hailstones, cities fall apart.

The Battle of Gog and Magog – Russia and allies invade Israel

While we are not sure of the exact timing, it seems logical to place the battle of Gog and Magog somewhere toward the latter part of the second half of the seven-year Tribulation period.

This will happen at a time when Israel is at rest or peace – because of the earlier peace treaty.

Ezekiel 38 & 39, Daniel 11:35-45, Joel 2:20

The Battle of Gog and Magog, as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 and supported by Daniel 11:35-45, and Joel 2:20, portrays a massive End-Time invasion of Israel led by a northern ruler (“Gog” the title of the military dictator who leads the coalition) heading a coalition of nations who come against Israel during a period of restored national security and false peace. Israel, regathered from the nations and dwelling “peacefully” and “without walls,” is suddenly attacked by a vast alliance drawn primarily from the far north (identified with regions north of Israel and allied Middle-Eastern, African, and Eurasian powers).

The Battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39 describes a northern-led coalition of modern nations centered around Russia (*Magog, Gog, Rosh*), Turkey (*Meshech, Tubal, Gomer, Togarmah regions*), and Iran (*Persia*), supported by

North African – Libya (*Put*), Sudan (*Cush*), Ethiopia (*Cush*) and Caucasus states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan – *Gomer*, *Beth-Togarmah*) culminating in a supernatural judgment on the mountains of Israel that demonstrates God’s protection over Israel, and prepares the stage for the final events of the Tribulation.

Summary of modern-day countries corresponding to the names mentioned in Ezekiel 38:1,2 as identified based on historical and linguistic analysis...

Ezekiel 38:1,2

Gog: Title, likely linked to a leader from Russia.

Magog: Modern Russia and parts of Central Asia.

Rosh: Possibly Russia.

Meshech and Tubal: Likely Turkey or Russia.

Persia: Iran. Persia was the heart of the Persian empire, and the name “Persia” was historically synonymous with the land now known as Iran. In 1935, the name was officially changed from Persia to Iran.

Ethiopia (Cush): Possibly modern Ethiopia and Sudan.

Libya: Libya (North Africa).

Gomer: Turkey or parts of Eastern Europe.

Togarmah: Turkey, or the Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia).

Russia, and its allies: Iran, Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, Sudan, (possibly other nations), form a coalition that will attack Israel in the End Times according to Ezekiel’s prophecy.

Ezekiel 38:13

Sheba: Yemen.

Dedan: Saudi Arabia.

Tarshish: Possibly the western Mediterranean (Spain, France, Italy, and other nations)

These nations question the invasion.

God Himself will intervene, and the invaders of Israel will be defeated. This will be a brief but destructive war in history. Only a sixth of the fighting forces will be left after the battle (about 85% killed). The invasion is halted not by Israel's military but by a direct, overwhelming intervention of God – supernatural earthquakes, torrential rain, hailstones, fire, confusion in the invading armies, and mutual slaughter cause the coalition's complete destruction on the mountains of Israel. The aftermath spans months of cleanup and burial becoming a global testimony of God's power and covenant defense of Israel. Daniel 11:35-45 complements this event by explaining that the Antichrist's northern and southern campaigns culminate in this same confrontation near Israel, where he plants his headquarters between the seas before meeting sudden destruction "*with none to help him.*"

The term "Hamon Gog" (Ezekiel 39:11,15) means the "multitude of Gog" or "hordes of Gog." The valley is thus named to signify the mass burial of Gog's defeated army. It emphasizes the vast number of soldiers who will be killed in the battle and buried in this valley marking the end of the invasion. The exact location of the Valley of Hamon Gog is not specifically identified in modern geographical terms. However, it is described as located "*east of the sea,*" (Ezekiel 39:11) likely referring to the Mediterranean Sea. After the battle, the people of Israel will spend seven months burying the dead (Ezekiel 39:12), and this valley will become a memorial to God's deliverance of Israel from its enemies. The passage

suggests that the valley will be a significant and well-known place obstructing travelers due to the large-scale burial of the dead. They will use the weapons to make fire for seven years (Ezekiel 39:9,10).

Russia pushed back into a desolate land

Joel 2:20

“But I will remove far from you the northern *army*, And will drive him away into a barren and desolate land, With his face toward the eastern sea And his back toward the western sea; His stench will come up, And his foul odor will rise, Because he has done monstrous things.”

One likely interpretation is the “Western Sea” referring to the Caspian Sea, the “Eastern Sea” referring to the Sea of Okhotsk or the Bering Sea (part of the Pacific Ocean) and the barren and desolate land as Siberia, which is sparsely populated and inhospitable. Given that the northern army is Russia, Turkey and its allies, then this seems to be a likely interpretation.

Together these passages present Gog’s invasion not merely as a geopolitical war but as a divinely ordained showdown revealing God’s supremacy, vindicating Israel, humbling the nations, and preparing the stage for the battle of Armageddon and Christ’s ultimate triumph.

Revelation 17: The great harlot “Mystery Babylon”

Babylon, derived from “Babel” meaning “gate of the god” or “gateway of the god”, “bab” meaning gate and “el” for god. In Genesis 11, Babel derived from the verb ‘bilbel’, is used to mean “confusion”. Babylon then seems to be man’s attempt to create a “gateway of god” for god to come into the affairs of men and for man to connect with god. Babylon is used in the Bible at least in 3 different ways – the literal city of Babylon (Genesis 11), a worldwide religious system (Revelation 17) and a world economic system (Revelation 18).

Revelation 17:1-6 describes the great harlot, or “*Mystery Babylon*” which is a worldwide religious system that has great influence, “*sits on many waters*” (multitudes of people, Revelation 17:15), blasphemous, embraced by world leaders, dispensed by the 7 kingdoms and 10 leaders and oppressive to those who believe in Jesus, killing many of the saints. She is dressed in purple and scarlet (colors of royalty and luxury) and adorned with gold and jewels (wealth and opulence). She rides on the beast (Antichrist’s political empire) and has massive global influence. This harlot is ultimately betrayed and destroyed by the 10 leaders who supported the beast.

John marvels at this great harlot and her influence and the angel helps him understand (Revelation 17:6).

Reasons “Mystery Babylon” is a global religious system

Why do we consider “Mystery Babylon” to be a global religious system?

First, the terms “*great harlot*” (Revelation 17:1), that “*committed fornication*” (Revelation 17:2), “*full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication*” (Revelation 17:4), “*THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH*” (Revelation 17:5) are in symbolic language and used to refer to people who spiritually depart from the true and living God and from His truth. We see this used often in the Old Testament (Isaiah 23:17; Isaiah 53:3-7; Jeremiah 3:2-9; Ezekiel 16:1-63; Hosea 4:12-19) and also in the New Testament (James 4:4) when people depart from the truth. The woman – the great harlot – was “*full of names of blasphemy*” (Revelation 17:3). Blasphemy is what is spoken against the true God and against the truth. Hence, this has to do with what is spiritual / religious and hence, must be a religious system.

Second, she persecutes and kills “*the saints*” and spills “*the blood of the martyrs of Jesus*” (Revelation 17:6), again indicating a religious / spiritual interest and hence, a religious system.

Third, her name “*MYSTERY*” (Revelation 17:5) indicates two things – firstly, she is not the “*literal*” city of Babylon and secondly indicates something that is spiritual in nature as a “mystery” or secret.

Her influence is “*on many waters*” (Revelation 17:1) which is explained as “*The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues*” (Revelation 17:15). Even many leaders, “*the kings of the earth*” (Revelation 17:2) embrace this religious system.

Fourth, “*women*” are used in Scripture to symbolize religious systems. The true Church of Jesus is called “*the Bride*.” This false religion is called “*a harlot*” (Ezekiel 16 and 23; Hosea).

The 10 kings suddenly turn on the harlot (Revelation 17:15-18) and destroy this religious system. They hate her, make her desolate, strip her wealth, and burn her with fire. The reason they do this is because “*God has put it into their hearts to fulfill His purpose, to be of one mind, and to give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God are fulfilled*” (Revelation 17:17).

Revelation 17:9,10 indicates that this harlot had her influence from times past over the seven kingdoms. This indicates that “*Mystery Babylon*” has always been present and is not a new world religion. This woman “*Mystery Babylon*” influences, legitimizes, partners with, and benefits from political power. “*Mystery Babylon*” does not represent a single

religion but a spiritual deception across religious systems and political power. For example, we note that Egyptians had occult worship, Babylon – idolatry, Persia – emperor worship, Greece – pagan philosophy and Rome – emperor worship. The woman “Mystery Babylon” sat over all these and exerted her influence through all these kingdoms. And finally, “Mystery Babylon” also rode on the beast (the Antichrist) himself indicating that the Antichrist himself promoted this religious system.

We do not know from Scripture whether “Mystery Babylon”, the “great harlot” is the same religious system introduced by the beast and the False Prophet demanding worship of the beast (Revelation 13:12-15), or is this some other parallel religious system? Going by what we see in Scripture, the worship of the beast could be the culmination of “Mystery Babylon”, the great harlot, diverting worship away from God to satan himself. And God directs things in such manner that this false global religious system self-destructs. The 10 leaders who supported the Antichrist throw out his global religious system (Revelation 17:16,17). As we see in Revelation 19:1-6, there is great rejoicing in heaven over the fall of the great harlot!

7 kingdoms, 10 leaders

Revelation 17:9-14 has been explained in detail while discussing Revelation 13. We repeat a brief here. The seven heads represent seven successive world empires (kings / kingdoms) – Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the future revived Roman empire – the final world empire (political system) which forms the End-Times Antichrist kingdom. These are a loosely held collection of countries that are situated in the region that was part of the former Roman empire located across modern-day Europe and the Mediterranean. They represent the dominant Gentile powers that oppressed Israel through history culminating in the final Antichrist system (a political system).

The Antichrist is identified as the 8th king (Revelation 17:11).

10 horns are a future coalition of rulers (leaders) who will rise simultaneously with the Antichrist and voluntarily surrender their authority to him. They are literal End-Time political leaders. These 10 leaders emerge out of the final form of the revived Roman world empire across Europe and the Mediterranean, a loosely held collection of modern-day countries that are situated in the region that was part of the former Roman empire.

Revelation 18: The fall of Babylon the great

Revelation 18 describes “Babylon the great,” which can be seen to be an economic system (or political-economic system) that nations were engaged in to make great wealth. This entire system collapses suddenly leaving many in great despair.

This is a demonically energized, global economic system. The reason we say that this “Babylon the great” represents a worldwide economic system is because, in contrast to Revelation 17, in Revelation 18, we have terms of commerce used throughout – *“merchants of the earth”* (Revelation 18:3,11), *“merchandise”* (Revelation 18:11,12), *“every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea”* (Revelation 18:17), *“sound of harpists, musicians, flutists, and trumpeters”* (Revelation 18:22), *“craftsman of any craft”* (Revelation 18:22), *“millstone”* (Revelation 18:22).

This system thrives initially as people who engage in it *“lived luxuriously”* (Revelation 18:7,9), *“the merchants of these things, who became rich by her”* (Revelation 18:15), *“all the things which are rich and splendid”* (Revelation 18:14). This system provides people with a false sense of ease, self-sufficiency, security – *“for she says in her heart,*

‘I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow’ (Revelation 18:7). It is possible that this system even engaged in unlawful and bonded labor as they sold *“bodies and souls of men”* (Revelation 18:13). Suddenly this entire economic system collapses. *“For in one hour such great riches came to nothing...”* (Revelation 18:17).

This economic system seems closely intertwined with the religious system as we see the practice – *“For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived”* (Revelation 18:23).

This economic system also results in many people losing their lives for their faith in Jesus – *“And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth”* (Revelation 18:24). Hence, while not explicitly stated in Scripture, it is possible that this economic system could be closely intertwined with the global economic system introduced by the Antichrist demanding people to engage in commerce only with the mark of the beast (Revelation 13:16-18). Those who refuse to take the mark of the beast are killed.

Common features of “Mystery Babylon” and “Babylon the great”

There are several commonalities between both *“Mystery Babylon”* (Revelation 17) and *“Babylon the great”* (Revelation 18).

Both systems are closely intertwined because there is both spiritual departure from God as well as making of riches and wealth. *“For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury”* (Revelation 18:3).

Both systems are responsible for many prophets and saints being martyred (Revelation 17:6; Revelation 18:24).

Both systems are referred to as city (Revelation 17:18; Revelation 18:21) indicating a place where many will come to reside in or establish themselves in thinking they are safe and secure.

Revelation 19: The marriage of the Lamb and the final conflict – Armageddon

Heaven rejoices over the destruction of the great harlot

There is great rejoicing in heaven at the fall of the great harlot, the world religious system that held the nations in great deception.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

The Marriage Supper is a grand celebration reflecting the joy and fulfillment of God's promises. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb is Christ celebrating His union with His people. This can be understood as in ancient Jewish wedding customs where the marriage supper was the culmination of the marriage process. The groom would claim his bride, and the marriage would be celebrated with a joyous feast attended by friends and family. Similarly, Christ will come for His Church, and this event will be celebrated with great joy in heaven.

The marriage imagery highlights the intimate, loving, and eternal relationship between Christ and His people. Just as a marriage represents a lifelong covenant, the union between Christ and the Church is a symbol of the eternal covenant of grace and salvation.

“His wife has made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7) and she is *“arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints”* (Revelation 19:8). We

see that the Raptured Church had made herself ready through righteous living, in response to the grace and gift of redemption, sanctification and righteousness through faith in Christ.

‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ (Revelation 19:9). Being part of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is among the many joys and blessings we will have in His Kingdom.

Once the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is done, Christ descends through the clouds of heaven, along with all of us, His people, and the armies of heaven.

The King of kings and the Lord of lords

(Revelation 19:11-16; Revelation 1:7; Jude 1:14,15; Daniel 7:13,14; Matthew 24:30)

At the close of the Tribulation, the Lord Jesus Christ returns visibly and triumphantly as the conquering Messiah, riding from heaven on a white horse to judge and wage righteous war against the rebellious nations. He is identified as *“Faithful and True,”* crowned with many diadems, clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and accompanied by the armies of heaven, with the sharp sword of His word proceeding from His mouth to strike the nations. Revelation 1:7 confirms this return will be witnessed by all mankind, including Israel who *“pierced Him,”* while Jude declares Enoch prophesied about this about 5000 years ago that the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all the ungodly. His title, written on His robe and thigh – KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS – affirms His Lordship as the Son of Man who receives everlasting dominion over all kingdoms (Daniel 7:13,14) and establishes His righteous reign upon the earth.

The battle of Armageddon – nations against Israel

(Joel 3:1,2,9-12; Revelation 16:12-16; Jeremiah 25:30-38; Zechariah 12:2,3; Matthew 24:21,22)

The battle of Armageddon represents the final military mobilization of the world's nations against Jerusalem and God's covenant people, occurring at the end of the seven-year Tribulation, the climactic end of the Day of the Lord. Joel describes the nations being gathered to the "*Valley of Jehoshaphat*" (Joel 3:12) for divine judgment because of their hostility toward Israel and their scattering of God's people. Revelation reveals that demonic spirits draw the kings of the earth into this conflict, assembling them at Armageddon (Revelation 16:16) after the Euphrates dries up to clear the way for invading armies. Jeremiah portrays this gathering as a worldwide slaughter decreed by God, extending judgment from nation to nation. Motivated by satanic deception and hatred toward Israel and Christ, the nations converge believing they are fighting to subdue Israel yet unknowingly march toward their own destruction at the hands of the returning Messiah.

Valley of Jehoshaphat

The Valley of Jehoshaphat is traditionally identified with the Kidron Valley, which lies between the eastern walls of the Old City of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. In Joel 3:12, the Valley of Jehoshaphat is described as the place where God will gather all nations for judgment in the "Day of the Lord." The name "Jehoshaphat" means "Yahweh judges," symbolizing divine judgment. While no physical valley known as Jehoshaphat exists by name today, the Kidron Valley is widely associated with this Biblical reference. The valley has historical significance and has been a burial site since ancient times, adding to its association with judgment.

Armageddon

Armageddon is derived from the Hebrew “Har Megiddo,” meaning “Mount of Megiddo.” This refers to the ancient city of Megiddo located in northern Israel. The site is situated on a strategic hill overlooking the Jezreel Valley, near the modern town of Megiddo. In Revelation 16:16, Armageddon is the prophesied location of the final battle between the forces of good and evil. It is depicted as the gathering place for armies in the End Times. The archaeological site of Tel Megiddo is a UNESCO World Heritage site and has been excavated extensively. The surrounding Jezreel Valley is a vast plain, historically a battleground due to its strategic location.

The Lord will defend Jerusalem

(Zechariah 12:1-11; Psalm 46:1-7; Zechariah 14:2,3)

God Himself promises to supernaturally defend Jerusalem when the nations besiege her in the last days, transforming Israel from the world’s weakest victim into His chosen instrument of victory. Zechariah foretells that Jerusalem will become a “cup of trembling” and a “burdensome stone” to all nations, causing the defeat of the nations despite their overwhelming numbers. The Lord will infuse courage into Judah, strengthen every defender, and strike the invading armies with confusion and blindness. Most importantly, Israel will experience national repentance when they recognize Jesus as Messiah – *“they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn”* (Zechariah 12:10) This divine intervention not only secures Jerusalem physically but also redeems Israel spiritually, fulfilling God’s ancient covenant promises and preparing the nation for Messiah’s kingdom rule.

War against Christ and His army

(Revelation 19:17-21; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Isaiah 66:15,16; Psalm 2:1-9)

At Armageddon, the rebellious world directly challenges the returning Christ, with the beast and the False Prophet leading their armies against Him and His heavenly hosts. The Lord destroys His enemies with “*the breath of His mouth*” (2 Thessalonians 2:8) and the glory of His appearing. Birds are summoned beforehand to feast upon the fallen soldiers, highlighting the totality of the slaughter. Isaiah’s prophecy foretells this fiery judgment where the Lord renders wrath upon all flesh by flame and sword. The beast and the False Prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire, while the remaining armies are slain by the word of Christ, fulfilling Psalm 2 of Messiah ruling the nations with a rod of iron and shattering human rebellion completely.

His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives

(Zechariah 14:1-5; Acts 1:9-12; Ezekiel 43:2-5)

When Christ returns physically to earth, He will descend to the same location from which He ascended – the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem. Zechariah describes that His feet will stand on this mountain causing a massive earthquake that splits the mountain in two and creates a valley. The valley formed by the splitting of the Mount of Olives is large enough to provide a path of escape for people fleeing from the chaos of the final battles in Jerusalem. This dramatic topographical change will signify a shift in the region’s geography. In Zechariah 14:10, it is mentioned that the land around Jerusalem will be flattened or leveled to create a vast plain, with Jerusalem being lifted up and exalted. This suggests a dramatic reshaping of the landscape in the End Times. While the area around the city will be flattened, Jerusalem will remain elevated, symbolizing its importance as the center of God’s reign during the Messianic Kingdom. This moment marks the visible, bodily arrival of the Messiah to deliver Jerusalem and establish His kingdom reign. The Book

of Acts records the angels' promise that Jesus will return "in the same manner" as He departed, validating the literal fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy.

Blood as high as the horse's bridle

(Revelation 14:19,20; Isaiah 34:1-8; Joel 3:13)

The staggering imagery of blood rising to the height of a horse's bridle over approximately 180-200 miles symbolizes the immense and unprecedented destruction of the armies during the Final Judgment. A horse's bridle is typically about 4 to 5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 meters) high. This indicates an immense and catastrophic amount of blood, representing the scale of destruction. Revelation portrays the earth's population gathered as ripe grapes crushed in God's winepress of wrath producing a tidal wave of bloodshed across the land of Israel. Isaiah and Joel use this same winepress imagery to describe the violent end of the God-defying nations when the Lord executes justice.

The supper of the great God

(Ezekiel 39:17-22; Revelation 19:17-21; Matthew 24:28; Luke 17:37)

Following the destruction of the invading armies, Scripture describes a solemn "supper of the great God" in which birds of prey are summoned to feast upon the bodies of kings, commanders, warriors, and horses scattered across the battlefield. Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog's defeat parallels Revelation exactly, indicating mass death and divine victory so overwhelming that months will be needed to cleanse the land. Jesus referenced this same imagery when stating, "*Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered,*" (Matthew 24:28) linking it directly to His Second Coming judgment. This "supper of the great God" symbolizes the utter defeat and humiliation of God's enemies and the final removal of wicked world power systems before

Christ inaugurates His righteous Millennial reign over the earth.

“Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone” (Revelation 19:20).

11

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST AND THE FINAL JUDGMENT (REVELATION 20)

We now cover Revelation 20 along with other Scripture texts relevant to the Millennial reign of Christ and the Final Judgment.

Satan bound for 1000 years

(Revelation 20:1-3)

At the beginning of Christ's Millennial reign, satan is seized by an angel, bound, and confined in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years to prevent him from deceiving the nations any longer. This removal of the great deceiver ends widespread spiritual blindness and global manipulation, creating a world no longer dominated by demonic lies or rebellion. Peace, righteousness, and proper worship flourish.

Resurrection of the Tribulation saints

(Revelation 20:4-6)

Those who were martyred during the Tribulation for refusing the worship of the beast and rejecting the mark of the Antichrist are physically resurrected at Christ's return as part of the *"first resurrection."* Along with the Old Testament saints, the Church Age believers resurrected earlier (1 Corinthians 15:22,23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16), are glorified to reign with Christ for the entire Millennium as priests of God and Christ. Over these resurrected saints, the second death (the lake of fire) has no power.

The Judgment of the nations – sheep and goats

(Matthew 25:31-46)

Immediately following His return, Jesus judges surviving people to determine who may enter the Millennium in their natural bodies. Those who demonstrated faith in Jesus Christ through their compassionate treatment of His “*brethren*” (believing Jews) during the Tribulation are welcomed as the “*sheep*” into the kingdom, while those who rejected Christ by persecuting His people are cast into eternal judgment as “*goats*.” This judgment does not determine eternal salvation by works but reveals genuine faith in Jesus Christ accompanied by outward action. Only believers (those who did not worship the Antichrist and receive his mark) enter the Millennium alive, ensuring that its population begins redeemed yet still capable of procreation.

[Side note: The judgment of the nations is different from the believer’s judgment that has already taken place in heaven. We understand clearly about the judgment seat of Christ where believers are judged and given their rewards (Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 5:9,10). We are also very clear about the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium, where every human person stands before God and the books are opened and the Book of Life is opened, and individuals are judged according to whether their names are in the Book of Life or not (Revelation 20:11-15). The judgment of the nations described in Matthew 25:31-46 takes place at the end of the Tribulation and start of the Millennium based on the terminology used.]

A fountain of cleansing for the land

(Zechariah 13:1,2; Malachi 3:1-5,16-18)

The Bible talks about a time of cleansing of the land from all manner of evil. When Israel recognizes and receives Jesus as Messiah, God opens a spiritual “fountain” that cleanses the

nation from sin and idolatry, bringing deep national repentance and restoration. The Temple will be cleansed (Malachi 3:1-5). We will have a Millennial Temple that is clean and consecrated for worship of the Lord. All forms of idolatry and falsehood are eradicated, and Christ Himself purifies worship, priesthood, and justice from Jerusalem on to the nations. This cleansing ushers in a renewed covenant relationship between God and the Jewish people.

The Millennial reign of Christ the King

(Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 2:2-4; Isaiah 9:6,7; Isaiah 11:10-12; Isaiah 60:8,9; Isaiah 66:19-21; Jeremiah 3:17; Ezekiel 37:1-28; Daniel 2:44,45; Daniel 7:13,14,27; Micah 4:2; Zechariah 14:1-21; Matthew 24:31; Luke 1:32,33; Luke 19:12-27; 1 Corinthians 6:2,3; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 20:4-6; Revelation 22:5)

Christ rules the earth physically from Jerusalem as absolute King over all nations, fulfilling God's covenant promises to David and Israel. His reign is characterized by perfect justice, peace, restored worship, international cooperation, longevity, and unprecedented prosperity. Glorified saints reign with Him as kings and priests administering judgment and governance over the nations. Israel is regathered from worldwide dispersion and restored spiritually and nationally. Nations will come to Jerusalem seeking God's Word. Warfare ceases, the curse on creation is partially lifted, and Christ's kingdom endures throughout the Millennium as the greatest era of righteousness the world has known.

King David will rule over Israel under Jesus

(Ezekiel 37:24,25; Jeremiah 30:9)

Scripture promises that resurrected king David himself will serve as ruler over the nation of Israel during the Millennium under the authority of Jesus Christ. This restoration fulfills

God's unconditional covenant with David (2 Samuel 7), ensuring a literal ruler from David's line governs Israel forever. David's leadership becomes a symbol of Israel's spiritual restoration, unity, and obedience to Messiah. Christ reigns over the entire world while David administers national leadership specifically for Israel.

Jerusalem will be the world capital

(Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 14:16)

Jerusalem becomes the political and spiritual capital of the world during Christ's reign, becoming the center of divine rule where nations come annually to worship Jesus. God's law and teaching flow outward from Zion, producing global peace as disputes are settled by Messiah's righteous judgment. International warfare ends, weapons are destroyed, and universal obedience replaces chaos and rebellion. Jerusalem will be known as "The Throne of the Lord," as the center of Jesus' kingdom administration.

Israel will be given all the original Promised Land

(Genesis 17:8; Genesis 15:18-21; Ezekiel 47:13-23)

During the Millennium, Israel finally receives the full geographical boundaries promised by God to Abraham – from the Euphrates River to the border of Egypt. These promises have never been fully realized historically, underscoring their future fulfillment under Messiah's reign. The land is re-divided among the 12 tribes according to divine decree, restoring Israel to its complete covenant inheritance. This reveals God's absolute faithfulness to His word and the permanence of His covenant commitments to the Jewish people.

Jerusalem – the center of worship

(Micah 4:1-5; Zechariah 14:16-21; Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 3:17; Psalm 48:1,2; Zechariah 8:3,20-23)

During the Millennium, Jerusalem becomes the global spiritual capital where all nations come to worship the Lord Jesus Christ, the reigning King. Micah and Isaiah envision Gentile nations streaming to Zion to learn God's ways so that they might walk in obedience and peace. Zechariah describes annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, and any nation refusing to worship the King faces divine discipline. The city becomes known as "the Throne of the LORD," and even everyday objects in Jerusalem bear the inscription "HOLINESS TO THE LORD," demonstrating that worship will permeate every aspect of life in Christ's kingdom.

Joy and gladness in Jerusalem

(Isaiah 2:1-5; Isaiah 35:10; Isaiah 51:11; Isaiah 61:10,11; Zephaniah 3:14-17)

Jerusalem experiences unprecedented joy when Messiah reigns from Zion and peace replaces conflict worldwide. Isaiah depicts God's people walking in the light of the Lord, rejoicing over His righteous rule, and celebrating freedom from fear and warfare. Songs of salvation replace mourning, and everlasting joy crowns the redeemed as sorrow and sighing vanish completely. The Lord Himself rejoices over His restored people with singing, making Jerusalem both the emotional and spiritual center of renewed creation and restored worship.

The Millennial Temple

(Ezekiel 37:26-28; Ezekiel 40-48; Isaiah 56:6-8; Jeremiah 33:15-18; Zechariah 14:16,20,21; Isaiah 2:3)

The Millennial Temple described in Ezekiel 40-48 is a massive, literal structure that will stand in Jerusalem as the central place of worship for the nations during Christ's reign. It will house memorial sacrifices that commemorate Christ's past atonement, not repeat or replace it (Hebrews 10:10-14). This temple fulfills

God's covenant promise to place His sanctuary permanently among Israel and to make Jerusalem a house of prayer for all the nations. Christ reigns personally as King while priestly worship resumes in a purified form consistent with Ezekiel's prophetic vision.

Why is there a need for the Millennial Temple?

(Ezekiel 47:13-21; Isaiah 11:11-16; Zechariah 10:10,11; Zechariah 14:16-19; Ezekiel 43:1-7; Jeremiah 33:17,18)

The Millennial Temple exists as the focal point for worldwide worship and obedience to Christ, serving as the center of global pilgrimage and covenant instruction. As Israel is fully regathered from the nations and receives her Promised Land inheritance, the Temple becomes a tangible symbol of God's dwelling among His redeemed people. It also provides structure for worship among natural-born populations entering the Millennium who still require instruction and administration. The Temple keeps worship ordered, reinforces remembrance of redemption, and reflects the holiness of Christ's reign.

Life in the Millennium

(Isaiah 65:18-25; Isaiah 11:6-9; Zechariah 8:4,5; Ezekiel 34:25-29; Amos 9:13-15)

Life during the Millennium is marked by joy, peace, prosperity, longevity, and harmony throughout creation. Sickness and premature death are removed, and human lifespans are greatly extended. Children play safely, agricultural abundance flourishes, and the lion and lamb live peacefully alongside as the curse on nature is partially reversed. God's people enjoy the work of their hands, families thrive free from fear, and every generation experiences tangible evidence of Christ's restoring rule over earth.

More specific features of life in the Millennium are highlighted below.

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord

(Numbers 14:21; Psalm 72:19; Habakkuk 2:14; Isaiah 11:9; Isaiah 40:5; Zechariah 14:9)

The central purpose of the Millennium is the revelation of God's glory throughout the entire earth. Prophets declared that the knowledge of the Lord will cover the world like waters cover the seas as Christ establishes righteous rule. His glory and truth will cover the earth. No longer will deception or spiritual blindness dominate nations; instead, instruction flows from Jerusalem and hearts respond in understanding and obedience. The entire planet becomes a testimony to the faithfulness, majesty, and redemptive power of the Lord, fulfilling the ancient covenant promise that all nations will know Him.

Salvation in its fulness will be for all

(Isaiah 35:5,6; Zechariah 8:4,5; Ezekiel 47:9-12; Malachi 4:2)

During the Millennium, salvation blessings flow openly across the world as Christ reigns and the redemptive power of His atonement is physically manifested in healing, restoration, and wholeness of body and soul. Disease, infirmity, and spiritual blindness are greatly diminished as the Messiah ministers righteousness and health to the nations, thus fulfilling Isaiah's promise that the lame will leap, the blind will see, and sorrow will disappear. Healing becomes a natural extension of Christ's kingdom authority over the curse introduced by the Fall, revealing the full scope of redemption in both spiritual regeneration and bodily renewal. The river of His life-presence flows out from the Temple bringing healing and restoration.

The very nature of things will be changed

(Isaiah 11:1-16; Isaiah 65:18-25; Isaiah 35:1,2,6,7; Romans 8:19-22; Amos 9:13)

Under Messiah's rule, the curse on creation is partially reversed leading to transformed ecosystems, renewed fertility of the land, and safety among humans and animals. Isaiah describes animals peacefully coexisting, and creation responding to the restoration of divine order. Longevity increases dramatically, labor becomes fruitful rather than oppressive, and the environment flourishes as it did before humanity's fall. *"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea"* (Isaiah 11:6-9)

Peace and tranquility on the earth – harmony in nature

(Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:2-4; Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 46:9; Hosea 2:18)

"He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). Global warfare ceases as Christ enforces righteous judgment among the nations ending hostility and ushering in genuine peace. Weapons are dismantled and transformed into tools of agriculture, demonstrating humanity's shift from destruction to productivity. Harmony returns not only between nations but within the natural world itself, fulfilling God's original design for peace in creation.

Building, planting and prosperity

(Isaiah 65:21-23; Amos 9:13-15; Ezekiel 36:33-36; Zechariah 8:12; Joel 3:18)

The Millennium is marked by prosperity as people enjoy the fruit of their labor without the threat of loss or oppression. Families will build permanent homes, cultivate fields, and eat from their own harvest with no fear of invasion or destruction. God blesses the earth abundantly so that labor produces lasting benefit, reversing centuries of scarcity and injustice.

People with immortal bodies and those with mortal bodies

(Revelation 20:4-6; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54; Luke 19:17-19; Matthew 25:34; Zechariah 14:16)

Two types of people coexist during the Millennium – believers who possess immortal, glorified bodies and reign with Christ, and mortal people who enter the Millennium having passed through the Tribulation period or are born naturally during the Millennium and continue to reproduce. The Scriptures teach that the saints will rule and administer Messiah's government. Natural people will live ordinary human lives under perfect kingdom justice.

[Side note: We know that saints will help administer the Kingdom, but what is not clear is the role in the Kingdom of those saints who come through the Tribulation, and those who are born during the Millennium and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Based on Luke 19:17,19, faithfulness in the Church Age is rewarded with authority over cities. So, if a person becomes a believer during the Tribulation, endures to the end without receiving the mark of the beast and comes through the Tribulation alive and enters the Millennium with their natural bodies, will they be given authority over cities to help administer the Kingdom? We are unable to arrive at a definite answer to

this. What we do know is that all who remained faithful to Him came out alive through the Tribulation period, and will continue into the Millennium as natural people to continue procreating on the earth.]

Natural people during the Millennium

(Zechariah 14:16-21; Matthew 25:31-34; Isaiah 65:20; Isaiah 66:20-23)

Survivors of the Tribulation who are believers enter the Millennium in natural bodies and live under the rule of Christ alongside resurrected saints. These mortal people marry, bear children, and populate the earth, traveling yearly to Jerusalem to worship the King and to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. Their obedience is enforced directly by Christ's rule, with disobedience resulting in immediate discipline such as drought or withheld blessing.

Rebuilding and repopulating the earth

(Isaiah 61:4; Ezekiel 36:8-11, 33-38; Amos 9:14; Zechariah 2:4,5)

After the devastation of the Tribulation and Armageddon, the earth is renewed and repopulated by human families born during Christ's reign. Cities are rebuilt, desolate lands restored, and nations re-established around righteous leadership under Messiah's government. Rapid population growth restores human occupation of regions devastated by judgment.

Sinners will be taught to worship the Lord

(Isaiah 2:2,3; Zechariah 14:16-19; Psalm 2:8-12; Isaiah 66:23,24; Revelation 20:7-9)

Although satan is bound, sinful human nature remains present among mortal populations, making instruction and discipline necessary. Christ educates all nations in righteousness as they worship yearly in Jerusalem, yet rebellion is still possible,

evidenced by occasional punishment and the final revolt when satan is released at the end of the Millennium. Worship will dominate cultural life as the Lord's law governs daily living.

Long life and longevity

(Isaiah 65:20-22; Isaiah 33:24; Zechariah 8:4)

Human life expectancy will be massively extended so that dying at 100 years old will be considered the death of a youth. Disease, violence, and premature death largely cease, allowing families to enjoy long productive lives in peace and blessing. Longevity reflects both physical healing from Christ's reign and the restoration of creation's vitality.

Will people live the full 1000 years?

(Isaiah 65:20-22; Revelation 20:4-6)

While longevity is greatly increased and it is possible for individuals to live for centuries, Scripture does not explicitly state that all mortals will automatically live the entire 1,000 years. Though greatly diminished, the mention of a sinner dying at 100 years old being accursed implies that sin and death have not been completely eradicated during the Millennium, but they are significantly curtailed. Isaiah indicates that death may still occur for sinners, though vastly delayed, suggesting that obedience plays a role in longevity. While it is not definitive from Scripture whether individuals will live the entire 1,000 years, the emphasis is on abundant life, peace, and blessing for God's people during the Millennium, with the possibility that many could live for centuries or close to 1,000 years. Immortal saints, however, reign for the full Millennium without death.

Israel, Egypt and Assyria – future foretold

(Isaiah 19:18-22,23-25; Zechariah 8:20-23; Micah 4:1-3)

In one of the most remarkable Millennial prophecies, Egypt

and Assyria (often associated with modern Arabic and Middle Eastern regions) are described as worshiping alongside Israel as equal covenant partners under Christ’s reign. A special “highway” of peace unites these ancient rival nations in worship and service to the Lord. This prophecy demonstrates Messiah’s universal reign over historic enemies and showcases the international reconciliation brought by God’s kingdom.

At the end of the Millennium

(Revelation 20:7-9; Isaiah 11:4-9; Jeremiah 17:9; Revelation 20:4-6; Matthew 24:14)

At the conclusion of Christ’s 1,000-year reign, we note that despite centuries of perfect peace, justice, and righteous rule under Jesus (Isaiah 11:4-9; Revelation 20:4-6), a vast number of people born during Millennium are still susceptible to satan’s deception. It also shows the strength of demonic deception.

Satan’s temporary release and the final destruction

(Revelation 20:7-10; Matthew 13:41-43; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 19:20)

After the Millennium, satan is released from his imprisonment to deceive the nations one last time. No indication is given in Scripture on the duration of the “*little while*” (Revelation 20:3) that satan is given. He gathers rebels from the earth—symbolically called “Gog and Magog”—to march against Jerusalem and the beloved city. This rebellion is swiftly crushed when fire falls from heaven, and satan is thrown permanently into the lake of fire, joining the beast and the False Prophet for eternal punishment. This event ends all satanic influence forever and ushers in the eternal reign of righteousness.

Resurrection of unsaved

(Revelation 20:11-13; Daniel 12:2; John 5:28,29; Acts 24:15)

Following satan's defeat, all unbelieving dead from every age are resurrected to stand before God at the Great White Throne Judgment. This is the second resurrection distinct from the first resurrection of the righteous (Revelation 20:4-6). They are raised not to eternal life but to face judgment before God.

The Great White Throne Judgment

(Revelation 20:11-15; Daniel 7:9,10; Matthew 25:41,46; Romans 14:10-12; Hebrews 9:27)

At this Final Judgment, heaven and earth flee from God's awesome presence as every unsaved person stands before Him. The books of deeds are opened (a perfect record of human works), while the Book of Life determines eternal destiny. Since their names are not found written there, each person is judged according to their deeds. Our works fall short and no man can be saved by their works and hence, each unsaved person is cast into the lake of fire – the “second death.” At this judgment, death and Hades are permanently ended. *“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”* (Revelation 20:11-15)

Renovation by fire – new heaven and new earth

(2 Peter 3:8-14; Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22; Revelation 21:1-5;

Revelation 22:3-5; Romans 8:18-23; Hebrews 12:26,27)

Following the Final Judgment, it is likely that all believers are with God in heaven, in the heavenly city of Jerusalem. At this time, God renews all creation by fire. The existing heavens and earth are dissolved and are replaced with a new heaven and a new earth, free from sin, death, corruption, and sorrow. The new earth becomes the eternal dwelling place of righteousness where God lives among His redeemed people forever.

12

NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH (REVELATION 21 & 22)

Revelation 21: The New Jerusalem

God sets in place a new heaven and a new earth. The holy city, the holy New Jerusalem, with all the redeemed is relocated to the new earth. This is a place where God Himself now dwells with people. A loud proclamation announces that God's dwelling is now permanently with humanity, fulfilling every covenant promise of divine fellowship.

All tears and pain are forever forgotten. God makes all things new. We drink of the water of life freely and we inherit all these things.

John is given a glimpse of the New Jerusalem, a city filled with the glory of God and full of light.

The number 12, seen in the 12 foundations, named after the 12 apostles, and the 12 gates named after the tribes of Israel, 12 angels, 12 gem stones, all symbolize divine government, order, and completeness, affirming that God's eternal kingdom fully unites Old and New Covenant redemption into one glorious structure.

The foundation stones of the city wall are adorned with precious gemstone reflecting divine beauty, purity, permanence, and glory. These stones are also seen in the 12 precious stones on the High Priest's breastplate (Exodus 28:17-20; Exodus 39:10-14), which represented the 12 tribes of Israel, showing

that the redeemed of all ages are eternally remembered before God. The colors also symbolize the multifaceted glory of God displayed through His saints (Isaiah 60:1-11; Malachi 3:17).

The city's streets are pure gold. What is valued much on earth is common in heaven because there are other things of much greater worth.

No temple exists in this eternal city because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its Temple and its light. The nations walk by this divine light and the kings of the earth bring their honor into the city indicating the restoration and sanctification of human culture under God's eternal reign. There is no sin, no impurity.

Revelation 22: The river of life and Jesus' soon coming

Revelation 22 continues the description of the holy city New Jerusalem. The river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, nourishing the tree of life, bears continual fruit and its leaves bring healing to the nations. The curse / Fall is forever removed and creation has been restored. We will see God's face, have His name on our foreheads and reign with Him forever.

Revelation 22 concludes a call to stay ready for Christ's return.

The angel affirms that these revelations are trustworthy and imminent, and Jesus declares repeatedly, "*Behold, I am coming quickly*".

Revelation 22:7,20

⁷ "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed *is* he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly."

Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

In chapters 6 to 12 of this book, we have journeyed through the book of Revelation, using it as an outline to highlight the unfolding of key events from the Rapture of the Church till the new heaven and new earth.

How close are we to the Rapture of the Church? All we can do is point to the signs the Bible presents to us. We will do this in the next and closing chapter.

13

BIBLE PROPHECIES AND SIGNS OF THE END TIMES

Matthew 24:3

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

In this closing chapter of this book on the End Times, we highlight important signs that alert us to where we are on God's timetable. While we do not know the day or the hour, we can be informed about the signs of the times and recognize that we are very close to the Rapture of the Church. Prophetic events that could not have been fulfilled earlier, now can be fulfilled.

1) Israel formed as a nation

God promised Abraham that He would make him a great nation (Genesis 12:2,3) and give him the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession (Genesis 17:8). The boundaries of the Promised Land are found in Genesis 15:18-21.

God promised that they would be re-gathered as a nation.

Jeremiah 31:10

“Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, And declare it in the isles afar off, and say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, And keep him as a shepherd does his flock.’

Ezekiel 37:12,21,22

12 Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD GOD: “Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

²¹ “Then say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God: “Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;

²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; ...

From 586 BC, when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, till 1948, it was 2,534 years before Israel could have their land back for themselves. On 14 May 1948, Israel finally became a nation. The formation of Israel as a nation is an important prophetic milestone as we move toward the End Times. This has already happened and in a sense, we've moved into the final hour.

2) Jerusalem taken by Israel and becoming the epicenter of conflict

In June 5-8, 1967, during the Six Day War, the Jews were able to recapture Jerusalem. It took 2,553 years for the Jews to take back Jerusalem.

From the time of king David through to the present day, the land of Israel, and specifically the city of Jerusalem, has been the center of the most volatile political, religious and military problems in the entire world. Jerusalem has experienced 46 sieges, 32 partial destructions, has been burned to the ground 5 times, and has seen numerous wars. This will only intensify. As we approach the final stages, Israel and Jerusalem will become the epicenter of conflict in the Middle East. All nations will turn against Israel in the last days and the entire world will be focused on Jerusalem. It is possible that the issue of Palestine and the conflict surrounding the Temple Mount will only increase the world's pressure being placed on Israel.

Zechariah 12:1-3

¹ The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

² “Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

³ And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it.

3) The Third Temple – ready to rebuild

The Old and New Testaments affirm that a new temple will once again be built on the Temple Mount. We refer to this as **the Third Temple**. This Third Temple will be desecrated by the Antichrist during the Tribulation. After the Tribulation and at the beginning of the Millennium, this temple will be cleansed, consecrated and restored. We refer to this as **the Millennial Temple**.

We have discussed in Chapter 9 of this book that the Jews are well prepared and ready to rebuild the Third Temple on the Temple Mount. The fact that all preparations are in place to rebuild the Third Temple and resume Temple worship is yet another important sign that we are close to the Rapture.

4) Possibility of the coalition of 10 leaders

We have explained this in depth in earlier chapters and provide a brief here.

Daniel 7:7,8

⁷ “After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, exceedingly strong. It had huge iron teeth; it was devouring, breaking in pieces, and trampling the residue with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

⁸ I was considering the horns, and there was another horn, a little one,

coming up among them, before whom three of the first horns were plucked out by the roots. And there, in this horn, were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking pompous words.

Daniel 7:7,8 describes the rise of the final world empire and the emergence of the Antichrist from within it – one of the clearest Old Testament prophecies of End-Time political power. The 10 horns symbolize 10 rulers (leaders) that arise out of the final form of the revised Roman empire, countries that are situated in the region of the former Roman empire, which is modern-day Europe and the Mediterranean. These 10 leaders (nations) form a coalition of political powers and temporarily shares authority with the central leader who emerges next (Revelation 17:12,13).

The “*little horn*” is a clear prophetic picture of the Antichrist who arises within the political structure of the 10-king coalition. He violently subdues three of the 10 kings to consolidate power. As we observe the interactions of nations across Europe and the Mediterranean and their relationship to Israel and the problems in the Middle-east, we become very aware of the possibility of Daniel’s prophecies about the 10-leader(nation)-coalition becoming a reality.

5) Possibility of a global economic system

In Revelation 13:1-6,13-16, we have a clear description of how the Antichrist will exert influence through a global economic system using the mark of the beast as a global identification. With all the upheavals that are happening politically among the nations, it is possible that many nations will align themselves with a strong leader who promises to have an answer to the many challenges confronting all of us. This leader will leverage a one world economic system and identification system to exert influence over the nations. Given the technology we have, it is

very easy to bring into place a universal system of identification for financial transactions and commerce, similar to what the Antichrist will do with the “mark of the beast”.

6) Russia, Iran, Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, Sudan

It is interesting to observe Russia’s present political relationships with Iran, Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Russia is strategically deepening its relationships with key countries in the Middle East and Africa including Iran, Turkey, Libya, Ethiopia, and Sudan through a mix of military, energy, and diplomatic engagements. Russia’s goal is to expand its influence, secure access to energy resources, and challenge Western dominance in these regions. These are leading to the fulfillment of the “Battle of Gog and Magog” as described in Ezekiel 38 and 39. (This has been described earlier in Chapter 10 and will not be repeated here).

7) Peace talks and the plan to divide the land

There have been several attempts to bring peace to the Middle East crisis. This seems to be intensifying with pressure on Israel mounting to give up territory in order to establish peace. Joel foretold that the nations will divide up the land (Joel 3:1,2). And this will be one of the reasons that could lead to the final battle of Armageddon.

8) The Church coming to maturity

The Lord Jesus is coming back for a Church that is mature, that has come to the knowledge of the Son of God (Ephesians 4:11-15), that is without spot or wrinkle (Ephesians 5:25-27). He will be retained in the heavens until the restoration of all things (Acts 3:19-21) – one of which is the Church to be restored to its original glory. Looking at the history of

the Church and seeing where the Church is, we know we are moving from glory to glory and are very close to the coming of the Lord.

9) The Gospel to the nations

Matthew 24:14

And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations (*ethnos = race, tribe, people*), and then the end will come.

We are closer than ever before in having the Gospel reach every race, tribe and people and to seeing this task completed.

10) Increased persecution of the Church

Luke 21:12,13

¹² But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake.

¹³ But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.

This is happening at a global scale and is again indicative of the nearness of the Rapture.

11) Deception, global spiritualism and false spirituality

Matthew 24:4,5

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

1 Timothy 4:1,2

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

This was the first sign that Jesus mentioned – the emergence of false Christs and false prophets who will lead many astray. Along with this, we are also witnessing an increase in cults, false religions and the teaching of all kinds of ideologies that are drawing people away from the faith.

12) Knowledge and travel explosion

Daniel 12:4

“But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Knowledge explosion and great increase in travel is a sign that the angel Gabriel mentioned to Daniel. This is important because this is key in exerting influence and control over nations, which pave the way for a world ruler and one world government. This is happening in our day and time unlike no other. Information is exploding exponentially and access to information is becoming so readily accessible.

While the rest of the signs 13-17 have “always” been happening, as we approach closer to the Lord’s return, we can expect both an increase in the number and in the intensity of these kinds of events.

13) Global political conditions

Luke 21:9,10

“But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.”

“Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.

Increase in wars and news about wars (Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9,10).

14) The hearts of people – fear, hate, terror, despair

Luke 21:25,26

²⁵.... and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity,

²⁶...men's hearts failing them from fear”

Distress of nations and people's hearts failing for fear. Mental health and well-being have become a major issue, and this is indicative of increase in fear, despair and other factors that affect us emotionally.

15) Weather and geo-physical conditions

Luke 21:11

And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

Increase in earthquakes and difficult weather conditions globally as well as things happening in the skies.

16) Plagues, pestilences, epidemics

Luke 21:11

And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.

Increase in famines, plagues, epidemics and pestilences, literally deadly diseases caused by pests.

17) Moral condition of people

Matthew 24:12,37

¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

³⁷ But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Increase in sin and ungodliness. As it was in the days of Noah – gluttony, drunkenness, immorality, corruption, violence (Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:28,30; Genesis 6:11; 2 Timothy 3:1-5)

One generation will see all these things

Matthew 24:32-34

³² “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

³³ So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

³⁴ Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

The Lord Jesus said that once the End-Time signs truly begin to unfold in their fullness, that final generation will not pass away before Christ's return.

Stay ready because we do not know when!

1 John 3:2,3

² Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

What are you doing for the Kingdom of God? How are you living your life knowing the times in which we live? Are you living “Rapture ready”?

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Do You Know the God Who Loves You?

About 2000 years ago, God came into this world as a man. His name is Jesus. He lived a perfectly sinless life. Since Jesus was God in flesh, everything He said and did reveal God to us. The words He spoke were the very words of God. The things He did were the actions of God. Jesus did many miracles on the earth. He healed the sick and suffering. He opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, made the lame to walk and healed every kind of sickness and disease. He fed the hungry by miraculously multiplying a few loaves of bread, calmed the storm and did many other wonderful things.

All these actions reveal to us that God is a good God who wants people to be well, whole, healthy and happy. God wants to meet the needs of people.

So why then would God decide to become a man and step into our world? Why did Jesus come?

All of us have sinned and done things that are unacceptable before the God who created us. Sin has its consequences. Sin is like a great unsurpassable wall between God and us. Sin separates us from God. It prevents us from knowing and having a meaningful relationship with the One who created us. Therefore, many of us try to fill this void with other things.

Another consequence of our sins is eternal separation from God. In God's court, the penalty for sin is death. Death is eternal separation from God in hell.

But the good news is that we can be free from sin and be restored to God. The Bible says, ***“For the wages [payment] of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).*** Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world when He died on the cross. Then, three days later He rose again, showed Himself alive to many and then went back into heaven.

God is a God of love and mercy. He does not wish that any person be lost in hell. And so, He came to provide a way for the entire human

race to be free from sin and its lasting consequences. He came to save sinners—to rescue people like you and me from sin and eternal death.

To receive this free forgiveness of sins, the Bible tells us that we have to do just one thing—accept what the Lord Jesus Christ did on the cross and to believe in Him wholeheartedly.

“...through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive forgiveness of sins” (Acts 10:43).

“that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

You too can receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins if you will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following is a simple prayer to help you decide to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and what He has done for you on the cross. This prayer will help you express your acceptance of what Jesus has done for you and receive forgiveness and cleansing for your sins. This prayer is only a guideline. You can also pray in your own words.

Dear Lord Jesus, today, I have understood what You did for me on the cross. You died for me, you shed Your precious blood and paid the penalty for my sins so that I could be forgiven. The Bible tells me that whoever believes in You will receive forgiveness for their sins.

Today, I decide to believe in You and to accept what You did for me by dying for me on the cross and rising again from the dead. I know I cannot save myself by my own good works, and neither can any other human save me. I cannot earn forgiveness for my sins.

Today, I believe in my heart and say with my mouth that You died for me, You paid the penalty for my sins, You rose again from the dead, and by faith in You, I receive forgiveness and cleansing for my sins.

Thank You, Jesus. Help me to love You, to know You more and to be faithful to You.

Amen.

ABOUT ALL PEOPLES CHURCH

Our vision at All Peoples Church is to be salt and light in the city of Bangalore, a voice to the nation and to the nations.

All Peoples Church is a **Jesus loving, Word focused, Spirit filled**, family church, an equipping center, a missions base and a world outreach.

- As a **family church**, we grow together as a community in Christ-centered fellowship, caring and serving each other in love as the assembly of God.
- As an **equipping center**, we empower and equip every believer to live victoriously, mature into Christlikeness and fulfill God's purposes for their lives.
- As a **missions base**, we engage in meaningful ministry to bless our city, nation and the nations with the full Gospel of Jesus Christ through the Word of God and supernatural demonstrations of the power of the Holy Spirit.
- As a **world outreach**, we serve locally and globally by nurturing godly leaders and Spirit-filled churches who can impact their regions for the Kingdom of God.

At APC, we are committed to presenting the complete, uncompromised Word of God in the anointing and demonstration of His Holy Spirit. We believe that good music, creative presentations, brilliant apologetics, contemporary ministry techniques, the latest technology and so on, can never substitute the God-ordained approach of proclaiming the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit with signs, wonders, miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4,5; Hebrews 2:3,4). Our theme is Jesus, our content is the Word, our method is the Holy Spirit's power, our passion is people and our goal is Christ-like maturity.

With our main base in Bangalore, All Peoples Church has several other church locations in India. To get a current listing and contact information of All Peoples Church locations, please visit our website at apcwo.org/locations or send an email to contact@apcwo.org.

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All Peoples Church ministers beyond its own borders as a local church by reaching out across India, especially North India, with a special focus on (A) Strengthening Leaders, (B) Equipping young people for ministry and (C) Building up the Body of Christ. Several training seminars for young people and ‘Christian Leaders’ Conference’ are held throughout the year. In addition, several thousands of copies of publications are distributed free of cost in English and other Indian languages with the purpose of equipping believers in the Word and in the Spirit.

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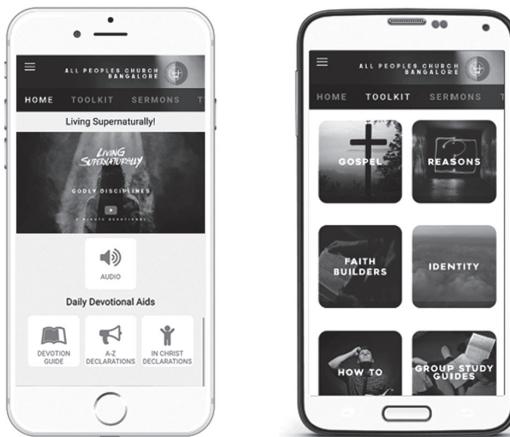
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विश्वास को मजबूत करने और सुसमाचार साझा करने के लिए विभिन्न विषयों पर आधारित वर्चनों के टूलकिट।
उपदेशों, टीवी कार्यक्रमों, पुस्तकों, संगीत और बहुत कुछ से भरे संसाधन।
अगर आपको यह पसंद आए, तो
दूसरों को भी इसके बारे में बताएं!



ALL PEOPLES CHURCH BIBLE COLLEGE

apcbiblecollege.org

All Peoples Church Bible College and Ministry Training Center in Bangalore, India, provides Spirit-filled, anointed, hands-on training and equipping for ministering in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit along with a doctrinally sound and intellectually stimulating study of God's Word. We believe in developing the whole person for ministry emphasizing godly character, deep roots in the Word of God and powerful demonstrations of signs, wonders and miracles, all flowing out of an intimate relationship with the Lord.

At All Peoples Church Bible College (APC-BC), in addition to sound teaching, we emphasize the love of God in demonstration, the anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural work of God. Several young men and women have been trained and sent out to fulfill God's call over their lives.

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In this book "The End Times" we provide a framework to understand and interpret End Time Bible prophecy. We also provide an essential Biblical historical background. We present the sequence of key events that are waiting to be fulfilled, and their relative timeline as presented in the Scriptures. We also point to key signs of the times to help us gain an understanding on the nearness of the Lord's return. In most chapters we address common questions on those topics from the Scriptures.

May our understanding of End Time Bible prophecy help posture us correctly before God in our daily walk, in the way we live and in the ministries He has called us to fulfill. May we be filled with passion for Him, a sense of urgency in our work, and expectation as we watch the signs of the times unfold before our eyes.



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