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This work represents my interest and study of Bible Prophecy since I first trusted in Jesus Christ in 1981. It was the accuracy of its' prophecies of the Comings of Jesus that convinced me the Bible was true and that Jesus is Lord and the only way to God.

Many of us in the 1980's-1990's were sure that the Second Coming was right around the corner. Some evangelical writers went beyond the Biblical boundaries in their predictions of dates and events. The lesson is that we cannot go beyond what the Bible says. We cannot call reasonable speculation to be interpretation.

That being said, the pendulum has swung to the other extreme in this present day with many evangelical leaders denying that we can know anything about prophecy beyond the certainty of Christ's coming.

I don't believe we have the luxury of just forgetting about prophecy while doing the work of the church. We must proclaim the whole counsel of God. The Second Coming of Jesus is one of the main topics of the New Testament and one of the prime motivations for us to live for Christ.

We are to live in the light of his Coming and that means we must know what God has revealed in His word. What we should do is look at current world events in light of prophecy, without the alarmist hype.

I believe the Bible still clearly teaches that Israel is the key sign for us to look to, and that the Coming of Jesus is imminent. Therefore, we must be alert, and watch and pray. (Mark 13:32-37)

1. The Prophetic Shakeup

I. PERILOUS TIMES IN OUR DAYS

In the days of the early church the Holy Spirit predicted there would be "*perilous times in the last days.*" (2Tim.3:1). To the NT writers, the last days meant the days just before the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ. They believed in the immanency of Jesus' return, that He could come at any time. Here we are, 2000 years later and Jesus has not returned, leading some people to disbelieve the Bible. Yet we live in dangerous times that closely reflect what Bible prophecies describe for the last days. These things include increasing natural disasters, a global economy and the pre-dominance of Israel and the Middle East in world politics.

We are perversely drawn to **disasters** - well at least a lot of guys are. Boys want to wreck things and men love collisions, whether they are from hockey, football or auto racing. Collisions are 'fun' to watch, especially if no one gets hurt. They are not fun when we are personally involved. We are fascinated by movies that play out "end of days" scenarios full of wars and great disasters. Watching actual natural disasters like tsunamis horrifies us - the scale of calamity can be overwhelming. The potential for natural disaster is helping to fuel the modern environmental movement. It is one thing to watch fiction and quite another to see it actually happen. We certainly hope it never happens to us. Most tend to think we are somehow immune. -g1 p.9

Our fascination with disaster runs against our deeply shared desire for a **life of security** and safety. We hope for a peaceful prosperous life to pursue personal dreams and find love and adventure. This is a world-wide passion all people share. God created us to desire and enjoy for this kind of life. For many it is only a dream. Since we in the west have enjoyed decades of peace and prosperity, we come to expect it will continue - that it is our right. Yet a look at reality can weaken our confidence. When it comes to personal finances, we know we can't always borrow on the future; we have to pay it back. But we don't all live by what we know is true. Over-borrowing on the future or losing the ability to pay our debt can ruin people. We must deal with reality.

The world pretty much runs on over-borrowing from the future. It is as though the personal debt of each household is magnified by the millions to give us a picture of the national or world economy. Every so often there are corrections: the stock market plunges, people lose jobs and homes, and the world economy gets re-ordered. That is basically what happened in the recession of 2008-2009. We weather such storms and look back and think, "that wasn't so bad." However, many economic experts frankly admit they don't really know how the economy works anymore; it is sometimes like a wild horse freely running according to its own rules.

The bigger the world economy gets, and the more it borrows on the future, the more volatile its mood swings will be. Older adults wonder if there will be enough money to enjoy retirement. For younger adults the issue is will they be able to have the prosperity of their parents have had. Meanwhile the third world lives on a tenth or a hundredth of what we live on. The Bible predicts there is coming a time of economic calamity that will interrupt our comfortable lives and demand a drastic re-ordering and control of the world economy.

When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine." –Revelation 6:5-6

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established...and all nations shall flow to it...He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many people. They shall beat their swords into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

-Isaiah 2:1-4

This Scripture is often quoted to reflect the desire and need for **world peace**. Notice that before this will occur, the Lord's Temple will be established in Jerusalem. However this day will not come by peace talks or the actions of the U.N. In fact the Bible predicts a great and disturbing event before this promised kingdom arrives. The timing of these events is linked to the restoration of Israel to her land. The Bible predicts there will be a final world war known as Armageddon, before God brings peace. The reason is so all the earth will know Jesus is Lord, and only He can overthrow evil and bring in the kingdom of righteousness. According to Joel 3, there will be a world war fought in Israel before the dream of Isaiah 2 will be realized.

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 I will enter into judgement with them there on account of My people, My heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations...Proclaim this among the nations: prepare for war! Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears... Put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe...The heavens and earth will shake, but the Lord will be a shelter for His people...So you shall know that I am the Lord your God. -Joel 3:1-17

It is a fact of **modern history** that world powers go to war for world domination. In the past century, every 20 years or so there have been unforeseen major upheavals. A peaceful Europe in 1900 dominated the world. By 1920 Europe was in tatters as old empires were broken up by World War 1. In 1940 Europe had again embroiled the whole world in WW2. Communism was allied with Nazism, and Britain alone stood against the threat. By 1960 Europe was split down the middle by the USA and the Soviet Union, who were embroiled in a cold war, vying for domination of Europe. The USA had become the dominate force on the planet, basically controlling the oceans as Britain had once done. By 1980 the US had been defeated in a war by communist North Vietnam and the Soviet threat seemed to be surging. By 2000 the Soviet Union had completely collapsed and the threat of world war had subsided. The US was now the only world superpower.

The year 2000 heralded the hope that a new millennium would end the cycle of human aspiration and madness. Middle East peace looked like a real possibility. Venerable journalist Walter Cronkite greeted 2000 with the words *"we must cross the threshold of this new millennium with the hope of those who have learned to resist, who have learned to build and dream of a brighter future."* However, the first decade of the 21st century was radically different than that. **Sept.11, 2001** ushered in a new 'war on terror' that looked like it would develop into a conflict for world domination between western democracy and Islamic jihad.

Every generation is optimistic they can change the world. We do not want to dampen dreams, enthusiasm or potential. But is there a valid reason that it will change by human effort? When we look at recent history, it seems to amplify what generations of history teaches us about the human condition. Our need for humility, cooperation and love can't change our inherent pride, greed and selfishness. World organizations like the United Nations or promising leaders like Obama have proven to be very limited in effecting change.

II. IS OUR GENERATION IN THE LAST DAYS?

-g2 p.9

When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away... Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. -Luke 21:9-11 (niv)

Since recent history reflects the on-going struggle of humanity for ages, why would we believe that our time is somehow the "last days" which the Bible speaks about? We know that many other generations have thought their situations indicated the time of the end. During World War II many thought Hitler was the anti-christ. In the early 1980's many thought the Soviet Union was going to bring in Armageddon. The Middle East is always ready to explode. Islamic Jihad and their seeking of nuclear weapons is a constant threat. Wars and rumours of wars come and go with predictable regularity. Jesus said that is part of the natural condition on earth. History readily agrees. Many world leaders are fearful that the current conflicts for control of Moslem countries in the Middle East could involve the world powers. The Bible certainly indicates this eventuality.

Therefore **we must have exceptional reasons** to think all the end-time prophecies will come together in our time – in the relatively near as opposed to the distant future. The Bible predicted the **return of Israel** to her land. After almost 1900 years of Jews being scattered to the nations, Israel became a nation again in 1948. It is the only ancient nation ever to be dislocated from their land and then relocated after so many centuries. Israel is the 'clarion sign' that we are nearing the fulfillment of prophecy. If you want a sign, Israel re-gathering stands out like the shining sun (Ezekiel 36:19-24). It is no coincidence that since 1948 Israel and the Middle East conflict is front and center on the world political stage. To God, Jerusalem is the center of the world. Middle East peace dominates headlines and is a prophetic focal point of the last days. -g3 p.9

I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, 'These are the Lord's people, and yet they had to leave his land.' I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone.

"Therefore say to the Israelites, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Sovereign Lord, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes. "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. -Ezekiel 36:19-24

The world today is vastly more inter-connected than at any time in the past. We are rapidly becoming a unified world in terms of communications and economy. Furthermore, the complexity of world problems increasingly calls for global solutions, such as world government and a world leader who can give visionary leadership to solve our collective and pressing issues. The Bible predicts world government, a unified world economy, a unified world religion, and humanity is working towards those goals. However, the Bible predicts these things will be used to feed the domination of a world leader who will promise good but deliver evil.

The positioning of world powers and alliances today shows us that mankind's desire and expression for empire and domination is alive and well. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union it is generally recognized that the **USA** is the only power today that could be rightly called an empire. The US does not seek to capture and

control nations as other empires have (ie. Nazism, communism), but it does seek the spread of its culture, the dominance of its corporations and the security of its markets. The American economy, culture and military is global in influence and reach. Its war strategy calls for containment of regional forces, as opposed to outright winning wars on the ground. Today American dominance is unparalleled as an empire. -g4 p.9

Corporate capitalism dominates world prosperity and the American empire is its security. As communication grows, control of this economic empire spreads over the earth, touching every life. New alliances will emerge, American dominance will be challenged, the response will be enormous and the results will be catastrophic. There is something bigger going on here. The Bible speaks of a greater spiritual reality that exists above the physical reality we know. The bigger universal political reality is revealed in scriptures like Rev.12:7-9:

Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. -Revelation 12:7-9

As control for heaven and earth intersect, the Day of the Lord will come as predicted. The world is on a mammoth collision course, not just nations against nations, but with God. These calamitous events will usher in Armageddon and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. Because of this, all hands will go limp, every heart will melt with fear. Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame. See, the day of the Lord is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light.

I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. -Isa.13:6-11

This is the plan determined for the whole world; this is the hand stretched out over all nations.

For the Lord Almighty has purposed, and who can thwart him? His hand is stretched out, and who can turn it back? -Isa.14:26-27

The earth will be completely laid waste and totally plundered. The Lord has spoken this word. The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers, the heavens languish with the earth. The earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse consumes the earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left. -Isaiah 24:3-6

The earth is broken up, the earth is split asunder, the earth is violently shaken. The earth reels like a drunkard, it sways like a hut in the wind; so heavy upon it is the guilt of its rebellion that it falls—never to rise again.

In that day the Lord will punish the powers in the heavens above and the kings on the earth below. They will be herded together like prisoners bound in a dungeon; they will be shut up in prison and be punished after many days. The moon will be dismayed, the sun ashamed; for the Lord Almighty will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before its elders—with great glory. -Isaiah 24:19-23

And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near" -Luke 21:25-28 (nkjv)

III. INCREDIBLE RISE OF ANTI-SEMITISM. Psalm 2 -the pattern for world conflict between God and humanity

Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters." ..The Lord rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." -Psalm 2:1-6

For volatile world leaders, few can match the rhetoric of Iran's past President Ahmadinejad. As he stated, his main mission was to "pave the path for the glorious reappearance of the Imam Mahdi, may Allah hasten his reappearance." Shiite Muslims believe that the Madhi (Islamic messiah) disappeared as a child in 941ad, and that when he returns he will reign for seven years on earth before bringing about a final judgement and the end of the world. With Iran's ongoing efforts to procure nuclear bombs and their threats to annihilate Israel, many fear Iran could trigger a global conflagration to set the stage for the Madhi's return and the end of the world. If Israel attacks Iran, a wide-scale war is almost certain to break out. Eventually something will give.

"The establishment of the Zionist regime was a move by the world oppressor (USA) against the Islamic world... The skirmishes in the occupied land are part of a war of destiny. The outcome of hundreds of years of war will be defined in Palestinian land... As Ayatollah Khomeini said, Israel must be wiped off the map." - Ahmadinejad, Oct. 2005

Ahmadinejad spoke at the United Nations in September 2009 and amid his religious references to the coming of the Islamic Madhi and a nuclear Iran, he denied that the Jewish holocaust by the Nazis ever happened. Some people got up and left as he spoke, including the Canadian delegation. Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu chastised the UN and those in the west who don't take the Iranian leader seriously; -g5 p.9

"Nearly 62 years ago, the United Nations recognized the right of the Jews, an ancient people 3,500 years-old, to a state of their own in their ancestral homeland... The United Nations was founded after the carnage of World War II and the horrors of the Holocaust. It was charged with preventing the recurrence of such horrendous events. Nothing has undermined that central mission more than the systematic assault on the truth... Yesterday the President of Iran stood at this very podium, spewing his latest anti-Semitic rants. Just a few days earlier, he again claimed that the Holocaust is a lie. Last month, I went to a villa in a suburb of Berlin called Wannsee. There, on January 20, 1942, after a hearty meal, senior Nazi officials met and decided how to exterminate the Jewish people. The detailed minutes of that meeting have been preserved by successive German governments. Is this a lie? I was given in Berlin the original construction plans for the Auschwitz concentration camp. Those plans are signed by Hitler's deputy, Heinrich Himmler himself. Here is a copy of the plans for Auschwitz, where one million Jews were murdered. Is this too a lie? This June, President Obama visited the Buchenwald concentration camp. Did President Obama pay tribute to a lie? And what of the Auschwitz survivors whose arms still bear the tattooed numbers branded on them by the Nazis? Are those tattoos a lie?

1/3 of all Jews perished. My wife's grandparents, her father's two sisters and three brothers, and all the aunts, uncles and cousins were all murdered by the Nazis. Is that also a lie? Yesterday, the man who calls the Holocaust a lie spoke from this podium. To those who refused to come here or left this room in protest, I commend you. You stood up for moral clarity and you brought honor to your countries. But to those who gave this Holocaust-denier a hearing, I say on behalf of my people, the Jewish people, and decent people everywhere: Have you no shame? Have you no decency? A mere six decades after the Holocaust, you give legitimacy to a man who denies that the murder of six million Jews took place and pledges to wipe out the Jewish state. What a disgrace! What a mockery of the charter of the United Nations!

Perhaps some of you think that this man and his odious regime threaten only the Jews. You're wrong. History has shown us time and again that what starts with attacks on the Jews eventually ends up engulfing many others. This Iranian regime is fuelled by an extreme fundamentalism that burst onto the world scene three decades ago after lying dormant for centuries. In the past 30 years, this fanaticism has swept the globe with a murderous violence and cold-blooded impartiality. It has slaughtered Moslems and Christians, Jews and Hindus..."

Islamic fundamentalism is a global force. Because the West has new Muslim citizens, most of whom are not violent, we are trying to accommodate their religion and downplaying the violent aspirations of Islamic Jihad. The western media and political left at times honor radical Muslims as freedom fighters. The truth is, radical Middle East Islamics boldly teach anti-Semitism and threaten Israel with another holocaust. They teach that no Muslims were responsible for 9/11 bombings. They teach that Jews slaughter Arab children to use their blood to bake matzos on Passover. The secret question most are afraid to raise is: is Islam inherently violent and does it seek the subjugation and destruction of all who oppose it? Remember those who were rejoicing on tv when the world trade center towers fell? Groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS are currently radicalizing Canadian young men to further their violent agenda around the world. Every day their Imams preach destruction to Israel and the west, even in some Canadian mosques.

Islam proclaims the goal of world domination by two means: Jihad and Fatah. Jihad seeks to carry out Allah's command to conquer the nations by the sword. Fatah seeks to conquer by cultural influence, by bringing Muslims to live in foreign countries and build families, mosques and minarets to proclaim and propagate their faith. In another generation, they will dominate some western countries by sheer numbers. Islam is not restricted to any particular government, but has a desire for empire similar in some ways to any other religion. Most religions seek to win others over to their faith, even atheists. As Christians we seek to testify to non-believers of the validity and necessity of trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation. Christians believe Jesus will return to dominate the world and establish the holy kingdom of God.

Where Islam differs with Christianity is in how to make it happen. Islam advocates on the Koran's authority, that Muslims are to take over the world for Allah by means of influence and war. If Islam is peaceful why is there no freedom of speech or religion in any Muslim country? Moderates may not take the Koran texts literally but the Jihadists certainly do. Former Muslims have a considerable world voice today in speaking out against the oppressive practices of Muslim countries, and in warning the west that Islamic desire for world rule is not only proclaimed by just a few extremists. Samuel Huntington, in his book 'The Clash of Civilization's, counted over 130 armed conflicts around the world in the year 2000. About 95 %of these were between Muslims and their neighbours. Former Muslims MA Khan and Dr Radhasyam Brahmachari describe the history of Jihad to bring Islam to the world.

The civilizational clash of Islam is not new; it is as old as Islam itself... The clash of "Islam versus the rest of humanity", initiated by Prophet Muhammad at its founding, was widened against all humanity and perpetuated by Muslims over the centuries. It could not be otherwise, because Islam was born in Arabia as Islamic God Allah's master-plan, His politico-military tool, for creating a global Islamic state by making Muslims His "agent and inheritor of the earth" [Quran 6:165] Since then, Muslims, including its classical scholars, have divided the humanity into two houses, two civilizations: Dar al-Islam (House of Islam) and Dar al-Harb (House of War).

Islam's central mission over the centuries has been to turn the non-Muslim Dar al-Harb into Dar al-Islam through Jihadi wars to realize Allah's global imperial dream. Classical Islamic literature is very candid about this. And Islam's history reflects exactly that. Islam has achieved stunning success in this mission. Where is the great pre-Islamic civilization of Coptic-Paganic Egypt, Zoroastrian Persia, Eastern Christianity of West Asia, Paganic-Animist North Africa, where Islam reached quite early by the sword? They have all vanished. Estimated 120 million human lives were lost to Islamic swords in Africa and 80 million in India. Some 60 million Christians and millions of Buddhists also perished. Readers may consult my just-released book, Islamic Jihad: A Legacy of Forced Conversion, Imperialism and Slavery, in order the grasp the whole picture of Islam's historical and ongoing clash with the rest of humanity. (from www.islam-watch.org)

On the flip side of all this, is the oft-repeated view that **the Jews** are trying to take over the world. This notion did not die with Hitler and is not only in the domain of the Jihadists or neo-nazis. This has been promoted in one form or another in the world for years. The arguments include holocaust deniers and other anti-Semites, and are based on such fictional publications as 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion.'

Protocols of the Elders of Zion are widely considered the beginning of contemporary conspiracy theory literature, and take the form of an instruction manual to a new member of the "Elders", describing how they will run the world through control of the media and finance, replacing the traditional social order with one based on mass manipulation. The work was popularized by those opposed to the Russian communist revolutionary movement, and achieved worldwide popularity after the 1917 Bolshevik October Revolution, when the idea that Bolshevism was a Jewish conspiracy for world domination sparked far-ranging interest in the Protocols. It was widely circulated in the West in the 1920s and 1930s, and while continued usage of the Protocols as a propaganda tool substantially diminished with the defeat of the Nazis in World War II, it still has currency in the arsenal of contemporary anti-Semitism. -Wikipedia article

There is virulent anti-Semitism all over the internet, just as there is all sorts of garbage on any subject. While the followers of Jesus are critical of Islamic Jihad, the faithful would never support any of the sites that promote hatred against Muslims. To do so would be to violate Jesus' command to speak the truth in love. Jesus never said to agree with everyone, but when disagreement leads to hate, it is obvious that evil has crept in. When any religion or ideology does that, they become reprehensible.

'Israel Today' reported on January 14, 2014 a comment from Hamas regarding the stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. *"Hamas Interior Minister Fathi Hamad marked the anniversary of the December 2008-January 2009 "Gaza War" with Israel by telling Palestinians that they would fully liberate the entirety of "Palestine" within eight years. According to Hamad, Islamic prophecies foretell that Israel will be replaced with a Palestinian state. This goal, the destruction of the Jewish state, "will take eight years," he explained. This reveals more of the on-going attitude of radical Islam to Israel.*

This sort of anti-Semitism has been in existence for ages, perhaps ever since the Jews were expelled from their homeland and scattered to the four winds. As the Bible prophesied, the Jews were never really at peace or welcomed in exile and yet they often prospered and had influence beyond the norm. The Lord said if they would follow Him they would *"always be at the top, never at the bottom."* (Deut.28:13). God picked Abraham and promised that from his son Isaac a great nation would arise that would bless the whole earth. Isaac had a son Jacob; God changed his name to Israel. Israel had 12 sons from whom arose 12 tribes of Israel. The tribe of Judah (Jews) came to be the dominate tribe and it was from this tribe that the Messiah was prophesied.

It is a fact of history that some people have gifts and abilities that rise above others. The Jews have unusual abilities in science and finance beyond their numbers. Because of this influence and power, other nations have hated them for it. The legitimate desire of Jews to have their own nation again has resulted in a whole new generation of anti-Semites. Most in the west believe the Jewish nation has the right to exist. But many Muslims believe Jews want to take over the Mid-East, as in fact God promised Abraham. -g6 p.9

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." -Genesis 15:18

And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.” -Genesis 17:7-8

Many people are not aware of the family connections between Arabs and Jews, or the Koran and the Bible. The Jews believe God promised the land and Messiah to them and the promised heir was Isaac, born through Abraham’s wife Sarah. Muslims believe the promised son was Ishmael, born through Abraham and Sarah’s servant Hagar. The Bible says it was Isaac and Galatians 4 agrees -here the Jewish and Christian beliefs merge.

And Abraham said to God, “Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!” Then God said: “No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year.” –Genesis 17:18-22

Of course religious critics say that here is their case in point, of why religions can’t get along and that they are just modern delusions based on historic differences. That is an easy and simplified view of history, but it is not based on reality or truth. Jews believe the Messiah will come and restore all the things God promised Abraham. Muslims believe their Madhi (Messiah) will come and bless only their faith and even use Jesus to bring people to Islam. Christians believe that God promised the Messiah who came through Isaac and Israel, and that He was born as Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah the Jews still wait for. We are not bigoted or intolerant, no more than the atheist is. We believe our faith is the true faith. We hold that everyone who wants to be restored to God the Creator must come thru Jesus Christ, whether Jew-Muslim-Christian-pagan.

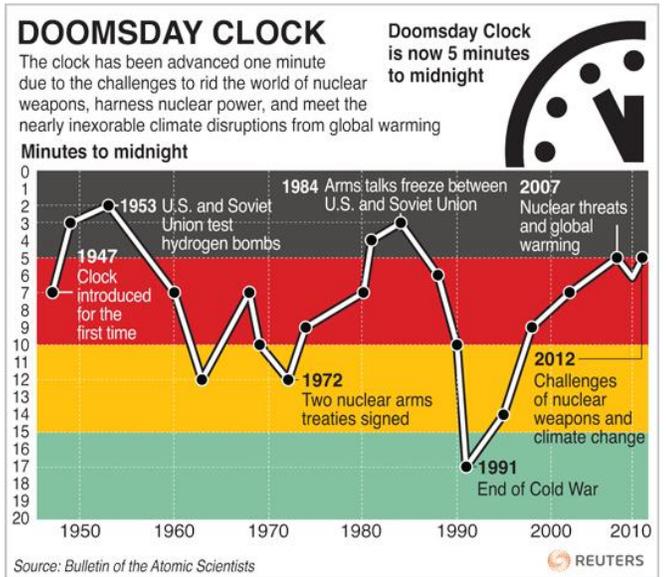
It is interesting that the concern Muslims have about the Jews taking over the Middle East results in their Jihad against them. A map based on the above Genesis 15:18 promise that Israel’s borders will be the Euphrates and the river of Egypt, causes some Jihadists to believe Israel plans to take over the Middle East. Some think the Jews have plans for empire and this so-called 'greater Israel' is proof of it. But it is the living God who has plans for such an empire for Israel, predicted some 4000 years ago to Abraham. Whatever the world’s leaders and alliances plan, the plans God has decreed will come to pass, and in Israel’s Messiah, Jesus Christ, the entire world will be blessed.

Everything the world is building, apart from the will of God, will one day fall apart. God wants you to know that this world is not eternal or stable, only His Kingdom is. Whether this coming worldwide shaking is near or decades away, everyone needs to know that God is not in the business of preserving a world of rebellion and sin. God is in the business of calling people to turn to Him for salvation through Jesus Christ and a hopeful future. Faith begins by looking to God's word to describe the events and outcomes that have been predicted.

Japan 2011



1.



2.

Jerusalem - epicenter of the world



3.

USA military bases surround Iran



4.

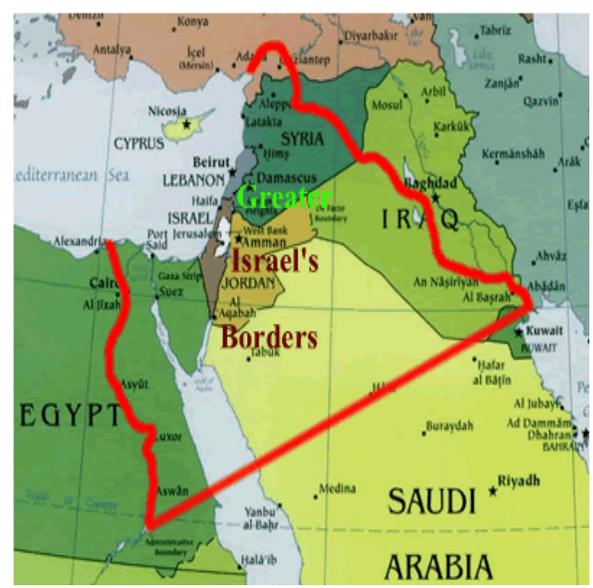


Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, PhD, 2009
"The establishment of the Zionist regime was a move by the world oppressor against the Islamic world... The skirmishes in the occupied land are part of a war of destiny. The outcome of hundreds of years of war will be defined in Palestinian land... As the Imam (Ayatollah Khomeini) said, Israel must be wiped off the map."



But to those who gave this Holocaust-denier a hearing, I say on behalf of my people, the Jewish people, and decent people everywhere: Have you no shame? Have you no decency? A mere six decades after the Holocaust, you give legitimacy to a man who denies that the murder of six million Jews took place and pledges to wipe out the Jewish state. What a disgrace! What a mockery of the charter of the United Nations!

5.



6.

2. Israel and the Land - Do You Not See?

I. THE DAYS OF ELIJAH

When Robin Mark penned the words of The Days of Elijah, he had his own thoughts about the Old Testament meanings and applications of the Days of Elijah (declaration), the Days of Moses (righteousness), the Days of David (worship), the Days of Ezekiel (unity). But there are various interpretations that run through my mind any time I hear it. Malachi said Elijah would come before that great and terrible Day of the Lord, to turn people's hearts. Jesus said John the Baptist was an Elijah figure (Mt.11:14). He also said that "Elijah truly is coming and will restore all things." (Mt.17:11). Elijah may be one of the future witnesses of Revelation 11.

When I hear about "the Days of Ezekiel", I think of the Valley of Dry Bones in Ezekiel 37 and the re-gathering of the Jewish people to their land in our generation - the restoration of Israel as predicted by many of the Old Testament prophets. This restoration was on the minds of Jesus' disciples with their Messianic expectations of what Jesus would bring to the nation of Israel as the Anointed One or the Christ. In Matthew 24:1 they pointed out to Jesus the glory of the Temple, and He gave them a shocking prediction:

"Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 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?'" -Matthew 24:2-3 (nkjv)

Do you not see all these things strikes me as a very poignant question for us. What is it that proves Jesus is who He claims to be? What is it that proves the Bible is the inspired, supernatural, revealed word of God? I believe it is the prophetic word come true. When believers saw the destruction of the Temple after 70 ad, they knew Jesus' prophecy had come true. I saw some of the excavation work being carried out along the Western Wall in Jerusalem in an Israel 2005 tour. Our guide pointed out the 1st century pavement stones recently uncovered, that had been crushed by the Romans when they threw the huge limestone blocks of the Temple over the wall. Jesus' words were confirmed. Not one stone was left of the Temple on the Temple Mount after 70ad.

-g1 p.14

II. BIBLE INTERPRETATION AND THEOLOGY

In order to see and understand what Jesus is saying, we must first consider the theological message of the Bible as a whole. My theological persuasion as a Conservative Evangelical Bible believer is what is known as Dispensation Theology. Bible teachers believe it is vital to have a system that understands and harmonizes what God has revealed in His word, so we can understand how that what He has said relates to what He will do. A dispensation is an administration of God's governing over the earth, in which He acts in different times and through different agents to carry out His will. Two key agents are Israel and the Church. God acts in distinct ways through different Biblical ages and covenants to carry out His redemptive purpose.

Dispensation Theology has distinct and indispensable factors. First, we must remember that there has always been one way of salvation. (John 14:6, Heb.9:6-15). "It has always been by the grace of God through faith in the word of God, and God has based salvation on the work of Jesus Christ." Second is the recognition of the distinction between the Church and Israel. (Rom.11:25-27). Dispensation theology believes Israel and the Church have special relationships with God and are distinct entities.

This belief arises from a third factor, which is the consistent use of a single hermeneutic method of interpretation. Dispensationalists use the literal - grammatical - historical method, in which words are given the common ordinary meaning which they had in the culture and time in which the passage was written. (Neh.8:8; Matt.12:40; 2Pet.1:20). So we take the Scriptures at their literal sense, unless there is obvious use of figures of speech, and submit to what they actually say regarding Israel. Thus we believe the Millennial Kingdom promised to Israel in the Old Testament will still be fulfilled. The church has not superseded or nullified Israel.

This doctrine is called 'Pre-Millennialism', meaning Christ returning before setting up His kingdom. Covenant theology has traditionally adopted 'A-Millennialism', the view that there will be no literal kingdom, and that Christ will usher in the eternal state at His Second Coming. Covenant theology sees this promised kingdom as symbolic because the promises to Israel are no longer valid, having been superseded by the Church. A third view is 'Post-Millennialism' which teaches that the church will usher in a kingdom of blessing on earth and then Christ will return. This faded from popularity in the 20th century as history consistently shows that neither humanity nor the church is capable of transforming the world. (note: Dispensationalists do not endorse everything Israel does. Ps.122:6)

III. THE VISION OF EZEKIEL

People are looking for signs the Scripture is true, but to those who sincerely seek the Lord, He gives faith. The events in Israel in our generation are signs that what the prophets predicted about the 'Time of The End', or the 'Day of the Lord' are coming true. Israel being restored as a nation is a fulfilment of what God told Ezekiel would happen over 2600 years ago. Come and see Ezekiel's vision. -g2 p.14

The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the valley; and it was full of bones... and He said to me, Son of man, can these bones live? So I answered, O Lord, You know... Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the Lord... So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army. -Ezekiel 37:1-6,10 (nkjv)

Then He said to me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off! 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... I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it, says the Lord...-Ezekiel 37:11-14 (nkjv)

Ezekiel sees a valley full of dry bones without the slightest evidence of life, representing the dead hope of a scattered nation. What man sees as hopeless, God proclaims to be hopeful. He preaches God's word and the dry bones become a great army. A scattered nation without hope is resurrected to national life. Prophecy scholars tend to see this 1st prophecy (37:7-10) as the physical resurrection of the nation of Israel. The 2nd prophecy (37:11-14) speaks of the future spiritual renewal of Israel, when they realize that Jesus Christ is their Messiah, when He comes in glory as King.

This is a vision of the restoration, resurrection and spiritual life of the nation of Israel. Deut.28 promised blessing upon Israel for obedience and curses for their disobedience. Some 800 years after Moses, (606bc), God banished Israel from her land as punishment for national sins - what the Bible calls the captivity. Some were re-gathered after 70 years and came back to the land to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem. (536bc) From the time of the return until the time of Jesus, Israel was never in full control of her land. By Jesus' day this 2nd Temple had been greatly modified by King Herod. Jesus predicted its destruction and in 70 ad the Romans conquered Israel and levelled the Temple.

The Jews were scattered to the four winds, to many nations around the world. Many of them continued in hope of a return to their land, and the saying at Passover among the Jews came to be "next year in Jerusalem." There have always been some Jews living in Israel, or Palestine as it came to be called. The Romans gave it that name derived from Israel's ancient enemy the Philistines, in order to degrade the name of Israel and the Jewish people. In the 1890's the World Zionist Foundation was born under Herzl Weizmann and began to purchase land in their ancient homeland. The British took control of the Middle East from the Turkish Ottoman Empire during World War I and passed legislation in 1917 guaranteeing a national homeland for the Jewish people, called the Balfour Declaration. Many Muslims don't think too much of the British and Balfour. This came to reality in 1948 when the UN passed a resolution for the State of Israel to be reborn. But first came the Nazis and the devastating Holocaust of WWII, and their mid-East influence. -g3-6 p.14

It is an incredible story. No ancient nation has ever been re-gathered into its ancient land with its national identity and bloodline intact. For centuries the Jews thought there was no hope, yet God kept His promise to bring them back. The tipping point was the Holocaust, when 6 million Jews were slaughtered, many of them buried in mass graves, others were rescued as walking skeletons. They cried out to God, who was not indifferent, but used the horror of the Nazis to be a catalyst for the world to say, that the Jewish people deserve to live in their own land in peace. -g7 p.15

Israel once again has national life. They are a sovereign nation in their own land, and have indeed become a great army. As soon as they became a nation in 1948, they were attacked from all sides by their Arab neighbours, whose stated goal was to drive the Jews into the sea. Golda Meir recounts those early days of war as a David vs Goliath story. The Arab armies were large and well equipped. The Jews had an arms embargo imposed on them by the British and were very poorly equipped. She tells the story of an Israeli fighter pilot, going up in his piper cub airplane, throwing grenades at the Egyptian navy, and turning them back from attacking. They persevered and turned the Arab armies back, and enlarged their territory to include the Galilee and Negev areas. -g8 p.15

They were at war again in 1956 and were victorious, but the major war was 1967. By then Israel had become a military powerhouse and was surrounded by Arab nations (Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq) who were also well armed and threatening to attack. In the face of grave threats and armies on all sides mounting on her borders, Israel attacked and routed her enemies and finally took control of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount, which because of its volatile status was returned to Muslim control. In 1973 Israel was almost overrun on their most holy day of Yom Kippur by the same Russian armed nations of Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Iraq. In spite of being unprepared by this attack Israel's military might prevailed. But it was touch and go for the first 24 hours and Israel was even contemplating using their nuclear weapons for survival. -g9-10 p.15

There have been smaller wars since, but the potential for a major war is always on the horizon, especially as Iran threatens Israel with another holocaust. The world applauded tiny Israel in the early days as they overcame near fatal odds, but the tide of world opinion has turned since 1973 as Israel has become one of the most powerful military forces on earth - some say the 4th most powerful. When we visited Yad Vashim, the national Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, our Jewish guide spoke of his people's mind-set of "never again." They will fight to the death to save their people and their land. The Bible predicts that indeed they will be forced to, as Israel will have peace and then war imposed on her by the will of the nations.

We believe that the modern history of the nation of Israel is the beginning of the fulfilment of Bible prophecy leading up to the Day of the Lord and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus said there are signs given if one will consider His words and look. One such sign is the fig tree, the fruit of which the Bible uses as a figure of speech to indicate the prosperity of Israel (Mic.4:4), and the falling of its fruit as judgement on Israel (Isa.34:4, Jer.8:13). The fig tree has come to signify Israel itself (Joel 1:7). Mark Twain said in 1869 that Israel was a dismal land with feeble vegetation. Today fig trees grow to be 40 feet high and Israel is one of the major suppliers of fruit and vegetables to Europe! Jesus said when we see the fig tree putting out leaves, such as Israel re-gathered and the beginning of sorrows coming to pass, His Coming is near. (Joel 2:21-27).

"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. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is very near, at the very doors. -Matthew 24:32-33

Temple Mount area 2005



1.



2.



The Balfour Declaration

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people... October 31, 1917



Introduction

After dreaming of a Jewish homeland for centuries, and working for a Jewish state for decades, the Zionist movement received a huge boost in 1917 when the British government declared that it supported the basic goals of Zionism.

Lord Arthur James Balfour, the foreign secretary of Britain wrote the following words, which marked a turning point in the struggle for a State of Israel:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

The Balfour Declaration was made in the context of one of the most tumultuous times in the history of the Jewish community of Palestine, World War I. This instant lesson will explore the Zionist experience during that conflict, and the circumstances that made the Balfour Declaration possible.

4/28/1917 Washington, DC: British Foreign Minister Arthur James Balfour.

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"Jews are guilty for the war!"



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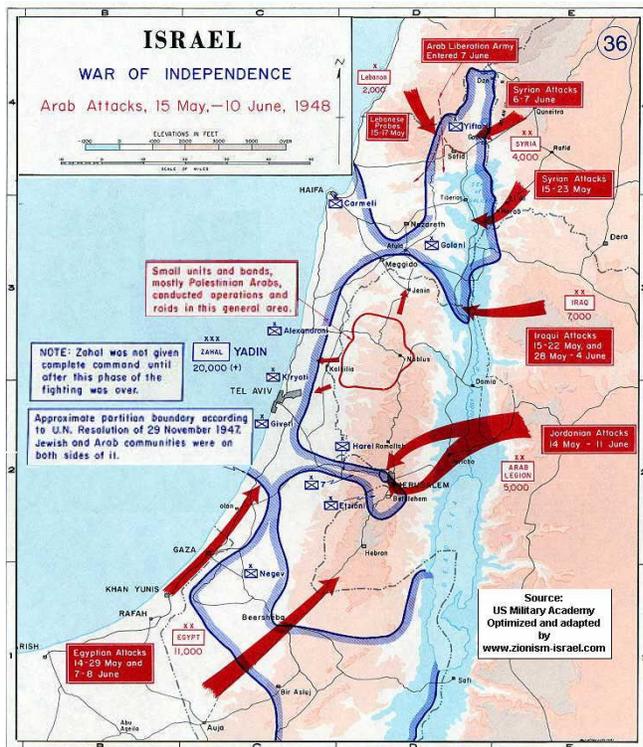
Grand Mufti Husseini with Hitler



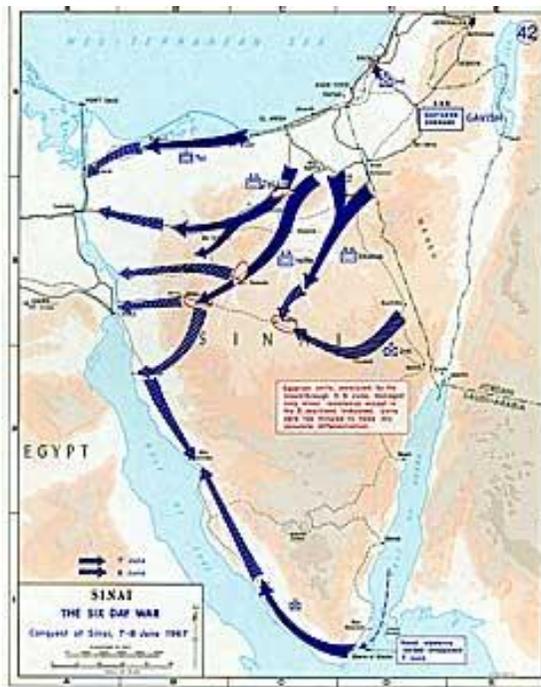
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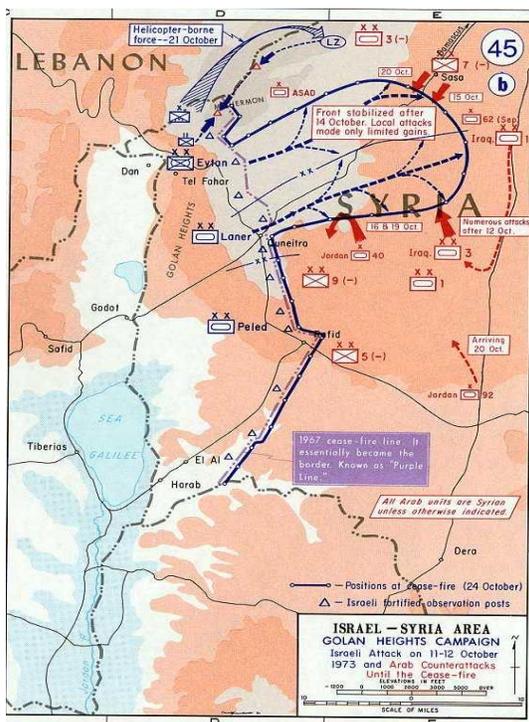
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Yad Vashim theme: "Never Again!"



10.

3. Jerusalem and the Temple Mount

Longfellow wrote a poem many years ago entitled "The Jewish Cemetery in Rhode Island". He wrote of Israel that "dead nations never rise again." God however had other ideas and Israel today is not only alive and well but the center of global politics and religious confrontation. While the nation of Israel ceased to exist for almost 1900 years and the Jewish people were scattered around the world, the city of Jerusalem continued to be a city all that time, under different rulers, with a Jewish presence. It has always been the longing of Zionism to be in Jerusalem: *"By the rivers of Babylon... we wept, when we remembered Zion."*-Psalm 137:1. While the land of Israel is the center point and the world's political hotspot, the ownership and future of the Temple Mount is the crucial question. So we'll take a closer look at Jerusalem in history and prophecy.

When the disciples pointed out grandeur of the temple in Jerusalem, they were likely thinking that it would last forever. After all, they thought that Jesus the Messiah, whom they followed, would soon take His rightful place on the throne of David. However, Jesus explained that God has a different timetable, and that the temple of their day would not last. But He also did indicate that another temple would arise on the same place in the time of the end. If the first prophecy was literally fulfilled (the destruction of the temple in 70ad), then the other prophecies will be literal as well. Another temple in Jerusalem will be built in the last days:

Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. 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." 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?" -Matthew 24:1-3

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. "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place..." -Matthew 24:14-15

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. -Revelation 11:1-2

I. JERUSALEM PRIOR TO CAPTIVITY

Mount Zion is one of the prominent mountains that make up the Jerusalem topography. Mount Zion is on the west side of Jerusalem. The others are Mount Moriah in the centre and the Mount of Olives on the east side. Zion apparently means stronghold, and before David captured it, it was a Jebusite stronghold (2Samuel 5:7). Zion came to stand for Jerusalem, as the strong city of God where His people may dwell safely. Modern Zionism is the aspiration of Jews to return to their land, and make Jerusalem their capital and spiritual center. The reason for this is simple: God declared that He chose Israel as His people, and Jerusalem as His eternal city where He would dwell. It is central to Biblical theology, as well as Jewish worship and identity.

Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; and blessed be God Most High Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all. -Genesis 14:18-20

The first mention in the Bible of the area of Jerusalem is Genesis 14:18 when Abraham met Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of God, a prefigure of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:15-17). The next mention is in Genesis 22:2, when God asked Abraham to go to the land of Moriah, to sacrifice Isaac on one of the mountains there. A primary Old Testament teaching is that God would choose a place where He would place His name in Israel. It began with Abraham (2100bc) and God's request for him to offer Isaac on Mt Moriah. This pre-figures how God the Father would sacrifice His only Son Jesus on the cross for our sins. -g1 p25

“Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you...” -Genesis 22:2

God's desired place to dwell was later manifested under Moses in the building of the Tabernacle, with the sacrifices and God's actual presence (Shekinah) above the Ark of the Covenant (Ex.40). The Tabernacle was to be a temporary place where God dwelt until the First Temple was built on the place God had already chosen.

For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. -Deut.7:6

But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His habitation, and there shall you go. -Deut.12:5

Israel went through cycles of disobedience and repentance from the time of the Judges to Samuel. Thus the Ark was moved around, captured and later returned by David to Israel around 997bc. After King David had taken Jerusalem from the Jebusites, he wanted a place for sacrifice to appease the Lord's wrath because of the sin of numbering the Lord's people. He purchased the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, which was on the top of Mount Moriah, the place where Abraham sacrificed Isaac. There David built an altar and declared that this was the place where God's house of worship would be built. -g2 p.25

Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). -2Samuel 5:7

And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite... And Gad came that day to David and said to him, “Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite...”

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver. And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel. -2Samuel 24:16,18,24-25

After David's death, Solomon built the Temple of God on this very same spot, according to God's intentions. Solomon finished the First Temple around 960bc, out of what his father David planned and provided. It was the place God selected and David had purchased in Jerusalem, the same expanse of rock on Mount Moriah. The Temple completion was one of the crowning moments in the Old Testament as the Lord finally had a permanent place to live among His people - the place where God said His Name would dwell forever.

Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem on Mt. Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. -2Chronicles 3:1

Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city... but I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there; and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel. -2Chron.6:5-6

When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. -2Chronicles 7:1

His foundation is in the holy mountains. The LORD loves the gates of Zion...

Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! -Psalm 87:1-3

I was glad when they said to me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem! Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. -Psalm 122:1-2,6

Thus from about 960bc onward, the glory of God dwelt in the Most Holy Place in the Temple. But as Israel degenerated into idolatry, God warned the nation He would forsake them for disobedience (Amos 4), as provided in the Mosaic covenant. (Deut.28:45). God finally brought about the fullness of His wrath. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came and took Jerusalem in 606bc and the temple was destroyed in 586bc. ((2Chron.36:15-22). At that time the Shekinah Glory of God departed from the Holy of Holies, the Temple, and Jerusalem, as Ezekiel recorded:

Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim... they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city. -Ezekiel 10:18-19; 11:23

II. JERUSALEM FROM THE CAPTIVITY UNTIL CHRIST

In fulfilment of prophecy (Isaiah 44:28 - Ezra 1:2, some 200 years after Isaiah), the edict of Cyrus the King of Persia in 538bc, was given to the remnant of Israel, permitting them to go back to rebuild the Temple and city of Jerusalem in 536bc. They were led by Zerubbabel (Zech.4, the governor and a descendant of David). The Second Temple restoration began in 536bc, and finished during the reign of Darius in 516bc. While it was praise-worthy, it wasn't as glorious as the first. It is also known as Zerubbabel's temple.

All the people gave a great shout of praise to the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the older priests and Levites and family heads, who had seen the former temple, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of this temple being laid, while many others shouted for joy. -Ezra 3:11-12

The Second Temple structure was not as glorious as Solomon's Temple and over the years its priesthood degenerated into a political office. Hellenist Jews adopted the ruling Greek culture of the day and when they controlled the temple worship around 175bc, they permitted some pagan worship. It was desecrated by the Syrian Greek ruler Antiochus IV who sacrificed a pig on the altar, alluded to in Daniel 8:9-11; 23-25. Orthodox Jews revolted under Judas Maccabeas who liberated Jerusalem in 164bc and reinstated temple worship, celebrated as Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication -John 10:22). The Romans ended independent Jewish rule when General Pompey took Jerusalem and entered the Holy of Holies in 63bc. He recorded that he found it empty and dark, and wondered why the Jews thought it was so great to worship the invisible God.

King Herod, a former slave of Edomite ancestry was appointed ruler over the Jews by Rome. In 23bc he began a massive reconstruction of the Second Temple which was completed around 12bc, though detail work on it continued for many years. Herod's engineers had to construct massive walls to create a 40 acre level platform on top of what we call the Temple Mount, on Mt. Moriah. One of these walls today is called the Western or Wailing Wall. The Temple was one of the marvels of engineering in the ancient world. Herod rebuilt the Second Temple to please the Jews and then installed the Roman eagle insignia on the temple doorway to please the Romans. This resulted in a riot and the eagle was hacked to pieces. Herod quelled the riot but died several months later, which was seen as the judgement of God.

Josephus wrote that the Second Temple was made with marble overlaid with gold and glistened in the distance like a mountain of snow in the sun. This is why Jesus' disciples were impressed to point out the latest work completed under Herod's successor, Herod Antipas, just before Jesus was crucified and risen in 33ad. Jerusalem had become once again to the Jews the spiritual and faithful city of God. This explains why the disciples were so moved by Jesus' predictions in Matthew 24:1-3 that it would be totally flattened.

The Glory of God returned to the rebuilt Second Temple when Jesus made His triumphant entry on Palm Sunday and threw out the moneychangers who made God's house a mere marketplace of transactions. Later that week Jesus wept over Jerusalem, where He would be sacrificed for sin, rise on the third day, and also ascend to heaven from the Mt. of Olives. He wept because they missed the time of their Messiah!

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves. -Matthew 21:8-13

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together... but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; you shall see Me no more till you say, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. -Matthew 23:37-39

-g5 p.25

III. JERUSALEM FROM CHRIST UNTIL TODAY

Various Roman rulers imposed their will on the temple worship in the 1st century. Emperor Caligula ordered his image to be placed in the Holy of Holies, but radical zealous Jews prevented it. There was a Jewish revolt against Roman rule in 66ad -the imperial sacrifices that were offered along with the traditional offerings were ended by the Jews. The Temple Mount fell into Jewish hands and the Romans under the General Vespasian and his son Titus besieged Jerusalem until it fell 4 years later in 70ad, costing 1,500,000 Jewish lives. The Romans set the Temple ablaze and it was said the fire melted the gold which ran into the seams between the stones. The soldiers tore apart the stones to get this gold which resulted in the complete devastation of the Temple. The Temple Mount and was razed as a show of Roman vengeance - the Jews were scattered abroad.

For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation." -Luke 19:41-44

Hadrian's Arch in Rome depicts the return of Titus' victorious armies, carrying spoils from Jerusalem, notably the Menorah and perhaps the Table of Showbread from the Temple. I was transfixed to see this, realizing the reality that some of the Temple vessels are likely hidden in the Vatican as many have claimed for centuries. In 2003 Israel asked the Vatican to return the temple vessels they may hold.

-g6 p.26

Christians believe the destruction of the Temple was fulfillment of Jesus' predictions of God's judgment for their rejection of Him as Messiah. Even the Jewish leaders were forced to see that God's hand was in it. Both the 1st and 2nd Temples were destroyed on the very same day, the ninth of Av, and on that day in 130ad the Temple Mount was plowed under by Hadrian. But they still hoped for the 3rd Temple.

Jerusalem came under rule of Emperor Constantine in 306ad, who replaced paganism with Christianity as the official state religion. This gave rise to the sense that Christianity had replaced Judaism. Jews could only visit

the Temple Mount once a year on the 9th of Av, the day commemorating the Temple's destruction. They even had to purchase permits to weep on this day! The Emperor Julian succeeded Constantine in 361ad. He favoured Judaism over Christianity and in order to replace Christianity, he decided to overrule Jesus' prediction that "*not one stone would be left on another*" by rebuilding the Jewish Temple. The gathering of temple materials was begun. The Jews were ecstatic and as word spread, Jewish immigration to Jerusalem increased. There was a feeling the Messianic era was near. Among Christians, it seemed like Julian would fulfill Daniel's prophecy about the "*abomination of desolation.*" The night before the building was to begin, an earthquake destroyed everything. No man will interrupt God's timetable!

The Byzantine empire ruled Israel until the 7th century. Muslims dominated the Middle East from the 7th-12th century, when the Crusaders from Europe waged war to liberate Jerusalem from them. Crusader rule couldn't be maintained and Jerusalem came under successive Muslim, Turkish, and finally British rule in the 20th C. Jerusalem has been besieged 40 times, partially destroyed 32 times with 26 different rulers. -g7 p.26

In our day it is being argued by some Muslim imams and scholars that there was never a Jewish temple or presence on the Temple Mount. However the Koran says nothing about Jerusalem. It mentions Mecca and Medina hundreds of times, as they are the first and second most sacred places to Islam. But it never mentions Jerusalem. There is no historical evidence to suggest Mohammed ever visited Jerusalem. It reminds me of one of the Nazis tactics attributed to Hitler's propagandist master Joseph Goebbels: "*If the lie is big enough and told often enough, it will be believed.*" It is similar to the Holocaust deniers.

Walid M. Awad, Director of Foreign Publications for the PLO's Ministry of Information, asserted in 2005:

"Jerusalem is not a Jewish city, despite the biblical myth implanted in some minds...There is no tangible evidence of Jewish existence from the so-called 'Temple Mount Era'..." -Wikipedia article

Historian and Educational TV host, former head of the History Department of PA University, stated in 2004: "They claimed that Solomon, may he rest in peace, built the Temple. Does the land testify to this? Solomon was a prophet and we see him as a Muslim and part of our [Islamic] heritage... There is no historical text that proves the existence [of the temple] or that it has a real history other than the Bible, and the Bible as we have previously mentioned... was written based on ancient legends." -Wikipedia article

How has Jerusalem become the third holiest site of Islam? Muslims cite a vague passage in the Koran, the 17th Sura, entitled "The Night Journey." It says that in 621ad Mohammed was carried by night in a dream or vision: "*from the sacred temple to the temple that is most remote, whose precinct we have blessed, that we might show him our signs.*" Muslims began to identify these temples as being Mecca and Jerusalem.

It is strange that whereas Muslims have historically acknowledged Jewish patriarchs and prophets such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, yet they deny an historical Jewish presence in Jerusalem and even say these patriarchs were Muslims! This has more to do with political expediency than any religious scholarship. It is a complete fabrication. The Muslims conquered Jerusalem in 636ad but never bothered much with it until around 685ad when the people of what is now Iraq conquered part of Saudi Arabia, including Mecca and Medina. Since Syrian Muslims could no longer make pilgrimage there, they build the Dome of the Rock in 691 to give Muslims another mosque for pilgrimage. In 715 they built another mosque called Al-Asqa -the "Furthest Mosque." so they connected this new mosque with Mohammed's dream & retroactively gave Jerusalem a role in Mohammed's life, 83 years after he died. -g8,9 p.26

13th C. Arab biographer Yakut: "Mecca is holy to Muslims; Jerusalem is holy to the Jews."

The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin Al-Husseini, initiated the riots of Hebron and Jerusalem in 1929 by claiming that the Jews were attacking the Al-Aksa mosque and killing Muslims. Housseini later became a confidante of Adolph Hitler, and asked Hitler to bring his killing machine to Jerusalem during WWII. Housseini's nephew, Yasser Arafat, with the full support of the Arab Nations, in 1967 resurrected the claim that the Jewish Temple Mount is the third holiest site for Islam. This is based upon the mythical ascension of Mohammed from Al-Aksa to Heaven. This great lie has grown exponentially. It is taught and practiced by Jihadists that it is desirable to promote a lie to defeat the infidel. -g10,11 p.26

There are several groups contending for control of the Temple Mount today - some actively and others behind the scenes. There was relatively minor Muslim interest in the Temple Mount until the Jews returned to the land, and especially since they took the Temple Mount in the 1967 6-Day War. Also past Popes have intimated to wanting their world headquarters in Jerusalem and the Roman Catholic Church has claimed the Holy Land has been under their stewardship for centuries. The United Nations wants to make Jerusalem an international city, but Israel has made it their capital and vows to never give it up.

Today groups like the 'Temple Mount Faithful' and the 'Temple Institute' are preparing for the building of the Third Temple, which Jesus indicated in Matthew 24 and Revelation 11 would be built. The foundation stones are already cut and the worship vessels are ready. Menorahs and tables have been built. All the priestly garments have been made and priests are being trained. Professor Hillel Wise, a spokesman for the newly formed Sanhedrin (Jewish council of leaders) says they already have a man in mind to serve as high priest. The Temple worship will require a large Levitical orchestra to play harps and other instruments. Micah Harrari has recently built the first harps in the land of Israel since Jesus' time. There is an old Talmudic tradition that when harps are made again in Israel, then the coming of the Messiah is near.

Where is the Ark?

One of the biggest questions about rebuilding the Third Temple is "where is the Ark of the Covenant?" There are many legends about where it went after the Babylonian captivity, such as to Ethiopia. But it is more likely that the sacred Ark was hidden before the Babylonians took Jerusalem. The Talmud states that the Ark can be found deep under the Temple Mount. Rabbi Shlomo Goren was the first rabbi to blow the 'shofar' (rams horn) at the Western Wall when the Jews took Jerusalem in 1967. In 1982 he and Rabbi Yehuda Getz 1982 carried out excavations under the Temple Mount from the Western Wall in the area of the Dome of the Rock. They claim to have uncovered the Ark and it is there now awaiting the Third Temple

The Temple Mount is under Muslim control delegated by Israel, and how a Third Temple can be rebuilt seems politically impossible. On our Israel tour we asked our Jewish guide how building the Third Temple could ever happen, given the political situation. "Only the Messiah could make it possible", was his perspective. It certainly will be a daunting task. Some Jewish and Christian scholars believe the original Temple was located just north or south of the Dome of the Rock, and think it could be built without having to destroy anything. However that would take some serious change in current Muslim attitudes. Also, some of the USA proposed peace plans in recent years give sovereignty of the Temple Mount to a new Palestinian state, with an international force present to guarantee access, by presumably Jews and Christians. I don't think anyone can predict how it will all come about, but the Bible predicts that it will in fact occur.

IV. THE COMING INVASION OF ISRAEL - Ezekiel 38-39

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 it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, The year of recompense for the cause of Zion. -Isaiah 34:8

Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, "Raze it, raze it, To its very foundation!" –Psalm 137:7

This is the context for Jesus predicting the future of Jerusalem in Matthew 24 and Luke 21. God said for the cause of Zion He would bring *"the day of the LORD's vengeance"* (Isaiah 34:8), for those such as the sons of Edom who said when Jerusalem was besieged, *"raze it, to its very foundation!"* (Psalm 137:7). Many believe the sons of Edom are some of the modern Palestinian Arabs. Edom (Esau) was Jacob's (Israel) brother. The battle for control of the Holy Land has and continues to be an ancient family dispute about who owns what. But it is foremost the place where the God of the Bible has declared His intentions to put His name there forever. God is supremely patient; after nations have their say, He will ensure His will is done, as predicted.

-g12 -p27

As I write these words, Israel and the Middle East peace initiatives are front page news. There is continuous pressure on Israel to give up land for a Palestinian state. There are serious threats of war and annihilation from Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas. Ezekiel predicts a coming war that may well occur just after a peace treaty is established with Israel and her neighbours, during the early years of the 7 year Tribulation period predicted by Jesus Christ. A northern alliance will attack Israel with the help of some southern nations, during a time of un-paralled peace in the Middle East. God even names the countries!

Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, O Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal. I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and lead you out, with all your army, horses, and horsemen, all splendidly clothed, a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords. Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all its troops; the house of Togarmah from the far north and all its troops—many people are with you. -Ezekiel 38:3-6

-g13 p27

-g14 p27

"Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely. You will ascend, coming like a storm, covering the land like a cloud, you and all your troops and many peoples with you." -Ezekiel 38:7-9

-g15 p.27

Gog is the term for a leader, in this case the leader or prince of Rosh – Russia; Meshech and Tubal – modern Turkey and area; Persia – modern Iran; Ethiopia – modern Sudan and Ethiopia; Libya – same today; Gomer and Togarmah – modern Turkey and central Asian states that were once part of the Soviet Union. These nations will come in the latter years – a term referring to the time of the end of this age. They will come to the once desolate land of Israel, where the Jewish people have been re-gathered from the nations, as we have seen in our generation. Israel will be living in peace, meaning a different situation that we have at present. While Israel has built a concrete wall around its borders to keep out terrorists, a guaranteed peace treaty could bring that wall down. These alliances are pretty much in place today, as Russia routinely backs the Islamic nations and supplies them with weapons. This alliance of nations will mount a surprise attack against Israel that will be one of the biggest mistakes in history.

-g16 p27

You will say, I will go up against a land of unwalled villages; I will go to a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates — to take plunder and to take booty, to stretch out your hand against the waste places that are again inhabited, and against a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land.

“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “On that day when My people Israel dwell safely, will you not know it? Then you will come from your place out of the far north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a mighty army. You will come up against My people Israel like a cloud, to cover the land. It will be in the latter days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me, when I am hallowed in you, O Gog, before their eyes.”

–Ezekiel 38:11-16

No invasion like this has taken place in history. Now that Israel has been re-gathered from the nations into her land, all that awaits is a peaceful solution to the most pressing crisis in modern history – peace in the Middle East. God will bring this to pass for the express purpose of revealing His reality and power to the world. One of the great themes of the Old Testament is just this: *“that all will know that I Am the LORD.”*

And it will come to pass at the same time, when Gog comes against the land of Israel, says the Lord GOD, that My fury will show in My face. For in My jealousy and in the fire of My wrath I have spoken: Surely in that day there shall be a great earthquake in the land of Israel, so that the fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all creeping things that creep on the earth, and all men who are on the face of the earth shall shake at My presence. The mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.

I will call for a sword against Gog throughout all My mountains, says the Lord GOD. Every man’s sword will be against his brother. And I will bring him to judgment with pestilence and bloodshed; I will rain down on him, on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, flooding rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations.

Then they shall know that I am the LORD. –Ezekiel 38:18-23

When Israel is attacked God will supernaturally defend them, just as in Old Testament times. It will be such a devastation that people of Israel and the nations will realize that the Living God is great and holy, and that He is the Defender of Israel. It will take 7 months for Israel to bury the dead and they will use the armaments of this destroyed army as fuel for 7 years. Many people will turn in faith to the Lord at this time, as is referenced in Revelation 7. There are also parallels to this in Daniel 11 and the events leading up to the world alliances meeting for the war of Armageddon. -g17 p27

So I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel, and I will not let them profane My holy name anymore. Then the nations shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. Surely it is coming, and it shall be done,” says the Lord GOD. This is the day of which I have spoken.

Then those who dwell in the cities of Israel will go out and set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and bucklers, the bows and arrows, the javelins and spears; and they will make fires with them for seven years...

For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them, in order to cleanse the land.

-Ezekiel 39:7-12

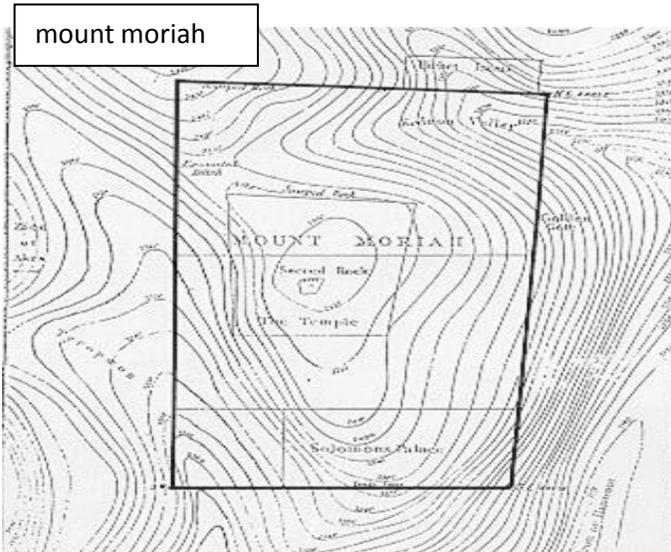
I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them. So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day forward. The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword.

**According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions I have dealt with them,
and hidden My face from them. -Ezekiel 39:21-24**

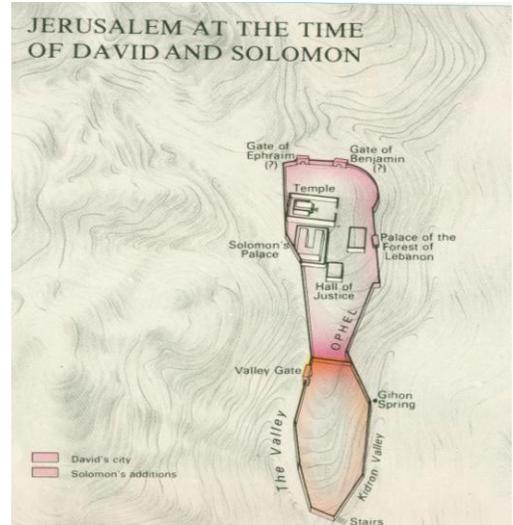
Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Now I will bring back the captives of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole house of Israel; and I will be jealous for My holy name— after they have borne their shame, and all their unfaithfulness in which they were unfaithful to Me, when they dwelt safely in their own land and no one made them afraid. When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and I am hallowed in them in the sight of many nations, then they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who sent them into captivity among the nations, but also brought them back to their land, and left none of them captive any longer. 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.

-Ezekiel 39:25-29

The Lord ends this prophecy in Ezekiel with a reminder to the whole world of what He has done and what He will do. For any who care to investigate, the Bible predicted that Israel would be led away into captivity among the nations for their unfaithfulness to God. The history is obvious. The Old Testament prophets predicted that the Lord would re-gather Israel back into her ancient land and this has obviously happened in our day. It amazes me that people attribute this reality about Israel to something like blind chance when it was actually predicted thousands of years ago! We say we want to see a sign that God is real and that the Bible is true – what could be more convincing? But it is certainly true that as Abraham told the rich man in hell: if people do not want to repent before God, they will not be persuaded, even if someone rose from the dead. I hope that you who read this will investigate and be persuaded that God speaks and keeps His word. As Jesus said, those who ask of God will receive wisdom, and those who seek after God will find Him.



1.



2.

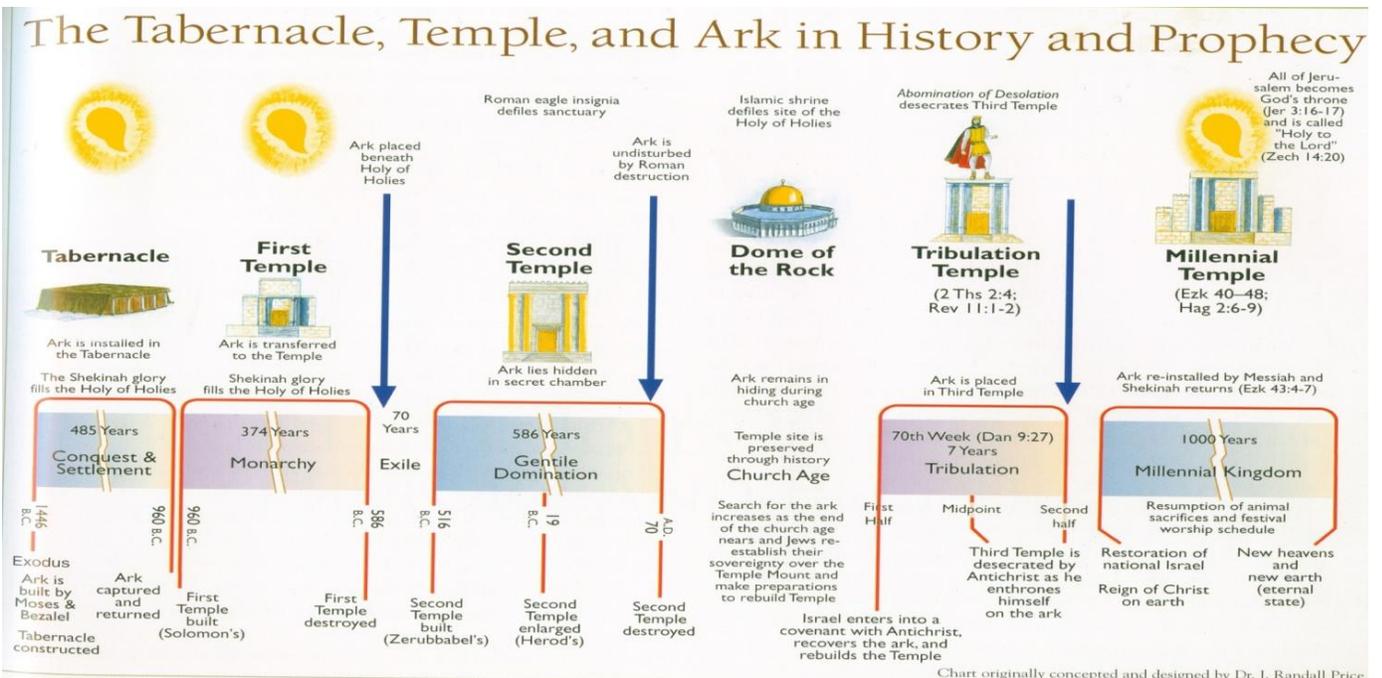
model of 1st Temple - 2nd Temple



3.



4.



5.

Hadrian's Arch in Rome - the captured Menorah



6.

Jews have worshipped at the Western Wall since ancient times



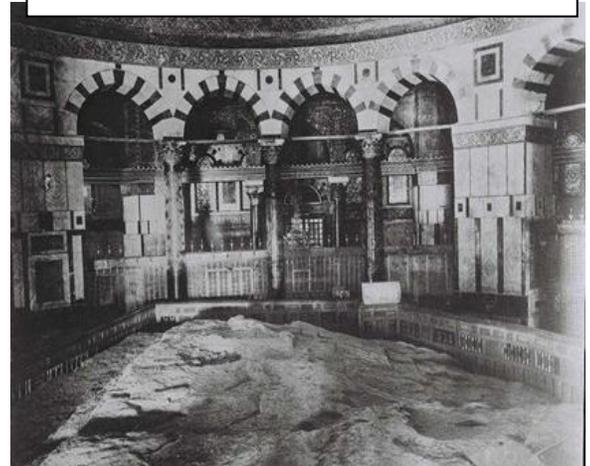
7.

Dome of the Rock in 1875 - rather neglected



8.

1915 - inside Dome - the foundation stone



9.

Huesseini and Nazis influence

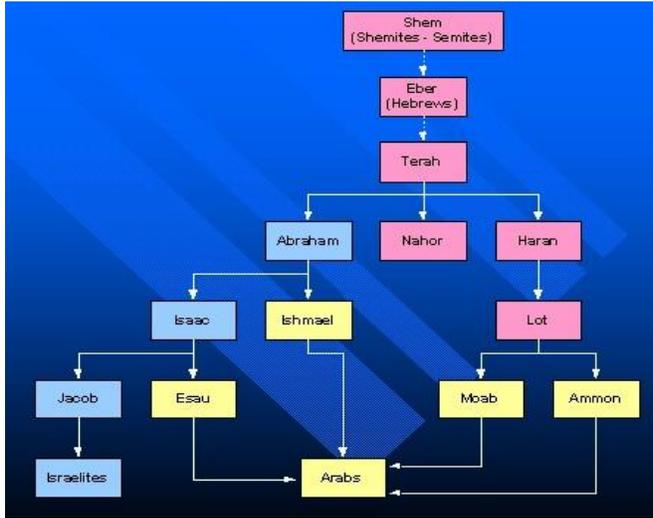


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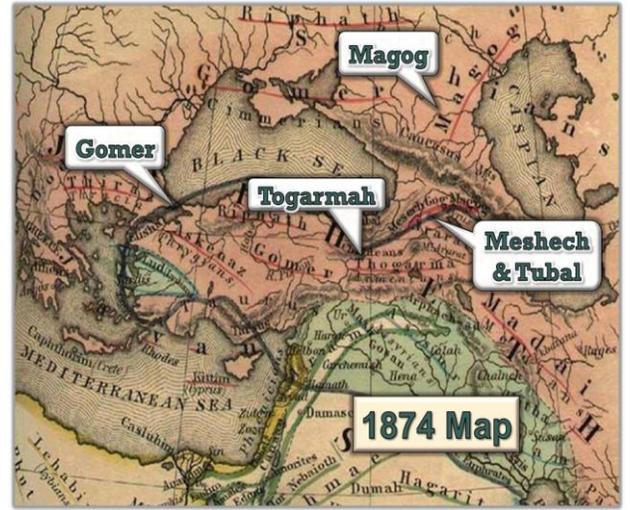
Huesseini's nephew, Yasser Arafat



11.



12.

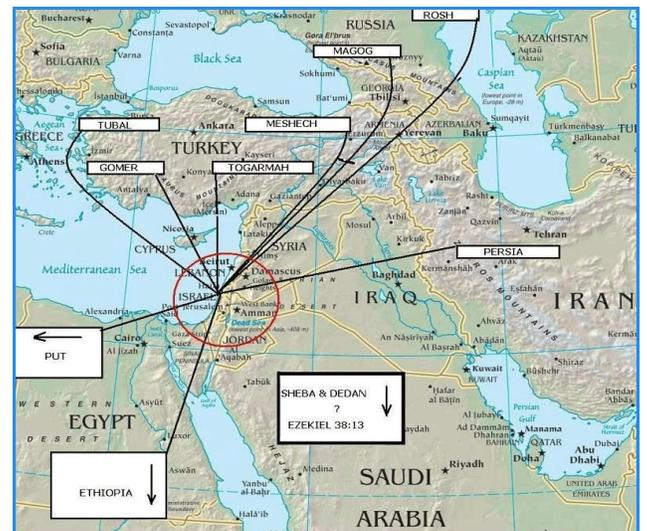


13.

THE EZEKIEL 38:1-6 INVADER

- Magog - the Southern Steppes of Russia
- Rosh - RUSSIA
- Meshech & Tubal - Turkey; (TURKMENISTAN)
- Persia - Iran;
- Ethiopia - Sudan, Somalia;
- Libya - Libya (may include Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia);
- Gomer - North-Central Turkey;
- Togarmah - Eastern Turkey.

14.



15.



16.



17.

4. When Will the End of the Age Come?

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?" And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 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. –Matthew 24:3-6

I. DANIEL AND THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

-g1 p37 Qumran

The Qumran Community was a group of Old Testament Jewish disciples living near the Dead Sea around the 1st century bc. They founded their own sect to safeguard Israel's calling as God's people, as well as the Old Testament prophetic writings and to wait for the Day of the Lord. In 1947, a Bedouin goat-herder found jars in the caves of the Qumran Community in Israel that contained leather scrolls, copies and fragments of the Old Testament books. This finding has been called the greatest literary discovery of all time. Their existence has had major implications for the authenticity and dating of the Old Testament scriptures. In this discussion we will refer to the prophetic Book of Daniel, which was found in these scrolls.

The fact that ancient copies are made many years and even centuries after the original writings, allows us to give reasonable dates for the writing of some disputed Old Testament books, such as Daniel. The Book of Daniel is disputed because Daniel the prophet made several predictions of world empires that came true. 19th century critics with their pre-supposition that it is not possible to have supernatural revelation from God about the future, (or that there is even a God), placed Daniel's book in the 1st or early 2nd century bc. Daniel's accurate description of empires, with even stating their national names and characteristics was, according to these critics written after the fact. After years of scientific investigation, linguistic analysis of the Hebrew and Aramaic language of Daniel proved that these copies of Daniel were written no later than the 5th century bc. This places Daniel's book in its stated historical period of the 6th century bc, meaning that Daniel was given an accurate glimpse of the future by God! There is no other explanation.

In order to prove the Bible was not inspired by God, much faulty textual criticism of the Bible has been perpetrated over the years. Archaeology has proven many such criticisms to be false but these discoveries are rarely reported by the seminaries, teachers and preachers who hold such beliefs and have eroded people's faith in the Bible over the years. It is much like the ape-men hoaxes of the early 20th century that were proven to be false, and yet their so-called 'missing link' proof continues to be taught in today's books. Many of today's popular atheist writers are repeating the same old yarns about so-called proofs against the truth of the Bible. Our society is being lied to about the origins and future of the world.

II. DANIEL'S PREDICTION OF WORLD EMPIRES

Nebuchadnezzar was a Babylonian king whose empire ruled the Middle East in the 6th century bc. Daniel was a captive Jew in Babylon, taken as a young man from Israel after Nebuchadnezzar took over the country. Daniel was groomed along with other Jewish captives to become top advisors to the king. In Daniel 2 we read of a troubling dream that king Nebuchadnezzar had. He wanted an accurate interpretation and so he insisted that his advisors tell him the actual dream, on the threat of death, so he would know they had

supernatural guidance and their interpretation would be true. Of course they protested, saying no king ever asked such from court advisors, where upon he began to carry out the threat. Daniel was also subject to this threat, so he prayed and God showed him the dream and interpretation. Nebuchadnezzar believed the interpretation because Daniel knew the dream without being told!

You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome. This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay. You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. -Daniel 2:31-35

In his dream king Nebuchadnezzar saw a statute or image of a figure with a head of gold, a chest of silver, midriff of bronze and legs of iron, the feet partly iron and clay. Then he saw a stone cut out without human hands, which struck the image on its feet. This stone broke the feet in pieces and then the whole image was crushed together and swept away by the wind. The stone then became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. Then Daniel gave the interpretation, saying that God was telling the king what would happen in the 'latter days.'

-g2 p37 Chart

This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king. You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all—you are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.” -Daniel 2:36-45

The head of gold was king Nebuchadnezzar and his empire of Babylon. After him would come another kingdom inferior to his, as silver is to gold, and then a third kingdom which would rule the earth. Then a 4th kingdom or empire would arise that would be very strong and destructive, like nothing before it. It would be divided into east and west kingdoms and then eventually succeeded in time by ten kings represented by the toes of the feet. The key word is this: “And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall be never be destroyed.. And it shall stand forever.” -Daniel 2:44. In short this is a

panoramic picture of world history culminating in the Kingdom of God ruling the earth, long prophesied in the Old Testament and by Jesus in the New Testament.

I saw in my vision by night, and behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the Great Sea. And four great beasts came up from the sea, each different from the other. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings. I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And suddenly another beast, a second, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. And they said thus to it: 'Arise, devour much flesh!' After this I looked, and there was another, like a leopard, which had on its back four wings of a bird. The beast also had four heads, and dominion was given to it. 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. -Daniel 7:2-7

Daniel had other visions and dreams that add information to the prophecy. In Daniel 7 he sees 4 great beasts that correspond to the characteristics of the kingdoms or empires represented by the statute metals. The first was a lion, that had wings like an eagle, then it was lifted from the earth and became like a man. That was Nebuchadnezzar and his strange transformation experience recorded in Daniel 4. The next beast was a bear raised up on one side with 3 ribs in its teeth. The third beast was a leopard with 4 wings on its back and 4 heads. The fourth was a dreadful beast with iron teeth and 10 horns, devouring and smashing everything in its path. A horn is a symbol of power and authority and represents rulers or kings.

Daniel 8 gives a vision which adds more details to the prophetic picture. The Babylonian empire had been taken over by the Medo-Persian empire in the latter part of the 6th century bc. Daniel saw a ram with 2 horns, one of which was newer and bigger than the other. The ram pushed in all directions and no animal could withstand him, until a goat flying from the west with one great horn came at him, and smashed the two horns of the ram and grew very great. Then the great horn was suddenly broken and 4 other horns came up in its place. Daniel was troubled by this and an angel came to tell him the meaning of the vision.

Now, as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep with my face to the ground; but he touched me, and stood me upright. And he said, "Look, I am making known to you what shall happen in the latter time of the indignation; for at the appointed time the end shall be. The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power. -Daniel 8:15-22

III. HISTORY VERIFIES DANIEL'S PREDICTIONS

-g3 -p38 Greek Empire

In Daniel 8:20 the ram is named as Medo-Persia and the goat is named as Greece. With this information let us see how this relates to actual ancient history. We will look at the four major 'world' empires from the Bible's perspective; the center of the world being Israel. The map below shows the extent of Middle East empires and those who ruled the Biblical world, from Babylon, Persia and Greece.

After king Nebuchadnezzar died, his successor Belshazzar became a weaker king of Babylon and in 539bc the Babylonian empire was overrun by the **Medo-Persian empire**, represented by the bear and the ram. Persia was more dominant than Media in this empire, thus the bear raised up on one side and the 3 ribs in its mouth being the three main provinces of Babylonia, Media and Persia. The 2 horns of the ram signify Media and Persia, who ruled the world from Europe to India until 331bc.

Then came the **Greek empire** of Alexander the Great, known for his lightning speed in conquest, represented by the leopard with wings and the goat from the west with the great horn. After Alex conquered the Medo-Persian empire, he came to Jerusalem and was given a copy of Daniel by the Jews, as a testimony of Daniel's predictions. Alexander thought he was a god, but he suddenly died (the great horn broken) and his kingdom was divided into four, represented by the 4 horns. Alexander's empire became divided by his 4 generals. These became the 4 kingdoms of the Greek empire (Ptolemy- Egypt, Seleucid – Greece to Middle East, Arsacids, Bactrians –east Asia / India), which ruled until Romans conquered in 63 bc.

Daniel could only have known from God how his vision so accurately pictured the historical conquest and expansion of the Greek empire. That is why Bible critics take such issue with the dating of Daniel's book. If it was actually written in the 6th century bc, then it is supernaturally inspired prophecy. That is why the Dead Sea scrolls are so important. They conclusively date Daniel and confirm the prophecy is from God. The reason Bible prophecy centers on world empires around the time of Jesus and in the last days is because they have to do with Jerusalem and Israel, which the Bible consider the center point of history.

-g4 p38 Roman Empire

The iron metal and beast is an accurate description of the awesome conquering power of the next empire, the Roman. Just as the world had seen nothing like the ruthless power of the Babylonians, or the speed of the Greeks, so the brutality and power of the **Roman Empire** was like nothing before it. Rome finished its conquest around 63 bc and ruled the 'known world' until about 330 ad, when it was divided into east and west segments, represented by the 2 legs of the image. Basically the Roman empire ruled in the west politically and religiously through its popes and through its dominant nations from the time of Charlemagne, to Napoleon, the British empire and Hitler. These three individuals all expressed their desire to rule Europe as Caesar did. The Eastern Orthodox segment had the greater influence in the eastern European and Mediterranean nations, as well as Russia.

-g5 p38 -EU map

The current European Union is the outgrowth of the old Roman empire. While there are more than 20 nations at present in the EU, there are only 10 principle nations (the WEU). They may indeed be related to the 10 toes, and they may also include Canada and the USA which originally came out of these nations. We can't be dogmatic about what the Bible does not specify, but we can see the modern political patterns shaping up for both world government and world control. The fact that Daniel dates the rule of 10 horns or kings just before the time of the end or the coming of the 'stone', relates these prophecies to the 'latter days' - the end of the world as predicted by the prophets, Jesus and the Book of Revelation.

Daniel's prediction of empires is important because in Revelation, the Beast is a composite of the beasts of Daniels visions, showing us that Satan is intertwined with these empires and rulers as the "god of this

world". The **stone** of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a picture of the Messiah. Jesus applied to Himself the Old Testament picture of the stone as both the cornerstone and a stumbling stone, which determines destiny.

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: " Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily. –Isaiah 28:16

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes. Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this stone will be broken, but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder. - Matthew 21:42-44

IV. THE TIMELINE FOR THE END – DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS

Daniel realizes the 70 years are nearly over and so intercedes for his people and nation, that God would deliver and restore them and Jerusalem as promised. The Mosaic Law called for Israel to let the land have a sabbatical every seven years, to lie fallow so it would be renewed, God promised to provide enough in the six years so the people would have enough for the seventh. Israel never obeyed God in this, so He promised that due to their sin, the land would enjoy its sabbaths, which He specified would be desolate for 70 years. In Daniel 9:24-27 the prophecy is given by Gabriel of seventy 'weeks', which Jesus quoted in Matthew 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. 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.

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. 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. –Daniel 9:24-27

Here a period of 70 weeks or sevens is specified. The Hebrew word here is 'shabua', meaning sevens. It can be taken to mean years as it is in Genesis 29:27, where Jacob is asked to work for Rachel for seven years, to fulfil her 'week'. Seven is God's number of perfection or completeness, and so the 70 weeks or sevens are God's timetable to complete His plan for Israel, Jerusalem and the purposes of salvation. Thus we are given 490 (70 x 7 = 490) years of pre-determined prophetic history. [-g6 p39 -70 Weeks Chart](#)

Here are the divisions of the 70 weeks. Seven weeks = 49 years from the command to restore and build Jerusalem, and 62 weeks = 434 years until Messiah the Prince, a total of 483 years. How does history square with this prediction given by God to Daniel in the 6th century bc? Some say it was all fulfilled by the coming of Jesus, His death and resurrection, and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70ad. But this ignores the purposes determined for the 70 weeks: 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.

While Christ's atonement has provided for all of these purposes, Israel has not yet had her sins finished and the Temple is still future, so the Most Holy has not been anointed. And we must also account for the final 1 week, the 70th week.

There are several proposed theories of interpreting this timetable. While they differ on the historical dates for the actual events described for the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks, they agree that the 70th week corresponds to the "Time of Jacob's Trouble", or what we call the 7 year Tribulation (see Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 12:1, Matthew 24:21). The following proposal has been popularized among pre-millennialists from the 20th century until today. I believe it has the most merit among literalist's interpretations.

In Nehemiah 2:5-8 we are told the command was given by King Artaxerxes in 444bc to Nehemiah to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. The rebuilding of the walls and gates of Jerusalem was completed around 396bc, which corresponds to the first 7 weeks or 49 years. Then we are given the 62 weeks or 434 years, to the crucifixion of Jesus, which is held to be March 30, 33 ad. This gives us 476 years. There is no year '0', between bc and ad, because only one year would have expired from 1bc to 1ad. However 69 times 7 is 483 years. What we must reconcile is the 360-day Jewish lunar-year with the 365.24-day Gregorian calendar, which our marking of history is based upon. The biblical rationale for a prophetic 360 day-year is that Daniel and Revelation both give 42 months and 1260 days as ½ of the 70th week, meaning a lunar year of 360 days. Israel from Mosaic times used a lunar calendar and inserted an "intercalary month" to correct the time.

Here is the math that reconciles this: $69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$ days, which is the exact time from March 5 444bc of Nehemiah 2, to March 30, 33ad when Jesus was crucified. This number of days when divided by the 365.24 day year, yields 476 years, which is the exact historical time. So this is 483 years of 360 days. The potential problem with these dates is that there is disagreement on exactly what date Nehemiah began rebuilding, or on what date Jesus was born. The day of the month He was crucified is certain to the calculation of the Jewish Passover, but some say 30ad, or 33ad. But we can be sure that Daniel's 69 weeks are accurate in that they describe the actual historical events from Nehemiah's rebuilding to the Crucifixion. While we may not be 100% certain about the dates because of the distance of time, the fact that Daniel's prophecy is verified by what happened and a reasonable calculation of dates is proof that the prophecy is historically accurate.

The most important thing about Daniel's prophecy is the 70th week. If historical events can be matched to the 69 weeks, then the 70th week will also see a literal fulfillment. Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt in the first return from 536 to 516bc. Because of neglect it had to be restored in 444bc, and it was done, even in the troublesome times described in Nehemiah. The Messiah did come, when Jesus was born around the year bridging 'Before Christ - Anno Domini'. The crucifixion of Jesus fulfills "Messiah shall be cut off but not for Himself", meaning not for His own sin. This happened after the 69th week. The people who destroyed the Temple Mount in Jerusalem in 70ad were Roman soldiers trying to uncover the molten temple gold, not the Roman generals who ordered that the Temple be preserved. That leaves the 70th week yet to come.

If the first 483 years are historically accurate to the coming of Jesus the Messiah, and the destruction of Jerusalem, then the final 7 years will also be specific. The term "the end" is used twice by Daniel, and seems

to fit with what Jesus called “the end”, as in the time just before His 2nd Coming. The prince who is to come (the little horn of Daniel 7:8), will arise out of the Roman people and he will make a treaty for one week, the final 7 year period of this 70 weeks. In the middle of the week he will bring an end to sacrifice and offering, and this we would easily count as 3½ years. In order to bring an end to the temple sacrifice, the Third Temple will be built.

In Matthew 24 Jesus gives the correct parameters to understand when this “abomination” will occur – after the beginning of sorrows and just before the great tribulation – meaning the midpoint of the 70th week, as Daniel 9:27 states. The same time descriptions tie Daniel and Revelation together as predictions of the same times and events leading to the end of the age. The phrase 'time, times and half a time' means 1260 days, 42 months and 3½ years, because the same time description is applied to the same event of the woman being protected in the wilderness (Rev.12:6,14).

He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, shall persecute the saints of the Most High, and shall intend to change times and laws. Then the saints shall be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time. –Daniel 7:25-26

Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished. –Daniel 12:7

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the presence of the serpent. –Revelation 12:14

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. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. –Revelation 11:1-3

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. –Revelation 12:6

And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. –Revelation 13:5

All these are the beginning of sorrows. “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake... 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.

“Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...

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. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened. –Matthew 24:8-9, 14-16, 21-22

This is the key to understanding the Tribulation, based on Daniel 9 and Matthew 24: there are increasing signs leading up to the final 7 years called “the beginning of sorrows” (Mt.24:8). The first 3 ½ years Jesus called the Tribulation (v.9), as God begins to judge the earth and the seat of Satan’s power (Rev.6-10). The dividing point is the “abomination of desolation”, after which comes “Great Tribulation” (Mt.24:21), which

will last for 3 ½ years, which is 42 months, or 1260 days, or time, times and half a time. The judgements of Revelation are spread throughout the 7 years, the worst of which is the final 3 ½ years (Revelation 11-18). This has not yet occurred in human history, because the consummation or end of the age has not yet happened. The Saviour has yet to come and bring the literal Kingdom of God to this earth. As surely as Jesus came the first time, so He will come back to finish what God has determined for Israel and the world.

V. IS THE TIME IS NEAR?

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show His servants - things which must shortly take place. 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 1:1-3

‘The Time is Near’ refers to Christ’s Second Coming, which will be the most incredible and monumental event ever! I grew up in a time and church where I never heard of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (except for an old saying, “*slower than the second coming of Christ*”), until Alice Cooper sang a song about it, called ‘Second Coming.’ God promises a blessing for all who read, hear and keep it, yet many preachers have utterly failed to teach the most important information next to the gospel: that Jesus who died on the cross and rose bodily from the grave will come again bodily to the earth according to the Scriptures.

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

One reason for this is that in every generation the faithful say Jesus is coming! We do this because the Bible teaches us to look for and anticipate His coming as being immanent, meaning it could happen at any time. Recently I watched a program on Aimee Semple MacPherson, an evangelist who built a large ministry in California in the 1920's. On her car a sign said ‘Jesus is coming soon.’ However some go overboard in their zeal. During WW II Charles Fuller preached on ‘The Old Time Gospel Hour’ that Hitler was the antichrist and Mussolini was the false prophet. In the 1980's, Edgar Wisenut put out a book about the rapture occurring in 1988. When these are proven wrong, we reveal what we don’t know and this overshadows what the Bible says. Jesus warned not to set dates. It is foolish for us to name people as the antichrist. (Acts 1:7).

What do we know? In Rev.1:1-3, 'shortly' is the Greek word ‘en tachei’ meaning quickly or suddenly. The word for time is ‘kairos’ meaning a season of time (‘chronos’ is time in general and ‘hora’ is hour). Near is ‘eggus’, from the root word to squeeze, as when you squeeze and wait for Heinz ketchup. Thus we have the sense that when the season of the 'end time' comes, it will occur suddenly and not be of long duration. The Bible predicts a coming Tribulation of 7 years. God will ‘squeeze’ world events and the end will come.

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. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the very door.

Assuredly I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things are fulfilled.

- Matthew 24:32-34

Much speculation is given to the meaning of “this generation”. A generation in Bible terms can be about 40 years (Matthew 1:17), or 100 years (Genesis 15:13-16). Wisenut was in error when he added 40 years to 1948 to predict the Rapture and Tribulation in 1988. Some date it from 1967 when Israel regained control of Jerusalem. Even now some Ultra-Orthodox Jews are preparing for the rebuilding of the temple and the coming of the Messiah. But it is unwise to set dates. It is right to say that the generation that sees the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecies will be around to see the end. We cannot know the day or hour, but we can know the season.

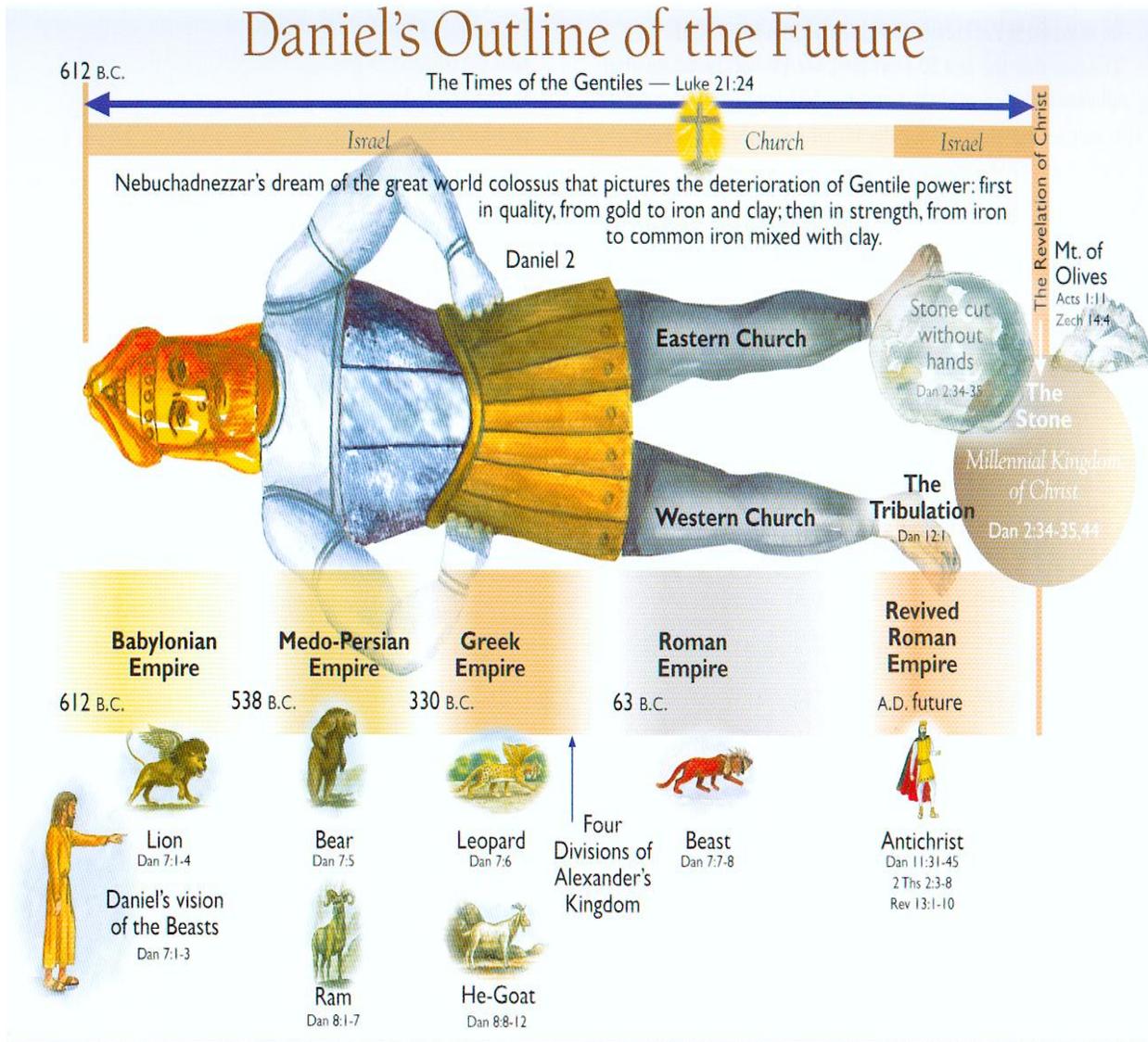
But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. -Matthew 24:36

Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him. -Matt.24:44

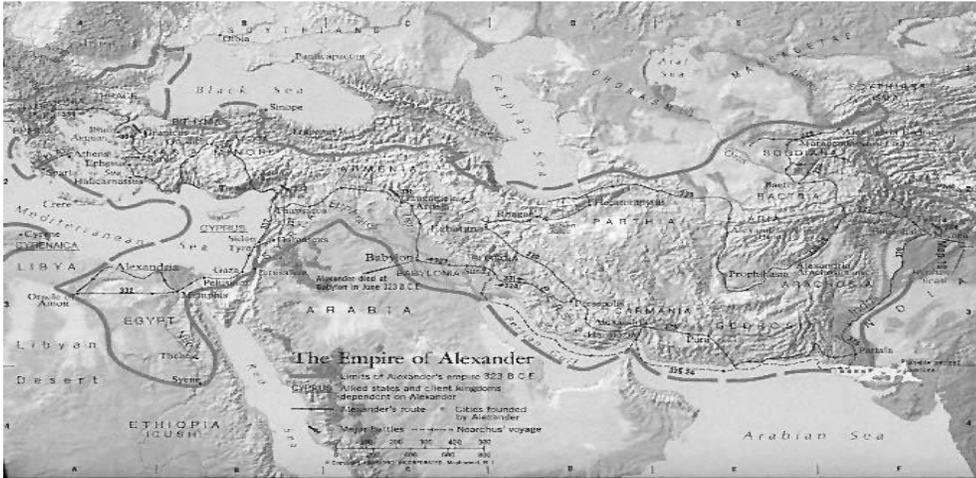
How do we respond? When I first heard about what the Bible predicted about the Second Coming, I began to read the Bible and investigate. As a result, I repented of my sins and turned in faith to accept Jesus as my Savior from sin and judgement. What will you do?



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

- WEU Nations**
1. Germany
 2. France
 3. United Kingdom
 4. Italy
 5. Spain
 6. Portugal
 7. Netherlands
 8. Belgium
 9. Luxembourg

5. The Rapture of the Church

A man from a winter climate left for a vacation to Florida. His wife was on a business trip and planned to meet him there the next day. When he reached the hotel, he was unable to find his wife's email address so he did his best to type it from memory. Unfortunately he missed one letter and his note was instead directed to an elderly preacher's wife, whose husband has just passed away the day before. When she was checking her email, she took one look at the screen, let out a piercing scream and fell to the floor in a dead faint. At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw the note which read: "Dearest wife, Just got checked in. Everything prepared for your arrival tomorrow. Your loving husband."

We who believe in a supernatural God have no trouble believing in His supernatural plan. One of the main promises of Scripture is for the translation of the believer's soul to the Lord after death. Another more startling promise is the translation or rapture of the true church. When Bible believers tell others about the rapture, the response can range from thinking we're nuts, to being linked with one of the flying saucer cults. Atheists love to ridicule the rapture. Yet the Bible plainly teaches the Rapture of the Church. If we believe in God the Creator of all things, then His ability to accomplish the rapture is rather easy.

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 be no means precede those who are asleep. 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. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. -1Thessalonians 4:15-17

graphic 1 p46 -Harpazo

I. THE RAPTURE: MEANING AND EVENTS

The New Testament Greek word for 'caught up' is 'harpazo', meaning to seize suddenly, to catch away, to transport from one place to another. The word rapture is from the Latin 'raptura', which translates harpazo. We think of rapturous moments, such as our wedding, buying our first house, having the first baby. The Holy Spirit uses the word harpazo to describe the removal of all born-again believers from the earth when the Lord comes for His Church. There are various raptures in the Bible. Genesis 5:24 says Enoch was translated alive to heaven, as was Elijah by chariots of fire, in 2Kings 2:11. In His Ascension, Jesus was caught up to heaven (Revelation 12:5), and Paul was temporarily caught up to the third heaven to hear from God (2Corinthians 12:2). It is a supernatural act by our supernatural God.

g.2 p46 -70 Weeks Chart

The Rapture of the church is the coming event in which all the deceased believers will be resurrected and those who are alive at this time will be caught up with them to meet the Lord. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians with some questions his audience had in mind: what will happen to the dead in Christ, and when will Christ come? In the New Testament, the word 'asleep' when relating to departed believers denotes the state of their body – it is not destroyed but is like a seed at rest until the Lord brings it back to life. (1Corinthians 15:42). At death the soul / spirit of the believer immediately goes to be with the Lord. (2Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 1:23). At the resurrection the believer's body will be raised to life and reunited with our soul/spirit. The Bible does not teach soul-sleep. Believers in heaven now have all their

individual personalities, yet without sin. They await the resurrection of the body. In God's eyes even the scattered dust of the human body can be easily awakened and reunited with the soul.

g.3 p47 -End Time Events

The rapture events follow a specific order and plan. First, the Lord Jesus Himself will descend from heaven. The New Testament equates Jesus with Jehovah God of the Old Testament by placing Lord before His name. Our Lord is the LORD, the Son who is the visible manifestation of the Living God, one with the Father. The shout may be His, or the voice of the archangel, most likely identified as Michael, the archangel who is the guardian of Israel. The rapture is connected with the Day of the Lord (1Thessalonians 5:2), which is the Old Testament designation of the time of the end, the Time of Jacob's trouble, when God will send judgement upon the earth, in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom reign of Jesus on earth. Daniel 12:1 says that at this time Michael will stand up and what the Bible calls the Tribulation period will begin. The rapture will precede the 7 years of Tribulation and may indeed usher its beginning. It is likely only believers will hear the shout. When God spoke in John 12:29, some heard Him, others said it thundered. Everyone left behind will witness world-wide chaos as millions of believers are translated to heaven in the rapture.

Behold I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed - 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. -1Corinthians 15:51-52

Then the trumpet of God will sound. Much conjecture is written about this trumpet. Paul links the resurrection with the last trumpet in 1Cor.15:51-52. Is this the 7th Trumpet of Revelation 11? Those who hold to the rapture taking place in the middle of the Tribulation believe so, but this is not the last trumpet, because the trumpet will sound again at the Second Coming according to Matthew 24:31. It may be connected with Israel's Feast of Trumpets, where the last great trumpet blast anticipates the future resurrection of the dead. The Corinthians knew more about the Roman military trumpets than the Jewish feasts. The last trumpet signified the end of a battle, but there were also last trumpets that end the watch and called the soldiers to supper. The twinkling of an eye is about a fiftieth of a second. In an instant, the dead will rise and living believers will be changed into the glorious body promised us, a body like Jesus'. We will be meet Him in the air, and from this meeting we will go to the Father's house.

"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." –Titus 2:13

Titus 2:13 divides the coming of Jesus into two stages: In the rapture Christ comes in the air for His church but at the Second Coming He comes to the earth with His church. After the rapture the church appears before the Judgement Seat of Christ but after the Second Coming the people on earth appear before Christ's throne to be judged. The blessed hope for the church is the Rapture, and Paul ends 1Thes.4 with the admonition to "*comfort one another with these words.*" Our hope is in meeting Jesus, not in this world.

Let not your heart be troubled.; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 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. 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. And where I go you know, and the way you know. –John 14:1-4

Many Bible commentators see a correlation of Paul words in 1Thessalonians 4 to what Jesus taught in John 14:1-4. This passage is often interpreted to speak of Christ receiving believers at death, but in fact the Bible never speaks of this in conjunction with Jesus' words "*I will come again.*" Jesus doesn't come for a believer at death, the believer goes to be with the Lord (Phil.1:23). Here Jesus speaks of coming for His saints as in the Rapture, not with His saints as in the Second Coming. If you compare the clear Rapture passage of 1 Thessalonians 4 with the clear Second Coming of Revelation 19:11-21, you cannot find significant parallels. But if you compare 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with John 14:1-4 there are amazing parallels of the progression of words and thoughts! Take a close look at the two passages for yourself.

II. THE ANALOGY OF THE JEWISH WEDDING

In Jesus' teaching of John 14, He is making an analogy of Jewish wedding practises and the rapture of His bride, the church. The betrothal of a bride and groom was at the groom's initiative, where he would go to the bride's father and negotiate the dowry (purchase price) for her. Once he paid the price, the marriage covenant was established and the bride was set apart exclusively for her husband, and the covenant relationship was signified in the drinking of a cup of wine by the bride and groom. The groom went back to his father's house for about a year to prepare a dwelling place, while the bride prepared for married life. After about a year, the groom set out for the bride with his best man and escorts, usually at night with a torch light procession.

The groom's arrival was preceded by a shout to warn the bride to be prepared for his coming. She knew the approximate time but not the exact time. The groom then takes the bride and her attendants back to his father's house where the guests assemble for the wedding celebration. The groom takes his bride to the bridal chamber to consummate the marriage while the guests celebrate. The groom then announces to the wedding party that the marriage has been consummated. The groom returns to his bride where they remain hidden for 7 days while the wedding is celebrated. After the 7 days, the groom brings out his bride, unveiled so all can see her beauty. What a marvellous picture of the rapture and wedding of Jesus Christ and His bride!

[g.4 p47 -Wedding Analogy](#)

Jesus paid the purchase price for His bride the church (Ephesians 1:7,14; 1Corinthians 6:19-20). He initiated a new covenant symbolized by the cup of wine (1 Corinthians 11:25), and we are set apart for Him alone (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:25-27). He returned to His Father's house and is preparing a place for us. We are preparing to meet Him. He will come with a shout, with His escorts, at the appointed time, but also at an imminent time. Because we do not know the exact time, we are to be ready. He will take us to His Father's house, where the wedding guests are the Old Testament saints. (John 3:29). We will be in His bridal chamber, during the 7 years of Tribulation, where our fidelity to Him will be examined at the Judgement Seat of Christ, and afterward we celebrate the marriage feast. At the end of the 7 years, He will reveal his bride to the world; we will appear with Him in glory (Col.3:4).

Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not expect Him. –Matthew 24:44

***For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. -1Thessalonians 5:93
Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall
come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. -Revelation 3:10***

g.5 p48 -4 Rapture Views

What about the timing of the Rapture? We believe the pre-tribulation rapture position fits the Bible teaching and the sequence of end-time events. A post-tribulation rapture leaves no time for the Judgement Seat of Christ or the marriage of the Lamb. Also, the rapture is imminent and we are to watch and be ready, whereas the Second Coming follows the Tribulation with its' obvious and predicted signs. God has promised that the church will not see the wrath of God - we will be taken away from it instead of going through it.

The promise of Jesus to the church of Philadelphia is for those of the 'rapture generation.' Only one event can be described as a world wide trial, the coming Tribulation. The word 'keep' is 'ek', meaning away from. If God had meant 'in' or 'through', He would have used another word. There are no instructions for how the church is to conduct itself during the Tribulation, which we would expect if the church was to go through it. This is because the Tribulation is to test those who dwell on the earth, which is a common Revelation phrase describing unbelievers. Those who become believers during the Tribulation will be martyred.

The wrath of God doesn't begin at the mid-point of the tribulation, but at the beginning through the Seal judgements in Revelation 6. In Revelation 4:1, after prophesying the church age John is called up to heaven, thus symbolizing the rapture before the tribulation, Thereafter the church does not appear in Revelation until chapter 19, picturing that the true church is not on earth during the 7 years of tribulation. The Tribulation and Revelation as well as Matthew 24 are focused on Israel and the world, not the church. Interesting, because the church is the primary focus of the New Testament until we get to Revelation 4.

An electromagnetic crane is used to separate steel from junk. The crane will move over a railcar filled with junk steel and at the flip of a switch, every piece of steel will rise out of the pile and be bonded to the magnet. Any pieces of wood or other junk will be left behind. So it will be at the Rapture. All true believers will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Mere professors of Christ will be left behind. He is coming for His sheep – the true believers. They alone will hear His voice. Which one are you?

III. THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

The marriage of the Lamb will be one of the most magnificent events in all of human history. It will be the consummation of all the hopes and desires of the Father for His Son. The bride is none other than the New Testament church, which is to become the Lamb's wife. The New Testament church will include those believers from Pentecost (Acts 2) to the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:51-52). The church is described in the New Testament as the Bride of Christ (Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17; Eph. 5:25 ff.), as well as a virgin espoused to her husband (2 Cor. 11:2). Christ is pictured as the bridegroom of the Bride (the church) in the New Testament; whereas, God is portrayed as the husband of His wife (Israel) in the Old Testament (Jer. 31:32; Hos. 2:1-23). Israel in the OT is viewed both as a widow (Lam. 1:1; Isa. 54:4), and as divorced (Jer.

3:8); yet will be restored as Jehovah's wife in the millennial kingdom (Isa. 62:4, 5; 54:4-8). The marriage of the Lamb is a heavenly scene, while passages depicting Israel are presented in an earthly setting. Others, however, believe the Bride is representative of all believers, both of the OT and NT. They do not see in God's program a distinction between Israel and the church, though the marriage distinction is a bit murky.

When will the marriage of the Lamb take place? Between the Rapture and the return of Christ to the earth two events concerning the church will take place; the Judgment Seat of Christ and the marriage of the Lamb. The Bride is depicted as wearing "fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:8). This could only be possible if the church has completed her examination at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Therefore, the marriage of the Lamb would be prior to the return of Christ in Revelation 19:11-21.

There are many variations concerning wedding customs in Scripture; yet, there seem to be three distinct phases in common with each: (1) the marriage contract or betrothal, which was initiated between the parents of the bride and the representative of the bridegroom. This was usually confirmed by oaths and a gift (dowry) to the bride's family; (2) the marriage ceremony or wedding procession, which involved the bridegroom and his friends. They would come to the bride's home to take her back to the house of the bridegroom or the bridegroom's father; and (3) the marriage supper or feast, which would be at the bridegroom's house or his father's. This was attended by guests of the wedding party.

The bride is dressed *"in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints"* (Rev. 19:8). This is in contrast to the harlot in Revelation 17! The "righteousness of saints" ("righteous acts" - NIV), are the deeds done in this life by the believer which will make up the wedding garment that he will wear when he attends the marriage feast. Charles Ryrie, in his commentary, Revelation, has noted the balance between God's sovereignty ("to her was granted"), and man's responsibility ("has made herself ready"). W.A. Criswell, in his Expository Sermons on Revelation, believes the Christian will wear two robes, which he relates to the Roman tunic and toga. The tunic or inner garment is that which relates to the positional righteousness imputed to the believer by Christ; whereas, the toga or outer garment refers to the practical righteousness of the believer, which we fashion ourselves. This outer garment, which will be fashioned from the believer's "good works" (Eph. 2:10), will be the garment of our own making, which we will wear throughout eternity. The outer garment relates to Christ's present work of sanctification with His church (Eph. 5:26), which will result in *"a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish"* (Eph. 5:27).

Who will be the participants in the marriage of the Lamb? The marriage ceremony of the Lamb will take place in heaven and involve only the Bridegroom and the Bride, which are Christ and the church. John the Baptist related that he was only a "friend of the bridegroom" (John 3:29). Israel, the Old Testament saints, and Tribulation saints will obviously be guests at the wedding gala, along with myriads of the angelic hosts. The marriage supper, on the other hand, has several interpretations, which make it difficult to find a desirable solution. Walvoord believes that the marriage of the Lamb is actually the marriage supper, which will climax the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church. He does state that the marriage supper would be held on earth in association with the return of Christ. Most writers distinguish between

the two events, placing the supper on earth with reference to Israel, who awaits the return of the bridegroom and bride (see Psalm 45; Matt. 22:1-14; Lk. 14:16-24; Matt. 25:1-13).

Lewis Sperry Chafer distinguishes "between the marriage supper which is in heaven and celebrated before Christ returns, and the marriage feast (Matt. 25:10, R.V.; Luke 12:37) which is on the earth after His return. Some interpret the marriage supper or feast as the millennial age, in which the Jew and Gentiles will be invited to participate. Others, such as Hendriksen, believe that "the feast lasts not one or two weeks but throughout all eternity."

Whether the marriage supper is in heaven or on earth, and whether the duration is one day, a thousand years, or throughout all eternity, the important thing for us to remember is that we still have time to fashion through "good works" the wedding garment that we will wear in eternity. *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1).*



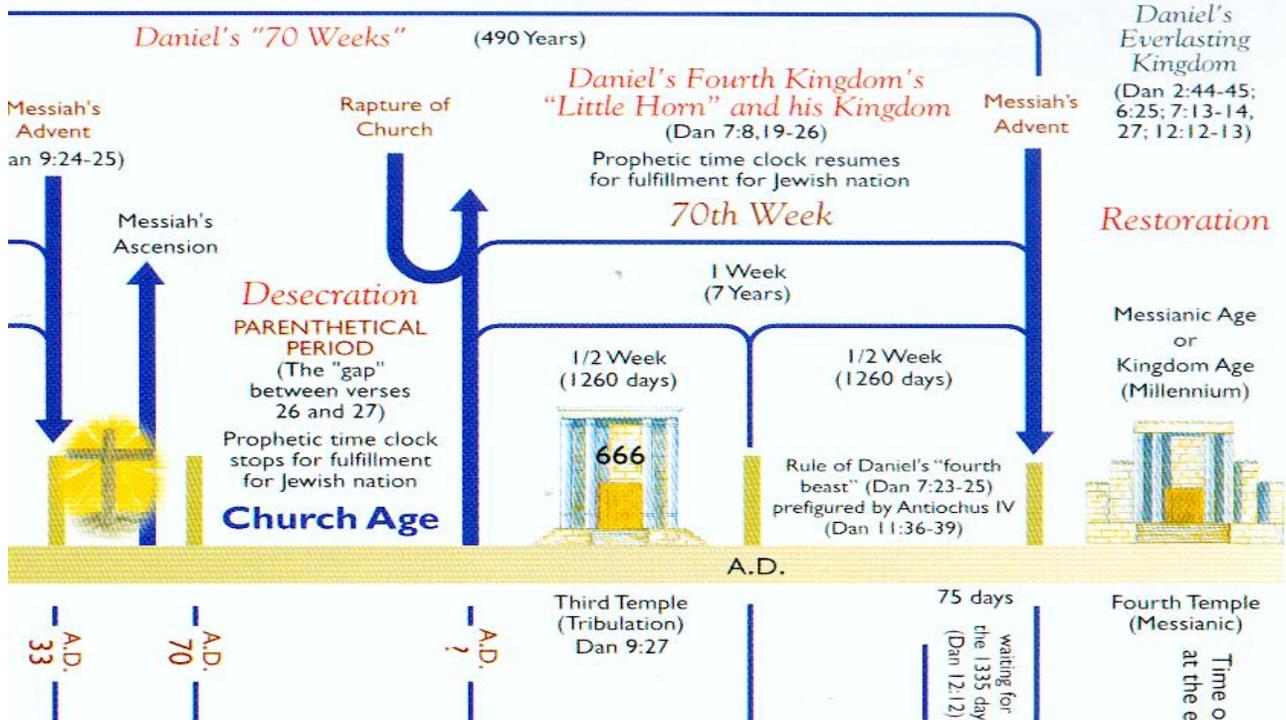
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Elijah caught up to heaven
-2Kings 2:11

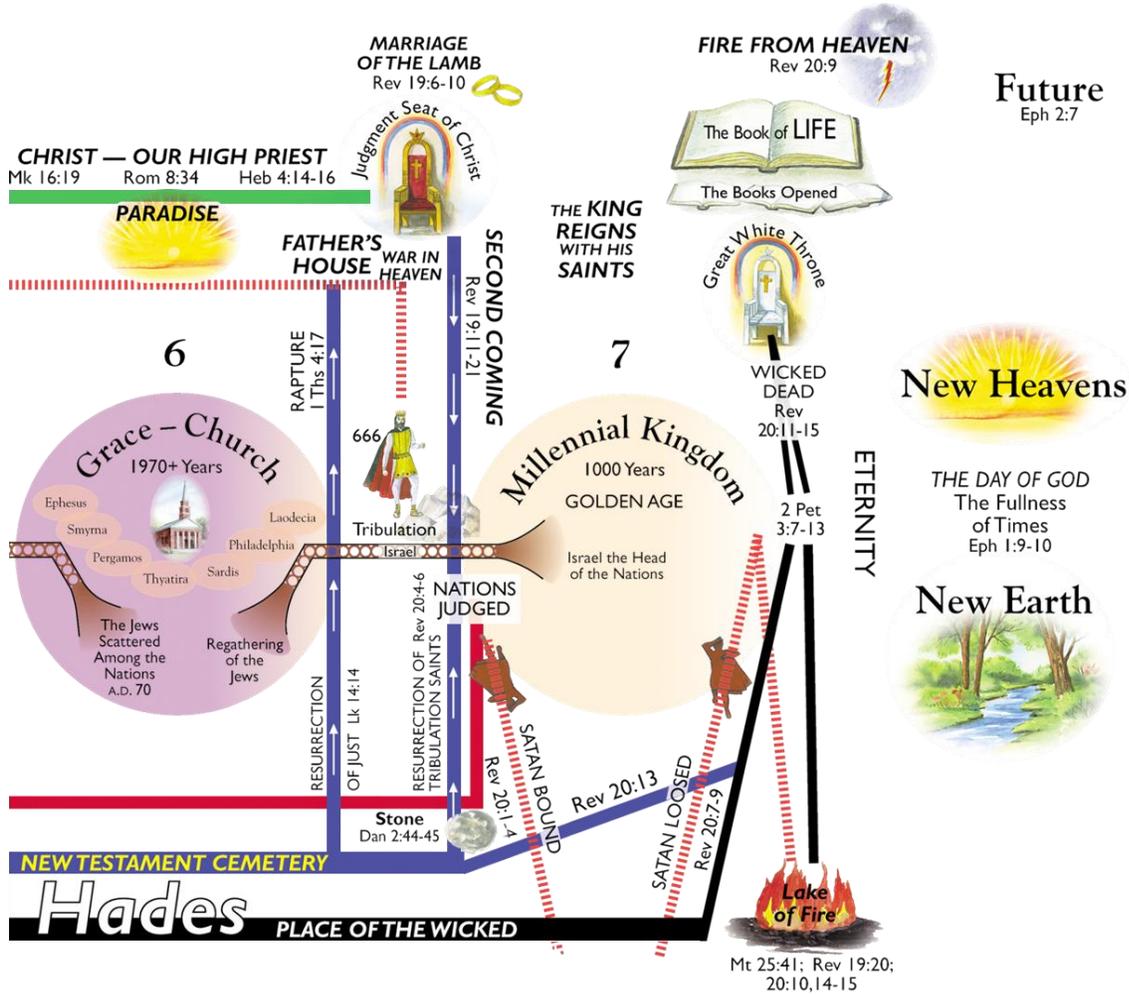
'harpazo'

-also
Enoch –Gen.5:4
Jesus – Rev.12:5
Paul -2Cor.12:2

70 Weeks of Daniel



2.



Future Events

3.

Jewish Wedding Analogy with Jesus' Coming for His Church

Groom negotiates the bridal price.

Covenant signified by cup of wine.

Groom returned to fathers house for about a year to prepare a house for her. Bride prepared for married life. Groom sets out for bride with best man and escorts at night by torchlight. Shout warns the bride he is coming.

They return to the fathers house for the wedding celebration. Groom takes bride to chamber to consummate the marriage. Groom announces consummation to guests, then Groom and bride remain hidden for 7 days.

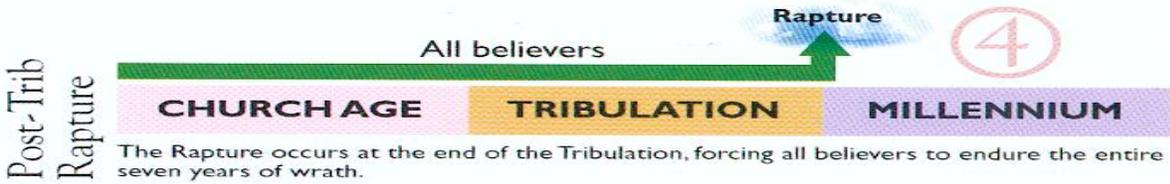
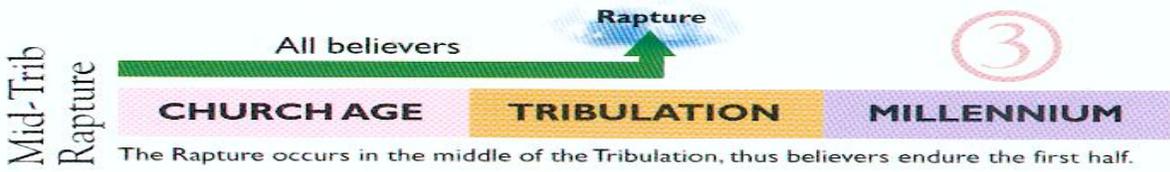
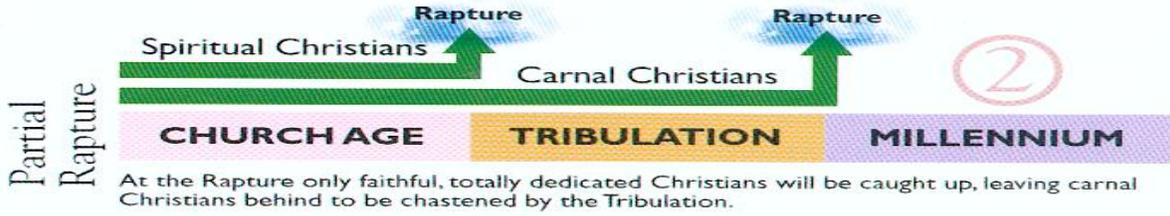
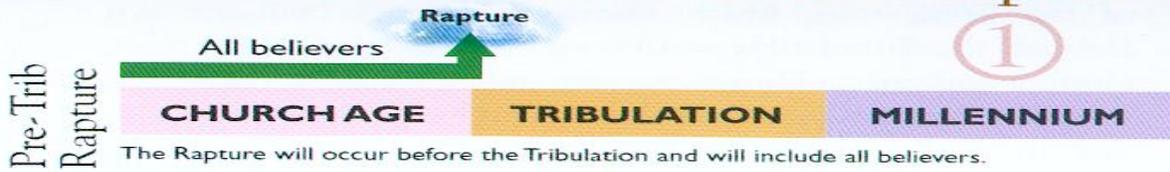
4. After 7 days groom brings out his unveiled bride so all can see her beauty.

-Jesus paid the purchase price for His bride the church (Eph.1:7,14; 1Cor. 6:19-20).
 -He initiated a new covenant symbolized by the cup of wine (1 Corinthians 11:25), and we are set apart for Him alone (2 Cor.11:2; Eph.5:25-27).
 -He returned to His Father's house and is preparing a place for us.
 -We are preparing to meet Him.
 -He will come with a shout, with His escorts, at the appointed time, but also at an imminent time.
 -Because we do not know the exact time, we are to be ready.

-He will take us to His Father's house, where the wedding guests are the Old Testament saints.
 -We will be in His bridal chamber, during the 7 years of Tribulation, where our fidelity to Him will be examined at the Judgement Seat of Christ, and afterward we celebrate the marriage feast.

-At the end of 7 years, He will reveal his bride to world; we will appear with Him in glory (Col.3:4)

The Various Views of the Rapture



5.

6. The Tribulation Revelation 6-10

Al Gore won an Oscar for his movie *An Inconvenient Truth*. The movie serves to stimulate people into believing there is an environmental crisis on the horizon. It calls for drastic changes if humanity wants to reverse global warming. Inconveniently for Al Gore, his family's carbon footprint was released, shortly after the movie, showing they use 20 times more energy for their household than the average. Who wants to be inconvenienced to benefit someone else? The Inconvenient Truth is that the world is on a collision course with Almighty God. The looming world-wide catastrophe is not the melting of polar ice or the twenty foot rise in sea levels, as the following predicts:

What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age? And Jesus answered and said, Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying I am the Christ, and will deceive many. 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. All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 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. -Matthew 24:3-13

Jesus speaks of human problems such as wars and rumors of wars as normal events, but He describes an escalation of events that will lead up to and usher in the Tribulation. The beginning of sorrows (Mt.24:7-8) will consist of increasing ethnic conflict, that even recent wars, peace movements and diplomacy have done little to alleviate. An environmental crisis could bring widespread famine. Devastating earthquakes and tsunamis are forecast. The problem that humanity has is not how we can get things under control. The world's problem is we are not in a right relationship with our Creator and He has warned us the day of reckoning is coming.

I. THE 7 SEALS - Revelation 6

When the Lamb opened one of the seals... behold, a white horse... and he went out conquering... another horse, fiery red went out, it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth... a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales... saying... do not harm the oil and the wine... a pale horse, and the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. When He opened the 5th seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed. I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and

island was moved out of its place. 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 6:1-12

Jesus words in Matthew 24 parallel the Book of Revelation. This picture of the 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse has been looming on the collective horizon of modern life and thought. Whether or not people believe the Bible, they look around at the modern trends of our age and see that we are not far from catastrophe, and that any or all of these things could suddenly come upon us. There are many voices who proclaim humanity will find permanent solutions to the threats of war, pollution and greed, but the progression of history speaks otherwise. A thoughtful conclusion is that we need salvation or face destruction.

Rev.6:1-2; Mt.24:5. The 1st Seal reveals a false messiah who will come conquering with a bow without arrows, suggesting successfully gaining control by dialogue and diplomacy. Revelation 13 tells us that such a person will arise, causing the whole world to follow after him, but he will be indwelt by Satan. He will control the economic, political and religious scene and end up leading the world into Armageddon. The world is waiting for a saviour who will bring a solution to the political, economic and ecological crises that are coming upon the world and God will allow them to believe in a leader they want and deserve, a servant of the devil.

Rev.6:3-4; Mt.24:6. The 2nd Seal reveals warfare, and the rider wields a sword of combat; the word kill means butcher or slaughter. Peace taken suggests that by this time there will be a peace made. The Bible looks at Jerusalem as the centre of world politics, so it may mean this leader will be the one who solves the Middle-East peace problem. Ezekiel 38 predicts a future attack by a northern power (likely Russia) on Israel, who will be coming upon a nation of unwallled villages suggesting a nation at peace. Currently Israel has a concrete wall around its most vulnerable places. He will come promoting peace, but in his wake, there will be war and slaughter. The design of evil is empty promises, brief pleasures, with deception at its core and destruction its reward. In alcohol, sex, gambling or politics, evil works the same and we cannot alter or subdue it.

Rev.6:5-6; Mt.24:7. The 3rd Seal reveals a coming world famine. Famine accompanies war and this seal predicts an economic and energy crisis of unheard proportions. The USA is the reigning world superpower, both militarily and economically. Can you imagine what will happen to our economy if the USA experiences oil and food shortages? This seal predicts a day's wages will be needed for a loaf of bread, like Germany in the 1920's. Who is prepared for economic calamity? How quickly do people panic when gas prices spiral? How many days will people tolerate food shortages? What will those who live in cities do? Revelation 13 predicts people will be forced to take the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell. They won't need much convincing to sell their souls for food.

Rev.6:7-8; Mt.24:8. The fourth seal is Death with Hell following. Power is given to Death and Hell over 1/4 of the earth's population. In other words, in today's terms, some 2 billion people will die by war, famine and death through disaster and pestilence. When scientists talk of deadly new diseases, they are painting a picture of possible world-wide catastrophe. These 4 Horsemen are the beginning of God's fury, the outpouring of His wrath and judgement upon the world because sin will have reached its fullness. The world is heading for

disaster and any other viewpoint is not in touch with reality. Man can do great things with technology but has still not learned how to love thy neighbour. The increase of evil and greed on earth is a product of human sin. Judgement must come and then God will set up His kingdom.

Rev.6:9-11; Mt.24:9. The 5th Seal describes the martyrdom of Tribulation believers, after the Rapture of the church. The gospel calls us to repentance, salvation and a life of following Jesus. Some who profess to know Christ have difficulty following. The idea of yielding one's life to God is foreign to some who say they believe. The question is, do they truly believe? They will know for sure after the rapture. If they miss the rapture because they do not now possess saving faith, then to believe in Jesus at that time will cost them not just their lifestyle, but their physical life. Better to be saved now than during the Tribulation, when the cost will be everything.

Rev.6:12-17; Mt.24:29. The 6th Seal involves supernatural judgements and seems to be a preview of the severe judgements of the second 3 2 years or Great Tribulation, culminating in the Second Coming. The 6th seal conveys some of the same imagery as Matthew 24:29: sun and moon darkened, stars falling from the sky. We see here not just the earth in calamity, but the heavens as well. Imagine the sky spitting apart like a rolled up scroll! (see Isaiah 34:4). After the Haiti earthquake of 2010 or Japan tsunami of 2011, we can see what large scale devastation looks like. The trouble we have seen is but a glimpse of what is coming. We call it terra firma, but this earth will shake like wind shakes a tree.

II. THE 144,000 - REVELATION 7

g.1 p57 -Revelation chart

Some people are easily enticed to become part of an "inner circle", especially when it appeals to their desire for power or to be special. The 12 disciples argued who would sit beside Jesus' in the Kingdom. Several times He gave a spiritual principle which gives us proper perspective on how God works: *"the last will be first and the first will be last."* Belonging to the 144,000 of Revelation 7 is not to be coveted, as several cults violate.

After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed: –Revelation 7:1-8

Who are the 144,000? The 7th Day Adventists taught they would be the faithful found observing the Jewish Sabbath at Christ's coming. However the apostle Paul said the day of worship was a matter of conscience, not of command. (see Romans 14:5-6). The Jehovah's Witnesses taught they would be the first 144,000 of their group, the only ones who will ever live in Heaven. They say they have filled that number decades ago. They also said Jesus returned in 1914. The Mormons taught they are the elders of the latter-day saint's. They also say that Jesus and Lucifer are brothers. Much of Protestantism taught that this is the church because it has replaced Israel. We can see how greatly people can err when they depart from a literal interpretation of the

words of Scripture! The text clearly says these are 12,000 from each of the 12 Tribes of Israel, Jacobs's sons. The sealing is a sign of ownership and protection of Jewish disciples to serve the Lord during the Tribulation.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes...

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?

And I said to him, Sir, you know. So he said to me, These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God... and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. -Revelation 7:9-17

The text tells us these believers are wearing white robes, so they are more likely those martyred out of the great tribulation, as seen in Revelation 6:11. Their salvation seems to be related to the work of the 144,000. It looks more like the on-going harvest of martyred believers who are killed for their testimony and refusal to take the mark of the beast. Also, the Greek word 'come' in Revelation 7:14 means a continuous action, as opposed to their coming one-time as one body, which the rapture means. (1Thessalonians 4:16-17). The term 'great tribulation' echoes Jesus description of the trouble when the abomination of desolation comes, paralleling the 2nd half of the Tribulation in Revelation 13-19. This cannot be an end-of-tribulation rapture or else the chronology of Revelation makes no sense. An on-going harvest of martyred believers is the most faithful to the text and the book. Rapture views are convictions based on various texts of Scripture, as there is no definitive text on the timing, but the pre-tribulation position is the most systematic.

III. THE 7 TRUMPETS - REVELATION 8-9

When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. -Revelation 8:1-2

What this describes is an awesome silence before the unleashing of the trumpet judgements by the opening of the 7th Seal, which means the scroll can now be opened. Something tremendous is about to happen, beyond the normal scope of disaster or calamity, something beyond even the Seal judgements, as the Trumpets bring direct judgement from heaven to the earth. Chronologically, we are around the midpoint of the 7 year Tribulation, although commentators differ on exact chronology. While the Trumpet judgements begin just before the mid-point of the Tribulation, the severity of the Trumpets indicates Great Tribulation and they surely proceed through the mid-point into the 2nd - 3½ years.

So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded:

And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up. Then the second angel sounded: And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood. And a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed. -Revelation 8:6-9

The Trumpet judgements are apparently supernatural, like the literal miraculous plagues on Egypt in Exodus 7-11. Whether the descriptions are exactly literal or portrayed in symbols, the results certainly are literal! In this

study of Revelation, we can speak to what the words of Revelation say, how the Bible sheds light from other passages, and then offer some speculation on what these judgements may be. The value of reasonable speculation serves to describe what John saw in possible terms of our day.

The first 4 Trumpets involve fire and judgements on the earth, so it is possible to speculate on a limited nuclear war at this time. The 4 angels of Revelation 7:1 only hold destruction back for so long. The first Trumpet brings hail and fire mingled with blood, like the 1st and 7th plagues of Exodus. Perhaps blood is the result of living creatures dying from the judgements, or it is literally blood from above. Fully 1/3 of the trees and all the green grass are burned up. (Exodus 9:23-26). It will be unprecedented ecological devastation.

When we see the word *like*, we can infer that John is trying to describe something difficult to describe. The 2nd Trumpet is like a burning mass or mountain (Jeremiah 51:25 calls Babylon a destroying mountain), falling into the sea, possibly a meteor, a volcano, or sub-launched H-bomb (Amos 7:4 says conflict destroys the great deep). The result is 1/3 of the sea becomes blood, as 1/3 of the creatures and 1/3 of the ships and crew are destroyed all over the earth. While a 1st century man may have difficulty describing these things, we in the 21st century can imagine the world-wide effects of modern missile and nuclear warfare.

Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter. –Revelation 8:10-11

This great star seems to be another burning mass or object, a 'star' referred to as 'it', called wormwood, a very bitter substance (Jeremiah 23:15), the opposite of the bitter waters made sweet at Marah (Exodus 15:23-25). This poisons 1/3 of the water and many die. The Greek 'apsinthos' for wormwood, is called Chernobyl in Russian, which is interesting in considering the meltdown of that Russian nuclear reactor years ago. There are other possibilities. Those who reject the water of life supplied by Jesus Christ the Lamb of God will drink the waters of bitterness in judgement.

Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. 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 8:12-13

The 4th Trumpet causes 1/3 of the sun, moon and stars to be struck, so that a third of day and night are supernaturally changed. Some say that the disturbances of judgements will cause 1/3 of these to be blocked out, but Jesus said there would be signs in the sun, moon and stars (Luke 21:25-26), which suggests something directly happening to them, not just dust in the atmosphere. In Exodus 10:21 there was a supernatural darkness in Egypt but not where the children of Israel lived. The first 4 Trumpets involve judgements originating from above, bringing destruction to 1/3 of the earth. The 5th and 6th Trumpets are inflicted on mankind and involve demonic forces bringing plagues and wars.

Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months. Their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. In those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will desire to die, and death will flee from them.

The shape of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle. On their heads were crowns of something like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. They had hair like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions teeth. And they had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots with many horses running into battle. They had tails like scorpions, and there were stings in their tails. Their power was to hurt men five months. And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon. One woe is past. Behold, still two more woes are coming after these things. - Revelation 9:1-12

The star is called he, and so here we have a being, a fallen angel fallen from heaven, which some think may be Satan, as he is tossed from heaven in Revelation 12:12, where woe is pronounced on the earth because of Satan's wrath. However he is not named here, but we see this star given the key to the abyss, likely the abode of demons called hell or 'tartarus' in Jude 6 and 2Peter2:4. The pit is opened and a smoke of darkness arises out of it, perhaps signifying the spiritual evil corruption which affects the physical, although on a scale unimaginable to us. Demonic locusts come out of the smoke, which recall the plague of locusts Moses brought upon Egypt in Exodus 10:13-15. These locusts are not grass eaters, but have the power to afflict the unsaved /unsealed people (Revelation 7:3), with a sting like a scorpion. Scorpions can inflict great suffering although their sting is only fatal to small children. These will inflict pain for 5 months that causes people to want to die but they will not be able to, even if they try to commit suicide.

In verse 6 we are given the description of something other-worldly, which is prefaced by the word like, meaning John is trying to put what he sees into word pictures he can describe. Locusts like horses prepared for battle tells us that demons like to take some kind of form or body. (ie. the legion of demons and the pigs, Luke 8). They are as a hideous corrupt fallen cherub: instead of having the 4 faces of lion, calf, man and eagle like the cherubim around the Throne of Heaven, they have crowns on their heads, faces like men, hair like women, teeth like lions and tails like scorpions. Sounds something like the WWF! Their breastplates are iron and their wings sound like a battlefield of horses and chariots.

We know they are demonic, but what futuristic manifestation is John trying to describe? How would he describe attack helicopters, or battle tanks? We read of an invading end-time army in Joel 2:1-11 that involves an appearance of fearsome battle steeds and chariots. Mechanized vehicles were unknown to the prophets, so how would they describe them? We know that demons summon armies to gather at Armageddon (Revelation 16:14). Do these demons come up out of the pit to bring war? But if this were the case, do not war armaments kill people? These demonic hoards are a mystery, whose king or leader is Abaddon, or Destroyer, and they will inflict suffering and destroy. Joel 1:6 says, "*For a nation has come against My land, strong and without number; his teeth are the teeth of a lion.*" Nahum 2:4 says, "*The chariots rage in the streets, they*

jostle one another in the broad roads, they seem like torches, they run like lightening.” Sounds like modern warfare to me. This is reasonable speculation, not interpretation. g.2-3 p57 Locust - Helicopter

Then the sixth angel sounded: And I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates. So the four angels, who had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was 200,000,000; I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision: those who sat on them had breastplates of fiery red, hyacinth blue, and sulphur yellow; and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, smoke, and brimstone.

By these three plagues a third of mankind was killed by the fire and the smoke and the brimstone which came out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails are like serpents, having heads; and with them they do harm. But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. -Revelation 9:13-21

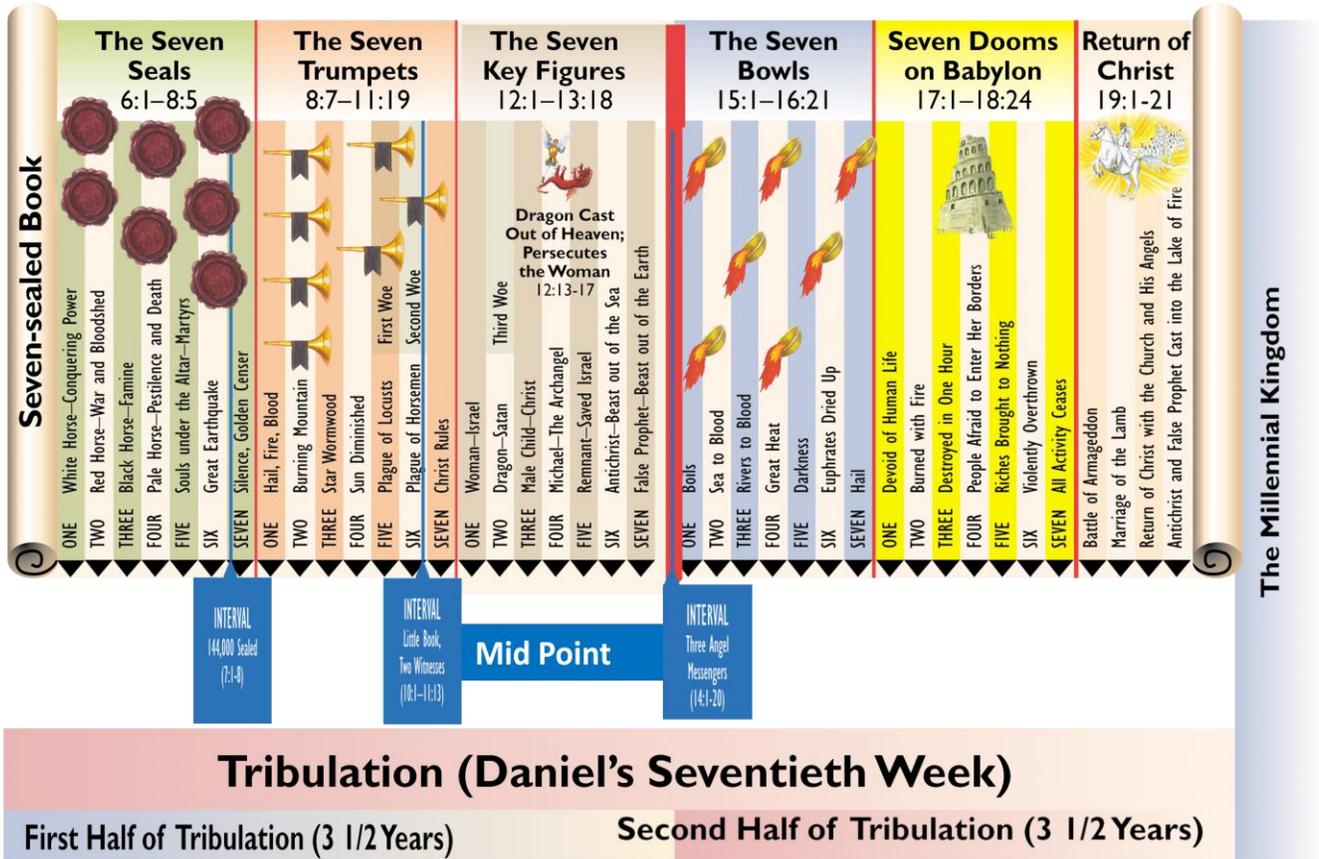
The angel with the 6th Trumpet hears the voice from the altar, the horns meaning the power or government of God, so God is giving this angel authority to release the 4 angels who are presently bound at the Euphrates River, which runs today through Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Kuwait. What an amazing picture of the spiritual conflict amidst the world's political trouble spot in the Middle East! The Euphrates has a prominent role as one of the geographical centers of Scripture. The Garden of Eden was located there as was the Tower of Babel and the city of Babylon. Today this area is the center of virulent anti-Semitism. Abraham was called from there to the land of Israel, and as Jerusalem has its part as the center of God's Kingdom to come, so the Euphrates is the fountainhead of idolatry, and where the judgement of God will begin to be poured out on the kingdom of Satan.

These 4 angels are to be released to kill 1/3 of mankind, with the destructive power of a huge army. This army seems to be the kings of the east from the 6th Bowl in Revelation 16, where the Euphrates is dried up so they can invade Israel and fight the rest of the world at the Hill of Megiddo in Israel. (Armageddon). Commentators have long speculated that China and her allies will bring this huge army to battle at the end. In 1965 China claimed to have a militia of 200,000,000. Because of China's recent one child policy, they will soon have this many men for whom there are no women. It seems this army begins its campaign around the middle of the tribulation and continues to the final battle.

Again we have horsemen. These horses are not literal horses; their heads are like heads of lions, and out of their mouths and tails come fire smoke and burning sulphur, something how we could describe as modern tanks, rocket launchers, flame throwers, missile batteries or tactical nuclear weapons. It is also possible that what John sees is the spiritual counterpart to the physical armies, such as when Elisha's servant saw the horses and chariots of fire around Elisha when an invading army threatened. (2Kings 6:16-17). There have been modern claims of battlefield relationships between the armies of men and the manifestation of angels and demons, such as the Angels of Mons in France in WW1, and the 6-Day War between Israel and Egypt of 1967. These Tribulation armies will kill billions of people and the spiritual realm has a major part in how it is played out. The 6th Trumpet allows the kings of the east to enter the war between the beast and the kings of

the south and north mentioned in Daniel 11:40-44. Four winds, four kings, four end-time alliances, all heading for the ultimate war in the Valley of Yitzreel in Israel - Armageddon.

There are those who will not be killed in the final wars but who still will not repent. The grip of the sensual and demonic nature of what modern man worships has many bound forever in unbelief (2Corinthians 4:2-4), and their great sins enslave them. The word sorceries is 'pharmakia', perhaps referring to the use of drugs and witchcraft by millions of people in our time. Most of the unrepentant have hard hearts because they do not want to give up their sins of sexual immorality or drug use, or their disdain for God. Please don't let a hard heart keep you out of the kingdom of God.



Tribulation (Daniel's Seventieth Week)

First Half of Tribulation (3 1/2 Years)

Second Half of Tribulation (3 1/2 Years)

Matthew 24:7-14

Mt.24:15-21

Mt.24:22-28

Mt. 24:29-31



1. Revelation Chart

2. Mature Locust



3. USA Cobra Attack Helicopter



7. The Abomination and World-Wide Delusion - Revelation 11-14

A messenger never knows who will read their message, and there may be some who hear or read this Christian message that think Bible believers are delusional. Especially when it comes to Bible prophecy and predictions about the end of the world, like some of the ones given in 2012. But we wonder who is under a delusion. People tend to reject such a message because it doesn't agree with what they think. Perhaps they don't recognize truth and it is they who are under a delusion. Give this careful thought: the Bible predicts a major delusion is coming that will affect the whole world.

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie. -2Thessalonians 2:9-11

Global problems are so huge that we cannot expect mere politicians to be up to the task. The world wants some kind of Messiah, but generally one who will not impose difficult moral demands on us, such as Jesus Christ does. Only truth and integrity will work in preserving the environment or human relationships, so why would we think these do not matter when it comes to spiritual realities and destiny? Jesus warned us that a false Messiah will come before His promised 2nd Coming. The strong delusion is the lie about this anti-christ. He will come proclaiming peace and safety, yet as he attempts world control God will send great judgements upon the world. The Tribulation moves from the Seal and Trumpet judgements to the events of the middle of the 7 years that usher in the final 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation. These events are the focus of Revelation 11-13, and the pivotal roles of great players in the collision of God and human rebellion.

Revelation 10 is a brief parenthesis in the Revelation chronology, similar to Ezekiel 2-3 when God spoke personally to the prophet. In fact, John is given a prophecy about the 7 Thunders of which we are given no interpretation - they are sealed up. One point to note is that we have an affinity with the Biblical prophets when we experience the turmoil and hope regarding the Coming of Christ. (Rev.10:9). The prophetic word of God is sweet for the believer to know but also bitter because of what it portends for the world.

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. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” -Rev.11:1-3

I. THE TEMPLE MOUNT - Revelation 11

In Revelation 11 John measures the temple of God - measuring signifies ownership; the area belongs to God, the Temple Mount is His property, today and forever (Deut.12:11). The Dome of the Rock occupies the spot where the Jewish Temple stood. It will be the result of a Mid-East peace treaty brokered by this anti-christ (Dan.9:27), that will allow for the new Temple to be built. Some believe that this is possible since it is the Al-Asqa Mosque on the Temple Mount that is the 3rd most holy site for Islam. The solution to the

current impasse about the Temple Mount will have take an extraordinary turn of events and will to allow for the 3rd Temple to be built. Some Israeli's say today that only the Messiah could bring the miracle of peace and the reality of the 3rd Temple. This may help pave the way for the delusion regarding the lie that the Tribulation peace bringer is the Messiah. This Temple will not point to Christ as the original did, for it repudiates all that He did on the cross. Jerusalem will be so spiritually corrupt that it is called Sodom.

These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire. -Rev.11:4-6

***What are these two olive trees, one at the right of the lampstand and the other at its left? So he said, These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. -Zech 4:11,14
Then behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah -Luke 9:30***

The two witnesses of Rev.11 are two prophets sent by God to preach and do miracles during the Tribulation. They warn of the coming judgements, and will be clothed in sackcloth, as a sign of mourning over the spiritual darkness settling on Jerusalem. Most Bible teachers identify them as Elijah and Enoch or Moses. Enoch and Elijah did not die, while Elijah held back the rain for 3 ½ years and called down fire from heaven. Conversely, the 2 anointed ones of Zechariah 4 were the political and spiritual leaders of the day, so it could be here as well. They will prophesy for 1260 days, the same as 42 months or 3½ years. Some say these time designations refer to the 1st and 2nd half of the Tribulation - Walvood says it is the 2nd half, because of the context of Revelation 11 in the middle of the Tribulation. The 42 months refers to the time of Satan's rule and 1260 days to the witness and protection of Israel. The beast out of the pit is Satan, the beast out of the sea (Rev.13:1) is the anti-Christ, the beast out of the land (Rev.13:11) is the false prophet.

When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit (Rev.9:11) will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. -Revelation 11:7-10

Rev.11:7-10 says that when their ministry is finished, the beast (anti-christ) will be given power over them and kill them. Their dead bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem and be paraded before the whole world. We can imagine Wolf Blitzer going nuts in the situation room! The message of salvation is life to the believer, but a condemnation to the unbeliever, and it will be hated like never before. Then God will raise them from the dead! The world will witness their amazing resurrection, but things will get worse as the 3rd Woe is coming. A severe earthquake strikes the city and causes the survivors to glorify the God of heaven.

Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them. - 11:11-12

The 7th Trumpet is a sound of praise as well as announcing the 3rd Woe. We will rejoice when the **"kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever"**- just like the Hallelujah chorus sings in triumph. Almighty God will take power and destroy those who destroy the earth.

II. WAR IN HEAVEN AND EARTH - Revelation 12

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days... -Rev.12:1-6

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him...

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent...

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. -Rev.12:7-17

Revelation 12 provides a vivid historical picture of Satan trying to oppose God's Messiah to be born through the nation of Israel and God's intent to take the kingdom of this world away from evil. The woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of 12 stars represents the nation of Israel and the 12 tribes. (see Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9-10). She is travailing in childbirth, representing the promise of Genesis 3:15 and pain Israel has under gone to bring the Messiah to the world.

The second sign is a great fiery red dragon, having 7 heads and 10 horns, and 7 diadems or crowns on his heads (Rev.12:3-4). The dragon is Satan, fiery red are his murderous characteristics. The description is like Daniel's vision of the 4th beast (Dan.7:7), and also like the beast out of the sea (Rev.13:1), and the scarlet beast of Rev.17:3. The 7 heads likely represent the 7 great world empires that have ruled the biblical world, Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome and the revived Roman empire of the Last Days spoken of in Daniel 2. The 7 heads of the dragon indicate that Satan is the real world ruler, the unseen head behind all despots, thus he has crowns on each head. The 10 horns were first shown in Dan.2:44; 7:8, and are described as 10 kings, which shall rule for a brief time with the beast (Rev.17:12). Satan is the political and spiritual vehicle upon which all who oppose the rule of God are riding on. "In the days of these kings", Jesus will return to set up His kingdom.

The dragons tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to earth (Rev.12:5). This is the rebellion Satan led in heaven against the rule of God (Isa.14:9-17, Ezk.28:12-19), and 1/3 of the angels rebelled with him. The dragon standing before the woman who is about to give birth is a vivid picture of how Satan tried to eliminate the godly promised seed from being born. This sweeping panorama of history then speaks of the Messiah being born, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron (Psalm 2:9), and who ascended to the throne of God after His crucifixion and resurrection (Acts 1:9). The scene leaps over ancient history to the Tribulation period and the time Jesus warned of in Mt.24:16, and sees the remnant of Israel fleeing to the wilderness for 1260 days or the 2nd half of the Tribulation, as anti-christ makes war against Israel (Rev.12:6).

Rev.12:13-17 describes war on earth. As Jesus notes in Mt.24:15, the dragons first attack is against Israel. The Bible teaches all anti-Semitic racism originates with Satan. When he attacks Israel and exalts himself in God's temple, the Jews will undergo great persecution and destruction. This is why Jesus tells the Jewish people who will see the Abomination to **run**. Unless God shortens these days, they all would perish. But God has a Jewish remnant of 1/3 (Zech.13:8), who will be protected, given two wings of a great eagle and taken into the wilderness (possibly Petra), for a time, times and half a time (Dan.7:25), which corresponds to 1260 days, 42 months, or 3½ years. Some take this mean the USA will protect Israel as she uses the eagle as her symbol. It is more Biblical to interpret this as God's provision to deliver Israel as He has done in the past, (Ex.19:4), rather than identify the nation apart from what the Bible says.

III. ANTI-CHRIST AND THE FALSE PROPHET - Revelation 13

Share International, the brainchild of British author and lecturer Benjamin Creme, has a website where they present Maitreya, the coming World Teacher. The same message was put in newspapers world-wide in the late 1980's. *"Many now expect the return of their awaited Teacher, whether they call him the Christ, Messiah, the fifth Buddha, Krishna, or the Imam Mahdi. Millions now know that the Teacher who fulfills all these expectations is already living among us. Miraculous happenings of all kinds will continue and multiply...The minds of men will be baffled and amazed by these wonders, and this will cause them to ponder deeply. As Maitreya himself has said: Very soon, you will see my face and hear my voice."* The miracles this refers to are the supposed manifestations of crosses of light, weeping statues, hands on mirrors, Christ images, ufos etc. We may laugh, but what if incredible things begin to happen world-wide?

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. 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. And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

-Revelation 13:1-8

Two beasts are mentioned in Revelation 13: the beast out of the sea (v1), which we call the anti-christ, and the beast out of the earth (11), or the false prophet. These two are captured at Christ's 2nd coming and cast alive into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20). The dragon, who is identified as Satan, completes the evil triumvirate, the opposite to the Triune God: Satan as rival to the Father, the anti-christ as the false messiah to Jesus the true Messiah, and the false prophet as the opposite to the miracle workings of the Holy Spirit.

The beast of Revelation 13:1-10 is *therion*, meaning a wild beast, stressing hostility. He comes out of the sea, which is often used in Scripture to mean the mass of humanity, which we would take he is a Gentile man, as v.18 refers that he is a man. He is similar to the dragon of Revelation 12:3 in having 7 heads and 10 horns, except that he has 10 crowns on the 10 heads, which we take it to mean he is leading the 10 ruling kings of the revived Roman empire (Daniel 2:44, Revelation 17:12). The dragon wears the symbols of world empire rule over world history, while the beast out of the sea wears the symbols of satanic authority ruling through this 10 horn confederacy in the Tribulation. He is given power, authority and rule by the dragon, which we can take to mean that he is a man possessed or energized by Satan himself.

One of the heads is mortally wounded, then the deadly wound is healed, which causes the world to worship and follow the beast. Is this the death or assassination attempt of a man, or the fact that the Roman empire once thought dead is revived in the Tribulation? It could be the false resurrection (see v.14), of the powerful political man who comes to rule at the beginning of the Tribulation, perhaps by his amazing success in brokering peace in the Middle East, and then is indwelt by Satan after the war in heaven. The world will be dazzled by the military and charismatic power of the beast and will come to think he is their saviour! He will speak great things, blaspheme God, and is given authority for 42 months, the final 3½ years of Tribulation.

Like Adolf Hitler, he will mesmerize the nations with his inspiring speeches, broadcast for all to see and hear. As we worship the Father because of the Son, the world will worship the dragon because of this beast. When he stands in the Jerusalem Temple and announces to the world that he is the messiah (Dan.9:27, Mt.24:15, 2Thes.2:4), most will accept it! Then he will attempt to exercise his rule and authority over all the earth, which will bring the other alliances together to fight him at Armageddon.

He will make war with the saints and overcome them (v.7). This leader and his growing empire will dominate the politics, religion and economics of the world system. The only ones who will not worship him will be those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of life, the saved of both Jew and Gentile. This is best interpreted as the names of the redeemed who have their names inscribed in the Book of Life before creation, and whose names will never be removed. The redeemed will never take the mark. Later, as his rule becomes oppressive to the kings of the east and others, he will wage war for control over all the earth.

Another beast will arise out of the earth, who will be a miracle worker, a false prophet not of heavenly origin, who cause all to worship and submit to the 1st beast's control. g.1 p64 Chart of Beasts

I saw another beast... he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon... He performs great signs... telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived... and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

And he causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.

-Revelation 13:11-18

One of the deceptions of this false prophet (Rev.19:20), will be to cause those he has deceived into worshipping an image of the 1st beast. The false prophet will reorganize the world's population under the control of the beast. They will be forced to take a mark, without which no one will be able to buy and sell. The world already has incredible commercial unity. The mark will be a universal replacement for all personal identification. We are seeing the use of implanted micro-chips to track children, animals and criminals. One day some such thing will be forced upon every citizen, and in the wrong hands give incredible power to those who design, control and enforce the system. The mark of the beast will enslave people, although it will gain gradual acceptance at first by promising great convenience and security. The Tribulation will be full of conflict as nations will be forced to become subservient to such a system. A dictator trying to control the world economy will be resisted by many powerful nations.

It is useless to try and identify the anti-christ now. Likely the understanding of the identity of the beast will be given to those careful to "*hear the words of this prophecy*", during the Tribulation. Then they will realize God was right all along and hopefully repent. 666 is the number of the beast. It could signify the satanic trinity or the perfect man. In the New Age movement, 6 is the number of divine light and 666 represents Lucifer, the coming New Age light-bearer. The mark will wed together religion and commerce, demanding absolute loyalty and enslavement to the evil system.

While true Christians will not have to worry about the mark of the beast, as the rapture will occur before it is an issue, those whom we know may. The Bible specifically says that if anyone takes the mark, they will not be able to be saved. (Rev.14:9-11). Rev.15:2 says that those who refuse the mark and turn to the Lord will be saved, yet it will cost them their life. That will be the crux of the matter. If one refuses the mark, they will not be able to physically live. If one takes the mark, they will not be able to spiritually live.

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name. -Revelation 14:9-12



Dragon = Satan -Rev.12:3
 -has 7 heads with 7 crowns + 10 horns
 -the 7 heads + 7 crowns = 7 world empires he rules
 -10 horns = 10 kings of Daniel 2-7 that will rule



Beast out of the sea : Rev.13:1-2
 -has 7 heads + 10 horns with 10 crowns
 -7 heads = continuing authority of Satan
 -10 horns + 10 crowns = he leads the 10 kings
 and gives them authority to rule & uproots 3
 -4 animals = Daniel 7 description of the beast



Beast out of the earth: Rev.13:11
 -2 horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon
 Called the false prophet –message and authority from Satan

-the beast out of the sea is a final empire that is personified as the world dictator / anti-christ

1. Chart of Beasts

2. Questions about the Mark

- **What is the mark of the beast?**
 - some mark or device that enables people to make economic transactions
 - will be on right hand or forehead -an implanted micro-chip seems most possible
 - without it no one will be able to buy or sell -imagine the pressure to take it!
- **How near might this be?**
 - the technology has existed since the 1990's -currently being used for pets and children etc
 - the amount of fraud and theft plus new economic order will make it necessary for all
- **What might trigger it's acceptance?**
 - a major world economic collapse will bring in a new reorganized cashless system
 - in the hands of evil this will be used to control the whole world and every person
- **What do we need to know about it today?**
 - Christians will not take the mark -we believe the Rapture will happen first (a pre-trib rapture)
 - the unsaved will be forced to decide –we must warn them not to take it (leave behind a witness)
 - those who take the mark will forfeit their soul (Rev.14:9-12)
 - we should consider our own ability to weather any sort of economic upheaval

8. Great Tribulation and Armageddon - Revelation 14-18

The Doomsday Clock originated with the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, to describe the danger the world is in for an apocalyptic scenario and the use of nuclear weapons. In 1953 it was set at 11:58, two minutes before midnight, or doomsday. In that year the first thermonuclear bombs were exploded. In 1984 it was set at 11:57, when there was great tension between the USA and the Soviets. After the Cold War was declared to be over in 1991, it was set back to 11:43, reflecting the easing of world tensions with the breakup of the Soviet Union. In January 2007 it was been set up to 11:55, reflecting the new nuclear threats and tensions existing. In January 2010 it was set back in hope to 11:54, but in 2014 it is back to 11:55. Even right after the 2014 Olympics, Russia threatens Ukraine and European peace, and talk of war rises. The danger is very real – they don't set it back an hour or two, but only 1 minute.

How are we to live? Jesus gave us two action words to in regard to living in the light of prophetic events:

Watch and pray... lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. -Mark 13:33-37

To watch means to be sleepless, to keep awake, be vigilant about the times we live in and the nearness of His coming. Some carefully watch events and know the Scriptures. We are to pray for and anticipate the coming of the Lord and be a faithful witness. Meanwhile others won't raise an eye to the reality of the destiny of the world and their own souls, or the warning of the Scriptures. Perhaps for you, it is now time to wake up!

I. HARVESTS OF SALVATION AND JUDGMENT

Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and on the cloud sat One like the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, Thrust in Your sickle and reap, for the time has come for You to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe. So He who sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

Then another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe. So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses' bridles, for one thousand six hundred furlongs. -Revelation 14:14-20

Rev.14:14-20 reveals the harvest judgement of the Lord Jesus Christ, for those who reject the kingdom of the beast and accept Him as Saviour. It also has the aspect of the harvest being overripe as the fruit of the earth is withering because of moral decay, implying judgement is overdue. God's wrath is a smouldering and building anger that when unleashed will be devastating. This wrath is pictured as the Lord treading the grapes of wrath in the winepress of judgement, and the blood will splatter up to the horses bridle in Israel for about 200 miles. This judgement will be manifested as the dogs of war are unleashed, when the world's armies will be destroyed from Armageddon to Jerusalem, as God purges the armies of evil from His land at the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is further described in Revelation 19 and Zechariah 14.

People wonder how a loving God could allow the horrors described in Revelation. There are valid reasons: the world has shed the blood of God's prophets and people and His Son, and the time will come to pay by giving them blood to drink. What about all the innocent people you say? Listen, there are only two sides in the battle of good and evil. Those who reject God because they enjoy their covenants with evil will be rejected. Those who reject Jesus Christ are by choice followers of their own self-will and Satan and they will end up in judgement with their leader. When God judges, no one has a defence. In Revelation 15 the 7 angels with the 7 last plagues are revealed, carrying 7 golden bowls filled with the wrath of God.

II. THE 7 BOWLS OF WRATH AND ARMAGEDDON - Revelation 16

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, Go and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God on the earth. So the first went and poured out his bowl upon the earth, and a foul and loathsome sore came upon the men who had the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Then the second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living creature in the sea died.

Then the third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

-Revelation 16:1-4

The 1st bowl produces a foul and loathsome sore upon all those who take the mark of the beast. This is similar to the plague of boils in Egypt (Ex.9:9-11), and it may be the result of the mark of the beast, as it becomes an evil and malignant affliction. What the world promises as the liberation of man will become the cancer that consumes him. The 2nd bowl is poured out on the sea and it becomes like or as the blood of a dead man. The sea will turn into a thick coagulated putrefying mass that cause great disease and death. Every living creature in the sea will die! This is similar to the 1st plague upon Egypt (Ex.7:17-21), but will affect the whole world. God gives life and takes it away. The 3rd bowl is poured out on the rivers and fresh waters of the earth, and it says they will turn into blood. Like the Egyptians in Ex.7:24, man will be in a panic without fresh water. The rivers will run red with blood and people will be unable to find fresh water.

Then the fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and power was given to him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.

They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds.

-Revelation 16:8-11

The 4th bowl is poured out upon the sun and people are scorched with a great heat. The sun's intensity will be increased or perhaps holes in the ozone will allow its ultraviolet rays to burn skin in a way that no one will escape. Instead of repenting and crying out for mercy, people will curse the name of God, whom they acknowledge has power over these plagues. Is this not the way many respond to God now, to curse and blame Him when trouble comes, instead of bowing before Him and asking for mercy? This is what it is all about - man does not want to submit to God and seek His mercy.

The 5th bowl is a supernatural darkness, poured out on the throne of the beast, perhaps understood as the seat of power of the anti-christ. This so-called world saviour will have no power to do anything about it, just as Pharaoh was powerless before God (Ex.10:21-23). This great leader who marvels and dazzles the world will begin to lose credibility as people suffer great pain from the sore of the mark and the burning sun in the thick darkness. They will gnaw their tongues because of the pain, yet will not cry to God for help. That is the way many people are, they love to castigate their leaders for failing them, then they put their trust in other leaders instead of in God. In this sorry day when the great lies the world believes are revealed for what they are, it will be too late!

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. 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. 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. 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. And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.
-Revelation 16:8-16

The 6th bowl is poured out of the **Euphrates River**, and its water will be dried up, to prepare the way for the kings of the east. The 6th trumpet (Rev.9:14-16) says there are 4 angels presently bound at this river, which is the great natural boundary between Asia and the Middle East. These angels when released will bring the world to battle. The kings of the east are likely the army that numbers 200,000,000, or be the larger part of it. Three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet (16:13), and perform signs which convince the kings of the earth to come to battle at Armageddon.

At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown... But news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and no one will help him. –Daniel 11:40-45

Daniel 11:40-45 gives us an account of the military campaign of the beast. He is here called the wilful king, who is the same as the little horn or anti-christ. He will guarantee peace in Israel, then he will move against Israel in his attempt to dominate the world. The king of the south will attack him as well as the king of the north, but he will overwhelm them. These kings and directions are in reference to Jerusalem, so the king of the south could be Egypt or Saudi Arabia, or a general Arab / Islam alliance. Russia is directly north of Israel and is mentioned in Ezek.38-39 as being in a northern alliance destroyed by God when they attack Israel. The anti-christ will prevail but news from the east and north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out to meet these alliances in a great final battle that be fought from Jerusalem to Megiddo. It is also possible that the attack from the northern alliance in Ezekiel 38-39 is a reference to this "news from the north", which would place this attack leading up to Armageddon rather than at the beginning of the tribulation.

The anti-christ will lead a western alliance that includes the dominant nations of the revived Roman empire – those of western Europe and North America. He will be resisted by the alliances of Asia and Africa. As he makes his seat of power in the holy land, the nations will gather there for the ongoing campaign that will culminate on the plains of Megiddo, also known as the Valley of Yitzreel in northern Israel. The Hill of Megiddo is translated as ‘**Armageddon**’, on the site of the ancient fortress of Megiddo. This place is a natural theatre for war; a huge flat plain on the major route from Asia to Africa, and the scene of many ancient battles between world powers, such as Babylon and Egypt. I stood on the hills surrounding this huge valley, accessible through mountain ranges from the north, south and east in northern Israel. The roar of Israeli jets practicing training runs raised the hair on my neck, anticipating the future. [g.1 p73 -Israel Map](#)

One of the greatest sins of humanity is the proliferation of **weapons** to destroy one another. There has not been one single day since World War II without some conflict or war. NATO has the most sophisticated military force on earth, but the 21 Arab nations surrounding Israel have amassed more than three times the artillery and tanks of NATO, and exceeds its soldiers by over 1,000,000. Israel must rely on their superiority of nuclear weapons in the event of all-out war. Russia still has some 20,000 nuclear warheads aimed at the cities of the west. The USA has overwhelming military superiority. Just one of its some 30 Trident nuclear submarines has the capability to destroy 408 cities or targets and can deliver more devastation than all the combined weapons used by the Allies and Germany in WWII! When we add in the other nuclear nations, there are over 60,000 nuclear weapons, not to mention the staggering amounts of conventional, chemical and biological weapons. Plus ½ of the world's scientists are presently engaged in research and development of new weapons technology. The world spends over \$1,000,000,000,000 per year on arms. These weapons will eventually be used. The major threat to the earth is still all out war. [g.2 p73 -world military spending](#)

This final battle is described in Revelation 14:20 resulting in a river of blood running through Israel, and as the horrors of nuclear war in Zechariah 14.

This shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It shall come to pass in that day that a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor, and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand. -Zech.14:12-13

Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done! And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth. Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath. Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And great hail from heaven fell upon men, each hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail... –Revelation 16:17-21

The 7th bowl is the final outpouring of wrath, this time as the greatest earthquake imaginable, that divides Jerusalem into 3 parts and fells every major city on earth, and cause mountains to fall and islands to sink. This great calamity will also see great 100 lb hailstones fall on the earth, in conjunction with this tremendous world-wide earthquake. Again survivors will blaspheme God instead of bowing before this incredible display of supernatural power and calamity.

III. THE DESTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS AND COMMERCIAL BABYLON - Revelation 17-18

And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication. And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.

–Revelation 17:3-6

Babylon was not only a city and empire in the Bible, it is a term that symbolizes a false religious system in Rev.17 (the great harlot), and a corrupt commercial system in Rev.18 (the great city). In Rev.17:1-6 we are shown the great harlot who sits on many waters, the spiritual prostitute who stupefies the nations with false spirituality, masquerading in pomp, riches and rituals. The kings of the earth commit spiritual adultery with this harlot and she leads the peoples to unfaithfulness to the Living God and moral wickedness through the union with the world system under the anti-christ. The harlot is described as a woman who sits on a scarlet beast, which was full of names of blasphemy, having 7 heads and 10 horns.

It is no secret that the **European Union** chose a woman riding on a beast as its main symbol of identification when it was officially formed in 1992. The goddess Europa is the woman, the beast with the 7 heads and 10 horns is the world system under the control of Satan. The woman represents ecclesiastical power while the beast represents political power. Her position as rider indicates she is supported by the beast while also being in a dominant role and directing the beast, at least outwardly. The Roman Catholic church has had a strange relationship with political Europe over the centuries, from the Vatican being the papal state and empire that once coroneted and dominated kings, to the less powerful institution today that still has a vital influence in European and world politics. The Catholic church has promoted Mary in a completely non-biblical role of *mediatrix* in salvation, (mediator between people and Jesus), which has gained her favor with the latent belief of ancient and modern Europe in the goddess. This is another historical aspect of the Catholic wedding of paganism with Christianity. g.3-6, p73-74 Euro - Europa - goddess

The woman is richly arrayed, outwardly spiritual and powerful but inwardly full of abominations and polluted with her fornications. This is the apostate world church in alliance with other faiths left behind at the rapture. She is the result of the ecumenical movement of today that seeks to unite all religions into a new structure that will fit into the new world political order. Religion is seen by many today as the main problem in the world and the cause of so many wars and historical divisions and atrocities. That is somewhat accurate, but note that Jesus Christ never advocated religious war, even though some of His professors have a carnal spirit of hatred, violence and control. The ecumenical movement not only seeks to unite all churches, but also all religions under the setting aside of individual beliefs for the common goal of unity. Virtually the only groups opposed to this idea are the fundamentalists, such as of Christianity or Islam, who refuse to give up their articles of faith. The Pope is seen as the one most likely to head this.

Mystery, Babylon the Great has its origins in Genesis 10-11 as a cult of worship begun by Nimrod. As it developed in ancient history, its key belief has been its exaltation of the individual through secret teaching,

initiation, ritual and rite to become like a god. Babylon in the Bible stands for the source for counterfeit religion, either pseudo-Judaism or Christianity, or paganism. Many secret societies advocate this secretive path to spirituality, such as the Masons, the New Age movement, Jewish Kabbalism, and various Christian-type cults. True biblical teaching has never been a secret and any secretive or so-called new revelation should be treated with apprehension. The legend of **Nimrod** says that he and his wife Semiramis had a son Tammuz who died. She prayed for 40 days and he was revived. This basic story is known to the Greeks as Aphrodite and Eros, to the Romans as Venus and Cupid, to the Egyptians as Isis and Osiris, to the Phoenicians as Astarte and Baal, who celebrated this resurrection with exchanging Astarte (Easter) eggs. Tammuz was considered a savior, like the promised son and deliverer from Genesis 3 and found in so many religions - a corruption of the original Bible account. g.7 p74 Mother-Child Symbol

This was a snare to Israel, as they were found burning incense to the queen of heaven (Jer.44:17), worshiping Tammuz (Ezk.8:14), and in the Ashtoreth worship borrowed from the Canaanites (2Kings 23:13). This is seen today in the mother and child emphasis of many religious pictures, as well as Easter worship and the exaltation of the goddess. The Babylonian cult of Pergamos (Rev.2:13) had priests who wore crowns in the form of a fish for Dagon the fish god, with the title *Keeper of the Bridge* (protection between man and Satan). The Roman equivalent is *Pontifex Maximus*, the title of the Pope.

I will tell you the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. Here is the mind which has wisdom: The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

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. The beast that was, and is not, is himself also the eighth, and is of the seven, and is going to perdition. 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. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them...

-Revelation 17:7-14

The harlot is drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. This false religion has killed them before and will do so in the Tribulation. John marvels at the woman and the angel explains that she is not to be marveled at, but abhorred as God does. Rev.17:7-14 describes the true relationship the woman has with the beast and their identification. The beast has 7 heads and 10 horns, just as in Rev.12 and 13. The world will marvel at the beast who *was, and is not, and will ascend*. (Rev.13:3). This refers to the revived Roman empire and its coming leader. The woman sits on 7 mountains. Some believe that this refers to the city of Rome that sits on 7 hills, which is what the early readers of Revelation may have understood. Rome was the latest of these empires that have controlled the biblical world (Rev.12:3), and will seek to control it again in the Tribulation. False religion such as centered in Rome has always had an on-going relationship with human government, particularly in the biblical days of the Caesars. The European Union has declared that a one-world religion is necessary to bring about world unity. The Roman Catholic church together with liberal Protestantism is leading the push towards this one-world unified religion and has also declared their interest in administrating the Temple Mount. A new world order is in the making.

The 7 mountains are linked to the 7 kings - if the mountains are empires, the kings are its leaders. "Five have fallen" means Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, who had fallen by John's time. "One is" means the Roman empire of New Testament times and "the other has not yet come" is the revived Roman empire (Dan.2:41-44). The anti-christ is called an 8th king, meaning that when he takes charge of the 10 nation confederacy, he will manifest the rule of a dictator and attempt the final Gentile form of world control.

[see chart pg74](#)

Then he said to me, The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire. For 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.

And the woman whom you saw is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.

-Revelation 17:15-18

Rev.17:15-18 describes the destruction of the harlot. The waters she sits on are peoples and nations, over whom she charms and seduces, by aiding the ungodly unification of the world religions and using this unity to help the world unite. Satan will use this unity not to help people but to enslave them and destroy them. The 10 kings and the beast will use her persuasive powers to unite her followers and then will turn on her around the mid-point of the tribulation, because Satan will not share worship. They will hate her and make her desolate by divesting her of her wealth, power and prestige.

Revelation 17 describes the woman riding the beast as the great city. Rev.11:8 calls Jerusalem the great city and Rev.14:8 calls Babylon that great city. In Rev.17 we believe it refers to spiritual or religious Babylon, while **Revelation 18** refers to commercial or economic Babylon. There are two views of conservative Bible commentators, one that this Babylon symbolizes a deceptive and enslaving religious and economic system, the other is that it is the literal city of Babylon that will be rebuilt. Isaiah 13 predicted its overthrow and that the city would never be inhabited. Jeremiah 51 describes its destruction and seems to refer to the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus around 535bc. Yet Saddam Hussein rebuilt parts of the city and the context of its total destruction is the Day of the Lord (Isa.13:6,9). So perhaps it will become great again.

God calls Satan the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14. The satanic influence of this city over the world and her leaders has continued from Babel to Babylon to Rome in John's time. The great cities of our day are something to behold, both in their mammoth and elaborate skyscrapers and their seat of power. When one thinks of commercial Babylon, New York City comes to mind, with the power of Wall Street and the potential clout of the United Nations. **Rev.18:1-8** proclaims the fall of Babylon and with her the coming judgement of all the nations who are united with her. The call is to "come out of her my people." God is not just calling people out of false worship, but specifically here it means He is warning people alive during the Tribulation to refuse the mark of the beast, to disengage from her satanic system, and trust in Christ.

Rev.18:9-19 describes the sorrow of the world at the destruction of commercial Babylon. When the city described as burning, it is easy to think of a literal city. Yet all the cities of the earth will fall and burn, so it is better to picture this as the system that is burning and dying. All the kings who make money their people's

main business will mourn at the end and the waste of their stewardship. All the merchants who thought that life was mainly about goods and trade will mourn the end of their commerce. They trade in all commodities, even the bodies and souls of men. This is certainly true today in the illegal selling of child prostitution, human body parts and the sorcery that is involved because the money system is tied to evil. (see Rev.18:23). When money is king, people sell their souls as they turn from God and practice the world's formula for success. The weeping illustrates that the world system has put all its stock in riches and pleasures. The Bible says that the true riches are faith, devotion and service to the Living God. (Mt.6:19-21).

g.8 p74 US Dollar

In Revelation **18:20-24**, what causes mourning on earth is cause for joy in heaven. God has finally avenged both His name and His people! An angel throws a millstone into the sea as symbolic of Babylon's utter destruction (see Jeremiah 51:61-64). No longer will the songs of the world fill the air. The making of merchandise will cease and the joy of the newly married will also not be heard. The great men of the earth are considered to be the merchants of the world system with names like Gates, Rothschild, Getty, Irving, Their commerce is called sorcery (Greek 'pharmakia'), which recalls the ancient denunciations of Babylon (Isaiah 47:9), and Nineveh (Nahum 3:4). This is a metaphor for leading the nations astray by deception and corruption. The people will be led by the leaders for the most part. If the leaders are morally upright, and make laws designed to honor God and look after others, then the citizens will generally follow. If the leaders bend to their own lusts or give the people what they want, moral degeneration will surely occur. In our modern elections some try to minimize moral policies, but wrong moral decisions pave the way for all other corruptions and troubles.

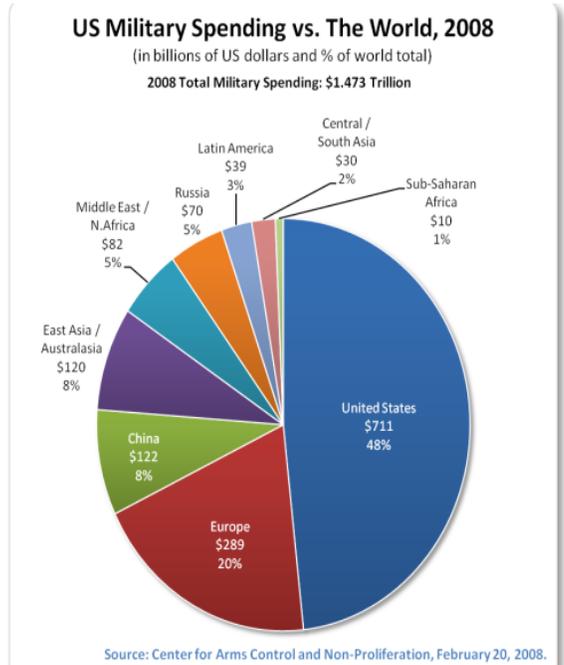
This chapter ends with one of the major crimes of Babylon, the murder of the prophets and saints of God, and all those who were slain on the earth. Jeremiah 51:49 says, *"As Babylon has caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon the slain of all the earth shall fall."* The world system sets itself against *"the Lord and His Anointed"* (Psalm 2), and thus also throughout history against His people Israel. Thousands of believers are murdered each year for their faith and witness. God said that the blood of His servants cries out for vengeance and it will come, exacted from the hand of the world religious, political and economic system. The cry of the world today is globalization, the unity of all the primary cultural and national systems into one giant machine. Most believe that this will be for the benefit of the human race, but instead it will be the ultimate enslavement and damnation of the human race.

Above this all stands the Living God and the Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ. Today the Holy Spirit is crying out through the proclamation of the gospel, for people to realize that the world has no hope, no future, no answer. He is pointing the human race to God's hope, future and answer; one way of salvation for those who put their personal faith and trust in Jesus, who died as our substitute for the penalty due our sins. God rendered to Jesus the judgement that was due to us. God will render to the world a cup of wrath mixed double for her sins. These are the only two destinies, eternal life with the Lord Jesus Christ, or suffering the wrath of God with the world system - which one will you choose?

"The world and its desires are passing away – but he who does the will of God will live forever." -1John 2:17



1. Plain of Esdraelon - Site of Armageddon



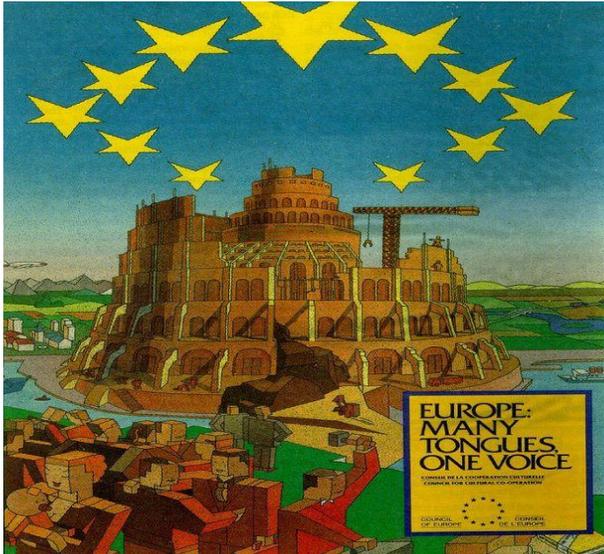
2. World Military Spending



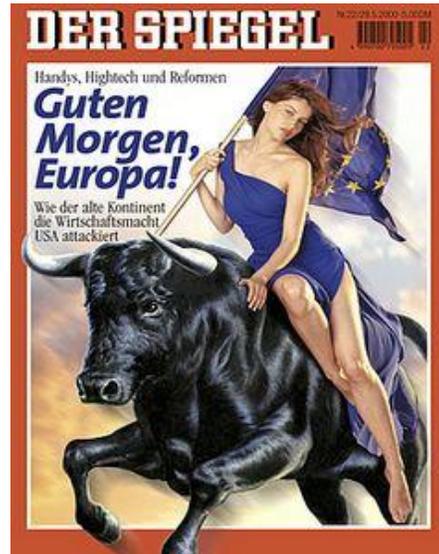
3. The Euro



4. Time Magazine Cover 1992



5. Europe and Tower of Babel Symbolism



6. The Ancient goddess Europa



7. Mother and Child of many Religions



8. USA Dollar - nuvus ordo seclorum = new world order

The dragon -7 heads, 7 crowns on his heads + 10 horns (Rev.12:3) = **Satan**

Beast out of sea -7 heads -10 horns with 10 crowns on horns

-1 head fatal wound healed (Rev.13:2, 13:12-14) = the **anti-christ**

-same as little horn of Dan.7:8 -subdues 3 kings) -he blasphemes, conquers

Beast out of earth -2 horns like lamb -spoke like a dragon (Rev.13:11)

-called the **false prophet** - his message and authority come from Satan

Woman on scarlet beast -the prostitute, the great city Babylon, (Rev.17:3)

-unified religion supported by 10 kings + beast, then destroyed (Rev.17:16)

Scarlet beast -beast once was, now is not, (political empire or anti-christ resurrected)

-will come up from the Abyss (as 8th king or empire) (Rev.17:8)

-7 heads are 7 hills on which the woman sits (reference to city of Rome)

-7 heads are also 7 kings, 5 have fallen (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece)

-one is (Rome of 95ad), one is yet to come (the revived Roman empire of last days)

-10 horns are 10 kings, who rule along with beast at the end (Dan.2:42-44; 7:7)

9. The Second Coming and the Millennial Kingdom Revelation 19-20

I. THE JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST AND THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

During the coming 7 years of tribulation on earth, there are corresponding chronological events taking place in heaven. The rapture of the church takes place prior to the tribulation and during it the church will be with the Lord in heaven. One of the main events will be the Judgement Seat of Christ for His church, where we will give an account of our service to the Lord as believers, and where He will reward the faithful for their good works done in His name. As the Tribulation reaches a climax with the 7 Bowls, the destruction of Babylon and war of Armageddon, the marriage supper of the Lamb takes place, and then the end comes.

Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. 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. -2Corinthians 5:9-10 (also 1Cor.3:11-15)

There is a day coming when we will all appear before the Judgement Seat of Jesus Christ. Not to be judged for our sins, but for the Lord to examine our lives, how we spent our time and gifts in serving God. If we served Him fully and faithfully, we will receive rewards, and hear those words, *“well done good and faithful servant.”* If we mainly served the world and selfish pursuits, we will lose rewards, and much of our work in life will be burned up. This ought to be motivation to put our shoulder to the plough and serve the Lord by serving through the local church. Serving implies working, yet the amount of service many believers contribute could be hardly called work. Too many approach the church with the consumerist mentality of “what can the church do for me.” That is far from the attitude of Jesus Christ, who came *“not to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many.”* (Mark 10:45). g.1 p85

After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

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!

–Revelation 19:1-6

Revelation 19:1-6 describes the joyous celebration of the saints and angels in heaven as glory is given to God because of His righteous judgements upon the great harlot who corrupted the earth. Apparently the church will be made aware of the events of earth and see the smoke of Babylon burning. It may seem cruel to speak of joy at the destruction of the world, but it is the world system that God has issues with, the entrenched evil. What person who loves what is good and right and true would not rejoice to see the evils and houses of sin, corruption and exploitation come crashing down?

Who is the 'great multitude' in heaven? The martyred dead are spoken of as a great multitude in Revelation 7:9,14. All the servants that fear the Lord, coupled with the martyrs and angels must compose this great multitude, as their praise rumbles like thunder, as in Rev.5:11. We who believe in Jesus long for the day when we will stand in the congregation of the righteous (Psalm 1:5) and with one voice sing praise to our Saviour and King. All divisions among true Christians will evaporate in heaven and we will be truly one body in Christ. We will be the purified bride prepared for the Lamb.

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." 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. 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." -Revelation 19:7-9 (Matt.8:11)

For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. -2Corinthians 11:2

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. -Ephesians 5:25-27

Revelation 19:7-10 describes the marriage of the Lamb. The church is pictured as the bride of Christ in 2Corinthians 11:2 and Ephesians 5:25-32. (see also Matthew 22:1-14 and Luke 14:15-24). We Jewish and Gentile believers are made righteous by the blood of Christ, and we are being sanctified in our Christian life by His word (Ephesians 5:25-26). We will be purified (1John 3:2) at our resurrection (at the rapture), and our service will be examined and rewarded at the Judgement Seat of Christ (1Corinthians 3:14; 4:5; 2Corinthians 5:10). We will be presented without blemish to our Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, (Ephesians 5:27), so the judgement Seat of Christ is before the marriage. Rev.19:7 speaks of the marriage ceremony, which will occur in heaven before the Second Coming. Rev.19:9 speaks of the marriage supper, which some believe will occur on earth after the Second Coming, and relates to the parable of the virgins in Matt.25.

And it shall be, in that day, says the LORD, "That you will call Me 'My Husband'... I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving-kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD. -Hosea 2:16, 19-20

Israel was Yahweh's bride in the Old Testament. God called Israel unfaithful and divorced her, but she will be restored and display marital fidelity to God in the Millennial Kingdom (Hosea 2:10-20).

In the eternal kingdom, the church and Israel will be together the bride and the one people of God. The New Jerusalem is called the bride in Revelation 21:9-14 and has as its foundation the 12 apostles and as its gates the 12 tribes. This is God's ultimate purpose, to have one people and family (Ephesians 2:19), one body (Ephesians 2:6), where there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Galatians 3:26-29), but one new kind of human (Eph.2:16). Gentiles do not have to become Jewish, as God will make us all new together. While the Lord has a distinct purpose for the saints of the various ages, in the end we will all be the people of God.

II. THE GLORIOUS RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

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.” -Revelation 19:10

The most important verse in Revelation may well be Rev.19:10. Regardless of our take or positions on the mysterious things of prophecy, the whole point of the Revelation is the testimony of Jesus. Any prophecy or indeed any biblical teaching that does not ultimately point to the Lord Jesus Christ is not faithful to the purpose of God or the 'spirit of prophecy'. In consideration of this, the ultimate revealing is now given, the 'Parousia' of Jesus Christ. Next to the subject of faith, the Second Coming is the most dominant theme in the New Testament. There are at least 333 prophecies about Christ in the Old Testament, and only 109 were fulfilled at the Incarnation, leaving 224 to be fulfilled at the Second Coming.

At Christ's coming, the nations will be gathered against Israel; specifically Jerusalem, the burden of the world. The Jews will be under siege and a remnant will be protected, and as their existence is threatened, they will undergo a national repentance, as they cry to God for deliverance. Even though there are many Jewish believers in Jesus, the nation and people as a whole have not embraced their Messiah. Faithful Jews are still waiting for their Messiah to come and save them. Things will be so bad during the time of the end that the remnant of the nation will realize who their Messiah truly is and turn to Jesus at His Coming. As it is with many, conviction and the need for mercy and salvation come from deep crisis and serious threat.

**I will return again to My place, til they acknowledge their offence, then they will seek My face.
In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me. –Hosea 5:15**

**Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. 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. 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. It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.
–Zechariah 12:2-3, 8-9**

While the campaign of Armageddon will be carried out throughout Israel, Jerusalem will be the focal point. The anti-christ will have his headquarters there and the image of the beast will be worshipped in the Third Temple. God will gather the nations to battle against Jerusalem, which does not seem at all far fetched, considering the current political situation in the Middle East. What is certain is that God will defend Jerusalem because that is the place where He has chosen to put His name, and where Jesus will rule the world. The rebellion of mankind against the authority and worship of God will come to an end at Jerusalem.

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. –Zechariah 12:10

And someone will say to him, what are these wounds in your hands? Then he will answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. -Zechariah 13:6
I will bring one-third through the fire...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. -Zechariah 13:9

The Jews will be in desperate conditions and many will have fled to the wilderness as Jesus described in Matthew 24:16. This seems to be the group of one-third who are brought through the fire and come to call on the Lord for salvation. The present population of Jews in Israel is approximately 1/3 Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox practicing Jews, while the other two-thirds are considered secular Jews. Interesting ratio.

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him. –Revelation 1:7

As Armageddon rages, Jesus will appear and then Israel will see the One whom they have pierced and crucified. They will grieve as they realize they had long ago rejected their Messiah. But their sorrow will turn to joy as their Messiah comes bringing their rescue! On Palm Sunday, Jesus was celebrated by the crowds as He entered Jerusalem, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 118:25-26. The next time Jesus enters Jerusalem, it will be a home-coming on an unimaginable scale! On Palm Sunday, He rode in on a lowly donkey, with some palm branches laid on the ground before Him; He came to die on the cross for our sins. Contrast that with the following description about the day of His glorious return.

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. 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. 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.

–Matthew 24:29-31 (also Isaiah 27:13-14)

Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

–Revelation 19:11-16

What a Coming it will be! Jesus painted the picture from the point of view on earth in Matthew 24:29-30. The sun will darken and the sign of the Son of Man will appear. In Revelation 19:11-21 John sees heaven opened and the glorified Lord, called Faithful and True (to His promises, Matthew 24:35), seated on a white horse. This is like a Roman triumphal procession, with the general leading his armies on a white horse. His army includes the bride clothed in fine linen. This not the time of meeting Him in the air, as taught by those who believe in a post-tribulation rapture; here we follow Him from heaven. This is distinct from 1Thes.4:17.

He is coming as the Warrior King, with eyes of righteous fire and wearing many crowns, and an unknown name written. His robe is dipped in blood and His name is called the Word of God (John 1:1,14). The armies that follow Him are the angels (Matthew 25:31) and all the saints (Jude 14). The sword out of His mouth is His spoken word, which He will use to strike against evil and rule the nations during His kingdom. The rod speaks of the absolute government of God (Psalm 2:9, Isaiah 11:4). He has on His robe and on His thigh a name, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

The day of the Lord is coming... for I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem... Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. 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... Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You... And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. -Zechariah 14:1-5, 12

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great." And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 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. And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. -Revelation 19:17-21

Jesus Himself treads the wrath of Almighty God because He is the 'God who is seen', the Saviour is also the Judge! As His sign, the Shekinah glory of God, appears like lightening flashing from east to west, then everyone on earth will see Him all at the same time. They will mourn because He is the Living God they would not believe in, coming with great power and glory. The remnant of Israel will see the One whom they pierced (Revelation 1:7). The blood on His robe is the blood of His enemies. He will deliver the Jewish remnant hiding in Edom (Isaiah 63:1-6) and avenge them on their enemies. As an angel calls the birds to come to the great feast of God, Christ will come to the fields of Armageddon, where the armies of the earth will turn their weapons against Almighty God and His armies. The world will turn everything they've got against Jesus: the fighter jets, the cruise missiles and nuclear ballistic missiles, the rocket launchers and lasers and who knows what else. He will destroy them as He comes to the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).

It will be the most one-sided war in history as Jesus will speak His word and His will is done. The beast and false prophet will be captured and cast alive into the lake of fire. The kings and captains, the mighty men and all people gathered at Armageddon will be killed and the blood will flow like a river. As grapes are trampled to squeeze out the juice in the winepress, the soldiers blood will flow; their flesh will consume and dissolve while they stand. The Living God who truly has righteous anger at the wickedness of mankind will repay sin with death and judgement as He promised. (see 2Thessalonians 1:6-10)

III. THE JUDGEMENT OF THE GENTILE NATIONS.

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then the King will say to those on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world... Then He will say to those on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. -Matthew 25:31-41

There are three judgements mentioned in the Bible: the Judgement Seat of Christ for believers, the Judgement of the Gentile Nations after Christ's Second Coming, and the Great White Throne Judgement for all the unsaved, after the Millennial Kingdom. The Judgement of the Nations, or the separation of the sheep and the goats, takes place after Christ comes to rule in Jerusalem. Daniel gives a time frame of up to 75 days between the Second Coming and the completion of this judgement. [g.2 p.85](#)

Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. -Daniel 12:10-12

The Gentile nations considered to be part of the sheep are permitted participation in the Millennial Kingdom. This will be based on the deeds they performed immediately before Christ's coming. Since Jesus relates their treatment of His brethren to their entrance to the Kingdom, it seems to be that it is how these Gentiles treated the Jews during the Tribulation. Their salvation is not based on their righteous deeds because salvation is by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. True spiritual rebirth manifests itself in righteous acts, and in this case a love and protection for God's people under persecution during the Tribulation. These saved sheep will have received the new birth as a result of believing the gospel, but will enter the Millennial kingdom in their natural bodies, along with the believing Jewish people. Conversely the goats are those whose anti-Semitism and persecution reveal their unregenerate state and they are refused entrance to the kingdom and will await sentence at the Great White Throne Judgement.

In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will serve with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be one of three with Egypt and Assyria—a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance." -Isaiah 19:23-25

And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. -Zechariah 14:16

IV. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM AND THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT

Revelation 20 is one of the most fascinating chapters in the Bible and has been subject to many varied interpretations. The A-millennialists, who say there is no literal 1000 year kingdom, believe that Revelation 20 is a recapitulation of previous events in Revelation. They deny that the Old Testament prophecies of such a kingdom for Israel will be literally fulfilled, and instead are fulfilled by the church. They see the reign of the saints in v.4 as taking place with Christ in heaven. The Post-millennialists, who say there is a 1000

year kingdom prior to the Second Coming of Christ, believe that the saints and the gospel will reign over the earth and then Christ will come. This teaching denies the steady themes of apostasy and tribulation that the New Testament predicts, and also is denied by history. It is also refuted by Jesus. (Matt.24:12, Luke 18:8)

We who are Pre-millennialists say that Revelation 20 follows in chronological order from Revelation 19, and that there is a literal 1000 year Kingdom of Christ coming after He returns and begins to rule the earth with a rod of iron, the only way to make world peace possible. This interpretation is the most faithful to a literal understanding of the Bible, without which the Bible becomes subject to subjective whims.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 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.
–Revelation 20:1-3

There are seemingly minor phrases that speak of a literal and chronological understanding of Bible prophecy, like *"then I saw"* (Rev.20:1). God does not waste words and these tell us of a progressive time line that God follows throughout Revelation, just as we do. The angel here has the key to the bottomless pit and lays hold of the dragon and chains him for 1000 years. How can the A-millennialists say that Satan is bound today or that this present world is the promised kingdom? How can the Post-millennialists say that the gospel will eventually convert the world, when the war of Armageddon has yet to be fought?

He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist. 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... 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 11:4-9

The question of the 1000 years must be answered. This is mentioned 6 times in Revelation 20, suggesting its literal sense and duration. Isaiah 11 points to the reign of the Messiah over the earth, as does Jeremiah 3:17 and Zechariah 14. Often commentators will play with God's use of a 'year', to teach that Creation was not 6 literal days or that this kingdom will not be a literal 1000 years, citing 2Peter 3:8, *"that with the Lord one day is as a 1000 years and 1000 years as one day."* However, the context of this verse is the Lord's patience and using this one verse to stretch the use of numbers in Scripture beyond any common sense has no Scriptural merit. What becomes of 3½ years or 200,000,000 man armies? The hermeneutic principle of taking the words of Scripture in their literal common sense meaning supports a literal 1000 year kingdom.

Satan and his demons will be bound and sealed for 1000 years, preventing their deception over the world. Christ will rule with a rod of iron, preventing any wickedness to prevail. The saints will reign with Him. What is the purpose of the millennial kingdom? The purpose of the kingdom is to demonstrate the Lordship of Jesus and the fact that the plan of God alone can meet the longings and hopes He has instilled in humanity.

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. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.

This is the first resurrection. 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.

-Revelation 20:4-6

g.3 p.85

Jesus told his disciples that they would sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel. (Luke 22:30). All believers will occupy positions of authority under Jesus during the Millennial Kingdom. Paul told us that believers will judge the world and angels. (1Corinthians 6:2-3). The Tribulation martyrs will be resurrected; *"the last shall be first and the first shall be last."* The unsaved dead will not see the first resurrection to life.

Who are the saints? The Lord comes with His saints, meaning all the dead in Christ (both Old and New Testament believers), and the martyred dead of the Tribulation who have a part in the first resurrection. These will enter the kingdom in glorified resurrection bodies. At the separation of the sheep and the goats after the Lord returns (Mt.25:31-46), the gentile nations who the Lord calls sheep (because of their treatment of His Jewish brethren), will enter the kingdom in their physical bodies, along with the believers of Israel. These will be the ones who have children in the millennial kingdom (Isa.11:6-9). These will populate the world and work under the authority of the Lord Jesus and His saints. The regenerate mortal believers will likely be given their glorified bodies at the end of the kingdom age, as there are multiple stages to the first resurrection (see Dan.12:2, 1Cor.15:20-26, Rev.20:4-5). The order of resurrection is Christ, church age saints at the rapture, then Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints at Christ's Second Coming. We will fellowship together: *"many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."* (Mt.8:11). What a time to look forward to! The rest of the dead will be resurrected to face judgement after the 1000 years are finished.

The saved Gentiles and Jews who enter the Millennial Kingdom will populate the earth during this 1000 year Kingdom and it will be their children who will either surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ, or who will be raised up in revolt by Satan at the end of the Kingdom, as described in Revelation 20:7-9. Scripture also says that Christ will rule the nations with a rod of iron, meaning that these children born will be in an unregenerate state and subject to following their sin nature. They will be required to submit to a similar theocracy that the Lord exercised over Israel in the Old Testament. Like all people, they will have the personal choice to trust in the Lord for their salvation, or reject the grace of God.

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are.

And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. –Revelation 20:7-10

The unregenerate people will be tested at the end of the age by the Lord releasing Satan from his prison. Satan will deceive many of these people who will reject the Lord's authority, proving that man does not need a perfect environment to live right, he needs a changed heart. This group, "*whose number is as the sand of the sea*", will be allowed to attack Jerusalem from the 4 corners of the earth (not the north as in Ezekiel 38-39). The Lord will destroy them by fire from heaven, not buried after Tribulation warfare as in Ezekiel 38-39. In Ezekiel 38-39, Gog and Magog have a historical designation as the northern nations allied with Russia. In Revelation 20 the terms are used symbolically for the leader (Gog) of all the unsaved (Magog) who revolt against the Lord. It is amazing to me how little is said about this future occurrence after the 1000 year kingdom, and how much is said about the Tribulation prior it. One of the secret things of the Lord, I suppose.

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 20:10-15

Now comes the time of final judgement. Jesus said hell was created for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). The evil triumvirate of the devil, the beast and the false prophet, are to be cast alive into the lake of fire and "*will be tormented day and night forever.*" All who have to face the judgement for sin will be sentenced with them at the awesome and horrifying Great White Throne Judgement. This is an eternal sentence to a conscious place of punishment. Read Luke 16:19-31 for Christ's description of Hell.

Imagine the sight - the throne and face of God the Creator, so awesome and powerful that earth and heaven dissipate. All the unsaved dead from all of human history will be there. The worst of sinners will be there alongside the 'good' people who are also sinners. "*There is none righteous, no not one.*" (Romans 3:10). Some charge that this is not fair, but they will be judged according to their works, so that the worst will suffer more than those who were guilty of less. (Luke 12:47-48).

And who is the Judge? He is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:22). The books opened are the records God keeps in heaven, of every human thought, word and deed. The human brain stores every thought and experience of life. All will be brought to light at the judgement. (Matthew 10:26). There is another book in heaven, the Book of Life. There is a 'book of the living' (Psalm 69:28), which seems to contain the names of all the living, and the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 13:8), containing those saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, who died as the substitute for sinners, and these have been saved by grace through faith. The names of the saved are permanently written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Luke 10:20, Revelation 3:5).

These people will all appear before God to face their day of reckoning. We believe that children who die before they reach the age of accountability, as well as the mentally handicapped will not be judged, but all

the rest will be there, regardless of position, prestige or popularity. There are three types of death mentioned in the Bible: the spiritually dead or those who are not saved, the physical death of the body, and the second death, which is eternal punishment in the lake of fire. The Bible plainly teaches an eternal torment in Hell, not universal salvation, not purgatory, not the annihilation of the wicked.

"Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earth, for I Am God, and there is no other."

-Isaiah 45:22

"If you confess with your mouth "Jesus is Lord", and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved... Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

-Romans 10:9-13

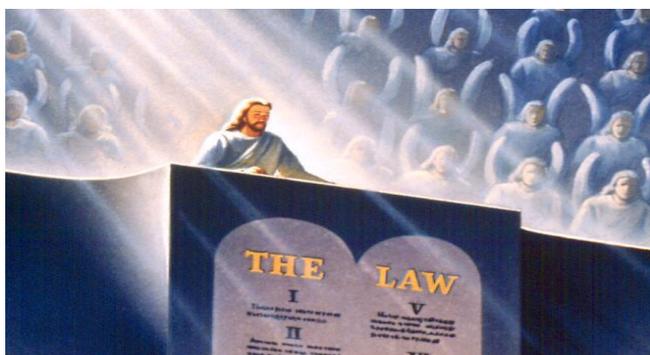
1. JUDGEMENT SEAT OF CHRIST - TO EVALUATE THE LIFE WORK OF BELIEVERS



2. JUDGEMENT OF THE GENTILE NATIONS AT THE SECOND COMING



3. GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT FOR SINNERS



I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." -John 14:6

