



THE COMING OF THE LORD, THE LAST DAYS, AND THE END OF THE WORLD

As Taught by Jesus and His Apostles

By: Larry T. Smith

Copyright © 2000 by Rightly Dividing the Word

INTRODUCTION

Many years ago, through prayer and fasting, God began to deal with me on the subject of Bible prophecy. It soon became evident as I began to study the scriptures that many of the things that I had accepted as biblical truth were not found in the Bible. I was then faced with the decision of whether I was going to stay with the traditions of men in order to be more accepted, or follow the Word of God. This was not a hard decision for me because Jesus made it very clear that it was His will for men to walk in the light as it was revealed to them. He warned that most would reject the light of truth because they loved darkness rather than light. He also revealed that the way of truth was straight and narrow and only a few would be willing to take that path.

I have always tried to stay open and honest before God, willing to walk in any new light of God's Word after I had carefully and thoroughly studied it out to make sure it was of God and not a deception. When I have tried to share some of these truths with others, I found out everyone did not have this same attitude and were not happy about the possibility that their traditional teachings contained some error. Because of their personal pride, many ministers today would rather stay in darkness than admit to their friends and followers that they did not have a thorough understanding of God's Word on a particular subject. Rather than being honest-hearted and hungry for any new truth, they become very defensive of their traditional teachings and refuse to even listen to anything else. I have found this to be true on everything from the plan of salvation to Bible Prophecy.

I believe the correct interpretation of Bible prophecy is very important to the Church so we can truly recognize and fulfill our purpose in the earth. Unfortunately, many Christians today are bound by manmade teachings and traditions, because they are unwilling to study with honest and open hearts biblical subjects that do not support their current beliefs.

Oftentimes denominations form when people are collectively led into more of God's truth. Denominations stagnate though when they choose to stay where they began instead of continuing on as God reveals more light from His Word. When one looks at the Reformation Period, from Martin Luther until this present time, history proves that once people embrace a new truth, most of them reject the next restoration of light from God's Word. One of the main reasons for this is most of the leadership of these denominations have, and still do, refuse to thoroughly examine these new truths for themselves, and yet try to persuade their followers to reject these new truths by labeling them as "heresy." If these followers are more concerned with pleasing their leaders than they are with pleasing God, they will close their mind and not study out these truths any further. God has always had a few who would choose to walk in His light and go on with Him, while the majority stayed in their traditional teaching.

These leaders have and still do take advantage of having the control of the pulpit during all their major conferences, along with the control of their organizational literature to misrepresent these new truths to their particular group. The men who have the true understanding of a new truth that God is trying to reveal are never given the chance to tell the truth about their new understanding of the scriptures. So the campaign that was begun to destroy this new truth is usually successful within that particular group, because the only thing most of the regular ministers ever heard was the misrepresentations, lies, and slanderous remarks that were spread by publications and by word of mouth. It seems that most men can never tell the truth about the viewpoint which they are trying to destroy. I have learned that if you are ever going to know the truth about a subject, you will have to hear it from someone who truly believes it.

I have read many articles supposedly exposing the error of the viewpoint that I currently endorse after over 10 years of in-depth study on Bible prophecy, and each of them have misrepresented the truth of this viewpoint. Some of them have grossly misrepresented it. The gossip that usually comes out of all this is usually worse than the writings. Men have told me they heard I didn't believe in heaven or a resurrection. But that is not true because I believe in them both. All these things are done to destroy a person's

credibility so no one will give that person a chance to present their true beliefs and the scriptural basis for them. Satan is the victor in this situation, and God's truth is the loser.

To talk about a brother in Christ, bear false witness against him, and try to destroy his credibility simply because he carries a different viewpoint is not the Spirit of Christ. Paul said in his letter to the Corinthians that if we had revelation to understand all mysteries, but did not have love, we are nothing. He said again that we should preach truth in love. I must love, respect, and be willing to work together with brethren for the spreading of the message of salvation, even though we may differ on certain other viewpoints. However, I am obligated to God to share what I see as the fullness of the Gospel of Christ.

If all Christians would do as the Bereans did, they would give men an opportunity to share their viewpoints. These hearers could then study out these viewpoints to see whether or not they agreed with the whole counsel of God's Word. These findings would then decide what teachings to accept as truth, and what teachings to reject as error. I feel that if all the Church would do this, most could come to a unity of the faith on the subject of Bible prophecy. I have written this book to share a small portion of what I have discovered during my many years of intense research of biblical prophecy and its related historical accounts. The truths contained in this book may be new to some but they are actually a restoration of the truth that most of the Church walked in for almost 1800 years. The key to see what truths are God's truths is to "rightly divide the word" by comparing it "precept upon precept and line upon line." That is what I have strived to do in this study by allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture. If you cannot agree with my findings, I will still love and respect you. I pray you will read this book with an open heart, and that it will impact your life.

THE COMING OF THE LORD, THE LAST DAYS, AND THE END OF THE WORLD

As Taught by Jesus and His Apostles



This lesson is the first of a series of teachings entitled ***Rightly Dividing the Word of Bible Prophecy***. The subjects that will be included in this six-part series are: *The True Israel of God, Daniel's 70th Week, The Great Tribulation, The Real Babylon the Great, The Book of Revelation*—and this lesson—*The Coming of the Lord, the Last Days, and the End of the World, as Taught by Jesus and His Apostles*.

MAJOR MISCONCEPTIONS AND ERRORS

Most modern day minds are clouded with **major misconceptions and errors** when trying to interpret the coming of the Lord, the last days, and the end of the world. This confusion occurs when men assume that these events always refer to a “**future time**” at the end of the Church age, the end of time, or the end of the physical world in which we live today. This could easily be corrected if people would stop long enough to study their Bibles to see what Jesus and His Apostles meant when they referred to these events. Through the Scripture they would quickly discover that these first century speakers always spoke as though they were expecting a prophetic fulfillment of these events to take place within their first century generation. This fulfillment was seen as the **end of the Jewish age of Law-keeping**, and the **full establishment of God's New Covenant Kingdom in the earth**.

The confusion of these terms has resulted in creating **two different viewpoints** of Bible prophecy today. Each of these two main viewpoints has within it **three different positions**. The following is a brief description of each:

FIRST VIEWPOINT—FUTURIST

Futurists believe that when the Scripture speaks of the coming of the Lord, the last days, and the end of the world that it is referring to events that will take place sometime in the future. They also believe the Great Tribulation is a future seven-year period that follows a gap of 2000—and still counting—years which takes place between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. Most teach that Jesus Christ and His Spiritual Kingdom (The Church) have never yet fulfilled the six points Daniel prophesied would take place during this 70-week time frame, but instead believe these prophecies must have a literal physical fulfillment in the earth. Futurists also believe that the Book of Revelation is an account of this future Great Tribulation period that will culminate with the Coming of the Lord and the end of the world. They hold three different positions in regard to when they believe these occurrences and the rapture of the Church will take place. These three positions are known as **PRE** (before), **MID** (middle), and **POST** (end) **TRIBULATION**.

SECOND VIEWPOINT—HISTORICAL

This group believes that most—or all—of these prophecies were fulfilled in the generation in which Jesus and the Apostles lived and were concluded in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem and its old covenant worship system of animal sacrifices. They teach that this fulfillment was **the sign** to all men that God's New Covenant was now fully established in the earth, and is His final method of obtaining salvation.

Nearly all Historical adherents believe the Church (Jew and Gentile in one body) is Spiritual Israel, and that Daniel's 70th Week was fulfilled by Jesus Christ without any gap of time between the 69th and 70th weeks. They believe this because the Bible says nothing about a gap between the weeks of Daniel's prophecy. (Some have said the teaching that the Church is “Spiritual Israel” is a doctrine that allegedly promotes anti-Semitism. That is simply not true! **To believe that the Church is Spiritual Israel is to simply believe that the New Covenant message of salvation**, which the Apostles preached in the book of Acts, **is the everlasting gospel**, and will remain the only gospel message by which all men, both Jew or Gentile, can ever obtain salvation. Some men deny that they believe the Church is the Israel of God; yet when they are questioned, they state that they believe that the New Covenant message is the only message that will ever save anyone even during their supposed future tribulation. That is an impossible position to carry, for to believe that the New Covenant message is the only remaining plan of salvation is to agree with the very

basis on which the teaching that the Church is the Israel of God is founded. You must either follow the Dispensational beliefs that there will be a change of covenants and a return to Law-keeping, or you must believe that the Church is the Israel of God.) They also believe that Jesus Christ literally and spiritually fulfilled Daniel's six-point prophecy when Jesus was cut off in the midst of the 70th week by His crucifixion. That agrees with Daniel 9:24, which shows this prophecy was to be fulfilled during the 70 weeks. They say that His cutting off (Jesus' death) caused the sacrifice and the oblation, (the animal sacrifices that were offered in the Jewish Temple for the sins of Israel), to no longer be accepted. (That is exactly what happened when Jesus died on the cross; these old methods were no longer accepted by God as His method for man to obtain salvation. **God now sees Jesus as mankind's final and all conclusive sacrifice.**) I will deal with this subject in detail later in this series of teachings in a lesson entitled *Daniel's 70th Week*.

Historical believers, like futurist believers, have basically three different positions. The following is a brief description of each of these differences:

HISTORICIST

They believe that most prophecy is now history that has progressively been fulfilling itself through time, even up to our day. Most see Rome or the Catholic Church as Revelation's "Babylon the Great."

PARTIAL PRETERIST (PAST)

Do not let the word Preterist throw you off. It simply means past. This group believes in a partial past interpretation of prophecy. Most believe the Church—Jew and Gentile in one body—is the True Israel of God, Daniel's 70 weeks are fulfilled, the Great Tribulation and the time of Jacob's trouble was the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Jerusalem was Revelation's Babylon the Great, Matthew 24 was fulfilled during the generation in which it was written, the first 19 chapters of the book of Revelation are fulfilled, and the remaining chapters of Revelation are being fulfilled in the Church. They believe there still is a final judgment, and a final coming of the Lord that will end the Church Age and will resurrect the dead in Christ, **even though the destruction of Jerusalem was referred to in scripture as a "coming of the Lord."** (This viewpoint is probably closest to the position that I currently endorse on Bible prophecy. However, I strive to remain open so that I can always walk in the light as God reveals more understanding about the Scriptures.)

TOTAL PRETERIST

The Total Preterist believes the same as the Partial Preterist, except they believe **all prophecy was fulfilled** when the Lord came in judgment against Jerusalem in 70 AD. They believe that He resurrected the dead at that time, and that we who are alive and remain will be caught up to meet the Lord as we die. They also believe the world and the Kingdom of God (Church Age) will never end because the Scriptures teach that His Kingdom is an "everlasting Kingdom that will never be destroyed."

The main difference between the Partial Preterist and the total Preterist is found in their differing viewpoints of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. The Partial Preterists believe its fulfillment will take place in the future. The Total Preterists believe its fulfillment took place in 70 AD when Jesus came back to bring judgment against Jerusalem. They say that those who were dead and in the graves then were resurrected and those who are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord as they die.

Please note that all viewpoints—both Futurist and Historicist—believe in the resurrection of the dead and spending eternity with Jesus as the eternal reward of the Christian. They only differ as to the **timing of the resurrection and the events surrounding it.**

Some men have used the statements that Paul made to Timothy about Hymenaeus and Philetus to say that Preterists teach the same doctrine concerning the resurrection. Paul said that these men "blasphemed" because they "erred, saying that the resurrection is past already." (See 1 Timothy 1:19-20 and 2 Timothy 2:16-18). The problem with this comparison is that Paul wrote these letters to Timothy before the 70 AD fall of Jerusalem. This fact causes this argument to lose its strength as a scriptural proof against the beliefs of Total Preterism. **As for the Partial Preterist, which is my current stance, this argument does not even apply. We do not teach that the resurrection took place in 70 AD, but that the 70 AD coming was a coming in judgment. And to distance us even further from this argument, Partial Preterists believe that there is yet to be a final resurrection.** After carefully examining the spirit of what Paul said, you can see these men were taking the position that there no longer remained a future hope or resurrection for those living then, because they believed the resurrection was past. Hymenaeus and Philetus taught a doctrine not far removed from Sadducean teachings of that century, who Jesus rebuked for their unbelief in a future resurrection. One reason why Hymenaeus and Philetus may have taught this doctrine was because they may have thought the resurrection of the saints that took place when Jesus

arose from the grave (see Matthew 27:53) was the final resurrection. Scripture does not adequately reveal why these men taught this heretical doctrine, but Paul's pre-70 AD writing of these letters dismisses their teachings from being an argument against Preterist doctrine.

The reason I am saying this is to address those preachers who have said, "If you are a Preterist, then you don't believe in a future resurrection." I can tell you now that what they are saying is just not true. Both views of Preterism believe in a future resurrection. Total Preterists teach, "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Corinthians 5:8) This is what most Christian ministers evidently believe when they proclaim at funerals the deceased person is "now in Heaven with the Lord." This is exactly what the Preterists say happens to a person when they die; they go (are resurrected) instantly to be with the Lord.

These explanations only begin to define the different opinions that men have in reference to this subject. I am purposely leaving them brief so that we can move on to what really matters, and that is what the Bible says Jesus and His Apostles believed when they spoke of these subjects.

Man may have 10,000 different viewpoints on this subject, but the only one that really matters is what Jesus and His Apostles taught and believed. This study is designed to address the questions that will unlock the true meaning of this subject. These questions are whether or not Jesus and His Apostles taught that these occurrences would happen in **their generation**—which would **end the Jewish Age or world** of that day—or if they were speaking of some yet to be fulfilled **unknown time** which is to take place thousands of years later in the future.

THE BIBLE IS VERY CLEAR

The Bible is very clear on the statements that Jesus and His Apostles made concerning this subject. This only leaves you with the question as to how you are going to interpret them. That can best be decided after you ask yourself the following: Do you believe that the New Testament's scriptures are divinely inspired and true, or do you believe that the New Testament writers were in error when they wrote these scriptures in the Books in which they are found? Remember, your answer to this question will affect everything else that you believe about God and His Kingdom, so please think it through.

WERE JESUS AND THE APOSTLES WRONG?

Would any Bible-believing person side with an opinion that would suggest that the New Testament writers were in error? Would a Christian reduce any scripture down to being a man's assumption or opinion, rather than being a divinely inspired Word from God? Unfortunately the answer to this is, "Yes." Even in the more conservative Apostolic ranks of Christianity some men have challenged the divine inspirations of some scripture when they were pressed about this issue.

One of these men wrote in a national publication that, "The Apostles preached the coming of the Lord because they believed it was the last days. Two thousand years later I am preaching the coming of the Lord because it is the last days." His statement clearly holds the position that the Apostles were writing what they thought, and were thereby in error. It also holds the position that he—a preacher of today—has a revelation of truth greater than the Apostles did in Jesus' day.

Another preacher was asked about the statements that Jesus and His Apostles made concerning the coming of the Lord in the last days and whether he felt their statements about their soon expectancy of that coming was correct or in error. He answered this by saying, "The Apostles were mistaken in their interpretation of the time period in which Jesus was referring. That was a good thing though because their mistake saved the lives of those in the early church when they fled from Jerusalem in 70 AD." This statement clearly holds the position that the New Testament writings of the Apostles contain errors. If this is true, then the New Testament could not have been divinely inspired, and its spiritual worth is questionable at best.

If the New Testament contains one or more erroneous statements, how could a person truly trust it to determine truth? One would have to wonder how many other scriptures were written by the inspiration of misled men, and not by the all-knowing God. Ultimately this type of reasoning challenges the authenticity of the plan of salvation, the necessity of holiness, the biblical basis for morality, and ultimately every other subject in the Bible.

WAS JESUS A DECEIVER?

The question then becomes, "Was Jesus a deceiver?" For many years the adherents of **Atheism, Agnosticism, Humanism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam**, have used the statements that **Jesus and His Apostles** made about His coming, to **criticize Christianity**. Critics say Jesus didn't come during **that**

generation—at least that’s what some contend—so He was either mistaken or a liar. Either of these—they say—would make **Him a false prophet**, and **not the messianic Son of God**.

In his book, *The Last Days According to Jesus*, R. C. Sproul addresses this subject of Preterism and the way critics use scriptures about Jesus’ coming to attack Christianity. He shows that **these critics use the very same scriptures that many Christians have ignored—or have refused to deal with—to suggest that Jesus was a false prophet**. The problem here isn’t the critics’ criticism; it’s the Christians saying, “Amen” to their findings. You see, every time a Christian suggests certain scriptures found in the New Testament are in error, they are in effect agreeing with those who criticize Christianity. Even if their position is taken in order to defend a futurist viewpoint of prophecy, they are still siding with those whose greatest desire is to erode the very foundation that we have for determining biblical truth—the New Testament.

CAN THE WRITERS OF THE BIBLE BE TRUSTED?

The Bible is the most trustworthy book that man has ever known. Over the years, countless critics have attacked its accuracy in reference to science, history, spiritual guidance, and its claim to Divine authorship. But the more men have tried to prove its words to be false, the more they have found evidence to support its teachings. Because of this, and because of my own experience with its life-changing power, I say that it is not the Bible’s statements that are misguided, but the critics’ statements that are misguided. To prove this we will look to the Bible itself. It is the only voice that we need to hear when determining whether its writings are accurate.

Luke 1:3 It seemed good to me also, **having had perfect understanding of all things** from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

Luke was speaking of his writings that became a part of the New Testament. Here he said that he had, “perfect understanding,” of “all things.”

Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

Jesus walked with the Apostles for three and one-half years before His crucifixion, and spent 40 days and nights with them after His resurrection. During those times, Jesus was continually opening up the truths of His Scripture to His Apostles, and because of that I feel they had a better grasp of His Word than anyone does today.

John 17:17-20 Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth**. (18) As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I **also sent them** into the world. (19) And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. (20) Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall **believe on me through their word** ;

Jesus said the Apostle’s word was the place that all mankind should look to if they wanted information about the plan of salvation and the gospel message. If we are going to trust the words of the Apostles when determining the plan of salvation, should we not trust their words on the subject of prophecy as well?

Galatians 1:8-9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (9) As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Here Paul is dealing with the power of apostolic authority. He is plainly teaching that no man or spirit being has the authority to change what the Apostles have already written.

2 Timothy 3:16 **All scripture** is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Paul tells Timothy that ALL Scripture originates from God’s inspiration, and not from man’s.

2 Peter 1:20-21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. (21) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

This is telling us that the Scripture needs to always be the basis for determining truth. The Scripture is always right because it did not come from the opinion of man, but from the inspiration of God. If our doctrine doesn’t agree with Scripture, then it is our doctrine that is in error and in need of change, not the Word of God.

Revelation 22:18-19 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man **shall add unto** these things, **God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book**: (19) And if any man **shall take away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, **God shall take**

away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Now friend, we had better be careful when we interpret the book of Revelation. Jesus said if a man would “add to” or “take away” from the words that are found in that book, that He would take away that man’s part out of the Book of Life.

Romans 3:4 God forbid: yea, **let God be true, but every man a liar**; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

This is what I strive to do and why I have changed my position on what I believe about Bible Prophecy. Every time I get new light from God’s Word, I had better change. I’d be the biggest fool in the world to argue against Scripture. Scripture is always right. If I am in opposition to it, I will always be wrong. That is why it says, “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” The best thing we can do is to change when we see Scripture saying one thing and our interpretation saying something else. We must always strive to align ourselves with the truth of God’s Word.

STATEMENTS MADE BY JESUS CONCERNING THIS SUBJECT



A person, who would dare to make a statement that would indicate that they thought the Apostles were wrong, would have to believe that Jesus was also wrong, since His statements totally agreed with the Apostles’ teachings. You must remember that the Apostles received their teachings from Jesus, so they taught what He taught them.

JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES

Jesus gave His apostles a timeframe in which they could expect to see His coming.

Matthew 10:23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye [YOU] shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

Jesus told His disciples that He would come before they would be able to cover all of the cities of Israel. This fact denotes His coming in their generation. What people have failed to realize—but will be forced to admit after we cover all these scriptures—is that **the Lord coming in judgment against Jerusalem was referred to by Jesus and His Apostles as a “coming of the Lord.”** I believe that **the failure to recognize this key point is the greatest cause of error concerning Bible prophecy**, and if you refuse to admit this point, then the Scripture will always be confusing to you.

Matthew 16:27-28 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works. (28) Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

These scriptures leave no doubt that Jesus said He was coming in their generation. He said that some of them standing there with Him would still be alive to see this coming. He said this would be a coming in which He would reward every man according to his works—which is another statement men tend to always put in the future, but Jesus said would happen **before all of them had died. These scriptures leave no room for debate. He either came in their generation, or He didn’t.** If He didn’t, then wouldn’t that make Him the false prophet that the critics say He was?

In an effort to explain this away, some have suggested that Jesus was referring here to the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, or His transfiguration on the mountain with Peter, James, and John. The problem is that this doesn’t agree with the rest of the Bible’s language when it refers to the Holy Ghost or the transfiguration, because verse 27 of Matthew 16 says that He will reward every man according to his works. However, it does match the language that’s found in the book of Revelation and other books, which refer to God’s rewarding of the wicked.

Another scriptural proof that this coming could not be referring to the transfiguration is that Jesus told the High Priest and the Sanhedrin that they would see Him “coming in the clouds of heaven.” The reason this is important is that the High Priest and the Sanhedrin were not present during the transfiguration, and their absence from this event proves that this coming is referring to another event, which Jesus said they would witness personally.

JESUS AND JOHN

Jesus confirmed that some of His 12 apostles would be alive at His coming. Jesus spoke this to Peter, but He was referring to John.

John 21:18-24 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. (19) This spake he, **signifying by what death he [Peter] should glorify God.** And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. (20) Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple [John] whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? (21) Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? (22) Jesus saith unto him, **If I will that he [John] tarry till I come, what is that to thee?** follow thou me. (23) Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? (24) **This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.**

Here Jesus was saying that Peter would die for the glory of God. He also said that His will might be for John to live long enough to see His coming. If that were to take place, then it would have required Jesus' coming to have taken place during the generation in which John was alive. Otherwise how could John have tarried long enough to see it? History agrees with this scenario for it declares John to have been alive during the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem. This would make Jesus' statement an absolute truth—provided that the coming He was referring to was the destruction of Jerusalem—for John would have been there as a witness to the events.

JESUS, THE HIGH PRIEST, AND THE SANHEDRIN

Jesus spoke to the High Priest and to the Sanhedrin and told them that they would see His coming in the clouds.

Matthew 26:63-66 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou **tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.** (64) Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, **Hereafter shall ye [you] see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.** (65) Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye **have heard his blasphemy.** (66) What think ye? They answered and said, **He is guilty of death.**

Jesus said THEY would see Him when He came in the clouds sitting in a place of power. If “they” were going to see Him, then **His coming would have to take place in their generation.** This makes three times in Scripture that Jesus told His listeners that some of them would still be alive to see His coming in the clouds. This makes three witnesses, and the Bible says that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established, so we can no longer say Jesus did not come in His generation without denying the truth of His statements. Why did this statement anger the High Priest so much? Simply stated, he knew that Jesus was applying to Himself a messianic prophecy, which is found in the book of Daniel. This angered the High Priest because he knew that Jesus was thereby stating that He was their long-awaited Messiah. Matthew 24 also has Jesus making reference to this when He said, “Immediately after the tribulation of those days you would see **the SIGN of the Son of man in the heavens.**” In both instances Jesus showed that the **destruction of Jerusalem** and its old worship system **would be the SIGN to the nations** that He had all power in heaven and in earth, and that He was ruling as King of kings, and Lord of lords in His Spiritual Kingdom—the Church.

JESUS QUOTES FROM DANIEL

This is what angered the Jewish High Priest and the Sanhedrin. They knew that Jesus, by quoting this Old Testament messianic prophecy from Daniel, and then applying it to Himself, was thereby claiming to be their Messiah.

Daniel 7:13-14 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven,** and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. (14) And there **was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom,** that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an **everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.**

There are two subjects that **have not** been fully studied out by most Christians, in regards to **biblical imagery and definitions**. They are:

- (1) JESUS COMING IN THE CLOUDS
- (2) THE KINGDOM OF GOD

We have always been told these two subjects always refer to things that are to come to pass in our future—and some of it may—but let's look at the Bible's language regarding these subjects.

JESUS COMING IN THE CLOUDS



“COMING IN THE CLOUDS” is Old Testament imagery that usually refers to God's coming in judgment on a nation. **God using another nation's army usually carried out this type of coming.**

Isaiah 19:1 The burden of Egypt. Behold, **the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt:** and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

This scripture describes God coming up as a cloud in a swift judgment against Egypt.

The next scripture has Jeremiah using the same descriptive language to also describe God's coming in judgment.

Jeremiah 4:13-14 Behold, **he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind:** his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for **we are spoiled.** (14) **O Jerusalem,** wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved. How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?

This describes His coming in judgment to spoil Jerusalem. Notice how this is some of the same biblical imagery that is found in the book of Revelation. The High Priest and the Jews knew the language of the Old Testament. That is why they were so angry about the answer Jesus gave to their question about Him being the Messiah or not. In answering that question, Jesus said He had the power to come in judgment against Jerusalem. He went on to show that His coming in judgment would be the sign that confirmed that He now ruled in the heavens, and had established His Church Kingdom in the earth.

Ezekiel chapter 30 contains more of the same type of biblical imagery.

Ezekiel 30:3 For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near, **a CLOUDY DAY;** it shall be **the time of the heathen.**

Ezekiel 30:18-19 At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when **I shall break there the yokes of Egypt:** and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, **a CLOUD shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.** (19) **Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the LORD.**

In these scriptures from Ezekiel, God describes **His coming in the clouds of judgment** against Egypt **using a heathen army.** Nahum used the same type of imagery in his prophecy.

Nahum 1:2-6 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; **the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies.** (3) The LORD is slow to anger, and **great in power,** and will not at all acquit the wicked: the LORD hath his way in the **whirlwind** and in the **storm,** and the **CLOUDS ARE THE DUST OF HIS FEET.** (4) He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and **drieth up all the rivers:** Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth. (5) **The mountains quake** at him, and the **hills melt,** and **the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.** (6) **Who can stand before his indignation?** and who can abide in the **fierceness of his anger?** his fury is poured out like fire, and **the rocks are thrown down by him.**

A lot of Bible prophecy teachers say that Revelation 16:12 is literally talking about the Euphrates River drying up to allow a physical army to come and attack modern-day Israel. Notice that Nahum uses the same language to describe this judgment. Nahum wasn't suggesting a physical fulfillment; he—just like Revelation—was simply using biblical imagery.

Here the Lord is using the **same biblical imagery that is found in the book of Revelation** to describe His coming in judgment. The clouds are said to be, “the dust of the Lord's feet.” One man writing against the Historical viewpoint said, “Historists believed this was, ‘the dust of the Roman Army's feet as they entered Jerusalem.’” When he wrote this he was supposedly quoting from my teachings. Yet I have never

heard anyone—this includes my teachings as well—ever teach this that way. I do, however, teach that **these “clouds” are biblical imagery used to describe the Lord’s coming in judgment, and they are just what the scripture says they are, “the dust of His feet.”**

Another Old Testament prophet named Zephaniah used the same type of imagery in his prophecies.

Zephaniah 1:14-17 The **great day of the LORD** is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. (15) That day is a **day of wrath**, a day of **trouble and distress**, a day of **wasteness and desolation**, a day of **darkness and gloominess**, a **DAY OF CLOUDS** and **thick darkness**, (16) **A day of the trumpet** and alarm **against the fenced cities**, and against the high towers. (17) And I will bring **distress upon men**, that they shall walk like blind men, **because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung.**

This once again **describes the Lord coming in the clouds as a day of judgment.** It is clear to see that the phrase “His coming in the clouds” is used when the Bible is referring to God coming in judgment against a nation or a people who have sinned or disobeyed Him. This is consistent with all of these Old Testament scriptures.

Now let’s look in the book of Joel and think about the biblical imagery used here to describe the heathen army that was coming to destroy another nation. Notice that much of its language is identical to the imagery used in the book of Revelation.

Joel 2:1-3 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the **day of the LORD cometh**, for it is nigh at hand; (2) A day of darkness and of gloominess, **A DAY OF CLOUDS and of thick darkness**, as the morning spread upon the mountains: **a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations.** (3) A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as **the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness**; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

You can tell that this is the devastation that an army would leave behind as they moved across the land. Notice it mentions the Garden of Eden. This was usually a reference to Jerusalem.

Joel 2:4 The appearance of them is **as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen**, so shall they run.

John also used Joel’s imagery of horses, horsemen, and warfare, in his ninth chapter of Revelation.

Joel 2:5-9 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of **fire that devoureth the stubble**, as a **strong people set in battle array**. (6) Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. (7) They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like **men of war**; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: (8) Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded. (9) **They shall run to and fro in the city**; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.

God is describing here their total devastation.

Joel 2:10-11 The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble: the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining; (11) And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?

This again proves that His coming in the clouds refers to God using another nation’s army to execute His judgments on another nation. **In verse 10 He even uses the same biblical imagery as is found in Matthew 24 and Revelation 6 to describe what was to happen after the destruction of Jerusalem.** Many try to say this is a literal happening at the end of this physical earth. Yet God uses the same prophetic language to describe three other judgments in the Old Testament.

Some say Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation have to be future since the sun, moon, and stars are still in the sky. Those who say this do not realize this same imagery was used many times in the Old Testament to describe God’s judgments, which have already been fulfilled, and yet the literal sun, moon, and stars have not stopped shining. This is true because, as **God said in the Old Testament, the SUN, MOON, and STARS were “for signs” and “to rule,” which means a sign of rulership or government.**

Genesis 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and **let them be for SIGNS**, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

Genesis 1:16 And God made two great lights; the **greater light TO RULE the day**, and the **lesser light TO RULE the night**: he made the **stars also**.

JOSEPH'S DREAM AND HUMAN GOVERNMENT

Remember Joseph's dream used these symbols to denote human government.

Genesis 37:9-10 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the **sun** and the **moon** and the **eleven stars** made obeisance to me. (10) And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? **Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?**

This came to pass when Joseph was made a ruler in Egypt and his brothers came there and bowed before him. But notice in verse 10 that Joseph's father, Israel, understood the true meaning of the imagery of Joseph's dream. He knew that his government was going to bow down to Joseph's. He saw this from Joseph dreaming that the sun, moon, and stars were bowing down to Joseph. In biblical imagery, seeing a star fall from the sky foretold a coming change in the government it was referenced to; it was referring to a future time when that government was not only going to bow down to their victor, but was to be completely overthrown by them and consequently cease to exist as a power.

THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

Let's look at the language that Isaiah used when prophesying about the coming destruction of Babylon. Remember that this is still Old Testament prophecy.

Isaiah 13:9-11 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with **wrath and fierce anger**, to **lay the land desolate**: and he shall **destroy the sinners thereof out of it**. (10) For the **stars of heaven** and the constellations thereof shall **not give their light**: the **sun shall be darkened** in his going forth, and the **moon shall not cause her light to shine**. (11) And I will **punish the world for their evil**, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

The actual fulfillment of this happened when the armies of the Medes and Persians defeated the King of Babylon and took over his city. **This represented a change in government and authority**. Approximately 200 years before it would be fulfilled, Isaiah 44:28 stated that the man who would carry out this judgment and give the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem would be named Cyrus. **Isaiah 9:6-7 also prophesied that when Jesus would come, the government would be upon His shoulders**. It should not be of any surprise then that the same biblical imagery is used in the New Testament—especially in the book of Revelation—to describe His destruction of Jerusalem's old covenant worship system by a heathen army, and His establishment of the New Covenant of Grace—the New Jerusalem—the new light of the world! This occurrence is referring to the time that the NEW SUN of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2, Revelation 21:23) took the place of the old sun (natural Jerusalem).

THE DESTRUCTION OF EGYPT

Now let's look at the way the destruction of Egypt is described.

Ezekiel 32:7-8 And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a CLOUD, and the MOON shall not give her light. (8) All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord GOD.

This scripture describes a change in government, which was fulfilled when Egypt was overthrown by the hands of another nation's army. When people do not look back to see where these scriptures originated, and the context in which they were written, they misinterpret the message that God intended these scriptures to communicate. This has caused many people to improperly interpret the prophetic language of the Bible. But if they would stop breaking the consistency of Scripture, and instead bring the consistency of the Old Testament into the New Testament, then they would be able to more easily understand the prophetic teachings of Jesus and His Apostles.

THE DEFEAT OF IDUMEA AND BOZRAH

Let's take a look at Isaiah's prophecies about the defeat of two Old Testament cities, Idumea and Bozrah and then compare it with the language of the book of Revelation.

Isaiah 34:4 And all the **host of heaven shall be dissolved**, and the **heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll**: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and **as a falling fig from the fig tree**.

These cities fell just as it was prophesied; yet the heavens are still physically intact.

COMPARE ISAIAH 34 WITH REVELATION 6

The language of Isaiah 34:4 is the same language that John used to describe the wrath of Revelation 6:13-16.

Revelation 6:13-16 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. (14) And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. (15) And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; (16) And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

People think that this passage in Revelation is referring to a nuclear blast because God said, “The heavens are going to depart like a scroll.” But this is exactly the same language that Isaiah used when he prophesied the impending destruction of the cities of Idumea and Bozrah. God did bring that judgment to pass, and He didn’t use a cruise missile, a Stealth Fighter, or a nuclear bomb to do it, because these weapons did not exist at the time of their defeat. He accomplishes this destruction through the might of a foreign army. This type of language is a consistent theme throughout the Old Testament and is used when God is describing the destruction that He is bringing against a people who have rebelled against Him. Since this is true, why couldn’t God use the same biblical language in the New Testament to describe His usage of a heathen Roman army to destroy a rebellious Jerusalem?

COMPARE REVELATION 6 WITH LUKE 23

The scriptures we have just quoted in Revelation 6 are the fulfillment of Jesus’ preaching in Luke 23:28-30.

Luke 23:28-30 But Jesus turning unto them said, **Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.** (29) For, behold, **the days are coming**, in the which **they shall say**, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. (30) Then shall **they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.**

This shows that the things happening in Revelation are happening to the people of that generation and their children. It is nothing more than biblical imagery showing the coming destruction of Jerusalem—this we will see in more detail later.

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The book of Revelation is nothing more than biblical imagery that describes God’s destruction of Jerusalem, His removal of the Old Covenant system from the earth, His full establishment of His New Covenant Kingdom in the Earth, and the unveiling, sealing, and deliverance of His New Covenant people. This scenario can be seen as the curse and the blessing of God. **Its occurrence is based on Leviticus 26, which says that God will bring FOUR SEVEN-FOLD JUDGMENTS upon those who break His covenant.** He said that except they repent, He would judge them until they were destroyed. This judgment is exactly the same judgment that you find recorded in Revelation. **So the foundation of the book of Revelation is found in Leviticus 26.**

In Leviticus 26:9 God establishes His covenant with His people and concludes by telling them in verses 14-33 that He would bring four seven-fold judgments upon those who rebelled against it. Each of these four sets of judgments offers the rebellious an opportunity to repent. If they repent, God promises that He would not bring the next set of judgments against them, but if they do not repent, He said He would bring upon them another set of judgments that would be more severe than those they had already experienced. These judgments would escalate against the unrepented until, the Scripture says, they would be eating their own children, their sanctuary and their land would be brought to desolation, and they would be killed and scattered among the heathen. History declares that all these things happened during the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Notice the judgments fall on their land and their possessions, and then become a final destruction and scattering of the people among the nations.

This judgment is the fulfillment of the **curse of the Law** that is **recorded in Deuteronomy 28:15-68** and also in the **Song of Moses**, which is mentioned in Revelation 15:3, and is **recorded in Deuteronomy 32:1-44**. Moses' song speaks of the judgments that God said He would bring against Israel if they disobeyed the Law. These judgments were prophesied to take place during one particular generation that we now know to be the final Jewish generation that rejected the New Covenant message and tried to keep the Law for salvation. The Song of Moses was also heard being sung in the book of Revelation along with the Song of the Lamb. The Lamb's song proclaims the redemption that comes through Jesus' New Covenant message. These two songs being sung together are just one more proof that the book of Revelation does show that the destruction of Jerusalem was a judgment that God said He would bring against those who forsook His Covenant. **Revelation refers to Jerusalem's judgment and destruction when it says, "Babylon the Great is fallen."** The language of the book of Revelation is much easier to understand after reading Deuteronomy, because it shows that the destruction of Jerusalem happened because its inhabitants rebelled against the Law's commands and Jesus' New Covenant. Jesus offered this New Covenant so that those who had failed to keep the Law could be delivered from the curse of the Law. Leviticus 26 is another chapter that gives us the same account as is described in Deuteronomy. Let's look now at its description of Jerusalem's judgment. All the statements in this study that appear in *[italics with brackets]* have been **added for the purpose of explanation; bold, UPPERCASE, and underline formatting is added for the purpose of emphasis.**

Leviticus 26:9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and **establish my covenant with you.**

Leviticus 26:14-33 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; (15) And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, **but that ye break my covenant:** (16) **I also will do this unto you;** I will even **appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes,** and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. (17) And **I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies:** they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. (18) And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, **then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.** [*First seven—7 seals—a one-quarter judgment—Revelation 5 & 6 (the amount of each judgment is found by reading the corresponding scriptures of Revelation)*] (19) And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: (20) And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your **land** shall not yield her increase, neither shall **the trees** of the land yield their fruits. (21) And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; **I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.** [*Second seven—7 Trumpets—a one-third judgment—Revelation 8 & 9*] (22) I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of **your children,** and destroy your **cattle,** and **make you few in number;** and your high ways shall be **desolate.** (23) **And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things,** but will walk contrary unto me; (24) Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and **will punish you yet seven times for your sins.** [*Third seven—7 Thunders—unrevealed—probably a one-half judgment, but at least more severe—Revelation 10*] (25) And I will bring a **sword** upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the **pestilence among you;** and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. (26) And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied. (27) And **if ye will not for all this hearken unto me,** but walk contrary unto me; (28) Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, **will chastise you seven times for your sins.** [*Fourth seven—The final destruction, captivity, and scattering of Israel—Revelation 16*] (29) And ye shall **eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.** [*History states women killed, cooked, and ate their babies during the three and one-half year siege of Jerusalem.*] (30) And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and **cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols,** and my soul shall abhor you. [*History estimates 1.1 million Jews were killed during this time.*] (31) And I will make your **cities waste,** and **bring your sanctuaries unto desolation,** and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. [*The city and the Temple were destroyed.*] (32) And I will bring the **land into desolation:** and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. (33) And I will **scatter you among the heathen,** and will draw out a sword after you: and **your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.** [*About 900,000 Jews were taken captive into all nations in 70 AD.*]

Jesus referred to this same judgment in **Matthew 23:29-38**. There He told **why it would happen, to whom it would happen, and when it would take place.** He told the Jews that He was talking to at that time that these judgments would take place **during "their generation."**

Matthew 23:29-38 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, (30) And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (31) Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. (32) **Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.** [*Finish the transgression as found in Daniel 9:24. They fulfilled this by killing the Messiah, by killing His followers, and by rejecting the New Covenant Gospel.*] (33) Ye serpents, **ye generation of vipers**, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (34) Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: [*Here Jesus foretold their killing of the Apostles and those of the early church.*] (35) That **upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. [*This is the exact wording of the reasons for the destruction of Babylon the Great in Rev. 18:24, "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."*] (36) Verily I say unto you, **All these things shall come upon THIS GENERATION.** [*This scripture proves this judgment will come in their generation. The next scripture confirms upon whom it is to fall.*] (37) **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets**, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, **your house is left unto you desolate.**

Compare Matthew 23:37-38 with the previously quoted scriptures of Leviticus 26:31-33 and you will quickly see that their language is almost identical. This would indicate that Jesus was predicting in His Matthew 23 message the fulfillment of the judgment of Leviticus 26. It also indicates that **this judgment was to take place during the generation of those He was speaking to at that time.** The book of Revelation predicted this coming destruction of Jerusalem a few years before it took place.

Prophetic truths are easy to interpret if you prayerfully use the consistent language that God placed in the pages of the Bible as your guide. This should be an easy thing to do, yet men still continue to ignore the time-tested Scriptures of the Bible preferring instead Dispensational doctrines that have only been around for about 200 years, and primarily only the last 100 years. I have found that most of the biblical commentaries on prophecy written before 1850 carry some form of a Preterist viewpoint. I have always tried to remain true to the Apostle's first century doctrines on salvation, godly living, and every other doctrine that they deemed important enough to write on, so why shouldn't I support a belief that these same Apostles held about prophecy as well? In another lesson I will show that many of the interpretations that Dispensationalists use as their key foundational Old Testament scriptures directly contradict what Jesus and His Apostles said about them. Let's now look at some more of the predictions that Jesus gave concerning the fulfillment of these Old Testament scriptures of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 & 32. As you read the following verses of Luke 21, keep in mind that **they are the parallel scriptures to Matthew 24**, and can be used to help us understand Matthew 24 as well.

(Luke 21:20-24) And **when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.** (21) **Then** let them which are in Judaea **flee** to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it **depart out**; and let not them that are in the countries enter therinto. [*When Jesus' believers saw the Roman Army surround Jerusalem it was to be their sign to flee. History says that the early church heeded Jesus' word and left the city. This exodus was the reason why there were no Christians killed during the siege of Jerusalem.*] (22) For **these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.** [*Jesus was letting them know that this would be the completion of all Old Testament prophecies that deal with this matter. By the time that the destruction of Jerusalem had ended in 70 AD, Jesus had fulfilled the Law when He offered himself as "one perfect sacrifice forever," had destroyed the Old Testament worship system in Jerusalem, had ended the Jewish age of Law-keeping, and had established His Church Kingdom in the Earth. These events were exactly what all of the messianic prophecies and types and shadows were speaking of or pointing to.*] (23) But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great **distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.** [*The Jews to whom he was speaking.*] (24) And they shall **fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations**: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

The fact that they will be carried captive into all nations proves this has to be speaking of the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem. I say this because Dispensationalists teach that this happens at the end of a final seven-year period in which two-thirds of the Jews are killed, one-third of them are saved, and culminates with Jesus coming to usher them into a future 1000 year period. There are two major problems with this teaching. First: this would have these people being saved by their race and date of birth rather than by obeying God's covenant. Second: this Dispensationalist scenario would leave no time for those

remaining people to go into captivity throughout the world. **These discrepancies would make the Futurist teaching on this biblically impossible**, but this scenario did happen in incredible detail during the 70 AD siege of Jerusalem. There, history says, approximately 1.1 million Jews were killed and approximately 900,000 were carried captive into all nations. This First Century time period also agrees with what Jesus said in Matthew 23:36. There He predicted that these things would be fulfilled during the time period of the generation to which He was speaking; He confirmed this was true in Matthew 24:34 and Luke 21:32.

Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Luke 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

Keep in mind that **Jesus revealed in Matthew 23:35-38 that the generation He was referring to was the one He was speaking to at that time.**

Matthew 23:35-38 That **upon you** may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. (36) Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon **this generation**. (37) **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem**, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, **your house** is left unto you **desolate**.

Jesus let them know these judgments would take place because they would finish the transgression by killing the Messiah and His followers. This would, as the Scripture says, “fill the measure” of the cup of His wrath, causing His judgment to be poured out upon those in that generation who rejected His New Covenant message. **Paul said this New Covenant had been given to deliver God’s people from the curse of the Law.** His words about this offer of grace are recorded in Galatians 3:10-19.

Galatians 3:10-16 **For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:** for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. (11) But that **no man is justified by the law in the sight of God**, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. (12) And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. (3) **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law**, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (14) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. (15) Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. (6) Now **to Abraham and his seed were the promises made**. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of **one**, And to **thy seed, which is Christ**.

Here Paul makes it clear that the promise God made to Abraham concerning his seed was not referring to all the natural seed of the Jewish race, but was referring to one seed—Jesus Christ. The promise then would be fulfilled in Christ and His seed (the Church), and not by the natural Jew under Law. To see further evidence of this, Paul wrote in Romans 4:13, “**For the promise**, that he should be the heir of the world, **was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law**, but through the righteousness of faith.”

Galatians 3:17-19 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. *[The Law that came 430 years after God’s promise to Abraham cannot make the promise void.]* (18) For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. (19) Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, **till the seed should come to whom the promise was made**; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Paul tells us that the Law was given because of man’s transgressions, and that it was to remain until the seed, to which the promise was made, could come. This seed is the Messiah Jesus. The Law’s purpose was to serve as the schoolmaster that would bring mankind to Christ. Dispensationalists, however, teach that this purpose has not yet been finished. They teach that the Church is a gap of time in-between the Old Testament time of Law-keeping and a future time in which God will once again have His people observe the Law for salvation. This teaching leads a person away from the sufficiency of Jesus’ sacrifice, and **it belittles His Church by making her a mere concubine rather than the chosen bride that the Scriptures declare her to be.** Furthermore this supposed church gap and return to Law has no biblical witness, for the Scripture says that Jesus was God’s ultimate plan (Logos), and that the Law (not the Church) was the parenthesis given to fill a gap of time that occurred between the promise given to Abraham and the fulfillment of that promise by the coming of the Messiah Jesus. The Bible goes on to show that Christ and His seed (the Church) were the fulfillment of this promise of God. Paul confirms this is the case in Galatians 3:25-29.

Galatians 3:25-29 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (26) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (27) **For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** (28) **There is neither Jew nor Greek,** there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for **ye are all one in Christ Jesus.** (29) **And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

Revelation 22:3-4 is another picture of how the Church is protected from the curse of the Law, because it says that in the New Jerusalem there were no more curses, and God's name (the seal of God that is received through obedience to the New Covenant Gospel) was in their foreheads.

Revelation 22:1-5 And he shewed me **a pure river of water of life,** clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. (2) In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the **tree of life,** which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. (3) And there shall be **NO MORE CURSE:** but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: (4) And they shall see his face; and **his name shall be in their foreheads.** (5) And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for **the Lord God giveth them light:** and they shall reign for ever and ever.

Revelation 21, and most of Revelation 22, is a description of a city called the "New Jerusalem." **This city is a symbolic picture of the Church,** which Revelation 21:9 says is the bride of Christ—the Lamb's wife—which we know must be referring to a people since God is not married to a building. The writer of Hebrews 12:22-24 reveals the New Jerusalem to be the New Testament Church, which he says is the "city of the living God." Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 5:14 that His believers are "the light of the world" and a "city set on a hill." This is yet another reference to the people of God being the Bride—the New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:23-24 explained Jesus' remarks further when it stated that the Glory of God and the Lamb is the light of that city, and that **all nations which are saved walk in the light of it.** Found within this city is "The Tree of Life" and "The River of Life." **The Tree of Life,** which is said to produce twelve manner of fruit, **is Jesus Christ; the River of Life,** which flows from the throne of God, **is the Holy Ghost.** The Apostle John referred to this river when he wrote, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, **out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.** But this **spake he of the Spirit,** which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7:38-39) This is the same river pictured flowing from the same temple in Ezekiel 47 that brings healing and life to all it flows to.

This city is found pictured in Isaiah 60, Ezekiel 47, and Revelation 21 and 22. When one begins to compare these chapters, it becomes clear that this is a symbolic picture of the New Testament Church, but the ultimate proof of this is in Revelation 22. There you have sinners pictured as still being outside the gates of the city, which Isaiah 60:11 says are open day and night, while the saved are pictured as being entered into the city.

Revelation 22:14-17 Blessed are **they that do his commandments,** that they may have right to the tree of life, and **may enter in through the gates into the city.** (15) For **without** are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. (16) I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things **in the churches.** I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. (17) And **the Spirit and the bride say, Come.** And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And **whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.** [Salvation is still being offered during this time.]

Isaiah 60:11 Therefore **thy gates shall be open continually;** they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the **Gentiles,** and that their kings may be brought.

Revelation 22:17 very clearly shows that an invitation is still being given to the thirsty to come and drink of the water of life (Holy Ghost) freely. To teach that this is a picture of Heaven rather than a symbolic picture of the church, one would have to believe that sinners would still be outside the gates in Heaven, and are still being invited to come inside and be saved. We know this is not true. But rather it is true that sinners are still outside the church, and its gate (door—Jesus) is open continually for them to come inside and be saved by eating of the tree of life (Jesus) and drinking of the river of life (Holy Ghost). Ezekiel 47 as well as Isaiah 60 speaks of this city and the land to which this river flows as being the inheritance of the twelve tribes of Israel. It also speaks of the Gentiles being a part of this, which proves that the Church (Jew and Gentile) is the True Israel of God, and that their inheritance is a spiritual land (Holy Ghost) rather than a physical land located in Palestine. Those who teach this is a physical land restoration either take the Old Testament scriptures that speak of Israel's return from Babylonian captivity out of context, or they quote scriptures that are spiritual prophecies that pertain to the Church. These same scriptures in many cases, such as Deuteronomy 30, have been quoted by the Apostles in the New Testament as being a spiritual prophecy fulfilled by the New Testament Church. In Romans 10 Paul quoted

from Deuteronomy 30 and said its scriptures were speaking of the gospel message preached by the Apostles. Clarence Larkin in his book *Dispensational Truth* uses Deuteronomy 30 as one of his key scriptures for trying to prove a restoration to a physical land, so we are once again faced with an interpretation given by the Dispensationalist that is in direct contradiction to the interpretation placed on the same scripture by the Apostles. I will give a more detailed explanation of these points in my lesson entitled, *The True Israel of God*, but the main point that needs to be remembered here is **the people who are in the Church are protected from the Curse of the Law by the blood of Jesus.**

Paul taught in Galatians 4 that those who were under the Law were the children of the concubine Hagar, and that they are the ones who are in bondage. It also says that those in the Church are the children of Sarah, and they are the ones who had the true promise. Paul made reference to the promised people when he said, "The Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." Paul warned those he was addressing not to be entangled again in the bondage of the Law from which Christ has set them free. Many never heeded the words of Jesus' Apostles. They instead killed many of them, as Jesus had predicted. This caused all the judgments of the Law, which are recorded in Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28, and Deuteronomy 32, to be poured out just as the book of Revelation said they would. From this you can see that the language of **the book of Revelation is biblical imagery** and that its message is referring to the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures from which its language originates and especially **the four sevenfold judgments previously mentioned in Leviticus 26.** Keep in mind that the amount of each judgment is recorded in the corresponding scriptures of Revelation. The following chart compares Revelation with Leviticus 26:

7 Seals—A one-quarter judgment—if they don't repent, God will send 7 stronger judgments—Revelation 5 & 6, Leviticus 26:18

7 Trumpets—A one-third judgment—if they don't repent, God will send 7 stronger judgments—Revelation 8 & 9, Leviticus 26:21

7 Thunders—Not revealed (possibly a one-half judgment)—if they don't repent, God will totally destroy them—Revelation 10, Leviticus 26:24

7 Vials—The final judgment—the total destruction of Jerusalem—Babylon is fallen—Revelation 16, Leviticus 26:28

Note that the seventh occurrence of each of these judgments in the book of Revelation uses approximately the same language: **Voices, thunderings, lightnings,** and an **earthquake. Moses experienced similar occurrences on Mount Sinai when he received the Law from God. Here God is showing how He would use the Law to judge those who refused His grace.** Remember Jesus told them that they must either fall on the stone (Jesus) and be broken (repent), or the stone would fall on them and grind them to powder (destruction of Jerusalem). (Matthew 21:44)

Daniel 2:34-35 prophesied that the stone would smite a ten-toed image on its feet. This ten-toed image is a reference to ten kings who are associated with the Roman Empire; they seem to be the same ten kings of Revelation 17:16 who will hate the whore (Jerusalem), make her desolate, and burn her with fire. Daniel went on to show that this stone (Jesus) would become a great mountain (Church Kingdom) and fill the whole earth. The Futurist interpretation of this occurrence requires an instant happening at the end of the church age, but the stone becoming a mountain and filling the whole earth would indicate a progression of growth rather than an instant event. Now compare that with what Daniel 2:44 said would take place during this time. "And **in the days of these kings** shall the God of heaven set up a **kingdom**, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, **but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms**, and it shall stand for ever." Here Daniel is showing that during the time of these ten kings, God would set up His Kingdom and His Kingdom would break in pieces and consume all the other kingdoms of the earth. God's Kingdom breaking in pieces and consuming all the other kingdoms is exactly what Jesus said the stone would do to those kingdoms that would not fall on Him in repentance. He is revealing here that earthly kingdoms will rise and fall, but His spiritual Kingdom will never be totally destroyed. Even in our day, millions are in His Kingdom throughout our known world. The reason men fail to see the true fulfillment of this prophecy is they, like the Jews, try to see Jesus' Kingdom as an "earthly" Kingdom instead of a "spiritual" Kingdom in the earth.

Isaiah chapters 28 and 29 describe one of these judgments in detail, but I will touch on it lightly here. Basically, Isaiah 28 is where God prophesied the giving of the New Covenant. He said it would come with "stammering lips and another tongue," but the unbelieving Jews "would not hear." They got their "Chief Cornerstone," but they would not trust in Him. They chose instead the covenant of death—which is the legalism of the Law—rather than to accept God's New Covenant—which is salvation by grace.

Isaiah 28:11-18 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. (12) To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing [New

Covenant]: yet they would not hear. [*Unbelieving Jews*] (15) Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death [*Law*], and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: [*They trusted in Law instead of the New Covenant*] (16) Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation [*Jesus*]: he that believeth shall not make haste. (17) Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. (18) And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it. [*The destruction of Jerusalem and the Law system*]

Isaiah 29:1 Woe to Ariel, to Ariel [*Jerusalem*], **the city where David dwelt!** add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

Isaiah 29:3 And I will camp against thee round about, and **will lay siege against thee with a mount**, and I will raise forts against thee. [*Destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman Army*]

Isaiah 29:6 Thou shalt be visited of the LORD of hosts with **thunder**, and with **earthquake**, and **great noise**, with **storm and tempest**, and the **flame of devouring fire**. [*Judgment according to Law*]

In Isaiah 29 you find the first six verses contain a direct prophecy against a city called “Ariel, Ariel.” This we know is Jerusalem because it is described there as “the city where David dwelt.” Then verse 3 says, “God will bring a mount against this city.” This is the judgment that is mentioned in verse 6 and is described as “thunder, earthquake, great noise, storm and tempest, and a devouring fire.” These verses in Isaiah use the same type of biblical language as those we have previously discussed. Because of that you can conclude that Isaiah—like all the other Old Testament prophets who used this type of biblical language—was referring to the same coming judgment against Jerusalem and Her rebellious citizens. This is very easy to see when you realize that this language and interpretation is a consistent theme throughout the Bible. I will speak more on this issue later in the series.

The Heavenly shaking, described in Matthew 24:29, is also prophesied in Haggai, and quoted in Hebrews 12. It is God shaking the kingdom of unbelieving Israel with the force of His judgment, so that only one kingdom will remain in its wake—the New Covenant Kingdom of Jesus Christ. God purposed this shaking to put the “lights out” on natural Jerusalem (old sun), so that He could announce to the world that His Church—the New Jerusalem (new sun)—was now the light of the world. This darkness, once and for all, illuminated the fact that God no longer accepted the old Levitical worship system and its animal sacrifices for salvation. God now wanted the world to look to Jesus’ sacrifice for its salvation. This truth loudly proclaimed that Jesus’ Kingdom has now been thoroughly established in the earth.

To help prove this is dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem, let’s read the two verses that precede the heavenly shaking mentioned in Matthew 24:29.

Matthew 24:27-28 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (28) For wheresoever the **carcase is**, there will **the eagles** be gathered together.

I would like to show you the definition of this Greek word that they translate here as an eagle. I am going to use the *Vines Dictionary of New Testament Words*. There it says, ‘**EAGLES - actos, ah-et-os**’: An eagle (also a vulture), is perhaps connected with aemi, to blow, as of the wind, on account of its wind like flight. **In Matthew 24:28 and Luke 17:37 the vultures were probably intended.**” This tells us that both Matthew 24 and Luke 17—which are the same account as found in the book of Revelation—probably intended the word “vultures” to be used instead of “eagles.” *Vines* went on to say, “The meaning seems to be that, as **these birds of prey gather where the carcase is**, so the judgments of God will descend upon the corrupt state of humanity. The figure of the eagle is used in Ezekiel 17 to represent the great powers of Egypt and Babylon, **as being employed to punish corrupt and faithless Israel.**”

KING JAMES AND OTHER TRANSLATIONS

The King James Version of the Bible is one of the few translations to use the word “eagle” here. Most other translations of the Bible instead use the word “vultures.” This language describes God’s judgment of death against a rebellious people, which would result in so much carnage that it would attract a gathering of vultures. I would like to show you an example of how some of the other translators treat this word, by showing you three of the more popular Bible versions that people use today.

Matthew 24:28 NRSV Wherever the corpse is, there the **vultures** will gather.

Matthew 24:28 NASB Wherever the corpse is, there the **vultures** will gather.

Matthew 24:28 NIV Wherever there is a carcass, there the **vultures** will gather.

This is talking about the vultures' feast of Luke 17:37, Revelation 19:17-18, and Ezekiel 39:17-23.

BOOKS OF REVELATION AND EZEKIEL COMPARED

The book of Ezekiel calls Jerusalem by name many times in its prophecies, and because of that, it becomes evident that much of its content is specifically dealing with God's judgments on Jerusalem. Most people, however, put these judgments in the wrong time period because they fail to realize that the books of Revelation and Ezekiel are basically the same books written with the same biblical imagery, and that they are, in most cases, prophesying of the same time period, and dealing with the same events. Since this is the case, you can even use one book to help interpret the same vision in the other book. This comparison is easy to prove by simply reading the book of Ezekiel along side the book of Revelation. You soon see that both books are dealing with the same destruction of Jerusalem, and that both books end with a symbolic picture of the establishment of God's New Jerusalem (Church Kingdom) in the earth.

Look at the following similarities as we compare these two prophetic books. The following chart was displayed in David Chilton's book, *Days of Vengeance*. It is a 750 page, verse-by-verse, exegesis of the book of Revelation. In it, Chilton proves that most of Revelation's prophecies are now history. You can obtain a copy of this book through our Rightly Dividing the Word ministry. Use the information at the end of this publication to contact us about ordering information.

1. The Throne-vision (Rev 4/Eze 1)
2. The Book (Rev 5/Eze 2-3)
3. The Four Plagues (Rev 6:1-8/Eze 5)
4. The Slain under the Altar (Rev 6:9-11/Eze 6)
5. The Wrath of God (Rev 6:12-17/Eze 7)
6. The Seal on the Saint's Foreheads (Rev 7/Eze 9)
7. The Coals from the Altar (Rev 8/Eze 10)
8. No More Delay (Rev 10:1-7/Eze 12)
9. The Eating of the Book (Rev 10:8-11/Eze 2)
10. The Measuring of the Temple (Rev 11:1-2/Eze 40-43)
11. Jerusalem and Sodom (Rev 11:8/Eze 16)
12. The Cup of Wrath (Rev 14/Eze 23)
13. The Vine of the Land (Rev 14:18-20/Eze 15)
14. The Great Harlot (Rev 17-18/Eze 16, 23)
15. The Lament Over the City (Rev 18/Eze 27)
16. The Scavengers' Feast (Rev 19/Eze 38)
17. The First Resurrection (Rev 20:4-6/Eze 37)
18. The Battle with Gog and Magog (Rev 20:7-9/Eze 38-39)
19. The New Jerusalem (Rev 21/Eze 40-48)
20. The River of Life (Rev 22/Eze 47)

JESUS USED OLD TESTAMENT BIBLICAL IMAGERY

Jesus used Old Testament biblical imagery, just like the list of 20 examples that we just went through, to describe the fall of Jerusalem.

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

Why is it after the tribulation? That means that Jerusalem has now fallen because Jerusalem fell **DURING** the Great Tribulation, and then her light went out. Why? Because Jesus had a new light—the

Church. She is now the city that sits on a hill. Paul dealt with this in Galatians 4 when he said the Church is the New Jerusalem, or the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Matthew 24:30 And then **shall appear the SIGN of the Son of man in heaven**: and then shall all the tribes of the earth [*Land*] mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Notice it says, “**SIGN**” as in a singular occurrence, and not “signs” as in more than one.

Matthew 24:31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Jesus is using the same biblical imagery as is found in the Old Testament **to describe the judgment on a nation and a change of government or covenants**. Jeremiah 31 is an example of this.

Jeremiah 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

If this new covenant was with the house of Israel, then the Church must be the Israel of God, because this covenant is to the Church—Jew and Gentile in one body. Jesus, the Bible says, broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile, making them one new man in Christ Jesus.

Jeremiah 31:32-36 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: (33) But this **shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel**; After those days, saith the LORD, I will **put my law in their inward parts**, and **write it in their hearts**; and **will be their God**, and **they shall be my people**. (34) And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more**. (35) Thus saith the LORD, **which giveth the sun for a light by day**, and the ordinances of the **moon** and of the **stars** for a **light by night**, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: (36) If those **ordinances** depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

These scriptures from Jeremiah are also found in Hebrews 8:8-13 where we find the New Testament’s covenant of grace, even though Clarence Larkin in his book *Dispensational Truth* denies that this covenant is to the Church. The falling of the **SUN, MOON, and STARS** represent the **falling of the old covenant worship system**.

THE BIBLE TRUTH ABOUT ROMANS CHAPTER 11

The scriptures of Romans 11 are partially drawn from the scriptures of Jeremiah 31. They show that “Natural Israel” was not cut off by God, but **by her own unbelief and refusal to accept His New Covenant**. She can be grafted back into the Vine—Jesus Christ—anytime she quits abiding in her unbelief. That is what Paul said in Romans 11—she’s not cut off except by her own unbelief.

Romans 11:1 I say then, **Hath God cast away his people? God forbid**. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Romans 11:19-25 Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. (20) Well; **because of unbelief they were broken off**, and **thou standest by faith**. Be not highminded, but fear: (21) For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. (22) Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. (23) And they also, **if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again**. (24) For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? (25) For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Later on page 35 I will deal more on the subject of the “times of the Gentiles,” however for now let me touch briefly on it here. People have been taught by Dispensationalists to interpret Romans 11:25 as a total turning back to the Natural Jew, which they say will take place at the end of the world after the church has been caught-up to Heaven. To see if this is true maybe we need to look at what this scripture does not say as well as what it does say. It does not say anything about a rapture of a Gentile church in order for this to take place, and as a matter of fact, when you look at Paul’s definition of “all Israel,” which you will be

studying next, it will prove that this could never have been the intention of the writer. Another thing this scripture does not say is that it takes place at the end of time, and when you compare this with other scriptures on the “times of the Gentiles” as I have done on page 35 you will see that it could be very much connected to events that concluded in 70 AD. However, with all that said let’s play along with at least the Futurist part of this Dispensational thinking for a moment and say that “times of the Gentiles” is something that is yet to happen in our future. Regardless of the false statements made by some, Historical believers have no problem with Natural Israel being saved; it is our prayer that every Jew, along with every Gentile, would be saved. However, the text in Romans 11 is not dealing with a future time of salvation, which the original Dispensational teachings say will be accomplished by a return to law-keeping after the Church is removed from the Earth, but rather **its text is clearly dealing with the one final method of salvation for all people for all times.**

Many try to use Romans 11:25 as pointing to a future time when all of Natural Israel will be saved by simply looking on Jesus. This would mean God had become a respecter of persons, and was giving salvation outside the born again experience He said was required in the New Testament, and would be giving salvation according to race and date of birth to those who happened to be alive at that time. Paul is not telling of a future time when all of Natural Israel will be saved outside the New Covenant message. He is simply saying that if Natural Israel would stop abiding in unbelief and be grafted back into the Vine—Jesus Christ—they would be saved, and **IN THIS MANNER all Israel will be saved.**

Romans 11:26 **And SO all Israel shall be saved:** as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

A look at the meaning of the Greek word “**houto**” from which we translate our English word “**so**” will help us see this more easily. The *Strong’s Concordance* has houto as the *Strong’s* code 3779, and it gives the following definition for its meaning: “houto, hoo'-to; or (before a vowel) houtos, hoo'-toce; adv. from G3778; **in this way** (referring to what precedes or follows):—after that, **after (in) this manner**, as, even (so), for all that, like (-wise), no more, **on this fashion** (-wise), **so (in like manner)**, thus, what.”

This *Strong’s* definition shows us the manner by which all Israel shall be saved will be their engraftation into Jesus Christ by the New Covenant plan of salvation.

WHO IS “ALL ISRAEL”?

We do not have to pray about this answer because Paul explained who “all Israel” is in the ninth chapter of Romans. You have to read all of Romans 9, 10, and 11 to get a full meaning about whom he was referring. He said in Romans 9:6-8 that the children of the flesh (Natural Israel) were not the children of God, but the children of the promise (the Church—Jew and Gentile) are counted for the seed.

Romans 9:6-8 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. **For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:** (7) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, They which are the **children of the flesh, these are not the children of God:** but **the children of the promise are counted for the seed.**

Paul is saying that the Natural Jew is not God’s Israel as a result of race, but must become God’s Israel as a result of grace. He proved this in Romans 2:28-29.

Romans 2:28 **For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;** neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: (29) **But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart,** in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Paul referred to the Church as the “Israel of God” in Galatians 6:15-16. There he made it clear that God’s Israel were not those who were physically circumcised, but those who had become a “new creature in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 6:15-16 For **in Christ Jesus** neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature.** (16) **And as many as walk according to this rule,** peace be on them, and mercy, and upon **the Israel of God.**

Paul went on to tell us in Romans 11 how all Israel should be saved.

Romans 11:26-27 **And so all Israel shall be saved:** as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: (27) **For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.**

Paul is quoting from Isaiah 59:20-21, which says they would be saved by the “deliverer” who would come to Zion, take away their transgressions, and make a covenant with them, which would take away their sins.

Isaiah 59:20-21 And **the Redeemer shall come to Zion**, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. (21) As for me, **this is my covenant with them**, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, **from henceforth and for ever**.

This was future in Isaiah's prophecy, but was presently being fulfilled in Paul's day, because **Jesus was the deliverer that came out of Zion and made a covenant with them** that took away the sins of all who would turn from their unbelief and be grafted into this New Covenant. (See Acts 2:38) **This is not referring only to some future event, but to that time and all times**, if anyone was going to be saved. Isaiah 59:21 said it would be "**henceforth, and forever.**"

When the Natural Jews tried to claim importance by being of the Natural seed of Abraham in John 8, Jesus rebuked them and let them know it was not a matter of race but of hearing the words of Jesus. He told them they were not of God but were of their father the devil, if they did not hear His words. Dispensationalists have gone completely against the teachings of Jesus and Paul and the New Covenant message, and teach that the Natural Jews, who are outside of Christ, are God's chosen people, when the New Testament teaches the Church (Jew and Gentile in one body) is God's chosen people. The New Testament teaches the Natural Jew is not cut off except by his own unbelief, and must be grafted back into the Vine—Jesus Christ—in order to be saved.

God includes the sun, moon, and stars, when mentioning the changing of covenants and His Church becoming the new light of the world. Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 5:14 that they were now the "light of the world," a "city set on an hill." These statements describe the Church as being the New Jerusalem of God.

Hebrews 8:8-13 shows the Covenant that God has made with "true Israel," and why it is now called "**new.**" The writer of Hebrews wrote the following scriptures just after he quoted Jeremiah 31:31-34. So the following scriptures—if kept in context—would still be referring to Jeremiah 31:35-36. Please note that the next scripture is in the Bible. And because it is, and because its meaning is very clear, there really isn't any reason to pray before believing it. I say this because I believe if the Bible says it, we should believe it!

Hebrews 8:13 KJV In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is **ready to vanish away**.

Hebrews 8:13 NIV By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging **will soon disappear**.

The writer of Hebrews is telling us here that the old covenant and its animal sacrifices were made obsolete by the blood of Jesus, and will soon disappear (cease to be offered). This was fulfilled in 70 AD. The New Testament writers knew that the animal blood that was still being shed at the Temple wasn't saving anyone since salvation now takes the blood of Jesus Christ. They also knew that the offering of this animal blood was soon to disappear just as the prophecies had foretold. The writer of Hebrews confirms this in Hebrews 10:9-14.

Hebrews 10:9-14 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. (10) By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Clarence Larkin in his book *Dispensational Truth* (page 151) quotes Jeremiah 31: 31-37 and Hebrews 8:7-13 as his eighth covenant or dispensation. Concerning this covenant he says, "**This covenant has not yet been made**. It is to be made with Israel after they get back to their own land. It is promised in Jeremiah 31:31-37. It is unconditional and will cover the Millennium and the New Heaven and the New Earth. It is based on the finished work of Christ as recorded in Matthew 26 and 28. **It has nothing to do with the Church and does not belong to this dispensation**. It is the 'Eighth Covenant,' and speaks of Resurrection and Eternal Completeness."

His statements are in direct contradiction to the Bible and the writers of the New Testament, yet men still hold to Dispensationalism as being true. I found basically the same thing being taught in the Fall 2000 edition of an Apostolic Sunday School teacher's manual entitled *Dispensations and Covenants*. There on page 10 this manual's writer was writing out this lesson while trying to stay within Larkin's teachings. In it he says, "This Covenant will begin to be fulfilled in Jerusalem during the Millennium, but the Church already enjoys this relationship. The New Covenant is yet to be introduced to Israel and Judah." My question is what nationality does this writer think Peter, Paul, the remaining Apostles, and most of the First Century church members were if they were not Jews? Jesus forbid the apostles to go to the Gentiles

in the beginning because He had to complete the last part of Daniel's 70th week promise to Natural Israel. Romans 1:16 and 2:10 say that the Gospel was preached to the Jew first and then to the Gentile. **This problem arises when men try to separate Natural Israel from the Church when the New Testament brings the two together into one body of believers in Christ Jesus.**

Ephesians 2:13-22 But **now in Christ Jesus** ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. (14) For he is our peace, who **hath made both one** [*Jew and Gentile*], and **hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us**; (15) Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, **even the law of commandments** contained in ordinances; for **to make in himself of twain** [*Jew and Gentile*] **one new man**, so making peace; (16) And that he might **reconcile both unto God in one body** by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: (17) And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. (18) For through him **we both** [*Jew and Gentile*] have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (19) Now therefore **ye are no more strangers and foreigners**, but **fellowcitizens with the saints**, and of the **household of God**; (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, **Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone**; [*Unbelieving Jews and Dispensationalists are still looking for a literal cornerstone on which to build a literal Temple, because they can't seem to recognize that Jesus is the true corner stone of God's true Temple—the Church.*] (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto **an holy temple in the Lord** : (22) In whom **ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit**.

Paul also stated this in his writings in Galatians chapter 3.

Galatians 3:26-29 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. (27) For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (29) And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The next few verses in Hebrews 10:16-22 prove **this Covenant was being offered to Israel at that time**, and is not speaking of some future time during a millennial reign.

Hebrews 10:16-22 **This is the covenant** that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (17) And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. (18) **Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin**. (19) Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest **by the blood of Jesus**, (20) By a new and living way, **which he hath consecrated for us**, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; [*Hath consecrated us, not will consecrate us*] (21) And **having an high priest** over the house of God; (22) Let **us draw near** with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

I am convinced that if men would read what the writers of Dispensationalism really teach in their books, they would have to reject those teachings as being totally against the sayings of Jesus and the Apostles. I will deal with this more in other lessons, especially in the lessons entitled *The True Israel of God*, *The Real Babylon the Great*, and a lesson that is not part of this series entitled *The Web of Deception*, which is an in-depth study on the errors of Dispensationalism.

THE HEAVENLY SHAKING MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

Now let's take a more detailed look at the heavenly shaking that is mentioned in the Bible to see its intended meaning.

Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the **sun** be darkened, and the **moon** shall not give her light, and the **stars** shall fall from heaven, and the **powers of the heavens shall be shaken**:

This is biblical imagery which is drawn from Haggai 2:6-9 and quoted in Hebrews 12:18-29. **Both these passages refer to a change of covenants.**

Haggai 2:6-9 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; (7) And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. (8) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. (9) The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

Haggai is saying **the glory of the New Covenant will be greater than the glory of the Law**. Paul dealt with this issue in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, when he showed that the veil over Moses' face was a type of the

blindness that was on the Jews that kept them from seeing the fading glory of the Law. You do not have to guess to what Haggai was referring since Hebrews 12:18-29 answers it for us.

The writer of Hebrews uses **Mount Sinai** as a reference in the first part of this reading. In biblical imagery this Mount **refers to the Law**.

Hebrews 12:18-21 **For ye are not come unto the mount** that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, (19) And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (20) (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: (21) And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

Here this same writer is now talking about **grace** because he is referencing the imagery of **Mount Sion**.

Hebrews 12:22-29 **But ye are come unto mount Sion**, and unto the **city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem**, and to an innumerable company of angels, (23) To the general assembly and **church of the firstborn**, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the **spirits of just men made perfect**, (24) And to **Jesus the mediator of the new covenant**, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (25) See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, **much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:** (26) **Whose voice then shook the earth**: but now he hath promised, saying, **Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.** (27) And this word, **Yet once more, signifieth the REMOVING of those things that are shaken, [Law]** as of things that are made, **that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. [New Covenant Kingdom]** (28) Wherefore **we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved**, let us have **grace**, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: (29) For our God is a consuming fire.

God is describing His coming in judgment against Jerusalem. He said it would come against all those who refused His New Covenant message by continuing to keep the old covenant's Levitical worship system. He said that there would be a shaking that would leave only His Kingdom—the Church—the New Jerusalem—standing as His light in the world. **Compare this with the parable of the wheat and the tares found in Matthew 13**; there the tares are removed first, and then the righteous shine forth as the “sun” (Son of righteousness). Many have said that this is referring to the rapture of the Church. That is not true. It has nothing to do with a rapture of the Church because it says the righteous shall shine forth after the wicked are removed. This happened when those who had been killing and punishing the Church for preaching the gospel were finally removed out of the Church's way, and the Old Testament worship system was totally destroyed.

THE BIBLE TEACHES A PROTECTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE, NOT A CATCHING AWAY

The parable of the wheat and the tares found in Matthew 13 agrees with the following prayer of Jesus and proverb of Solomon. They uniformly declare a keeping and protecting of God's people through the outpouring of God's wrath, rather than a pre-tribulation catching away, or raptured escape from the earth.

John 17:15 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

Proverbs 10:30 The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

Nowhere does the Bible speak of a pre-tribulation rapture. It does speak of the “resurrection at the last day.” Jesus mentions this “last day” resurrection four times in John chapter six. **For Jesus to catch away His Church before the last day resurrection**, so that His Church could avoid tribulation, **would oppose His own prayer and the Word of God.** People need to realize the difference between the wrath of Satan (which is pictured in Revelation 13 and was fulfilled when Nero persecuted the Church for about three and one-half years), and the wrath of God (which was poured out on the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem after the Church had fled [Revelation 12] when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by armies). For the Church to be protected from God's wrath, or to escape to another physical location in the earth from His wrath, is very scriptural. This type of protection for God's people is exactly what happened each time God's wrath was poured out in the Bible, but it is not to be confused with the resurrection of 1Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The dispensational teaching of a Pre-Tribulation rapture was put into the world with the purpose of getting men to accept the idea of a change of covenants and a return to seven-years of Law-keeping, more than it was to escape a time of tribulation. It was also designed to promote a natural people above God's spiritual covenant people, because at its core is the teaching that there will be a return to the old order of

Law-keeping for salvation. This teaching makes God return to being a respecter of persons according to race and places the attention of the Church and the world on the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple and sacrificing of red heifers rather than obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of the same people who believe a Pre-Tribulation rapture would deny that there is going to be a change of covenants, because they realize how contrary that would be to the scriptures of the New Testament, yet they still want to hold onto the skeletal system of Dispensationalism with its futurist pre-tribulation rapture, gap theory, future seven-year tribulation, etc. That is an unrealistic stance since there isn't a purpose for a Pre-Tribulation rapture of the Church if there isn't going to be a change of covenants. Not only is there no scriptural basis for a Pre-Tribulation rapture, but the scriptures actually teach the opposite, which is a protection rather than a removal of the saints. Also a pre-tribulation rapture without a change of covenants doesn't even make sense. Why would God remove all the Spirit-filled saints from the earth, and then turn to the unbelieving Jews and the foolish virgins to have a revival that preaches the same plan of salvation as those who have just been raptured?

THE WICKED SHALL BE TAKEN AND THE RIGHTEOUS LEFT

When we study Scripture, we must do it with an open and honest heart. When that openness is applied to the study of the prophetic scriptures that dispensationalists use to teach a Pre-Tribulation rapture, you quickly realize many of these verses were fulfilled in 70 AD and deal with a protection of God's people, and not a catching away. For instance, when the Bible talks about two being together, one taken, and the other left, it is not referring to a rapture of the Church, because it definitely shows that **the wicked are the ones who are taken, and the righteous are the ones who are left.**

Luke 17:26-36 And **as it was in the days of Noe**, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (27) They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and **the flood came, and destroyed them all.** [*The wicked were taken, and the righteous were preserved by obedience to the plan of God.*] (28) Likewise also **as it was in the days of Lot**; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; (29) But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom **it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all.** [*The wicked were taken and the righteous were preserved alive by fleeing the city at the warning of God.*] (30) **Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.** (31) In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. [*This is the exact language that is used in Matthew 24:16-18, and in Luke 21:21 when Jesus warned the Church to flee Jerusalem when they saw the Roman Army, and is therefore dealing with leaving the city before its destruction. This is exactly how Lot was protected, and not by a catching away up into heaven.*] (32) Remember Lot's wife. (33) Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it. (34) I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; **the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.** (35) Two women shall be grinding together; **the one shall be taken, and the other left.** (36) Two men shall be in the field; **the one shall be taken, and the other left.**

The next verse leaves no doubt as to what Jesus is referring to, and who will be taken, because **they ask him where He was going to take them, and He answered them**, by letting them know He was going to feed the ones taken to the vultures.

Luke 17:37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

We have previously shown that most Bible translations, other than the King James, use the word "vultures" here instead of "eagles," and that most commentaries do the same. This biblical imagery is referring to the vulture's feast of Matthew 24:28, Revelation 19:17-18, and Ezekiel 39:17-23. These passages show that the death toll of the rebellious people during the destruction of Jerusalem would be so great a number that God would allow their corpses to be fed to the vultures. It is easy to see that **this could not be referring to a rapture** since it is the wicked that are shown to be taken first, and the righteous are preserved alive.

ENOCH'S PROPHECY QUOTED BY JUDE

Jude seems to be quoting from 1 Enoch 1:9 when he talked about the coming of the Lord to judge the wicked. He could have been talking about the Lord coming in judgment against Jerusalem in 70 AD, or he could be referring to the Lord's final coming. Each person that studies this will have to decide that for his or her own self. The main point I want to make here is that **after carefully examining Jude's statement,**

and the text he seems to be quoting from, you can see that it reveals the righteous will still be living in the earth when this judgment takes place.

Jude 1:14-15 And **Enoch** also, the seventh from Adam, **prophesied of these, saying**, Behold, **the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints**, (15) To **execute judgment** upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

1 Enoch 1:9 And behold! **He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones**, to **execute judgment** upon all, and to destroy all the ungodly: And to convict all flesh of all the works of their ungodliness which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

I am not going to argue whether or not 1 Enoch is an anointed book. It forms a part of what is known as “apocalyptic literature,” which claims that the first portions of 1 Enoch existed before 150 BC. Jude seems to be quoting from the first part of its text. I would never want to use any of these writings as a lone text to try to establish any major doctrine. I am simply saying that Jude seems to have quoted from 1 Enoch 1:9, and a look at the first and eighth verses of this same chapter will tell us whether or not a rapture has taken place before this judgment is poured out.

1 Enoch 1:1 The words of the blessing of Enoch, wherewith he blessed **the elect and righteous, who will be living in the day of tribulation**, when **all the wicked and godless are to be removed**. [*The wicked are removed and the righteous are protected.*]

1 Enoch 1:7-9 And the earth shall be wholly rent in sunder, and all that is upon the earth shall perish, and there shall be a judgment upon all men. (8) But **with the righteous He will make peace, and will protect the elect**, and **mercy shall be upon them**. And **they shall all belong to God**, and **they shall be prospered**, and **they shall all be blessed**. And **He will help them all**, and **light shall appear unto them**, and **He will make peace with them**. (9) And behold! **He cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to destroy all the ungodly**: And to convict all flesh of all the works of their ungodliness, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.

One can easily see that **the apocalyptic writings of 1 Enoch clearly teach a protection of the saints, rather than a removal of them from the earth**, during the judgment of which he is speaking. There is a possibility that Moses could have been influenced by this quotation from Enoch’s prophecy when he made a similar statement in Deuteronomy 33:2.

Deuteronomy 33:2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and **he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them**.

When Moses made the statement “he came with ten thousands of saints,” he was referring to the LORD bringing the Children of Israel out of Egypt and giving them the Law. Jude seems to have used this same statement to describe God’s judgment that was to come upon the wicked as a result of their disobedience to that Law. It is evident from the scriptures that we have studied that disobedience to the Law was the reason for the judgment that fell on Jerusalem in 70 AD. Paul revealed in the New Testament that the righteous and perfect Law brought a curse to all of the human race, because all had sinned and came short of obedience to its commandments. That is why the New Covenant message of being born again through the blood of Jesus became the only method of salvation for all mankind—Jew and Gentile.

HE PROMISED THE SAINTS AT PHILADELPHIA THEY WOULD BE KEPT

Another scripture some try to use to indicate a Pre-Tribulation Rapture is Revelation 3:10. There John is writing to the saints at Philadelphia, and telling them that God promises that they will be kept from that hour. If we carefully examine this verse, and keep it in its proper context, it becomes evident that this is referring to a temptation that they would soon face and not to a time of tribulation thousands of years away.

Revelation 3:10-11 Because **thou [you] hast kept the word** of my patience, **I also will keep thee** from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth [*land*]. (11) **Behold, I come quickly**: hold that fast which **thou** hast, that no man take **thy** crown.

Jesus tells the church at Philadelphia that because they have kept His word, He will keep them—not remove them. John is writing to that church telling them about what they will face during their time; he is not writing this to another church group thousands of years down the road. The next scripture proves this

time frame because it says that He was coming “quickly.” Quickly means soon. The Angel made this time frame clear from the beginning because he said he was speaking of things that would “shortly come to pass.” That also means soon. I will cover these scriptures in more detail later in this lesson. Let’s look at a couple of them here:

Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants **things which must shortly come to pass**; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: **for the time is at hand**.

When you study these texts it is easy to see that they are not teaching a catching away of the saints up into heaven in order to escape tribulation, but rather a keeping of God’s Church during tribulation. It also becomes clear that most of these texts are referring to the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem, and the Church’s escape into the wilderness during this three and one-half year destruction as pictured in Revelation 12.

WHAT ABOUT FUTURE TRIBULATION?

The destruction of Jerusalem did not forever end all the persecution against the Church, because the Bible says, “They that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” and “in this world you will have tribulation.” Many people have questions about whether or not the Church will face opposition from the New World Order, or experience any future tribulation or persecution. These questions seem to have intensified in light of the situations that we are currently facing. Revelation 20 does speak of a time that Satan will be permitted to go and deceive the nations and bring them against the saints. I do believe and teach that there are satanic powers working through men today whose purpose is to destroy the Church. All believers should be able to recognize these powers so that they can better know how to pray against them and defeat them through the power of Jesus Christ! **By taking these prophecies out of their historical context and placing them in the future it makes one believe that these current evil powers are prophesied to be here and therefore cannot be defeated through prayer and fasting.** This causes the Church to believe a **defeatist theology** where the Church is destined to be defeated and in need of a quick escape.

The main reason I am trying to educate the Church on the true interpretation of Bible prophecy is to help them more easily recognize and pray against these modern day forces. God spoke to me in a lengthy session of prayer a couple of years ago and instructed me to go through the Church and reveal this wicked system to them and to recruit people who would pray against this system. In a later lesson I will reveal that Dispensational Theology plays a major role in this deception and that it was intentionally placed in the Church for that purpose. I do have answers concerning these modern-day satanic plots against the Church, but they are too vast for me to cover in this current lesson. I will deal with these issues, however, in my lessons entitled *The Real Babylon the Great* and *The Web of Deception*.

JOEL’S HOLY GHOST OUTPOURING IN THE LAST DAYS

Joel prophesied both **Pentecost** and **Holocaust** when he prophesied of the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon all flesh, and the sun’s turning to darkness, and the moon to blood before the Day of the Lord. Peter said Joel’s statements were fulfilled when the Holy Ghost fell in Acts 2. **He also claimed that its outpouring was happening in the “last days.”** By saying this they knew that the remaining portion of Joel’s prophecy concerning the **Day of Judgment** was soon to fall on those that rejected God’s kingdom. Peter revealed this to us in Acts 2.

Acts 2:16-18 But **this is that** which was spoken by the **prophet Joel**; (17) And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, **I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh**: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: (18) And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Then he began to discuss the judgments on the Old Covenant and the rejecters of the New (Days of Vengeance).

Acts 2:19-21 And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: (20) The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: (21) And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The people in the New Covenant were saved from the siege of Jerusalem, because when they saw the Abomination of Desolation (the city compassed about with armies), they fled Jerusalem just as Jesus had instructed them. It becomes very clear that **Jesus and the New Testament writers** were using **biblical imagery** to describe the **destruction of Jerusalem**, the **ending of the old Levitical worship system**, and the **change from Law to Grace**.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD



Now let's look at the second subject that many people have not fully studied out—the **Kingdom of God**.

Matthew 3:1-2 In those days came **John the Baptist**, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, (2) And saying, **Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus then sent out His disciples with the same message.

Matthew 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Notice that they were all preaching that **the Kingdom of God was “at hand,”** and not several thousand years away. That means they had to be referring to the Church Kingdom.

JESUS SAID...

Jesus used this same terminology when He described the closeness of His Kingdom to man.

Matthew 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, **then the kingdom of God is come unto you**.

John 18:36 Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight**, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Luke 17:20-21 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, **when the kingdom of God should come**, he answered them and said, **The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:** (21) Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, **the kingdom of God is within you**.

Jesus clearly taught that His Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom that is found within man, and not, as most men teach, a physical kingdom. Where did man get this idea of a physical Kingdom of God? I found the answer in a book that was written by Gershom Scholem entitled *The Messianic Ideas of Judaism*. This book claims its roots in the Hebrew Kabbalah, which is Jewish Mysticism, and the extra-biblical oral-traditions of the Hebrew Talmud. Scholem starts out his book by revealing that unbelieving Jews do not believe in a “spiritual” Kingdom of God. They do however believe in a “physical” kingdom of God in the earth. He further states that this future earthly Jewish kingdom is based on the belief that Jesus, whom unbelieving Jews call “Messiah Ben Joseph” (son of Joseph), was a failed false Messiah who redeemed nothing and brought destruction to Jerusalem. I am afraid that much of the Christian Dispensational teachings out there have not come from the Bible but from hand-me-down Jewish theology. This elevates the teachings of unbelieving Jews and mystics above the truths of Jesus and His Apostles.

One of the main cornerstone teachings of Dispensationalism is that God delayed His Kingdom because the Jews rejected Jesus' Kingdom when He offered it to them. There are two questions that every serious student of the Bible should ask about this. First, where does the Bible teach that Jews, or any other people, have enough power over God to force Him to delay His Kingdom? Secondly, where does the Bible say that if a majority of people, including Jews, refused to accept God's Kingdom, He would just hold off its beginning until another time? The answer to both of these questions is “nowhere!” This lack of scriptural evidence clearly shows that this delayed Kingdom doctrine is nothing more than a manmade theory, and **since it cannot be substantiated with even one scripture it should be rejected**.

A Jewish Apostolic brother sent me a copy of a speech made by Senator Joe McCarthy in which Senator McCarthy revealed that **two non-Christian groups intentionally put this Dispensational teaching in the world**. This, McCarthy showed, was done in order to **deceive our churches and bring political and spiritual favor to a natural people instead of God's spiritual people the Church**. He also mentioned the notes in the *Scofield Bible* as being one of the main tools used in propagating this deception. Grace Halsell, in her book *Forcing God's Hand* revealed many of the same factors. (*Forcing God's Hand* is available

through Rightly Dividing the Word.) I will deal with this subject in more detail in two lessons entitled *The Real Babylon the Great* and *The Web of Deception*.

The book of Romans and the Gospel of John both show that the Kingdom of God is not a physical kingdom in the Earth, but is a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of the believers.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but **righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

It is easy to see that Jesus and His Apostles believed the Kingdom of God to be the Spirit of God indwelling in the hearts of believers after they are born again and not a future kingdom in the earth. The Apostles wrote as if the Kingdom of God was something they had already received rather than something they were waiting to receive in the future.

Colossians 1:12-13 Giving thanks unto the Father, which **hath made us** meet to be **partakers of the inheritance of the saints** in light: (13) Who **hath delivered us** from the power of darkness, and **hath translated us into the KINGDOM of his dear Son**: [*hath is past tense*]

Does this do away with the belief that we will spend eternity with the Lord after our death? Absolutely not! That is the hope and promise of every true Christian, but it does not change the fact that His Church is called the Kingdom of God in the Bible. I am not teaching “Kingdom Now” doctrine, as some men teach it, but I am teaching the Church Kingdom now.

With these points established, you can understand that **HIS “COMING IN THE CLOUDS”** deals with **HIS JUDGMENT ON JERUSALEM** and the **FULL ESTABLISHMENT OF HIS KINGDOM IN THE EARTH.**

THE TIME TEXT GIVEN BY JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES



Here are more statements that Jesus and His apostles made about His coming judgment.

Matthew 24:1-2 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. (2) And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, **There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**

THIS WAS FULFILLED IN THEIR DAY

This was fulfilled in their day at the destruction of Jerusalem. Nearly all prophecy teachers believe that this was fulfilled during the time of Jerusalem’s destruction. The problem begins when they try to divide the next statement into different time periods.

Matthew 24:3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be **the sign** of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

Notice that it says, “The sign”—singular—not “signs”—plural. Pay special attention to this point.

They were not dividing this out, but were **asking for the one sign** that would bring about the **destruction of the temple**, the **coming of the Lord**, and the **end of the age in their generation**. They asked this because Jesus had plainly told them that some of them would still be alive to see this occurrence take place. By reading Mark’s account of the same question, it becomes clearer that Jesus never intended for these events to be separated. He was just answering their question about **the one sign** that would let them know when **all these things** would be fulfilled. Jesus gave them many signs that would come to pass but He said, “the end was not yet”; later He revealed what would be the key **sign** that would begin the three and one-half year period that Daniel prophesied as the **“time of the end.”** This **sign** would be **Jerusalem being surrounded by armies** and was the signal for Jesus’ followers to flee the city to escape His coming wrath, which would be carried out by the Roman Army.

Let’s read Mark’s account of the same statements we just read in Matthew 24.

Mark 13:4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be **THE SIGN** when all these things shall be fulfilled?

Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

These statements make it very clear that these occurrences should not be divided—if you are going to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. *Strong's Concordance* supports this interpretation in its definitions of the Matthew 24:3 word “coming.”

COMING—Parousia (par-oo-see'-ah—*Strong's* NT: 3952). It is said to be, “from the present participle of NT: 3918; **a being near**, i.e. **advent (often, return; specifically, of Christ to punish Jerusalem, or finally the wicked)**; (by implication) physically, aspect: KJV-coming, **presence**.”

THE THREE GREEK WORDS TRANSLATED “WORLD”

To understand how this was also the end of the world, you need to understand the differences in the three Greek words that are translated “world” in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible.

COSMOS—THE WORLD

The first Greek word we will look at that is translated **WORLD** is **COSMOS**. **kosmos, (kos'-mos—Strong's 2889)**. It is described in *Strong's* as, “**the world** (in a wide or narrow sense, **includ. its inhab.**, lit. or fig. [mor.]):—adorning, world.” An example of this is found in Matthew 4:8.

Matthew 4:8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the **world**, and the glory of them;

This means the “**physical earth and its inhabitants**.” This is also the meaning most people put on the word “world” in the New Testament regardless of which original Greek word is being used; **this is one of the main reasons for all the related misinterpretations of the Scriptures**.

AION—THE AGE

Another word that is translated **WORLD** is the Greek word, **aion, (ahee-ohn'—Strong's 165)**: *Strong's* says it means, “an age; by extens. perpetuity (also past); by impl. the world; **spec. (Jewish) a Messianic period (present or future)**:—**age**, course, eternal, (for) ever (-more), [n-] ever, (beginning of the, while the) world (began, without end). Comp. G5550.”

This is the word used in Matthew 24:3. There it shows that **they were asking about the end of the “age,” and not the end of the “cosmos”** (earth) as most people try to teach. The Jews only understood there to be two ages: the current age they were living in, and the coming age of their Messiah. Because of that, they were not asking about the end of the “cosmos,” but the end of their “aion” or “Jewish” age. They wanted to know when their Messiah Jesus would come in judgment against Jerusalem to destroy its old worship system. This, they were told, would be the sign to the Jews and to the world that Jesus is now ruling in His Kingdom—which is the Church. The following scriptures prove this is referring to the **last days** of the **Jewish age**.

Hebrews 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, (2) **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

This scripture calls the time that they were living in the “last days.” This refers to the last days of the Jewish age of Law-keeping.

Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now **once in the end of the world** hath he appeared to **put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**.

This says **Jesus died at the end of the world**. Is that still future as well? We know that this is impossible to apply to the future since Jesus died almost 2,000 years ago. The only way this scripture would make any sense is to understand that the term “world” is being used here as a reference to the **age**. This would make this statement to say that Jesus' death ended the **age** of Law. This wasn't a physical ending, but a spiritual one, because God no longer accepted their sacrifices. This ending also brought in the Church's New Covenant, which was also purchased by Jesus' blood.

HIS COMING WAS NEAR AND WAS TO HAPPEN IN THEIR DAY

The language of Scripture shows that their writers believed that they were currently in the last days. They also believed that they would live to see Jesus come back to end the Jewish age, and to judge the rebellious of Jerusalem. **These are some of the scriptures of which Futurists say the New Testament writers must have been mistaken when the writers wrote them**, because in the Futurist's mind, Jesus still has not come. Once again, this problem is created because of their failure to recognize that Jesus and His

Apostles referred to His coming in judgment to destroy Jerusalem as a “**coming of the Lord.**” This does not do away with the “**resurrection at the last day.**” The failure to recognize the differences in these two events has created much of the confusion, which currently exists concerning Bible prophecy.

Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, **as ye see the day approaching.**

Notice that this verse says, “As ‘**YE**’ (or ‘**YOU**’) see the day approaching.” This is a reference to those who heard him then, and not to those who were still several thousand years away in the future!

Hebrews 10:37 For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.

He said it’s not much longer and He is coming. Was He wrong? I don’t think so.

1 Peter 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but **was manifest in these last times for you,**

Peter called it “the last times.” He was referring to his time, not to a time in the future.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written **for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.**

Paul said that they were the ones upon whom “the ends of the world are come.” He couldn’t have been talking about the end of the physical world because it is still here, so he must have been talking about the end of the Jewish age of Law-keeping. He was referring to a time when God would have a new sun, moon, and stars.

OIKOUMENE—THE KNOWN WORLD

The last Greek word that is translated **WORLD** is **oikoumene** (oy-kou-men’ay—*Strong’s* 3625). *Strong’s* defines it as, “land, i.e. **the (terrene part of the) globe; spec. the Roman empire:—earth, world.**” An example of this is found in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in **all the world** for a witness unto all nations; and **then shall the end come.**

Most scholars say that in most cases oikoumene refers to **the inhabited part of the earth, their known inhabited part,** or more specifically **the Roman empire of their day.** A brief look at the next seven scriptures will show **that the prophecy found in Matthew 24:14 was fulfilled before the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem.**

Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that **your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**

Romans 10:18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Colossians 1:5-6 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of **the gospel;** (6) Which is come unto you, **as it is in all the world;** and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Colossians 1:23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and **which was preached to every creature which is under heaven;** whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Romans 16:25-26 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, (26) But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:**

These scriptures show that the command to preach the gospel to “all” the world—their world—had already been completed. This left no hindrances in the way of Jesus coming in their day to execute His judgment. Because of this, the disciples worked all the more to preach the gospel to all those—Jew and Gentile—who would hear them throughout their known world—the Roman Empire. This burden was heavy because they wanted every soul that was in rebellion against Jesus’ New Covenant to have a chance to be born again before His coming.

One thing that will help a person to understand this is to realize the differences between the messages of Matthew 24:14 and the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19. Matthew 24:14 tells us that the gospel was

to be preached to all nations as a witness, so if they rejected its truths it would thereby become **a witness against them**. The Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 commands the Church to preach the gospel to the whole world in order to **make disciples** of the hearers. The gospel, being a witness that removes a rebellious person's excuses before God, speaks of a different objective than the teaching of these truths to make one a disciple of Jesus.

"All the world" meant the inhabited world that **they knew in their day**. Some people say that the fulfillment of Bible prophecy has to be in the future if it has never literally happened to the entire world. What if you used this same type of logic on the next two scriptures?

Luke 2:1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that **all the world should be taxed**.

You would then have to say that this scripture is future, because the whole earth has never been taxed. We know this future time frame can't be true. This scripture clearly applied only to the Roman Empire, and was definitely fulfilled during that time. This same fact applies to the next scripture.

Acts 11:28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be **great dearth throughout all the world**: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Some would say since the "whole world" has never experienced a worldwide famine, this scripture has to be referring to the future as well. This type of reasoning is exactly why some miss the simplicity of the truths found in the book of Revelation and other similar scriptures. You have to go beyond the surface of these words and define their truths within the context in which they were written. If you didn't do that here, you would totally change the true meaning of this scripture. But the remaining context tells us that it happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. We can thereby know with certainty that it was for their time, and not written for a future time. Had the last part of this scripture that declares the time period been left off, Futurists would no doubt be trying to say this famine is still for the future.

MATTHEW AND LUKE'S ACCOUNT OF THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

MATTHEW 24:15 gives the **key sign** to recognize the **time of the end**—the **Abomination of Desolation**. Luke revealed this occurrence to be **the armies surrounding Jerusalem**. That is exactly what the **early church saw and thereby knew to flee to safety** before the coming judgment on Jerusalem took place. To prove this we simply have to compare Matthew's account with Luke's on this subject.

Matthew 24:15 When **ye [YOU]** therefore shall see the **abomination of desolation**, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Notice that Jesus said, "When YE (which is "you" in modern English) see." This meant that the people to whom Jesus was speaking at that time would see it in their day. Proof this could not be referring to some future antichrist stopping animal sacrifices is found in the next verses.

Matthew 24:16 Then let **them which be in Judaea** flee into the mountains:

This is referring to the country areas of Judaea. How could people in these areas see what was happening in the Temple? They couldn't. But they could see what the true sign was: a Roman army surrounding Jerusalem.

Matthew 24:17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

People have applied this to a rapture of the Church, but this is nothing more than Jesus telling His people to hurry and to get out of the city of Jerusalem before He judges her.

Matthew 24:18-20 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. (19) And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! (20) But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:

Jesus would only give such a warning because He knew when this judgment took place that there would still be some who were still engaged in the Jewish Law and its customs. How can we know this? Simply because the unbelieving Jew's reluctance to accept Jesus' New Covenant was the very reason He brought judgment against them.

Matthew 24:21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Jesus let those to whom He spoke know that they were the ones that would see the heathen army surround Jerusalem. When they saw this they were to escape that city because Jesus said there was a

great tribulation coming there the likes-of-which had never been seen before, and never would be seen again. For a person to teach that this tribulation is for a future time, he would need to ignore these scriptures' time references, and the obvious context in which Jesus spoke them.

Josephus, in his Volume One of the *Works of Josephus*, says, "Whereas **the war which the Jews made with the Romans hath been the greatest of all those**, not only **that have been in our times**, but, in a manner, of those **that ever were heard of**; both of those wherein cities have fought against cities, or nations against nations."

Some men today repeatedly contend that several different modern day events have been the greatest prophetic fulfillment since the crucifixion of Christ. One would have to wonder how this could be possible with any modern day event since Jesus even said, "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." (Luke 21:22) Furthermore when one compares Matthew 24:21 with these words of Josephus it is easy to see that **this occurrence was without doubt the greatest prophetic fulfillment since the crucifixion of Christ.**

Luke made the same statement as Matthew concerning the Abomination of Desolation, except **he revealed what the Abomination of Desolation was.**

Luke 21:20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

This is the same statement as Matthew, except Luke replaced the phrase, "abomination of desolation" with what it actually was, "Jerusalem compassed with armies." If you accept all Scripture as being divinely inspired, then this scripture needs no further interpretation since it leaves no room for guesswork. Here in Luke, Jesus is clearly saying that the instrument He would use to bring the desolation was the Roman army who would surround Jerusalem in preparation for her destruction.

The Abomination was actually the abominable sins of Israel, which are revealed in Ezekiel chapters 8 and 16. The judgment, however, would be carried out by a heathen army just as God has always done in the past. This is the judgment that was to be brought against those that refused the seal of God. The New Testament reveals this seal to be the seal of water and spirit, which is pictured in Ezekiel 9. This seal is the same one that is found upon the 144,000 of Revelation. They had experienced the new birth, which means they had the seal of God on them. Because of that they escaped the judgments of the Law that came against Jerusalem. Revelation 14:1-6 says these people were the **firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb**. They also were the same people who preached the everlasting gospel which is found described in Acts 2:38. **Both Paul and James confirmed that the early church was the firstfruits of the Spirit.**

Romans 8:23 And not only they, but **ourselves** also, which have the **firstfruits of the Spirit**, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

James 1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

God's usage of numbers in the Scripture has a message of importance for us. To give you an example, first look at the way the Scriptures use the number twelve. **Twelve is recognized as God's number of perfection in the Church.** You can really see this truth about twelve in the descriptions written about the New Jerusalem as is found in Revelation 21. There everything is in twelve's or multiples of twelve, and if you take 1,000 (a number of unending perfection), and multiply it by 12 you get 12,000. If you take that 12,000, and multiply it by 12, you get 144,000. The number 144,000 is a symbolic picture of those in the Church who are sealed by the preaching of the gospel.

Seven is also a number that holds a lot of importance in God's Word. It is His number of perfection as well. If you take 10 (a number that symbolizes unending perfection), and multiply it by 7, you get 70. Take this 70 and multiply it by 7 and you get 490, which is exactly the number of times that Jesus told Peter he must forgive; it is also the number of years that Daniel's 70-week prophecy said would transpire before perfect forgiveness would come to all nations. This forgiveness did come to all through the blood of the Messiah Jesus Christ. These numbers are significant because they help us better understand to what these prophetic passages are referring. An example of this is the 144,000. Some claim that the 144,000 are a people that are yet to happen some time in the future. If that were true then **they would be the last fruits and not the firstfruits** as Romans 8:23, James 1:18, and Revelation 14:4 describe them. The 144,000 were warned by Jesus in Luke 21 and Matthew 24 to flee from Jerusalem when they saw the approaching judgment and go into the wilderness. They were the same ones who were sealed by the Holy Spirit and born again in Jesus' name.

Luke 21:21 Then let **them which are in Judaea** flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

This is the same scripture as found in Matthew 24. These people who are in the countryside will see the Roman army coming, and when they do, they are to flee away from them and from Jerusalem.

Luke 21:22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Now, would one want to question the New Testament? Is it right? Was it really true that by the time this event was completed, "all things" that were written in the Old Testament (at least concerning this subject) would be fulfilled? Or would one dare side with the critics that claim that Jesus' statement was incorrect?

Luke 21:23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be **great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.**

This again is not talking about rapture. An expecting woman could be raptured just as easily as one who is not. This is speaking of the discomfort she would experience while fleeing, and the difficulties one would have trying to escape from God's judgments while traveling with a small child.

Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

I would like to explain this "times of the Gentiles," but first let me reemphasize the fact that those who did not fall by the edge of the sword were **led away captive into all nations** is **definite proof that this scripture refers to the 70 AD tribulation** and not to some final future tribulation at the end of the Church age. I say this because Dispensationalists teach that Jesus will come at the end of this tribulation to rescue the Jews, and to set up His 1000-year reign of peace. This futurist scenario would leave no time for those who were spared the sword to be carried away captive into all the nations, but we do find a perfect fulfillment of this during the 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem. During this siege 1.1 million Jews were killed, and over 900,000 captives were led away and dispersed into all nations. I will cover this subject in more detail during my lesson on *The Great Tribulation*.

The verses found in Luke 21, which parallel those of Matthew 24, are the exact fulfillment of those verses known as the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32). Remember that we have previously shown that we also find Moses' song and the Song of the Lamb sung in the book of Revelation. The Song of the Lamb is the song of the redeemed of Jesus. The Song of Moses is a song about the judgment that God said He would bring against those who rejected Him as their Messiah, and against those who killed the servants that He sent. God said this judgment would be the destruction of Jerusalem and her worship system. That took place during the final Jewish generation that lived under Law, and those Jews were the ones who also fulfilled these horrible rejections of truth. **Much of the language of Deuteronomy 32 is exactly the same language that the book of Revelation uses to describe the fall of Babylon (Jerusalem).** In Deuteronomy 32:41-43 God clearly says He will send **vengeance** (these are the "Days of Vengeance") to those that hate Him and that He will kill with the sword and take captives. He also will avenge the blood of His servants by taking vengeance on their enemies and having mercy on His true people. When you compare that with Revelation 18:20, 24; 19:2, you find it is the same wording.

Deuteronomy 32:41-43 If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render **vengeance to mine enemies**, and will **reward them that hate me**. (42) I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and **my sword shall devour flesh**; and that with the **blood of the slain** and **of the captives**, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. (43) Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for **he will avenge the blood of his servants**, and will **render vengeance to his adversaries**, and **will be merciful unto his land, and to his people**. (20) Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy **apostles** and **prophets**; for **God hath avenged you on her**. (24) And in her was found the **blood of prophets**, and of **saints**, and of **all that were slain upon the earth**.

Revelation 19:2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for **he hath judged the great whore**, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and **hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand**.

Compare this with Paul's statement in 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the **Jews**: (15) **Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men**: (16) Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, **to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost**.

God plainly said in Deuteronomy 31:29 that **this song of Moses was going to be about the evil that would befall Israel in the latter days**, and Deuteronomy 32:5, 20 revealed that **it would happen to a particular generation**. Jesus warned in Matthew 23:33 & 36 that **this would happen to the generation of**

Jews that He was talking to at that time. As you compare these passages, their prophetic interpretation becomes so easy to see that I can't help but wonder how anyone could continue believing the man-made unbiblical Dispensationalist teachings of Darby, Larkin, Scofield, and Pentecost over these clear teachings of Jesus and His Bible.

THE TIME OF THE GENTILES

Some teach this **"time of the Gentiles"** (Luke 21:24) refers to the time of the Gentile Church Age. The problem is **there is no "Gentile" Church Age since the Church of Jesus Christ is plainly explained in Scripture as being Jew and Gentile together in one body.** The Scripture makes it clear that a Jew is not cut-off from the salvation of Jesus Christ. They can easily receive the Holy Ghost now if they—like everyone else—believe in Jesus, and accept His message of salvation. It is Jesus' will for all of them to be born again right now! They are not cut-off except by their own unbelief.

I believe this reference to the "time of the Gentiles" is the time that God allotted to the Gentiles for the destruction of Jerusalem. In the generation following his 70-week prophecy, Daniel described this time as a war that would not end until there was a total destruction of the city of Jerusalem and its Temple. This siege was prophesied to last approximately 42 months, and according to history, it did.

42 MONTHS

Look at these 42 months in Bible prophecy.

Revelation 11:1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the **temple of God, and the altar**, and them that worship therein.

Here God is separating the New Jerusalem—the true Church—from the old Jerusalem.

Revelation 11:2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the **Gentiles**: and the **holy city** shall they tread under foot **forty and two months**.

He is saying, "I don't want you to measure the old city, because it is no longer the exclusive city of My worship system. But I do want you to measure My true temple, the Church, My true worship system, because what's outside this 'Holy City' is no longer part of it." God goes on to show that because Jerusalem is no longer the place of His true worship system, she is going to be, "trodden down of the Gentiles," for 42 months. This was fulfilled a few years later in 70 AD. This scripture is **one of the "proofs"** that help prove that **the book of Revelation was written probably sometime in the early 60's, and before the fall of Jerusalem.** The reason why I say this is because if the Temple and city were not still standing when it was written, then this scripture would not have made any sense to John's readers. The prophet Daniel agrees with this 42-month time period in the twelfth chapter of his prophecy.

Daniel 12:6-7 And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, **How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?** (7) And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a **time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.**

Every Bible teacher that I have ever studied from or heard speak always says this is the three and one-half year Great Tribulation. The problem is that they usually place the tribulation sometime in the future instead of allowing it to stay in the timeframe in which the Bible says it should remain—the generation that was alive during the 70 AD fall of Jerusalem.

Daniel 12:8-9 And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be **the end of these things?** (9) And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: **for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.**

It says, **"time of the end,"** not **"end of time."** It was revealed to Daniel that there would be 70 years—490 years—which would have to be fulfilled before this would come to pass. The Bible shows that this is exactly what took place because it was in the middle of this seventieth year that Jesus was crucified, and all that Daniel wrote concerning these 70 years were completed. The time of the end would be during the generation that followed the death of Jesus. History reveals the three and one-half year siege of Jerusalem began in the Spring of 67 AD, and ended around September of 70 AD. That would have made that siege to have lasted approximately 42 months. Some writers contend that the September date in which this war actually ended is consistent with the 1,335 days of Daniel 12:12.

COMPARE THE TIME TEXT OF DANIEL AND REVELATION

Let's compare these scriptures of Daniel, which were commanded to be sealed until the time of the end, with the language of Revelation.

Daniel 12:9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

I believe that John opened the book that Daniel had sealed over 500 years earlier. John did this because "the time of the end," and not the "end of time" was at hand. This time period is recorded in Daniel 12:7 as being a "time, times, and a half." It would result in the scattering of the holy people and bring to an end all the other things that were prophesied.

Daniel 12:7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a **time, times, and an half**; and when he shall have **accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.**

Let's compare this now with the wording and **TIME TEXT of the book of Revelation.**

Revelation 1:1 The **Revelation of Jesus Christ**, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants **things which must shortly come to pass**; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

He didn't say this was going to happen 2,000 to 3,000 years in the future. He said this was "shortly" coming to pass.

Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: **for the time is at hand.**

He said the time is "at hand." Compare the phrase "at hand" with its usage in the rest of the New Testament, and you will discover that this is a reference to it being close by, not far off, something that was soon to take place.

Revelation 1:7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth [*and*] shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

How are those who pierced (crucified) Him going to see Him coming unless they are still alive on that day? This fulfillment would be impossible if this is referring to a time in the future. It would have been easy to fulfill if this was referring to His coming in their generation. The word "earth" here is the same word that means "land," and is normally used in reference to the tribes of the land of Israel.

Many try to say the Jews looking on Jesus is future, because they claim this occurrence is the fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10. To the futurist mindset who have been taught Dispensational Theology all of their life, this all seems to fit so well. The problem is that this viewpoint goes against the Apostles' interpretation as recorded in the New Testament. The Apostle John quoted Zechariah 12:10 in John 19:37 and claimed it was being fulfilled at the time of Jesus' crucifixion, which in turn resulted in the outpouring of the "spirit of grace."

John 19:33-37 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: (34) But **one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side**, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (35) And **he that saw it bare record, and his record is true**: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. (36) For **these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.** [*Psalms 34:20 He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*] (37) And again **another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.** [*Zechariah 12:10*]

Zechariah 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

The Apostle John has given a very definite and accurate interpretation as to the fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10. He even said in John 19:36 that "these things were done, that the Scriptures should be fulfilled." A person is then faced with the choice of accepting the historical interpretation given in the New Testament by the Apostle John, or the recent Futurist interpretation given by Scofield, Larkin, Pentecost, Darby, and other followers of their Dispensational teachings. A careful examination of the Dispensationalist viewpoints, such as I have done in *The Web of Deception*, will reveal that a lot of Dispensational teachings either have no scriptural basis at all, or when it does use Scripture, it directly

contradicts the way Jesus and the Apostles interpreted many of the same scriptures from the Old Testament. This inconsistency is why I made the decision to follow the interpretations of Old Testament Scripture given in the New Testament by Jesus and His Apostles, rather than the interpretations of Dispensationalism, and to use Old Testament biblical imagery when interpreting the same type biblical imagery in the New Testament. This allows scripture to interpret scripture, and keeps man's opinion out of it as much as possible, which allows an accurate interpretation of the scriptures.

Look now in Revelation 22, which is the closing chapter of that great book, for even more proof that the book of Revelation was to be fulfilled immediately after it was written.

Revelation 22:6 And he said unto me, **These sayings are faithful and true:** and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the **things which must shortly be done.**

Even at the closing of the Book of Revelation He said it again, "The things which must shortly be done."

Revelation 22:7 Behold, **I come quickly:** blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

He said you had better keep these things because I am coming soon!

Revelation 22:10 And he saith unto me, **Seal not** the sayings of the prophecy of this book: **for the time is at hand.**

As previously stated, I believe that John opened the sealed vision of Daniel because it was then "**the time of the end.**" This does not mean that it was "the end of time" as most preach.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Remember, Jesus said that some of **them** would **still be alive when He came back to give His rewards.** Here He is giving those rewards out: to the wicked He will destroy them in His wrath; to the righteous He is going to allow them to flee into the wilderness and be safe from the destruction of Jerusalem. The Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:4-43) says the same thing. There Moses says it will be a time when God will **reward the wicked** and be **merciful to His people**

Revelation 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, **Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

God told Daniel to seal his book because its prophecies would not be fulfilled in the days in which they were written. But that is not what He told the apostle John. **God told John not to seal his book** because the time for its fulfillment was at hand. Even though this is what the Bible says, some contend that the language of Revelation is misleading and say its prophecies will be fulfilled sometime in the future. What I want to know is how can they say such a thing when Revelation's wording is so clear? How can they honestly believe that the angel who spake to John missed it? Or that Jesus, who was the one who inspired John's writings, missed it? I contend that neither the angel nor Jesus missed anything! Rather, those who have misinterpreted Revelation's prophetic timetable are the ones who have missed it. They have done so because they refuse to see that most of Revelation, which was given in biblical imagery, is John's detailed account of the Matthew 24 Mount Olivet Discourse, which describes Jesus' 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem.

WHAT ABOUT SIMILAR SCRIPTURES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Some men want to try to claim that you can't use the time text given in the book of Revelation to determine the time of its fulfillment, because there are scriptures found in the Old Testament which contain the same type time text. We will quote some of these scriptures and show why this does not change the fact that we can use the time text given in Revelation to determine the time of its fulfillment. Before we go into these scriptures, I want to point out **three points to keep in mind as we study this.**

1. These scriptures usually speak of a coming judgment, and many times it was to happen in their day.
2. Many of the dates given in the columns of your Bible are erroneous at times. An example of this is the Book of Daniel given as 607 BC, when it's more likely to have been written in 457 or 456 BC. Daniel received the last portion of this prophecy during the last year Israel was in captivity, and Israel was released to return the next year in 456 BC. The exact number of years from the command to return till Messiah the prince was given as 483 years. Jesus began his ministry in 26 AD when the Holy Ghost anointed him at his baptism, beginning Daniel's 70th week with the anointing of the Most Holy. He was

crucified on Passover 30 AD when he was cut off in the mist of the week, causing the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (animal sacrifices to no longer be accepted by God). This shows the dates of the writing of Daniel to be 457 or 456 BC rather than the 607 BC shown in most Bibles. This also proves that Daniel's 70 weeks were fulfilled in order, and there was no unbiblical, manmade Dispensationalist Gap between the 69th and 70th week. Even if you disagree with me by 3 ½ years, there is an error of nearly 150 years in the dates given in most Bibles. The point I am trying to make is that some of the prophecies given in the Old Testament may have been more "at hand" than many of the dates indicate.

3. The most important **key** of all these points is that you must consider if the time text is being given as a **setting for the vision** of prophecy, or if it is given **after the prophet has entered into his prophetic vision**. Once he enters the vision, everything is considered at hand.

The first scripture we will examine is **a prophecy against Babylon**.

Isaiah 13:6 Howl ye; **for the day of the LORD is at hand**; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.

This statement is found within the vision itself and is dealing with the destruction of Babylon by the Medes and the Persians in the near future. How near? No one knows for sure because of the discrepancies of the dates given by the translators. It is in the visionary prophecy itself and not in the setting of the prophecy, which makes it even more difficult to determine the actual dates. The next scripture proves what this is prophesying about.

Isaiah 13:17 Behold, **I will stir up the Medes against them**, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. (Isa 13:18 KJV) Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

Isaiah 13:19 And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, **shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah**.

These scriptures prove this is a prophecy of literal Babylon, which carries with it the spiritual type used in the book of Revelation concerning spiritual Babylon (Jerusalem), spiritually called Sodom and Egypt where our Lord was crucified. This reveals the spiritual adultery of the system, as well as the sorcery of the system. Remember she repented not of her sorceries. God uses the method of the literal destruction of literal Babylon prophesied by Isaiah and carried out by the Medes and the Persians in describing the destruction of spiritual Babylon (Jerusalem). Example—The Euphrates River drying up to make a way for the kings of the east. The Medes and Persians diverted the literal river, and that is how they overthrew literal Babylon.

Let's now look at some of the other scriptures in the Old Testament which have similar time text statements. Let's keep in mind, as we look at the book of Ezekiel, the comparison of Ezekiel and Revelation on page 19 showing most of the books of Revelation and Ezekiel as being the same prophecy.

Ezekiel 7:6-8 An end is come, the end is come: it watcheth for thee; behold, it is come. (7) The morning is come unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, **the day of trouble is near**, and not the sounding again of the mountains. (8) **Now will I shortly pour out my fury upon thee**, and accomplish mine anger upon thee: and I will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense thee for all thine abominations.

Ezekiel 7:12-13 **The time is come, the day draweth near**: let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof. (13) My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and **I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans**; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

The book of Ezekiel covers both the destruction of spiritual Babylon, which corresponds with the book of Revelation, and prophecy dealing with Israel's captivity into literal Babylon. We must judge it according to the three suggestions given and especially whether or not the statements are given in the vision itself or in the setting for the vision. This certainly cannot be used to discount the time text given in the book of Revelation, especially since the time text in Revelation is in the setting for vision and not within the prophetic vision itself.

Let's now look at some other Old Testament Scriptures with similar time text.

Joel 1:15 Alas for the day! **for the day of the LORD is at hand**, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.

Joel 2:1 Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: **for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand**;

Zephaniah 1:7 Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: **for the day of the LORD is at hand**: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.

Zephaniah 1:14 **The great day of the LORD is near, it is near**, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.

Obadiah 1:15 **For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen**: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head. *[This was a prophecy of judgment against the Edomites, the descendants of Esau.]*

Notice that all of these prophecies are given within the prophetic vision itself where everything becomes “at hand” and not within a setting that precedes the vision as the book of Revelation does. **The book of Revelation can be divided into three parts:**

1. The opening setting for the vision, which contain the time text for the vision.
2. The prophetic vision itself which contain no time text statements.
3. The closing setting after the vision has ended, which contain more time texts for the vision.

The time statements in Revelation which say the things that are about to be shown will “shortly come to pass” and not to seal the book because “the time of its fulfillment is at hand” are found in the opening and closing settings of the vision and not within the vision itself. This fact is the very reason you cannot discount them as an actual time text for the time of its fulfillment.

Let me give you one final proof from the Bible that where the time text is located is of utmost importance by showing you a scripture in the Old Testament which says within the prophecy itself that the calamity is “at hand”, yet the setting for the prophecy says it is to befall them “in the latter days”.

The first scripture is a prophecy given **within the prophecy** of the song of Moses.

Deuteronomy 32:35 To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: **for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.**

The next scripture is given **as a setting** for the same prophecy **before the prophecy began.**

Deuteronomy 31:29-30 For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; **and evil will befall you in the latter days**; because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands. (30) And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

We can tell within the vision that this prophecy is to one particular generation, which we now know was to be the final generation to practice law-keeping which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem after they had rejected the gospel of Jesus Christ for 40 years (30 AD to 70 AD—one generation).

Deuteronomy 32:5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: **they are a perverse and crooked generation.**

Deuteronomy 32:20-21 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they **are a very froward generation**, children in whom is no faith. *[Remember Mat. 23 which said that all these things would come upon that generation to whom Jesus was speaking, and that their house (Jerusalem) would be left desolate.]* (21) They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; **I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.** *[Paul quotes this in Romans 10:19 & 11:14 and claims its fulfillment in his day as the Gentiles began to be saved, giving us an Apostles interpretation as to the time of its fulfillment in that particular generation between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem. Why then do we keep accepting a Dispensational interpretation of this scripture above the clear teachings of the Apostles, and still try to call ourselves Apostolic?]*

Deuteronomy 32:29 O that they were wise, that they understood this, **that they would consider their latter end!**

Deuteronomy 32:43 Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: **for he will avenge the blood of his servants**, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

Compare this with Revelation 19:2 and you will find the language identical except one says will avenge and the other says hath avenged.

Revelation 19:2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for **he hath judged the great whore**, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and **hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand**.

We can see from these scriptures that where these time text are located makes all the difference as to whether they can be used to determine the time for the fulfillment of the prophecy.

THE TIME OF THE SIXTH KING—THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE FOR THE DATING OF REVELATION

I believe—along with many other biblical scholars and writers—that the Book of Revelation (**most or all**) was **fulfilled during the age in which it was written**. It was **written in the early 60's AD**, and **before the fall of Jerusalem** and **in the days of the "sixth King."** The fall of Jerusalem occurred, just as the Bible said it would, in the **days of the ten kings associated with the Roman Empire**. It was these ten horns the Bible says would "hate the whore, make her desolate, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." There seems to be various schools of thought among Historical viewpoints and commentaries as to the exact identity of the eight kings of Revelation 17:10 and the ten kings of Revelation 17:16, yet they all agree that these kings were associated with the Roman Empire around the time of the fall of Jerusalem, and were definitely a part of Daniel's fourth beast, or ruling kingdom in the earth, which most prophecy writers teach to be the Roman Empire.

I will not try to make a definite identification here as to who I think these various kings and rulers were other than to say that I lean the strongest toward believing that the first seven kings of Revelation 17:10 were the seven Procurators that Rome placed over Judea and Jerusalem after the death of Herod Agrippa I. To properly identify these rulers, one must be able to find a connection between them and the whore. Agrippa's son, Agrippa II, was considered too young to oversee the troubled area of Judea, so Roman authority decided to reduce it down to a province. Cuspius Fadus was then sent into Judea as the first of seven procurators (viceroys or governors) who were chosen to lead Judea during this time. Historical records differ with each other by a year or two as to the exact years of their reign, but we do know that the Apostle John was writing Revelation during the time of the sixth king. Albinus was the sixth of these rulers and he ruled Judea from 61-65 AD. **This makes the time of John's writing of Revelation to have happened sometime during the early 60's AD.** Gessius Florus had a short reign during 65 AD, and was the seventh and final of these procurators. After Gessius, Nero himself took control of Judea because of the trouble the Romans were having there with the Jews. This made Nero the eighth king.

The Bible shows that the beast took control and gave power to ten rulers, which finally resulted in the destruction to Jerusalem. This destruction was fulfilled under the leadership of the Roman Emperor Vespasian. Rome had previously divided Palestine into ten geographical areas and administrative districts. The following are a listing of these: (Southern) Samaria, Judea, and Idumea; (Northern) Galilee and Perea; (Northeastern) Iturea, Trachonitis, Gaulanitis, Auranitis, and Batanea. Evidently Nero gave these ten districts authority to rise against Jerusalem when they began to rebel against Rome. This scenario would once again be a perfect historical fulfillment to this entire prophecy of Revelation chapter 17.

I do not necessary agree with the next school of thought because the Bible says they have "received no kingdom as yet," but some teachers say these ten horns were a line of ten Caesars who were in power up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. Vespasian would then be the one to arise after them, which would make Vespasian the little horn of Daniel 7:8, 24 who came up among the ten, but arose after them, before whom three were plucked up by the roots. (*Pulpit Commentary* vol. 13, page 225) History states that three kings following Nero had very short terms in office, and were plucked up quickly until Vespasian took office—a reign in which he spake and did great things, hence the destruction of Jerusalem during his reign. This resulted in the Son of Man coming with the clouds to the Ancient of Days as is found in Daniel 7:13-14, and being given a kingdom and dominion that would not pass away or be destroyed.

There are other opinions and viewpoints given by different writers and scholars on this subject. I feel it would be fruitless to get into all of them here. The main points I want to bring out here are that **there are historical fulfillments which fit these prophecies**, and that **most of the historical viewpoints agree that these kings were rulers under the power of Rome before and during the destruction of Jerusalem. Most also agree that Nero was the beast of Revelation 13** which persecuted the Church for three and one-half years. This three and one-half year persecution of the Church occurred in the last of Nero's reign and ended with his death in 68 AD.

This three and one-half year persecution of the Church should not be confused with the three and one-half year time of Jacob's trouble. Jacob's trouble was a time that the Bible refers to as "the Great Tribulation." It was a three and one-half year siege of Jerusalem by the Roman Armies and ended with its destruction. People must recognize the difference between the wrath of Satan against God's Church, and the wrath of God against the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem to avenge for the blood of His servants.

Another proof that this beast of Revelation 13 is referring to Nero is that his name equals 666. (See Revelation 13:18) The letters of the Hebrew alphabet were not just used for writing; they also have a numerical value as well. When you translate the name “Neron Kesar” (Nero Caesar) in Hebrew it has the following numerical value: -N/50; -r/200; -w/6; -n/50; -Q/100; -s/60; -r/200. When you add these numbers together they equal **666**. Many scholars have shown in their writings that some early manuscripts of Revelation have the number of this man equaling 616. This is not a contradiction to the 666 number, nor is this a proof against this number referring to Nero. This 616 number is easily seen as Nero when you figure the numerical values of “Nero Caesar” by translating it from its original **Latin** into Hebrew. When that is done its numerical value equals **616**. The fact that his name, “Nero Caesar,” equals both of these commonly found numbers as applied from their various languages is a definite indication that this number in Revelation 13 was referring to Nero. I have even heard Futurists teach that their future Antichrist will be the resurrected Nero. They had the right man, but they put him in the wrong time period.

Some contend that Nero, Vespasian, and the fall of Jerusalem were all in the past by the time John penned Revelation, which they say was around 90-100 AD. Those who subscribe to this later date do so because of the words of one man—Irenaeus. The other late date writers of church history were simply quoting Irenaeus or were quoting from other writers who had quoted his statements. He wrote over **100 years after John** was banished to Patmos. But his words must be called into question since he is also the same writer that is credited with saying **Jesus preached up to 40 or 50** years of age. This older age for Jesus is inconsistent with both the biblical record and other extra-biblical sources that refer to the time span of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Because of this discrepancy, should anyone use Irenaeus’ teachings to interpret the prophecies of Revelation? Should the information of a man who didn’t know the correct age of Jesus be found trustworthy enough to be the sole source for a late date of the book of Revelation? I don’t think so. This is just one of the reasons why I say you can’t trust history on this subject, because **history is inconclusive** when dealing with this subject. To determine truth about the Bible one must look beyond history and look to the Bible itself; to determine the time frame in which Revelation was written you must look at the **internal evidence** that is found within its own pages, which all point to a Pre-70 AD writing of the book. There is much internal evidence that proves the book of Revelation was written before the fall of Jerusalem. The following are just three of the more powerful ones:

1. Why would John write to a church in Revelation 11:2 about the holy city being trodden under foot by the Gentiles for forty-two months as a future event, if it had already been fulfilled in 70 AD? Jesus predicted this occurrence in Luke 21:21 and said that all these things He foretold would be fulfilled before that generation He was speaking to then had passed away. John is saying Jerusalem **shall be** trodden down,” which is a definite indication that it had not happened at the time of his writing.
2. History indicates that Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake in 66 AD (see the *New Unger’s Bible Dictionary*), and was not rebuilt till the 161-180 AD reign of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius. Since that is the case, why would John be writing to a church in a city that had been destroyed 30 years prior to his writing? That would make no sense. It would however make sense if he wrote it while the city was still standing in the early 60’s AD. This time frame also agrees with the time of the sixth King, and was before the fall of Jerusalem.
3. The Bible reveals Jerusalem to be the Great Whore that sat on a political beast (Rome) and used its influence toward this governmental power to persecute and to kill Jesus, His apostles, His prophets, and His saints. The beast would then turn on the whore, make her desolate, and burn her with fire. The perfect fulfillment of this took place during the three and one-half year siege of Jerusalem ending in September 70 AD. This proves this occurrence has to be dealing with the siege of Jerusalem that ended in 70 AD, and not a Futurist interpretation that says Jesus will return and save Jerusalem from destruction at some future time.

These are only a few of the main reasons why today many others and I believe that the Book of Revelation was written prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD. For an in-depth study on the subject of the dating of the book of Revelation I recommend **Dr. Kenneth Gentry’s book *Before Jerusalem Fell***. This book is available through Rightly Dividing the Word.

The terms “**last days**” and “**the end of the world**” were used most of the time in the New Testament in reference to the last days of the **Jewish age of Law-keeping as the method of salvation**—not to a future time at the end of the physical world. This “**last days of the Jewish age**” was **spiritually ended with the**

death of Jesus, but was **physically and literally ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and its old worship system**. This destruction serves as **THE SIGN** that the Son of Man **is ruling** in His Kingdom.

The next section contains some additional New Testament scriptures that help to prove that the above statements concerning these things being fulfilled in their 70 AD generation and that Jesus is now ruling with power are true.

MORE TIME TEXT GIVEN BY JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES

Let's look and see within what time frame the Apostles expected Jesus to return.

PETER SAID...

1 Peter 4:7 But the **end of all things is at hand**: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Peter wrote these words a few years **before the fall** of Jerusalem. Compare this statement with Jesus' statements recorded in Matthew 24:3 and Mark 13:4 about when these things shall be, and the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled. Peter said here it was about to happen, and it did a few years later in 70 AD.

1 Peter 4:17 For the **time is come** that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, **what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?**

PAUL SAID...

Paul answered this when he wrote to the persecuted church at Thessalonica and assured them that God was about to **pour out His wrath upon those** that were **persecuting them**.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-6 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; (4) So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for **your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure**: *[They were already in tribulation.]* (5) Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, **that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer**: (6) Seeing it is a **righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you**;

Paul spoke as though he expected for God to soon take vengeance against those who were troubling them during their lifetime. What comfort would there have been in Paul telling those saints that God was going to punish those who were persecuting them in another 2,000 years or so? The only comfort would have been the promise of a soon deliverance.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, (8) **In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ**: (9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; (10) When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

Paul is clearly stating it was their obedience to Jesus and His gospel that would save them, and their rebellion against Him that would bring judgment.

Paul added more statements on this time text in 1 Corinthians 7 and in Romans 16.

1 Corinthians 7:29 But this I say, brethren, **the time is short**: it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none;

He is saying that the time is so short that you better start living like you aren't even married. This doesn't mean they were to leave their families. Paul was just exhorting them to focus on Christ's imminent return. **Was the time truly short, or does the New Testament contain erroneous statements?**

Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall **bruise Satan** under your feet **shortly**. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Before I explain this scripture, let's compare Paul's statement with Malachi 4:1-3.

Malachi 4:1-3 For, behold, **the day cometh**, that shall **burn as an oven**; and all the **proud**, yea, and all that **do wickedly, shall be stubble**: and the day that cometh shall **burn them up**, saith the LORD of

hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. (2) But **unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings**; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. (3) And **ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this**, saith the LORD of hosts.

When you compare these two texts it seems that Paul was drawing his statements in Romans from the book of Malachi. Many scholars say Paul had to be referring to the **destruction of Jerusalem** and its **old worship system** when he wrote Romans 16:20. If that is true—and it seems that it is—then I have to ask **why so many Christians of today are trying to resurrect a system that was called “Satan” in the Bible and was destroyed by God for its outdated method of salvation.**

TRYING TO RESURRECT WHAT GOD HAS DESTROYED

Galatians 2:18-19 For if I **BUILD AGAIN the things which I destroyed**, I make myself a transgressor. (19) For I **through the law** am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

Paul is clearly saying we don't need to resurrect this old Law system, or the Temple, or the blood of red heifers. He is saying all we need is Jesus' blood! Paul is clearly saying here that we should not rebuild the Law system that God has destroyed. If we do, we make ourselves a transgressor. By reading the next scriptures, we can see further why God no longer wants the Law enacted.

Romans 10:4 For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness** to every one that believeth.

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Paul said, “The Law gives us the knowledge of sin.” Jesus is the one who came to deliver us from the curse of the Law, because it brings us destruction. Remember, there were two trees mentioned in the Garden of Eden: the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Tree of Life was symbolic of Jesus Christ. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was symbolic of the Law. He also said that “by the Law is the knowledge of sin” and that knowledge contained in the Law slew us, but Jesus Christ came to deliver us from this curse of the Law and give us life! (See Romans 7:11; Galatians 3:13; Romans 6:23.)

JAMES SAID...

James 5:7-9 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto **the coming of the Lord**. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, **until he receive the early and latter rain**. *[To the Jewish farmer the purpose of the early rain was to cause the seeds to grow, and the purpose of the latter rain was to mature this same crop for harvesting. Judging from his time text given in the next verse, James is evidently viewing the early church period from the outpouring of the Holy Ghost (seed rain) until the destruction of Jerusalem as one planting and harvest season. This agrees with many of the parables in the Bible such as the wheat and tares of Matthew 13:37-43. There Jesus said the wicked (tares) were gathered first and the righteous (wheat) were left to shine forth as the sun.]* (8) Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the **coming of the Lord draweth nigh**. (9) Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, **the judge standeth before the door**.

Notice, James wrote, “the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” He also wrote, “the judge standeth before the door.” He didn't say He was on His way to the door. He said He is at the door now. **Did God inspire James when he wrote this**, or **did James write this on his own**? In order to prove their interpretations, men who believe Futurist theology have had to fight against the words of the New Testament and suggest that its writers—the Apostles—missed it.

JOHN SAID...

1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; **WHEREBY** we know that it is the last time.

Now, don't get upset with me. I did not say this. John did. I am just quoting here from the Bible when it says it was then the “last time,” which is the same thing as “last days,” because the spirit of antichrist was already working then. If you are upset with this, then you need to be upset with all the writers of the New Testament, and with Jesus, because they unanimously believed this same thing! 1 John 2:19 clearly stated that these who were of the spirit of antichrist were those that “went out from us, but they were not of us.”

It becomes evident then that **the spirit of antichrist was a reference to those Christians who had left Christianity and went back into Judaism's legalistic system of Law-keeping.** One would have to question then the spirit behind Dispensational Theology that teaches a return to Law-keeping in the near future.

JESUS SAID...

Matthew 24:34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Luke 21:22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

Luke 21:32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

To what generation was He referring? Was it to that generation then or to some future generation? Jesus answered these questions by saying some of them would still be alive when it happens. **In Matthew 23, Jesus sets the stage for this teaching and very clearly states to which generation He was referring.**

Before we once again read in Matthew 23, let's read the book of Revelation's description of Babylon the Great. There we will see the identity of Babylon the Great, which we also find revealed in Matthew 23.

BABYLON THE GREAT

The following are prophecies concerning Babylon the Great that are found in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 16:6 For **they have shed the blood of saints and prophets**, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

Revelation 18:20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

Revelation 18:24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Remember this description. When we can find a city guilty of the blood of the prophets, apostles, saints, and (the key point) of all that were slain upon the earth, then we can know for sure to what city this refers.

Revelation 11:8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of **the great city**, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, **where also our Lord was crucified**.

Revelation 19:2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and **hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand**.

In what great city was Jesus crucified? Rome or Jerusalem? It was Jerusalem. This is a definite reference to Jerusalem being "**the great city**." (I will deal with the identity of the two witnesses in a later lesson.)

BABYLON—THE GREAT CITY

Babylon is called "the great city" in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 14:8 And there followed another angel, saying, **Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city**, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

The great city that has fallen in this judgment is Jerusalem.

Revelation 16:19 And **the GREAT CITY was divided into three parts**, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

Compare Revelation's statement about the city being divided into three parts with the 5th chapter of Ezekiel. Remember that Revelation and Ezekiel are basically the same prophecies.

Ezekiel 5:1-5 And thou, son of man, take thee a sharp knife, take thee a barber's razor, and cause it to pass upon thine head and upon thy beard: then take thee balances to weight, and **divide the hair**. (2) Thou shalt **burn with fire a third part** in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled: and thou shalt **take a third part, and smite about it with a knife**: and a **third part thou shalt scatter in the wind; and I will draw out a sword after them**. (4) Then take of them again, and cast them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for thereof shall a fire come forth into all the house of Israel. (5) Thus

saith the Lord GOD; **This is Jerusalem:** I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.

You can't get much plainer. God is saying here that the city that would be judged is Jerusalem!

Ezekiel 5:12 A **third part** of thee shall die with the **pestilence**, and with **famine** shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a **third part** shall **fall by the sword** round about thee and I will **scatter a third part** into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

The prophet was told to shave his head and divide the hair in three parts. He is then told to burn one third with fire, to smite one third with a knife, and to scatter one third in the wind which would have a sword go after it. This was done to show the different judgments that God was going to bring against—as verse 5 says—the city of Jerusalem. Verse 12 explains the three-part judgment of Jerusalem, which history says took place just as it was stated.

Revelation 17:18 And **the woman** which thou sawest **is that great city**, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

Remember that this is a harlot city that is described as riding on a political beast. The prophet Isaiah spoke of Jerusalem as being a city of harlotry.

Isaiah 1:21 How is **the faithful city become an harlot!** it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.

Ezekiel chapters 16, 22, and 23 all call Jerusalem by name and declare her to be the harlot city that God will burn with fire. I will give a few references here, but you should still read these chapters for yourself.

Ezekiel 16:2 Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,

Remember in the book of Revelation, she had a golden cup in her hand that was full of her abominations.

Ezekiel 16:15-17 But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and **pouredst out thy fornications on every one** that passed by; his it was. (16) And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and **playedst the harlot** thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. (17) Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, **which I had given thee**, and madest to thyself images of men, and **didst commit whoredom** with them,

During the old covenant Israel was married to God. He was the One that she committed adultery against. Her unfaithfulness is what caused God to divorce her, but He then offered to take her back under a new covenant that He established with the death of Jesus. Their refusal to accept God's New Covenant was the reason why He judged Jerusalem so severely.

Ezekiel 16:40-41 They shall also **bring up a company against thee**, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords. (41) And they shall **burn thine houses with fire**, and **execute judgments** upon thee in the sight of many women: and **I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot**, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.

I will deal with this in detail later in this prophecy series in the lesson entitled *The Real Babylon the Great*.

Babylon is that great city that sat on the beast that had seven heads (seven mountains) and ten horns. It was the beast, and not the whore that sat on the beast, that had the seven heads and ten horns. Rome fits this description since it is a city that has seven hills. Rome was also the political strength that Jerusalem was riding on when she persecuted and killed the apostles, prophets, and saints of Jesus Christ. Then, just as Revelation 17 says, Rome turned on Jerusalem and threw her off its back and devoured her in 70 AD. Remember, **this harlot city is described in Revelation as the one that killed the prophets, the apostles, and the saints, and is also guilty of the blood of all that were killed upon the earth.**

THE WORDS OF JESUS TO THE UNBELIEVING JEWS IN MATTHEW 23

Matthew 23:29-32 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because **ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous**, (30) And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (31) Wherefore ye be

witnesses unto yourselves, that **ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.** (32) **Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.**

Matthew's, "Fill ye up the measure of your fathers," and Daniel's, "Finish the transgression," are synonymous descriptions of the same event. Daniel said this event would take place during his 70 weeks prophecy, and Matthew indicated that this would happen when the unbelieving Jews killed their Messiah.

Matthew 23:33-34 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? (34) Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

Jesus said that these unbelievers would kill the apostles, the people who He sent to them, and that they would also persecute these first century Christians from city to city. To see this come to pass, all you have to do is read the books of Acts.

Matthew 23:35 **That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Here it is again. The unbelieving Jews were the ones that God was going to hold responsible for all the blood that had been shed in the earth. Remember, when they asked for Jesus' death, they told the ruler of Rome to "**let His blood be upon us and our children.**"

Matthew 23:36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

This proves to which generation He was referring in Matthew 24:34 when He said, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." To say that this is referring to some future generation, maybe even that of our day, would directly contradict the clear meaning of Jesus' words found here.

Matthew 23:37-39 **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee**, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! (38) Behold, **your house is left unto you desolate.** (39) For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Jesus called the name of the city that killed the prophets, the apostles, and was guilty of the blood of all righteous clear back to righteous Abel, "Jerusalem." He then said He was going to bring all those things on her in that generation and make her desolate. This was fulfilled in 70 AD, forty years after Jesus' crucifixion. He gave them one generation—forty years—to choose between Him, and the Law. Those who refused Him, He judged according to the Law.

PAUL AGREED WITH JESUS

Paul agreed with the words of Jesus. He spoke of this occurrence in 1 Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the **Jews: (15) Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us;** and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: (16) Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to **fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**

God sent His wrath to avenge for their killing of the prophets, apostles, the saints, and even their Messiah—Jesus.

COMPARING AND INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE WITH SCRIPTURE

You can understand the **gathering of the elect** (Matthew 24) by comparing the **destruction of Babylon the Great** (Jerusalem), followed by an **invitation to the marriage supper** (Revelation 19), with the **parable of the wedding feast** (Matthew 22).

Matthew 22:1-3 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by **parables**, and said, (2) **The kingdom of heaven** is like unto a **certain king**, [God] which made a **marriage for his son**, [Jesus] (3) **And sent forth his servants** [Apostles] to call them that **were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.**

This is the Apostles inviting the Jews to be saved.

Matthew 22:4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and **all things are ready: come unto the marriage.**

The marriage supper was already prepared before the destruction of Jerusalem, so the invitation to the marriage feast was literally nothing more than the preaching of the gospel to the lost, which brings a person into a marriage relationship with Jesus Christ under the New Covenant. This relationship will result in spending eternity with Jesus for those who are obedient to the New Covenant message.

Matthew 22:5-6 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: (6) And the remnant **took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.**

This was referring to the apostles preaching to the unbelieving Jews, and just as Jesus said, they rejected the apostles' message, and attacked them by physically abusing them, and by murdering them.

Matthew 22:7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth HIS ARMIES, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up THEIR CITY.

This is talking about Jerusalem. God is showing that He will burn their city because they refused the invitation He sent, via the apostles, to partake in His wedding.

Matthew 22:8-10 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. (9) Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. (10) So those servants went out into the highways, and GATHERED TOGETHER all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

Remember they "**gathered together**" those who would come. This is the "**gathering together of the elect.**"

In Revelation, the marriage supper took place after Jerusalem was destroyed.

Revelation 19:2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for **he hath judged the great whore**, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and **hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.**

Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: **for the marriage of the Lamb is come**, and his wife hath made herself ready.

This compares with the marriage invitation found in Matthew 22. It took place after the city was destroyed. This also matches the sending out of His angels (messengers/preachers) to **gather the elect** from the four corners of the earth immediately after the tribulation of those days.

Matthew 24:31 And he shall **send his angels** [*messengers*] with a great sound of a trumpet [*preaching of the Word*], and they shall **GATHER TOGETHER his elect from the four winds**, from one end of heaven to the other.

We are still gathering souls to Jesus today! This also matches Jesus' parable of the wheat and the tares. In that parable Jesus said the tares are gathered first so that the righteous could shine forth as the sun (Son of Righteousness).

Matthew 24:31 is a direct fulfillment of Isaiah 11:12. Many try to say the scriptures of Isaiah chapter 11 are referring to a future 1000 year reign of Christ, but a careful examination of these scriptures, along with chapter 12 of Isaiah, proves that this is nothing more than biblical imagery used to describe the inner peace that comes through the New Covenant message and having the Prince of Peace living within you.

Read both of these chapters in Isaiah for yourself. Remember as you do that men divided them into chapters and verses, but they were not originally written that way. As you read them in their original context, it will become evident that chapter 12 is still speaking of the events of chapter 11. This is easy to see since chapter 12 begins by saying "and in that day" and goes on to describe things that apply to the New Covenant message. Let's examine a few of these scriptures.

Isaiah 11:10-12 And in that day there shall be a **root of Jesse**, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the **Gentiles seek**: and his **rest** shall be glorious. [*This scripture is quoted by Paul in Romans 15:12 as being fulfilled by Jesus Christ, and by the Church offering salvation to the Jews and Gentiles of Paul's day.*] (11) And it shall come to pass **in that day**, that the Lord shall set his hand again **the second time to recover the remnant of his people**, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. [*This proves that Israel was restored by Jesus Christ and His New Covenant message, and that this is not a future physical restoration.*] (12) And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and **gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.** [*When you compare this statement with Matthew 24:31 statement above it becomes*

clear that this “gathering” is dealing with the preaching of the New Covenant message, and not with a rapture of the Church, or the restoration of natural Israel into a physical land.]

When you compare this with other Old Testament scriptures on the restoration of Israel, it becomes evident that this is referring to their restoration to God by Jesus Christ and the New Covenant message. The beginning of Isaiah 11 and all of Isaiah 12 prove this has to be referring to the events fulfilled by Jesus Christ and the New Covenant.

CONCLUSION



Jesus and His Apostles taught that the **COMING OF THE LORD**, the **END OF THE WORLD (AGE)**, and the **LAST DAYS**, were all primarily referring to **His coming in judgment on Jerusalem**. They taught that this coming would happen in **their generation**, and would bring an end to the **Old Covenant worship system**. This **coming** (the destruction of Jerusalem) would be a **sign** to all men that **Jesus was ruling in the heavens** and that **His Kingdom had been thoroughly placed in the Earth**, which was fulfilled by placing His Spirit in the hearts of His believers through a born again experience.

Dispensationalists and **Futurists** must have a **future Jewish Temple** and the **restoration of its sacrificial system** in order to **fulfill their prophetic interpretations of the scriptures**. But I believe that the Bible teaches that the **New Covenant message is the only message that will ever save a person** and that **God will never again turn back to literal temples and animal sacrifices for salvation**.

In prayer, God showed me that the **danger of Futurist doctrine is that it deceives you into believing the New World Order is a prophesied occurrence that cannot be prayed against**. But that is not true because **The True Church—through prayer and fasting—has the power to bring this system down, or at least hold it back from its anti-Christian agenda** so that the Church can continue to accomplish God’s purpose in the earth. Satan has used natural things like physical **temples, lands, and animal sacrifices, to distract the Church** so it won’t **see and understand these truths**.

God wants to bring us to **spiritual fullness** and to a **unity of focus** so that we can **defeat the powers of darkness and evangelize our world** for His Kingdom!

I realize that there are many more areas that need to be dealt with on the subject of bible prophecy than is covered in this study, but keep in mind that this is only the first in a series of six lessons on this subject. I recommend that you continue on where this study stops by ordering the entire six lesson series entitled *Rightly Dividing the Word of Bible Prophecy* and the series entitled *The Web of Deception*. These will give you tremendous insight on these various subjects that are written by someone who draws his interpretation of the Bible by using scripture to interpret scripture. We have many other books and materials available from our ministry that will be able to assist a person in a more detailed study of these various subjects. Whether we are teaching on the plan of salvation, spiritual growth, or Bible prophecy, we at this ministry always strive to rightly divide the Word.

I believe the correct interpretation of Bible prophecy is very important to the Church in order to avoid deception and to fulfill its true purpose in the earth. That is why I have tried my best to share these truths in this study. However, whether we ever agree on every area of prophecy or not, **let’s agree to respect and honor each other and to work together to reach this lost world with the only gospel that will ever save anyone—the Apostle’s New Testament gospel of Jesus Christ!**

Author: Larry T. Smith

Copyright © 2000 by Rightly Dividing the Word

All rights reserved. No part of this study may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from Rightly Dividing the Word. Brief quotations may be used in literary reviews and articles.

All Scripture quotations in this study are from the *King James Version* of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.

Cover art used by permission of Robert Browning. Full-color reprints of this picture can be ordered through Rightly Dividing the Word.

For permissions or further correspondence contact:
Rightly Dividing the Word
PO Box 1226

El Campo, TX 77437-1226
Phone: 979-543-23600
Web: www.rightlydividingtheword.com