

Zion's Promise

The Prophets Speak Today

Dennis R. Wilson

*“It will come about that just as you
were a curse among the nations, O
House of Israel, so I will save you
that you may become a blessing. Do
not fear; let your hands be strong.”
Zechariah 7:13 (NASB)*

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Dedication

Holly Wilson, my partner through it all
Josh McDowell, who broke the Bread of Life
Dr. Duane Gish, who opened the book of nature
Dave Hunt, whose discernment has been a guide
Dr. Chuck Missler, Dr. John G. Mitchell
Pastor Wendel Grout, Dr. Bill Bright

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My Kook Book



Regular people just didn't **do** Revelation; my parents, the minister, and all the "normal" people simply agreed. Revelation was for *kooks* and weirdos. And where I grew up we were definitely not about looking, acting, or becoming *kooks*. We didn't speak yahoo, and we sure didn't chew, nobody kept a hooded robe in the trunk of his car; and we didn't meet in little clapboard boxes with names like *New Apostolic*, or *Full Gospel Temple* over the door.

There were no sweaty nights in the revival tent, no shouts of "preach it, brother," to spur on the rant, no casting out devils or dancing in the aisles, no speaking in tongues, and nobody I knew could even conceive of picking up snakes for any reason whatsoever. But we just knew such things went on among those "Revelation types."

Not much more than a kid, Dad had been part of what we now call the "greatest generation" young Americans, not much more than teens themselves, who answered their nation's call, to fight a European war to keep freedom alive on planet earth. Somehow they met that enormous threat, defeated it, and came home again to a world much different than the one they had left behind.

Crossing the Atlantic in convoys of fragile "tin cans," the government called "liberty ships," they were like "ducks in a row for lurking Nazi submarine packs. But the war finally turned and Dad found himself ferrying troops across the English Channel as part of *Operation Overlord* and the *D-day* invasion of Europe. His ship had just joined the armada, and as they neared *Gold Beach* with a shipload of Aussies, they struck an acoustic mine and began sinking. As the junior radio officer on board it was his job to grab a radio, a bunch of deck hands, and get the captain's lifeboat into the sea.

But he'd survived and thrived, and by the time he was ready to start a family, many progressive new ideas had been sealed into his thinking. The confluence of the skeptical university, and the hard knocks of a youth spent in war, will do that to you. Graduating as a geologist, Dad had gained a love for science in all its forms. And it wasn't just rocks for him; Dad was interested in the whole gamut of the world of nature. From the smallest atom to the farthest reaches of space, he speculated upon and taught his children to appreciate the incredible breadth of science. But even so he never questioned the existence of the Almighty as Creator and Sustainer of all he saw.

Raised on a little dirt farm near Lawton, Oklahoma, a place where God in one's life was just a given, his early exposure to a simple country Christianity was inevitable. I'm sure he'd rather have been dragged by wild horses than go back to one of those sweaty sawdust revival meetings he'd experienced as a kid, none-the-less, God remained.

Though I doubt he'd read it often for himself, he agreed strongly with Paul in Romans. He could see there was order in the universe which proved God's existence. Everything in nature seemed to point at some sort of "preparation." The whole earth had been made ready for the advent of someone or something who could admire its beauty—from the soil, with its ability to consume and cycle wastes; to the seasons, with their ability to replenish; to the tides of the sea, washing each coastline two times daily. Nature seemed to be moving in an orderly and predictable cycle.

The night for sleep, the day for work; the world of plants; living things with a complex architecture of branches and leaves, growing, accumulating carbon out of the breath of living animals, generating new oxygen for these animals to breathe. Things which seemed designed to flawlessly take a waste product of animal respiration, and by using the energy of the sun, make that waste into sugar, a substance for animals to eat. While underfoot, in the teeming world of the soil, complex bacteria tirelessly fixed nitrogen, enriching the soil upon which the plants could grow, consuming refuse dropped by animals, protecting living things from their own wastes.

In other words, the universe was composed of complex cycles within cycles— and it all spoke of a balance prepared to be the self-sustaining home of someone who could appreciate it all. The earth, he realized, is a

finely tuned machine for nurture and preservation; the perfect home for man.

Some call this the *anthropic principle*, and it is real. Somehow all nature has been constructed to ready itself for man. Even in such simple observations my father could see clearly what those in many technical fields try to hide. There is some controlling power over nature directing everything. Blind chance might produce some fortunate aspects, but it would also have produced some nasty adversity, as well. But some “One” like a *Creator* would have filled all nature with the beauty and harmony men actually see.

If earth were 10 percent farther away from the sun, the waters of the sea would freeze solid—10 percent closer, and the oceans all boil away. And as it turns out, liquid water is pretty spectacular stuff and very rare. It is the aqueous nature of this planet which makes life even possible. Only water can carry so many chemicals and still be a liquid. Blood circulation, and cell metabolism would be impossible without water. Moreover water is the only liquid that freezes from the top down, leaving space underneath for fish and other living things and able to carry the air required for survival even in the colder months.

So Dad never had time for self appointed experts; he called them “pseudo” intellectuals. He knew most of the “educated elite” would disagree with his views, but he simply mocked those he called educated fools. Carl Sagan, it seemed, could ponder the immense complexity of his own brain making grand assertions that such matter had the highest order in all the cosmos, and all the while claiming he couldn’t find evidence for God anywhere. Perhaps God was too close to such enquiring minds as Sagan. Dad only laughed at such blindness.

Nevertheless, he was no kook. He was always careful not to behave like those he decided had gone too far in the other direction. They were fanatical, and just strange. All his early experiences with religion back on the farm gave him pause to be as skeptical about the traveling salvation show as he was disdainful of celebrated atheists like even the queen of all unbelievers, Madelyn Murray O’Hair.

So he always kept religion in its place.

A little church was fine, but too much smacked of the charlatans and ranters he'd seen down in the South. For him, "goin' to meetin'" was mainly a habit which took him dutifully back to church on Sunday morning. In the rest of the week oil was the family business and wherever there was potential for a new strike, Dad was sent. We were moved about like military brats all over the western United States. We moved from the Four Corners region of Arizona, to the frigid Dakotas, and everywhere in between. We finally ended up in Calgary, Canada where I went to high school, and I suppose there is a bit of the "Canuck" still in me to this moment.

But wherever we lived, the habit of church persisted. Some would have given up constantly trying to break into new churches, but Dad and Mom insisted on getting us up and going every Sunday morning. And we always attended one of those respectable old brick castles with their tall steeples and stained glass on the outside. They all looked alike to me, and they certainly seemed the same inside.

So there we were each week, sliding into a hard wooden pew on Sunday Morning to pay our respect to the conventional, respectable, middle class "god." The pastor—and we had many—was always a man of letters, spoke in a deep clergy voice, and wore long black robes. He was always referred to as "reverend," and most often had an impressive blueblood handle like Barnhill.

I don't suppose he did it intentionally, but Dad always sought out the same sort of church for his new little family: high, liberal, and mainline. Inside was an enormous organ that could shake the sidewalks, and the sanctuary always smelled of old furniture polish. Heavy wooden doors led back into passageways whose secrets were never opened up to little church mice like me.

But even such churches weren't all bad. I remember one potluck supper in late December which went on very late watching an old reel-to-reel about the Christ child. The story was told from the perspective of the traveling wise men, and I remember the glow of the season, the carols, and the wonderful scent of the candles. It was a night of magic, singing all the old songs amidst the pageant which re-enacts every year. Dad loved to sing in those days, and always fancied he could sing the harmony line.

Whether he could, or was just off key a lot, I am still uncertain, but I remember leaving with a wonderful glow that night. And I remember thinking how awesome the story of the Bible could be and wondering why it was always something quite different during the rest of the year.

Because church was invincibly dull. The day was tedious and predictable. The boredom usually gave me glazed eyes, and a splitting headache. And the church itself was simply drab. No one would ever accuse our group of being outlandish or unusual in any way. We did all things in order, and unfortunately always the same order. Three songs, a verse taken from where no one ever knew, announcements, twenty minutes of a tedious preachment, and then we were shaking hands and free at last. It was the best moment of the day, and it was the same every week. Such a religion was more staid than any little kid could have been expected to endure for a whole hour. Actually, snakes would have been fabulous.

But our attendance was consistent.

In those days practically every family in America went to church somewhere and the children went along—there was no argument. Everyone went in nice clothes, the girls gussied up by their mothers in billowing skirts with scratchy multiple petticoats. Boys wore bow ties, white shirts, and those dedicated instruments of torture, itchy woolen sport jackets. I could hardly breathe with that monkey suit and that choking bow tie acting as a tourniquet, cutting off the blood to my head. But that's just the way people thought religion ought to be: smug, middle class, fancy dressed, and boring. And I endured it, week after tedious week. There was no getting round it.

Of course, it's never been fashionable to talk about one's religion, even among adults, unless you were one of those "weird kook people," who talked about nothing else. But these were the '50s, and there was nothing wrong with having a religion; so long as you just didn't talk about it. And it didn't matter a great deal whether you were Methodist or Episcopalian, Baptist or Congregational, they were all pretty much the same. Mainline Christianity had become pretty homogenized, and even the old antagonists—Catholic and Protestant—had mostly reconciled. Nobody I knew understood anymore what all the ancient hubbub had been about.

Catholic fathers had a neat black top, with that reversed high collar. It was always said they dressed better, but spoke worse. And that was about the sum of it. Though I can't imagine anyone with a more consistently boring delivery than Reverend Barnhill. Week after week he may have had just one sermon the whole time and numb as we were, we never would have known it.

The "social gospel" was all the rage in Christianity at that time, and it was fairly simple. We were all "God's children," and supposed to act like brothers and sisters. It was the old saw of the "brotherhood of man," and over all of us, the "fatherhood of God." Whatever that meant, it sounded nice. And though the cross was on everything, most of us had little understanding of what that symbol even meant. It was Christian, and we were told over and over Christ had died for our sins, as though that might mean something while choking on our ties, and scratching all over. We were in a Christian church, and that was enough to make us Christians.

Well actually, I really did know what the cross was for. The cross was a symbol of "good power" when waved at werewolves and vampires in old "B" horror films, at least it always worked that way for Basil Rathbone. Only the lack of werewolves left most of us without much opportunity to try it out in the here and now. But all joking aside, whenever we went into a church, we expected the cross to be displayed inside and out. It was the proper label on the Christian package.

Jesus—I knew—had been some sort of suffering martyr. Yes, we knew he died, but we weren't sure why. Jesus' cross was there for the atmosphere and the Catholic, with Jesus suspended on it, had a bit more drama, but we saw it as basically the same.

Strangely enough, nobody seemed able to explain how Christ's death mattered to us in the present, some 2000 years after the event. In fact his death seemed sort of irrelevant. The preacher kept mouthing the Christian mantra about our sins but in relation to the cross it meant nothing because we didn't understand, and we had no context. Our social gospel taught us to be law-abiding citizens, and nice people. Be a good guy, attend church, and go to heaven. That's all there was to it. So what was this cross thing?

Someday God would simply weigh everything, the bad and the good, and if a person was about as good as the next, he or she had little to worry about. Hell was out—I hoped—because I wasn't a jailbird; and heaven would be long in coming, because I really didn't much care about harps and clouds. And like me, I think, many were secretly of the opinion

heaven was going to be a royal bore spent strumming harps for eons—kind of like millions of years in church. And oh horrors, I had to admit that thought a bit daunting. I didn't know how anyone could get too excited about a place where you sit for endless ages on a big ball of cotton and strum on a harp. Maybe that was why Mom made me practice the piano, for what seemed like hideous eternities. Honestly I think she was getting me used to music-based torture.

On the other hand, hell was something out of a Larson's *Far Side* strip--though Larson's comics wouldn't come into existence for some fifteen years. Just a bunch of funny-looking devils playing nasty tricks on each other. Both places were just about this real. To a kid like me, the latter sounded more interesting.

When a funeral was held, there was never any doubt the individual was now gone to his everlasting reward and it was bad taste to even imply something else. Actually, it was kind of an unspoken taboo. We were not to mention either heaven or hell at a funeral, that was for sure. It was much better to talk about how good the punch was, that and the Green Bay Packers.

I would hear my "enlightened" Sunday school teachers waxing eloquent over how it didn't matter if there were a real hell anyway. In their estimation bad people already carried around their own hell, so it didn't matter much if anyone actually went there. And I supposed this might be true emotionally, but I still had a little bit of worry. I didn't think I would do fire real well.

But rather than turning to the Bible for information, many in the social gospel turned to the sensational tales of near death researchers like Kubler Ross and Raymond Moody, who got very popular for a time. There seemed to be a surprising number who could talk about their own near-death experiences. Story after story appeared in the press about people who had popped out of their bodies over operating tables to watch their own resuscitation. Their stories were remarkably similar. They had some violent accident, and during the scramble to repair the damage they found themselves floating out of their mortal bodies. Just jaunty little puffs floating about the ceiling fans. Then, in very extraordinary conditions, they slid down some gigantic umbilical into a separate reality they were certain was heaven. But few ever reported about a post-death experience of fire and brimstone. Strangely, none of these people ever seemed to end up in the oven. Some said they were anti-religious, even atheists, prior to

their out of body experience. But after their near-death, not one of them ever feared death again, or so they told the rest of us. How could anyone ever know if they were truthful, lying, or deceived? Were they just victims of overactive imaginations or chemically induced hallucinations? What was happening to them?

No one can be sure. But many in the main stream of religion were very superstitious. Mom was reading everything she could find on Jeanne Dixon, and it was no wonder. People had sort of given up on the bumbling, friendly, social-gospel god, and gone out to explore spirituality for themselves. Even Christian leaders, like Episcopal Bishop James Pike got into it. He reported poltergeist activity in his home; things were flying off the walls, and soon he was participating in nationally televised séances with the self-styled medium Arthur Ford. It was an attempt to contact his dead son whose suicide had shocked and broken his father's heart.

Youth groups were sort of chummy cool, filled with a kumbaya goody-two-shoes religion. It was about the same as listening to Peter, Paul, and Mary. We bought little bunnies at Easter and waved palm branches on Palm Sunday, wondering what in the world that was all about. Everybody had God as his or her "Father," whatever name you called him, or for that matter, her. And that god was god; call him Allah or Odin or Zeus or Baal or even Jehovah. Whoever and whatever he was, he was obviously still God. And the lessons were the same. "... do unto others as we would have them do unto us," This was the essence of the social gospel, and frankly about all the rest of it as well.

But there was one group we stayed away from like the plague.

These were others who also fancied themselves Christians. They may as well have been aliens from outer space. These were the *kooks*, of course, religious fanatics of various sorts, who usually got banished to the other side of the tracks for their ramshackle little meeting boxes. We had little to do with them, and wanted nothing to do with them. Some of them worked in offices, but we didn't socialize. They were *Birchers*, weirdos, and Bible bangers. Some were even Democrats. They knew we disdained them.

But that didn't stop them from trooping right up to the front door. And when they came, Mom was way too nice to slam that door. But she did have another method. She would snatch their literature through the crack

in the screen door, nod, and slowly press against the screen. This would get rid of them as quickly as the snap of the latch took hold.

She would smile, shake her head, and plop their literature into the nearest wastebasket. They might have been nice people, but we never gave them the chance to prove it because they seemed odd, and their kids wouldn't stand for the pledge every morning.

Perhaps they thought they could blend in. But the more they tried, the more obvious they became. One notorious group cruised around the neighborhood in their big old rusty "boats," old *Buicks* and *Oldsmobiles*, with their chrome falling off, and they didn't fool anyone. And there were the pairs of young men on bikes in white shirts, their nametags blazing with *Elder Smith*, and *Elder Jones*. But they never did look too elderly to me. And I suppose they thought they looked just like everybody else out riding bikes in starched white shirts with backpacks in 100 degree weather. They all stood out like vultures at a bird bath.

And they all carried a Bible, and they all promised to tell you the "only" way to God. And they all seemed to base their views on the book of *Revelation*.

But it was because these people thought the Bible could tell the future, I was always a bit intrigued. The kooks never brought plastic shoehorns to our door like the Fuller Brush man; but they had their religious magazines. And some of us liked to snatch them from the waste basket when Mom wasn't watching. It was always pretty interesting.

One thing was obvious even to kids like us: whether we liked these people; or the books they carried, they were devoted to what they were doing. They had a passion lacking in our churches. They talked about new worlds and wars, and adventures, things quite alien to our stiff collars and boring hymns—and the contrast was amazing, especially to children.

And each one of these people at our door was sure he had discovered the only way to heaven and had to warn the rest of us. But even though they all seemed utterly confident in their views, they all seemed to contradict. And of course, they were all recruiting for their specific brand of cult. But at least they weren't being cynical about it. I knew our own sloppy-unprepared Sunday school teachers; reluctant parents pressured into the role, stuck in front of the class without even reviewing the material, couldn't hold a candle to them. In the little weekly Sunday School folders were repetitive questions even we kids knew wouldn't help

us very much. It was the warm body method, and it is no wonder all mainline churches have continued to dwindle.

But these others, trying to get their feet into our door, were different. They made me wonder about many things in my own church. And *Revelation*, which had never even elicited so much as a shrug, suddenly began calling to me. When no one was looking I would page through my little Sunday school *Revised Standard Version of the Bible* given as a gift somewhere along the line—and doors began to open in my mind. And like the kook literature at our door, *Revelation* seemed strangely forbidden, and even foreboding. It was like a movie about a mansion with a sealed room, forbidden, but still part of the house. An extra room, abandoned for some curious reason, and pregnant with questions. What was the family hiding?

My pastor would never mention the book, so I wanted to know all the more. Why indeed was it called the *Revelation of the Christ*, when it seemed so closed? To whom was this so called unveiling addressed? These people at our door might be wrong, but one thing was clear, they weren't out to bore their people to death. Jesus proclaims he would rather run into a red-hot sinner than a lukewarm saint; and in spite of all the twaddle liberal churches put out about their superiority to Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, and the other major religious groups—my take is Jesus is much angrier with sleepy Christians. At least the unorthodox kook is sure of what he believes, and is willing to get persecuted for it.

But in my own case, as I devoured the magazines from these Bible based non-Christian groups, I began to engage with the underlying prophetic fabric of the word of God, the stuff which ties the sixty-six books of the Bible together into one whole.

I had no plan. I dove in here and there, I had no structure, I had no outlines or guidance, and all I got for it was confused. But it was anything but boring. What gripped me most was its symbolism. And it certainly was a new experience being excited while reading something religious. Those little two-page handouts they gave us at Sunday school never accomplished that.

There was no way I could possibly understand it, but already inside my life was changing. In poorly illustrated, pulpy cult rags, I had found something C. S. Lewis, the author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, would have said had a "chest." You put your battle decorations on your chest.

There was no battle in the blather of the robes and rituals of the liberal church. Even the preacher looked bored. But in the battle and the grit of these cult magazines, I had awakened something. I wasn't sure what was happening, but at least it gave me something to think about. Yes the explanations in this quazi Christian material was flawed, but flawed interpretation didn't much matter to me as yet. But I could see that in them was the real world, down and dirty, which gripped me. It was the possibility that there was more to God than just being nice, singing two hymns, and itchy sports jackets.

The Boy Scouts helped my behavior lots more than choking on my tie every week if the point was only to be nice. But the point of the Social Gospel escaped me, it didn't seem to do anything. I wasn't synthesizing concepts just yet, and understanding would come later. But in the meanwhile, something was waking up inside, and it had a chest, and I think it was starting to have some medals on it.

A Door Opens



So why I wondered was *Revelation* such a closed book in our church? Even as an adolescent, I knew that what I had snatched from the trash was cult literature and I sort of assumed it presented a flawed view of the Bible. But somehow, due to my limited understanding, I seemed to have missed most of the propaganda and latched onto an underlying issue of truth. No matter what error they were injecting at least these people were excited about what they believed. And it was just so obvious the people of my church were going through the motions.

Years before, in what seemed to have been a rite of passage in liberal churches, I had been given a copy of the World-Council-of-Churches-approved *Revised Standard Bible*. Even though it is published by an extremely progressive arm of what calls itself Christianity, the *Revised Standard* is reasonably true to the original languages. Many of us got these gift Bibles sometime in our Sunday school years and placed them neatly on our bookshelves in the “forgotten and collecting dust” sections. That was what I had done with mine.

But now my appetite for Bible had been awakened, and the day finally came when I noticed that little black book on my shelf where it had been hidden in plain sight for years, and started to read. I opened that book with my hands shaking, and turned to the forbidden door of that missing room called *Revelation*. And there I saw for the first time John, the old Apostle, introducing his book. And there with growing excitement I read:

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day! From this, John’s astonishing introduction to the last page, I quickly came to the conclusion that *Revelation* was nothing to trifle with, and nothing to ignore. In fact as I

explored its amazing pages, I was simply shocked at what things could be found in the same stuffy old Bible I thought I knew so well.

We have mentioned C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*, and in this novel someone asks if Aslan is a tame lion, and his listeners laugh. No, he is not tame; he is the most dangerous lion of all. But he is good. Aslan is Lewis' Jesus, and he represents the *Lion of Judah*. Like Aslan I think the *Book of Revelation* is not a tame book, but it too is good. And I had already guessed why this most important book had long been ignored by a very flaccid clergy. It was simply too much for them. It was too much for a convenient religion. It was simply too explosive for a lazy church, too dynamic for flaccid hands and furniture polish. Because *Revelation* is a plunge into spiritual hyperspace. It's as jarring as finding *Star Wars* in a manuscript for dishwasher repair. Revelation has such aspects—spectral riders, ghosts with the smell of hell still on them, equestrians on lions with snakeheads which kill a fourth of the human race. The gargantuan throne of God Almighty surrounded with lightnings and thunders, and holding in his hand a giant scroll upon which rests the fate of the whole human race.

And there also a man standing alone as center of the universe, the *Lamb*, who is not a lamb, but rather a *Lion, The Lion of Judah*, who was once the man from Nazareth called Jesus with the power to enter that inferno, to stroll up to the One who is the definition of power, and take the scroll. And then, and only then, would all be well.

It is to watch as the stars of heaven begin falling like streamers of fire into a roiling red caldron called earth, a world made of blood. It is to watch the men of that hour struggling to stay alive, to see them doubting, moving away from God and accepting a Mark of everlasting damnation. It is even to watch as the everlasting covenant of nature starts fraying, as the sun erupts into a flaming scorching, inferno, baking mankind back into the ground from whence he came. All of which is followed by a contrasting blackness, like a shroud of hell, covering all the earth with a lost mankind, shaking their fists in the face of heaven.

And then-I happened into inky swarms of flying scorpions covering the face of the skies. Stinging swarms of flying insects with faces like people, visions of horror set free to torment those still on the earth, who try to escape in vain. And for some reason these people, stung again and again, can't even find relief by dying. And after reading this, I actually slammed the book shut and decided I wouldn't go back to doing it again. Perhaps the pastor and the church leaders had been right all along. Only crazy people messed around with this *Revelation* stuff.

And I could see why they were crazy. Some of this *Revelation* was composed of nightmares. And I didn't think I would be reading Revelation

again very soon. But I did, every time I noticed that dusty black Bible on my bookshelf, and I was alone in my room. It held the same sort of fascination that the cult literature had held. It was deliciously forbidden, and yet I couldn't just give this *Revelation* stuff up.

Then on one memorable Sunday morning, seated in a liberal church with my family in Calgary, now as a young adult, watching with a great sense of well placed-doubt as the preacher sprinkled babies in their mother's arms, I came to the conclusion my own sprinkling had only made me damp. In fact it had all become so much phony baloney churchism that I might have tipped over right there into the bleakness of atheism except I still had a nagging suspicion there was something awfully real about *Revelation*. It just "tasted" like something hard and true.

So on that fateful Sunday I asked God in the most direct way to do something for those little babies. I wanted to see God at work someplace, because I was pretty sure religion had done nothing for me. Strange how I remember this one service, when there were hundreds of others. But important events often pivot around the simplest of moments. I hoped the magic in the baptismal font would work for these babies because it certainly hadn't worked for me.

But these were years of transformation, and so it was not long after that I was enrolled in college in Arizona trying to find the roots of my existence and perhaps some old friends, in the state of my birth. And there I met others who had been raised in their mainline religion and had rejected it outright. But I noticed that it was often to justify hedonistic lifestyles not exactly the sort their parents wanted for them. Some where along the line they had convinced themselves it was intellectual suicide to have a belief in any sort of god at all.

They had simply put their family religion behind their backs and refused to look at anything other than the selfish ways they had committed themselves to living. They wanted me to join with them and live life as it came, forgetting the tired old religion of my family and live in the rush of the moment...And I admitted flaccid old gentlemen in long velvet gowns had never done much for me, either. I had already figured out the social gospel had very little staying power with any but the dumbest of people. They knew my background, and some of them challenged me to be courageous.

The world was an oyster. All you need do is grab the pearl. And my own family religion had proven as worthless as theirs. But then I thought about those babies being sprinkled and my own experiments with the

Bible and I was sure there was meaning to be found somewhere. And suddenly it dawned on me that some One had been listening to my cranky prayer that morning in a liberal United Church of Canada service—and how strange was that, I thought. Somehow I knew he had been listening. I think this is the way God speaks. Suddenly you know, and you know you know, and I can't explain it better than that.

For at that instant I knew there was more to all of this than readings, robes, and rituals. I knew the real author of all that lived, God—I decided, really had to exist someplace.

So no, I couldn't join my friends in their hedonist adventure no matter how enticing to my flesh. I told them there was a God and He was out there somewhere and they just laughed at my efforts to convince them. I admitted I didn't know him personally, and didn't know how to find him, but he had listened to me that one day and I knew he had written the *Revelation*. And even if that was all I knew, I was sure about him, I just wasn't so sure about me.

That said, I sure had no allegiance to any particular religious group, not even the family tradition. But there was something starting to stir, and it had to do with reality, not the games of either the ritualist or the skeptic. I didn't see how I could ever find anything like ultimate reality, whatever that was, but He was out there, somewhere. He had to be:

So I stumbled about for over a year determined to find the truth.

I even transferred back to my home in Alberta. College in Arizona hadn't been going anywhere, and I started classes again in Calgary. But my heart wasn't in it. I was emotionally confused, lost in regard to my studies, and rarely even bothering to go to class. I was looking for something far more important than school.

And then one special afternoon something happened at the University of Calgary. God finally moved into my life, or rather He allowed me to encounter him where I was. I met the living Jesus Christ. Not the effeminate Jesus of the social gospel, not the Jesus in the statuary of your local Catholic diocese; I met the living Jesus as surely as any apostle ever did, and all my world was turned on end.

Josh McDowell, a very popular speaker with Campus Crusade for Christ, spoke on my campus. McDowell has spoken on all six inhabited continents to millions of college students and even then, in 1970, he was a very popular and well-known speaker. But honestly at the time this all happened, I had never heard of Josh, nor even the vast and growing

ministry of *Campus Crusade for Christ*. (*Campus Crusade* is known today as the ministry of *Cru* and is still thriving on every major campus in the United States and most worldwide.) As I said, the year was 1970, and it was in the fall near Thanksgiving Day.

Oh I had seen the teasers. “Josh is coming!” It had been written on every blackboard in the university; but the students doing the writing hadn’t deceived anyone. We knew this Josh guy had to be one of the greatest wack jobs of all the kooks around. This was obviously one of those times when the religious wing nuts were making their play for the rest of us.

Perhaps with my struggles you would have thought I would have been one of the first in line to listen. And I might have been, except for my many bad experiences with religion. I expected Reverend Barnhill in long dark cloaks again. And I wasn’t about to be pressured into God by a bunch of kooks.

So in my mind there was about a zero chance of this guy going to listen to any of that “evening presentation,” as they were calling it. My mindset, while appearing to be contrary in hindsight, was set on discovering the truth. So that even though I was struggling with “spiritual issues,” I had no intention of becoming a kook on top of all that. I had even sort of bought into the strange notion of being “spiritual” without being in church, whatever woo woo that idea comes from. Eastern religion had gotten to be sort of interesting. It was kind of a fad at that time. I had heard someone talking about the sound of “one hand clapping” while reading *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, and thought such nonsense might be profound. Well, not really, at least not after about a half hour of it. I had too much common sense. I was looking for reality, not more of the guff of religion. So I wasn’t ready to go out and buy the biggest leather bound gold leaf Bible I could find, either. That would make me a *kook* and I would need to wear a suit all the time. Kooks do, you know.

But as a matter of fact I didn’t even go to see Josh, he came to me. The afternoon of his arrival he set up his overhead in the middle of a student lounge,-full of overstuffed chairs, and started to speak. Like everybody else in that lounge I’d been half asleep myself, pretending to be working. I don’t even remember seeing him set up. But as he went live and introduced himself, and began to promote his evening meeting, I thought the guy must be off his rocker.

The first question I would have asked him was, “why?” Why set up in the middle of a study lounge. Nobody did that. Everybody knew that

nobody was awake in there. And Josh didn't even have slicked down hair and a suit jacket, like kooks are supposed to have. He sort of looked like one of us, in a clean-cut sort of way. We were all pretty scroungy in those days. But whatever else he was, surely this character was about to have a quick exit, courtesy of the campus police. But for some reason the campus cops never arrived. Maybe he had some sort of deal with them, I never knew.

But right there in the middle of that lounge with all the courage and conviction which comes with knowing you are right, Josh began to speak about Bible prophecy—fulfilled predictions thousands of years old, and things yet to be fulfilled in the future. And his arguments could not be assailed. My mouth had fallen open, my heart had started to pound; his words were astonishing me and all my sophomoric braggadocio which held religion illegal had eluded me.

His thesis dealt with the human authors of the Bible—he called them prophets, those who could apparently see things hundreds of years ahead of the events themselves. His logic? If these prophets had been right in the past, they could be trusted to know the future. If it was possible for anyone to know the future, these were the guys who could know it. It all made perfect sense to me.

He pointed out that the prophets of our time; Edgar Cayce, Jeanne Dixon, and all the prognosticators in the tabloids were wrong more often than they were right. Even Jeanne Dixon, who seemed to have the best reputation, had missed more future events than she had guessed right. And every year at New Year's all the psychics lined up in the grocery store tabloids because "inquiring minds want to know." And every year they missed by a mile.

Strangely while in Arizona I had actually met Jeanne Dixon—sat with her in her home in Window Rock, on the Navajo reservation and had a nice long personal chat about how she practiced this thing she regarded as her "gift." The woman had some sort of a spiritual aura, that was for sure, and she claimed to have the same gift as the Bible prophets. Moreover, she had gained a reputation for accuracy by predicting the assassination of President Kennedy. But there was one vast difference, she had often been wrong, sometimes very wrong—and for a prophet of God to be wrong, given what the Bible says, should not be possible. It would bring a loss of trust in the *Name of God*. So when something was predicted in the name of God, and the prediction failed, that meant death by stoning. The prophet spoke for God so he had to be right, or God was not speaking through him.

No doubt there was some power at work over Dixon. It was actually a little spooky. Sitting on the sofa nearby, she seemed to be the point from which came some sort of aura or energy, and she somehow had the power to make everyone in the room feel incredibly relaxed with a sense of well being. In fact she projected serenity which felt very good and yet left me wondering.

But it seemed to me she was doing parlor tricks, giving what she called life readings over each one of us, making us feel good in our bodies, but she had no point to her prophecy other than self-glorification. It was all about Jeanne Dixon. True Bible prophets always pointed back toward God. In her defense Jeanne Dixon spoke often about God. But there was something wrong with her, something occultic. She used amulets and crystal balls, and she was deeply respectful of the mediumistic medicine men on the reservation, one reason for her home in Window Rock, capital of the vast Navajo nation. And as we have said, contrary to the prophets of the Bible she had often been wrong.

When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 18:22 (NASB)

In fact, according to Josh, in order to prove himself a Bible prophet would usually predict something not many years distant. It would be a test of the gift. Many would still be alive to see if the prophecy came to pass. If the prophet could be trusted for the near future, he could be trusted period. Even Jesus proved his prophet's credential in this manner. The fall of Jerusalem was coming in only 38 years, well within the lives of most of his hearers. He made a prediction that the temple would soon come down, and that every stone composing it would be torn apart from the others. Many would be alive to see if it happened. Many were alive when it did.

To be a prophet in Israel was a very risky business. It meant you were in touch with God, really in touch with God, or you could quickly end up very dead. If the prophecy did not come to pass as stated, you were stoned, pummeled into the ground, and there was no grading on a curve. Clearly if such a thing as real prophecy exists, it must be thus; to protect his name, it must be as accurate as God. That is, if God reserves to himself the power to look into the future.

I was listening as he spoke in the student lounge, and Josh began with the modern state of Israel, as the most important prophetic sign on planet earth.

This was all entirely new to me. Until that moment, I had never understood how important the return of the Jews to their own land really had been. My birth in 1951 had happened only three years after the establishment of the modern state, and nobody had ever told me. I don't think they knew. But Josh was filling in some blanks even in my own life. And it was as if there was some sort of special connection from Josh McDowell right into my head that day. His words were punching deep into me, breaking up old stuff inside. And I felt I was being swept along in a sort of wonder.

I had never heard anything similar. Not in all my days of occupying a seat in church. I felt good, I felt high, but it was not making me intoxicated. I was more alive and alert than I had been in years. Even when some of the things Josh was saying were not all nicey peace and happiness. In fact Josh spoke of events which would tear at the fabric of the world. And while I understood all of that, the message of God's reality was what I had been searching for, and it was like the loveliest song in my ears. My soul sang within me. At last I had found the truth, the 100% truth. Thrilled to the depths of my being I knew; God was real, the Bible true, and eternity would not be boring. I didn't even have to rush out and buy a harp. I could even quit playing that dang piano. I was sure Jesus Christ must be standing somewhere close. And though I couldn't see him, he was there—yes he was there.

Josh tied prophecy from the whole Bible together, and invited us back for the evening where we could hear more. And I, the guy who was never going to be at that evening presentation—wild horses couldn't drag me there—could hardly wait for the sun to go down. I wasn't even going home for dinner. I didn't care if I ever went home again.

And by the end of that fabulous day I knew. The prophecies concerning Jesus had come to pass in both broad brush strokes and the finest detail. I had even discovered that there are hundreds of tiny details scattered throughout the Old Testament which lend proof to his claims, some of them spoken at the time of the Creation four thousand years before Christ was born. These are details so varied, and of such number, it would be impossible for any one man to falsify in one lifetime.

Even so, there have always been some who try to debunk Jesus. In spite of his great moral teaching, his eye-witnessed healings, his impact on history, and his affirmation by prophecy, they are convinced Jesus was the greatest fraud of all time.

Hugh Schonfield, one such antagonist, wrote *The Passover Plot* in 1965, a travesty of half-truth and outright lies in which he tries to expose Jesus as a false *Messiah*. He attempts to make the Lord into some sort of trickster with bogus powers, allowing him to fake his person to the unsophisticated, resulting in the New Testament. And according to Schonfield the New Testament is all just a spurious fraud.

In *The Passover Plot*, this “conniver,” Jesus, set up all the ingredients of his being recognized as *Messiah* in advance. He actually went out of his way to get himself crucified by the Romans so he could be revived in the “cool” of the Garden Tomb. By the way, according to Schonfield and others, that “cool tomb” is apparently a detail of massive importance missed by most historians. Somehow a cool tomb can even revive a man after 40 lashes with his internals hanging out, with the accompanying loss of most of his blood, and even after being declared dead by crucifixion!

But to even assert such a thing, Schonfield must have understood that 40 lashes with the Roman cat-o-nine tails was already considered an execution. It would have opened his back to massive bleeding and infection. And that, followed by hours on the cross, the shock, and even a spear thrust into his side, (yielding blood and water separated, sure sign of lung failure); convinces us that we know with certainty he died. In actuality a cool tomb could do about as much to revive such a victim as ice does for dead fish. Four professional crucifiers took him down and declared his death, and no honest historian would be willing to joust with such four experts. These men knew death. But even so, Jesus was revived when he went into the tomb. Because, as Schonfield reveals, Jesus had just swooned and the cool tomb revived him.

And when he woke up again, he was able to drag himself off to the Apostles and convince them he was the expected *Messiah*, the very power of God in heaven. And Josh likes to have fun with this scenario.

“After being whipped, crucified, and speared, Jesus just jumped up from his shelf in the tomb. Still bound in the grave clothes, encased like a mummy, and breathing through it all, he hobbled over to the door, pushed a two-ton stone out of the way and tied up the guard outside with the linen cloth.” Or something like that!

Well after all, it couldn’t have been too hard for him, having already convinced these first century know nothings he could feed 5000 with a few loaves and fishes, that he could walk on water, and still the storms! He

had already managed to light himself up on a mountain, looking like the very glory of God, and speak out of the cloud like some monstrous ventriloquist.

But even could he somehow manage all this, Jesus still had to fulfill hundreds of major and minor prophecies about the *Messiah* throughout the Bible. How could he decide ahead of time which town was going to host his nativity? Especially when his mother Mary was living in far away Nazareth, and he had to be born in Bethlehem? And how could he arrange the correct family lineage—King David’s line? And how did he arrange for a star to have appeared; the predicted star of the *Messiah*, just over his own bedside? A star of such majesty, a star of such peculiarity, that magi noticed from their home in the east and followed it to his crib side. It had to have been the predicted “star of the Great King,” to be ruler in Jerusalem? Jesus couldn’t even have manipulated the amount of money Judas would take for his betrayal.

None of these predicted details, and thousands of others, could ever have been arranged. They all depend on heavenly signs, or other people. Even Judas had no control over the amount he got from the Sanhedrin. But the price for Jesus’ betrayal had already been set in stone by the great prophets of Israel as 30 pieces of silver.

So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver...Then the LORD said to me, “Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them.” So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the Lord. ZECH 12:11-12 (NASB)

Nor could the testimony of the apostles be faked.

I suppose there are a few people so committed to a program they will give up their lives for what they know is a lie. But you will look high and low over all the history of the world and never find such determination, as that residing in these eleven ordinary, extraordinary, men. We call them the apostles; Jesus’ disciples.

So what were they like, these eleven remaining apostles? Their deaths are not recorded in Scripture, but we have the scrolls, their histories. Were they unstable characters, politically motivated, after power and money? Not one of them. They were simple fishermen, men who worked a trade with their hands; not politicians, not the educated, not even men of great means. They stood to get no financial gain, and their testimony would eventually get them killed. From the beginning others warned them to stop talking.

They all knew the loneliness of serving in places where they were unwelcome and far from home but not one of them recanted, not one walked away from Christ.

Why did these apostles affirm Christ to their own deaths? The only answer is the Bible answer. They had seen what they were absolutely convinced was true. They had seen a man named Jesus raise the dead, and heal the sick. They had seen him still violent waters and make bread out of thin air. Finally, they had seen him alive after crucifixion, and they had watched him slowly ascend into the clouds, really the first of the *rapture*.

Not just one but all eleven of them, faced the torture of a Roman death. All of them including John, who finally died of old age because the boiling oil that Domitian plunged him into couldn't kill him. They all died horrible hideous deaths, and not even one broke down with a different story. The fact that they all refused to renounce the resurrection, the single most important message of Christianity, is a matter of history. They could go happily into the next world because they knew death was not the end.

They had heard Jesus' words, seen Jesus die, and then they had been there to walk with him again after he came back to life. With their own bodies as a witness to the truth, they testify from the grave that death has no hold on the one who is born from above. They testify that they actually watched as he went away into the sky, promising to come and receive them back again, just as he had gone away. If this is not a description of the coming snatch, the Rapture, then there can be none.

Peter was crucified upside down in Rome; he had not felt worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord. John, as we said, was boiled in oil but miraculously survived, living to see old age in banishment. Nathaniel was killed in the east by whipping; Matthew in Africa by the sword. Thomas was speared in India. James had his head cut off in Rome. Every single one of them paid for his testimony with blood. But the *Church* remembers, and histories were written in detail. They died to the glory of the One whose glory they wanted to copy.

Peter's words are clear:

For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him

from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

2 Peter 1:16–17 (NKJV)

Listening to Josh in that study room I was in ecstasy, and in shock. Had much of this been in that little gift Bible hidden in plain sight for years and years?

But the most stupendous truth of all was yet to come.

Jesus is still alive! He was, and still is alive and ready to rescue every one of us. Because of his death we can live. And every one of us require his help to keep us out of everlasting hell.

Behold I [Jesus] stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him
Revelation 3:20 (NASB)

As I listened it gradually dawned on me that I finally understood something that had eluded me all the years of my attending church. I had not been a true believer. I had gone to church, sat through all those sermons, but I had never come to know Christ. If I would have died in all those years, I would have gone straight down. I understood that even yet, I was headed for hell. Everyone naturally is. Headed to the place of fire and loneliness forever.

So even as I had suspected, those children I had seen getting sprinkled were only getting wet. They were too young to understand. Sprinkled, wet, or bone dry, we must all be *born again*. To be alive is to be born once, to receive Christ is to be born a second time. Jesus told a puzzled Pharisee one evening, that we, each one of us, must be born of both the *water* and the *Spirit*, in order to go to heaven. We are all born once into the flesh of Adam, and we thus pass through the waters of our mother’s womb. But when we say yes to God through Christ, the *Ruach*—the very breath of God—envelops and fills us, just like our mother’s watery womb once did, and we are born again, by the living *Spirit of God*.

That day I learned the Social Gospel’s promises are all false. The righteous do not live eternally by trying to be good, helping the poor, or even as a metaphor of living forever in everyone’s good memories. Everlasting life is real, and all the high sounding expressions of being made eternal as an example to others; of carrying on the torch of goodness, or some other New Age twaddle, is just more of this

foolishness. And every human soul will be conscious forever in one place or the other, in heaven or in hell.

that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV)

Josh explained the Bible as being a letter written to those who love God, a letter that requires the Holy Spirit to understand it, and finally I got that too. A lack of salvation had been my problem. No wonder the Bible had seemed so dry for so many years. Now, as I understood Josh correctly, I could poke around the book in my ignorance forever, and stay the same. I would never properly understand the Scriptures.

But by accepting Christ, I knew I had to agree with God that my whole life had been based on myself. I had been serving *the almighty me* and I needed to ask Christ to come inside and take his rightful seat on the throne of my life, as my King, my Savior, and the best friend I will ever have, the one true God for all eternity. Finally in coming to him, I had to admit only his death could pay for all that is wrong with me.

Jesus spoke with authority, because he is almighty Authority. Such authority that they followed him all over the hills of Judea, and this Josh McDowell seemed like him. This wasn't robed religion and furniture polish anymore, the God so obviously living within this man was empowering him. Josh made being a *kook* seem cool, and I wanted to change sides and stand up before the whole world with him, and that feeling has never gone away.

I had finally heard the truth, the absolute 100 percent unvarnished truth, and I was so excited. And my friend seated nearby told me to sit down; I was embarrassing him. And he was right, I had already caught everyone's attention in that room. But I didn't care in the slightest. I felt like I had never been so free. I seemed to be floating. It was like what the Bible says, "you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

I suppose the Spirit of Christ came into me right then. But that night I knelt by my bedside and formally gave my life to God. The year was 1970, in the fall near Thanksgiving time, and I finally understood the cross. Some decry the cross because it is an instrument of torture, but

Jesus embraced his cross. In fact it was for the joy set before him that he went to die in the first place. He had come in fulfillment of the promised sacrifice, the only thing that could have broken the curse sending all of us straight into hell.

That night I gave all my past life to him, for it was all sin. I gave my present to him because I had no purpose in living. And I gave my future to him because he would lead me on to heaven. I also bade the fraudulent social gospel farewell, as I opened the door into my soul, and gave God total permission to take charge and save me. Eternity has changed. For that day in the student lounge at the University of Calgary, I met the real Jesus.

*and the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life,
and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who
does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I
have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so
that **you may know** that you have eternal life.*

1 John 5:11–14 (NASB)

And the next day I couldn't get over the change. It seemed some sort of subtle difference had occurred in even my ability to see things, ordinary things. Even the concrete beneath my feet was not the same. Oh I know it hadn't changed, but I had.

And I opened the Bible, and read in the book of Matthew chapter 24, and the Lord told me to write a book, this book, though I had yet to live many years to learn what should go into it. But what came into being that night was the concept for *Zion's Promise*. It has been a wrestling with the Spirit of God to write it ever since. It is not Scripture, and do not take it for that. It is one man's adventure with God, and I hope it becomes as exciting an adventure for you to read, as it has been for me to write.

The Chosen People Return



Now the Lord said to Abram, Go forth from your country...And I will make you a great nation...And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

12:1–4 (NASB)

On May 14, 1948, two thousand years of wandering came to an end. Right before the eyes of the nations the modern state of Israel seemed to rise from the dead, and even now, some 70 years later, the world does not really understand what all the excitement is about. But for those who do, this thing is electric. For it is the great marker of God. It is a major sign of the times—a sign not unlike the star which led to Jesus’ crib in Bethlehem. And like that star, it speaks very loudly of things to come. For against all odds God’s chosen have returned in the latter days, in fulfillment of all the prophecies about regaining their land. The Star of David now flutters over Jerusalem, and Israel’s name is back in their land.

When the rains of spring begin falling the flowers of early summer are about to bloom; so it is with the return of the Lord’s *Chosen* at this hour. They have come like the fresh spring rains, and the full bloom of the Second Coming cannot be far behind.

Rouse yourself! Rouse yourself! Arise, O Jerusalem, You who have drunk from the Lord’s hand the cup of His anger; The chalice of reeling you have drained to the dregs.

Therefore, please hear this, you afflicted,...

“Behold, I have taken out of your hand the cup of reeling, The chalice of My anger; You will never drink it again. “I will put it into the hand of your tormentors, Who have said to you, ‘Lie down that we may walk over you.’”

Isaiah 51:17, 21, 23 (NASB)

The return of Israel is a true miracle, an event so amazing that only by the Second Coming itself will it ever be exceeded. The return of the *Chosen* to flourish in their land has stopped the mouths of skeptics, enraged the Islamists, and stunned liberal Christians. And it is such a happy truth. Israel is home, and God is moving all things to their long awaited climax.

Narnia author C.S. Lewis put it, "...Aslan is on the move!" God has emerged, and he is playing out the final act as it is written down on the page. The Bible coming true is the very thing that surprises Zion's critics, and enrages her foes. *Messiah* is coming, and coming soon. The future is his, and no power anywhere can derail his everlasting plan.

Israel is the primary indicator of what God is doing. And since the state has reappeared there is no longer room for a reasonable debate. We are living in the days of *the Coming King* and Israel will never again go into captivity. Let the super powers threaten the world's end, with their giant arsenals, let Iran produce her vaunted nuke, let the whole earth surround them, in order to run them into the sea, and there will still be no third captivity. The prophets tell us that Israel is now in her land to stay. And though they don't yet know his name, Israel is under the hand of the Mighty King who is *Yeshua/Jesus*. The shadow of great miracles, signs and wonders is already cast. Even now many lost in Islam are having visions of Jesus. He is visiting people in their dreams, often even during their required pilgrimage to the black stone of Saudi Arabia, leading them onward like sheep to places where they will find his still waters.

thus says the Lord God, 'Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob...When I bring them back from the peoples and gather them from the lands of their enemies...they will know that I am the Lord...I made them go into exile among the nations, and then gathered them again to their own land

Ezekiel 39:25–28 (NASB)

But what made Israel leave in the first place? Why did they leave their land? Why did they travel to the ends of the earth; into the great captivity they call the *Diaspora*? Why those long years of wandering? What terrible thing befell them to make them pack their bags and abandon their ancestral home? What made them leave?

Moses warned, as far back as *Exodus*, so long as they walked in humility with God, he would stay nearby. But if Israel ever departed and began to chase after what are called gods by the nations, she would be rejected and vomited up. She would lose her home, and wander. And as it has turned out, she would be gone at least two thousand years. She would have no permanent place, and everywhere a sword—the metaphor of death and destruction—would follow close behind.

keep all My statutes and all My ordinances and do them, so that the land to which I am bringing you to live will not spew you out
Leviticus 20:22 (NASB)

The Jews left this special land in 70 AD, after her temple was destroyed. But it wasn't the first such temple or the first time she had been made to leave. It had actually happened the first time some 600 years before, in a kind of warning, when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came in and destroyed the first temple and took thousands of Jews captive into his land of Babylon.

The prophet Jeremiah told them way back then that they would stay captive in Babylon seventy years to learn what it meant to live in a land of idols. And after exactly seventy years, true to their 100 percent accuracy in prophecy, the Jews returned and rebuilt Jerusalem.

And the years passed while the city grew, and the temple was expanded and even remodeled most dramatically by the non-Jew Herod, who wanted a temple as big and glorious as Solomon's. These so-called "quiet years" were the inter-testamental times, the time between the two testaments; but they were anything but quiet, as reading Jewish history like the *Maccabees*, makes very clear. Such histories are accurate, but have never been considered Scripture because God was silent during those 400 years.

Then suddenly, as the prophets of old had predicted, an amazing young man; the carpenter from Galilee, came into the temple. And the crowds which followed him recognized a great prophet had arisen. Some followed him because of his wisdom and some because of his miracles, but the ordinary people welcomed him without reservation. They followed him in droves, and ate his loaves, embracing every word. They were in awe of him. Never had anyone spoken the way he spoke, and never had anyone done the miracles he had done. Not even Elijah had been able to

walk on water, and the people were certain they had found the promised *Messiah*.

Then, after three years of his ministry, came the time for shouting and loud hosannas, to welcome this great king to his throne in Jerusalem. Born with the star of *Messiah* over his cradle, tapped out by John the Baptist as **the Lamb**, able to raise the dead, and teaching with real authority like no man ever taught before him; Jesus was the most amazing person ever to set foot in Jerusalem.

And as he rode into town the people were declaring him their king. The whole city, everyone, was coming out to him and most were worshipping, scandalizing the Chief Priests and the elders. They shouted for him to control his followers, and he made no attempt to stop anyone. In fact, when commanded by the priests and scribes to silence his overzealous followers, he declared the “rocks would cry out” if the people should stop worshipping him.

Like the commander of a victorious legion, he entered the city, his followers throwing garments on the road for him to tread upon, waving palm branches in honor of the great victor; horsed like a conqueror, but astride the wrong steed, his ride but a lowly donkey. It was so classic Jesus—to be almost the *Messiah* the people longed for; powerful enough to end the Roman occupation, and refusing to do so. The popular leader the people craved, but not quite what they wanted. He just never seemed to fit into the human program.

They should have understood him. He had never hidden his real mission. One warm morning, on another day in Nazareth, he’d explained what he was up to but the people of Nazareth had simply refused to understand. He had come to open the way to heaven, and not to judge and destroy their oppressor. Some day he would return. Some day he would do all they hoped, but he would be their captain later, and as it has turned out, much later.

Then from the pinnacle of popularity, he seemed to plummet into total submission, even into what looked like defeat to the people. The high priest, leader of the Jews and master of the temple, had taken him captive, and he seemed doomed to accept a Roman execution, saying almost nothing in his own behalf.

What shock was theirs, seeing their champion cuffed and paraded and whipped? A sense of betrayal, dejection, and disappointment must have diffused through the streets of Jerusalem. Their palm branches hardly

withered, their shouts of hosanna still echoing in their ears; they raised now their voices in hatred of the one they now considered a phony king.

Soon all in Israel were outraged as Roman spikes were pounded through his hands. It is said that love and hatred are close relatives, and this was certainly true of Jesus. The people of Jerusalem had believed in him, and trusted him; but he couldn't possibly be the predicted one now. Their *Messiah* must be more powerful than the iron fist of Rome, and Rome had defeated this one.

So they missed entirely why he had come. Moses had promised a *Messiah* who would lead them out of bondage, but Rome had quickly subdued this one. So it all had to have been some terrible mistake. The people would just have to wakeup and shake off the magician from Galilee, and wait for their King all over again. And Israel has continued this wait for over 2000 years.

By the time he went to his cross the same people shouting "hosanna" on Sunday, were calling for his blood on Thursday. And even though he had to be rejected and placed on the cross to pay for the sins of men, his almost complete rejection by his own people was the true disaster which came out of this. The Jewish people have suffered for this wholesale rejection of their King ever since.

It was not his death which precipitated the *Diaspora*. His atoning death had to happen, or there would be no heaven for anyone. Jesus was born to die. In the vast plan of God, Jesus had been "slain from the foundation of the world..the righteous Jesus in place of all men, the unrighteous who deserved the cross." But it was the national organized rejection of Jesus afterward, even refusing to take a second look after his resurrection, which as a tripwire into judgment and dispersal. The *Diaspora* sent them into all the world in a second judgment much akin to their captivity in Babylon, so many years before. As before it cost them their temple which burned to the ground exactly 656 years later to the day.

So it was in rejecting their *Messiah* that the remnant would be swept off the land as they were when Babylon came. They would be dispersed in all the world; and this time it would last for a very long time.

The children of Abraham, these Israelites, have never yet understood why they were chosen in the first place. They have worn their status as a badge of rank, rather than as a foot-washing commission. They have lorded it over, rather than serving it under. And because they do not understand their identity in God, they do not understand their own

Promises as given by him to Abraham. But they will, through testing they will, and when they do, the whole earth will rejoice.

In the meanwhile, God formed the gentile (non-Jewish) *Church*.

When Jesus walked back out of his grave on that first resurrection Sunday morning, (it is called-the *Lord's Day* for that reason) in what must be the most joyful thing that ever happened, he left the sin of the world in the grave and brought a new thing into being called the *Church*. An altogether new kind of human life, empowered and filled by the *Holy Spirit*, something long promised in the Old Testament, there by prophets and seers. Hearts of stone would morph into hearts of flesh and blood, and those of the *Church* would live forever with him in *heaven*.

And for the first time since creation there were now three types of people on the earth: the gentile nations, who know almost nothing about the *Word of God*, these are what the Bible calls the restless “sea,” and second, the *Chosen* (Israel itself); and a new group called the *Church*, mysteriously hinted at throughout the Old Testament, a people who have the *Holy Spirit* resident within them, and too often this group seems beneath the honor given to them, because they do not really understand what they are. The *Church* is today composed of some Messianic Jews and many gentiles, those who have been rescued from hell by Christ's blood. And Paul explains in Romans chapter 11 that the gentiles of the *Church* were grafted into the “olive root,” which is Israel.

The *Church* represents the true people of God for this age, during a long season of Christ's rejection by Israel. (We will speak more of this parenthesis in God's scheme when we look at Daniel chapter 9. This situation has a reason but but will not go on forever.) Unlike some, in what is called “replacement theology” assert, Israel has not been thrown away forever. On the contrary, in *Romans*, Paul pictures these gentiles of the *Church* as merely grafted in. But the “stump” into which they are slipped is not dead and will grow a new “shoot,” someday. In fact the *Church*, all gentile believers are called the “wild” olive grafted into the true olive tree which is still Israel. With the establishment of the nation in 1948, the “tree” has “budded” and the “bloom” may be coming soon.

But tragically, at the time of Jesus' cross, most in Israel clung to her tradition, rejecting *Messiah*, and hoping to be made ready for heaven by their traditional religion, the ongoing, slogging, never-ending attempt at self-improvement that is the keeping of the *Law of Moses*.

There is one atomic clock by which all other clocks are measured. And rightly used the atomic clock is very good. In fact the atomic clock almost perfectly tells the time. It is not quite perfect, but it works close

enough to act here in the way of analogy. The other clocks will never be as accurate as the atomic clock. That's why it's the standard. And when the *Law* is used rightly like the clock, it works to set the standard in the same manner. Used rightly, God's perfect standard always shows us how far we have moved away from God and directs us back toward his mercy. The *Law* is a standard which only Christ managed to live.

We can never hope to reach such perfection, at least not in this world. Jesus had to reach this perfection. It was required of him. To become the payment before a holy God for everyone else, to take the place of sinners, Jesus had to pass the standard of perfection. Only he could.

But some have difficulty believing in Jesus' perfection. Was Jesus really perfect, according to the *Law of God*? As we have said, he had to be, and he actually proved it in a very simple way. In front of those who knew him best, his friends and family, he declared his own perfection, and shockingly not one of them raised the slightest question.

To those who might be wondering if such a scenario proves anything; what would happen at a family dinner if you foolishly announced to all present that you were perfect in every way? When they all got back up off the floor I would expect you would get an earful. But at this dinner, this family remained quiet. It was quite evident, this brother, this son, was perfect.

I defy any other human being who has ever lived to pass such a test. Mother Teresa wondered every day if she even belonged to God. Billy Graham would tell you he must confess his sins, every day. Mohammed wasn't even sure he would go to heaven himself (he wouldn't), and he was quite sure he couldn't help anyone else. Gandhi never claimed anything but the quest for perfection on a never-ending spiral of Hinduistic reincarnation. But when we are dealing with Jesus the incredible thing is that even under the critical stare of his brothers and sisters, the people who lived and worked and suffered with him most, he emerges the perfect man. Not one of them could find even the slightest flaw in him.

Thus Jesus is set apart even by what others thought about him.

And this is entirely a good thing. In fact, it had to be. Without utter perfection, under the scrutiny of the *Law of Moses*, Jesus could not have died in payment for the sins of anyone, he would have been dealing with his own.

But Israel, not interested in the salvation of their own souls, and thinking themselves sort of above such things, given a pass as the *Chosen* people, wanted a king, and not a redeemer. Oh they understood they had sin, they just assumed God would overlook their sin and rescue them from Roman tyranny, which is what they really wanted.

But in the rejection of his redemption, Israel began her long “transgression” which will last until they discover that Jesus really is their *Messiah*. This is what drove them out of their land for the second captivity. Israel had missed *Yeshua* (Jesus), or rather she had deliberately refused his friendship; and so the great madness came.

The legions of Rome poured into Jerusalem under Titus, son of Emperor Vespasian, and the defense of Palestine was on. It didn't go well for Israel. A thousand Jews committed suicide at the mountain fortress of Masada, thousands more were deported, and many became galley slaves to the ends of the earth. As the prophets of Israel had warned, the land had vomited them up again, and a “sword” would follow wherever they went.

As the centuries passed, that sword hounded them. Pogroms and persecutions followed them everywhere and made their lives tenuous. And because they were driven, they circulated ever farther from any contact with their land, trying to find comfort and understanding among strangers. They percolated into every city and province of the ancient world.

And wherever they went they hoped and dreamed their imaginary military *Messiah* who would finally come to rescue them. After a while, most of them just stopped expecting him. Every year they would hold their *Seder* meal at *Passover* and set the table with one extra place for the great prophet Elijah who was expected to come as the forerunner before this military *Messiah*. But it was all for show. If Elijah really would have appeared as he actually will someday, people would have regarded him as a ghost, and fled for their lives. But in misery they covered their eyes from all the obvious clues found in their own Scriptures and insisted *Yeshua* could not have been the true *Messiah*.

And though at his death their great temple curtain, which covered the most holy part of the temple and by some accounts inches thick, had mysteriously split from the top down, at the very moment of his death, they never understood the connection. The New Testament, which they reviled and refused to read, reveals that Jesus really was God but veiled in humanity. When the veil of his human body was broken, the veil of the temple was symbolically torn, opening the way into heaven. Jesus even called himself the doorway, and indeed his death is the way, the way into

the most holy place—the *Holy of Holies*, the inner sanctum of the temple representing heaven, the throne room of the Almighty God.

After his death and resurrection, for the short time Israel still had the temple they couldn't keep the veil together anymore. They would sew it and darn it, and find it split again. It seemed to be telling them Jesus's death was a one-time thing for all men of all times, and there was no going back again. But the great temple veil with the rest of the temple, was burned by the invading armies of Rome, and Israel no longer has that object lesson facing them every day.

But because they kept hiding their eyes from him, they put up a new veil, deep inside their own hearts. And they remained blind to him. And they kept repeating the mantra, "Jesus is not for the Jews" hoping against hope they were right. Wanting another, more attuned to their own wishes, but no longer sure what those wishes really were. Jesus himself had warned them, they would be deceived "*if another should come in his own name,*"—and he told them—"*him you will receive.*"

*Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
...He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.
He is despised and rejected by men
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.*

***He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by his stripes we are healed.***

Isaiah 53:1–5 (NKJV)

Like all men everywhere, these Israelites had been concerned for what they wanted in the here and now. They wanted Jesus to become a king for their political ambitions and like Esau (the twin brother of Jacob, who sold

his Godly birthright), they were willing to trade their birthright in heaven for what they thought would be like heaven here below.

And because of their rejection of Christ Israel has lived before a great veil for a long time now. Through all the long years of her temple worship, where she always served outside the important part of the temple and was never allowed inside. The blood on her altar was only a symbol of that which truly could become the satisfaction for her sins. She needed the true Passover blood from the true *Lamb*, the blood over each doorway for each person in payment for her sins. But she rejected the *Messiah* and his Own Passover blood, the *Lamb* in his first appearance.

Only the *high priest* could go inside the most holy part of their temple, and then only once a year. And while the *high priest* was inside, the whole nation would wait outside with baited breath, wondering if God would accept their offering for yet another year.

The temple itself had various rooms all representing the life of the believer. The outer courts for the people, the *Holy Place* where the priests worked, just outside the heavy veil covering the inner sanctum called the *Holy of Holies*. And inside the veil there was the box called the *Ark of the Covenant* whose top was known as the mercy seat, guarded by angels, whose wings touched over it.

Because he was not yet covered in the blood himself, it was a dangerous proposition for the *high priest* to invade the *Holy of Holies* each year, to place the blood on the mercy seat between the angels on *Yom Kippur*, the *Day of Atonement*, and get back out of there again.

But even after the temple burned, and they no longer had the great veil of the temple, they were still spiritually blind. Now they were blinded by the veil they still carried inside their own heads. Israel still couldn't see Jesus's *Day of Atonement* blood placed between the real angels, in the *Holy of Holies* of his tomb.

What a picture God set before them.

The true *Holy of Holies* was actually a picture of Yeshua's tomb! On the morning of his resurrection, when the women had approached his sepulcher, there were the angels at foot and head, and the longed for blood of a "better high priest" between, just as had been modeled from antiquity by the *Holy of Holies* of the temple. Only the real death and sacrifice of Jesus could break through the veil into heaven, where they needed to be. But they closed it back up quickly, and cauterized it. By forcing every Jew to agree that *Yeshua* was only for the gentiles, to take Jesus was to cease being Jewish. And to this day Israel still holds that veil before her own

face and she is still in her transgression, and for the most part is still not willing to let *Yeshua* take that blinder away.

When I was first attracted to prophecy, and especially the *Book of Revelation*, I understood that the word *Apokalypse* (English Revelation) meant *unveiling*. But to whom? It is officially the *Unveiling of Jesus Christ*, but who needs to have Jesus unveiled? Well many human beings all over the earth, but especially Israel, the errant children of Abraham are the veiled. *Revelation* has been waiting over the years for them to discover, and many believe it will be soon. *Revelation* is more tied to the Old Testament than any other New Testament book. It is the Jew who carries a veil against Jesus, and needs to be unveiled. The whole purpose of the *Book of Revelation* is the unveiling of the Lord Jesus Christ, not to those who already have seen and know him, but to his self-blinded and deluded *chosen* Jewish brethren. *Revelation* is the *unveiling* of Christ to lost and wayward Israel.

So the Romans came, and the *Great Diaspora* had finally begun. It would last for at least 2000 years And while the people were missing, scattered everywhere, squatters would begin to settle in their empty land. But the land would become a curse to those who didn't belong. But in the meanwhile there was no home for the Jews, and the *wandering Jew* became a saying, as Israel could find no rest in all the world.

In the vision God gave to Abraham, Israel is attached to her land. It was part of the tripartite blessing of God; a land, a seed and a blessing. She is a people attached to a special land. She still is, even though little of it remains to her, and even to this present hour the world keeps trying to take this smallish land away again. What other nation has to buy peace with their own land? Most of the land promised to Abraham, he has never yet possessed. But the land will not thrive in others' hands. Today from earth orbit, the green outline of the Jewish national map can be plainly seen. It is strange to see the spiked shape of the modern state as though a map were actually drawn on the face of the ground itself. But there it is. From space; a green oasis set against the unremitting brown of the lands all around.

In antiquity, it was not so. In the days of the *Great Diaspora* the land grew forlorn. A land once described as that of "milk and honey" became rough and overgrown by thorns and deserts and even the muck of swamps, filled with poisonous reptiles and scorpions. Israel had become a foreboding land.

Samuel Clemens (*Mark Twain*) visited in 1867, and he certainly wasn't ~~very~~ impressed with it.

We traversed some miles of...a desolation ... here that not even imagination can grace... We pressed on. The further we went the...more rocky and bare, repulsive and dreary the landscape became...It is a...heartbroken land...Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies...And should it be otherwise? Can the Curse of the Deity beautify a land?

—*The Innocents Abroad Volume II, p.216-359 Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain)*

Once more the prophets of Israel had spoken, and they had spoken truth.

I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

Leviticus 26:32–33 (NKJV)

So Israel scattered, and the world responded with a sword. Pogroms in Europe, Russia and the Middle East seemed to move in waves. The Jews were even blamed for the plagues of Europe. Sometimes they seemed better able to survive because they practiced better hygiene, as prescribed for them in their Scriptures. The gentiles around them got the notion they were poisoning the wells.

Sometimes in Russia the Czar would persecute to get attention off his own financial problems, and sometimes the clergy throughout Europe would stir up trouble against the “Jewish heathen,” to shake them down for money. Houses were burned, people were killed, and all manner of mayhem occurred. There were thousands of these pogroms occurring from at least the times of the Crusades. Even during the terror of the Nazi Holocaust, when all eyes were on the Axis powers, Israel was being destroyed in Baghdad in ordinary pogroms.

Having borne such persecution, it is a miracle they still exist at all. And by all the experience of mankind, once they left the place of their home, they should have blended in to other tribes never to have been heard from again. Israel has survived, and part of the testimony for their God-

shaped pedigree is their persistence. They have been persecuted and shunned and left homeless far more than any other people, and yet they have this uncanny ability to persevere. It has never been so with others.

Where are the Etruscans? They were called the first Romans. If anyone should have had a presence, it would have been the Romans. But they abandoned the boot of Italy in their ships and vanished into the sea. And where are the people who built the ruins of Zimbabwe, in the middle of an African rainforest? The only knowledge we have of them are some lonely architectural ruins. Or whatever became of those on Easter Island? These islanders felt the need to carve giant heads and left them there as lonely relics. They literally lost their heads. They have all vanished like the wind. Not so Israel. And that alone is astonishing!

But as the years passed, and memory of the old kingdom faded, few really believed in the possibility of going back any longer. They would toast “next year in Jerusalem,” but few believed in it anymore. It was all a formality. And to all appearances God was doing nothing, and old Israel was finished. They would wander to the end of time. No wonder some Christians began to say God was “through with the Jew.”

For a time, God did seem to place the Jews on a “spiritual” shelf, apart from the main show of what he was up to: the gentile people being saved in the New Testament. God did seem to turn away his focus from his own Jewish brethren for a specified period, but it was all in the plan as Paul explains here in Romans chapter 11. Israel was set aside so that the *Church* (“the wild olive”) could be grafted into the “olive” Israel.

But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. ...if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches...the root supports you... and so all Israel will be saved...

Romans 11:13-15, 17, 26 (NASB)

But even as we have said, the long years of Israel’s eclipse and dispersion convinced many in Christ’s *Church* that God had given up on his chosen people altogether. Hadn’t Paul stated that the *Church* was

composed of Abraham's children by faith? Many had even convinced themselves that they had become the new Israel. God was never going to do anything further with the Jews. They had turned their backs on Jesus. In their minds God had returned the favor.

So some Christians, no longer satisfied with merely being grafted into the root—that root being Israel—actually believed all the promises coming to Israel now belonged to the predominantly gentile church. Such is the view called *replacement theology*. The *Church* is the new Israel, and the nation now known as Israel in Palestine means nothing. In fact such churches were unhappy to see Israel come back into being.

But in 1948 Israel suddenly and quite unexpectedly came storming back to life right in the face of their ecclesiastical collars. Even yet, some of them still refuse to believe Israel is Israel, and all of them expect the Arabs to throw these upstart Jews back into the sea. And unfortunately many would say, “Good riddance!” The Jews are stealing their thunder.

Meanwhile, and even during the *Church Age*, there has always been an *aliyah* (return) to the land. From as early as the Middle Ages and right up to this present, a few stalwart Jews slowly trickled back from every corner of planet earth into their historical land. Just a few here and there, but they began to congregate in what they reminded themselves was still the *promised land*.

Most came back with hearts filled with hope only to be shocked and disappointed by the terrible conditions they found when they arrived. They had been absent for so long and had built up such great expectations. But the land had been neglected. Instead of the land of milk and honey, they came back to the land of dust and no money. In fact the land they found had been neglected for centuries and reduced to the desolation Mark Twain saw on his trip in the 1860s. Regardless, the refugees just kept flowing in. As the twentieth century dawned, with darkness accumulating on the continent of Europe, more and more fled this growing darkness. Anti-Semitism was on the rise again. The return to Israel was almost premature.

Once in the Holy Land they began using donated money from wealthy Jews in America to buy up land. But it was dismal property. Most of it was land even the Arab squatters didn't want. And for a while all of Arabia thought they would make a killing selling foolish Jews the badlands of Palestine. They couldn't imagine anyone actually wanting to live in fetid swamps with mosquitoes as big as horse flies, mosquitoes carrying endemic malaria.

But the Jews began to organize into the communal kibbutz and others into the family-style moshav, and pressed deeper and deeper into inky, dangerous swamps. Olive groves and pasturelands began to emerge where flies and jackals had flourished.

But as Israel began to transform, the local Arab populations began to worry. The Jews were making headway, and the Jews were starting to accumulate. Jews were used to being segregated and persecuted in other places, but they hoped that they were away from all that in their new land. But it didn't take long for recriminations against Jewish emigrants to start, and they became ever more frequent.

The *Mufti* wasn't happy.

Several times, under the pressure of the *Grand Mufti*—the local Arab leader—the Arabs had already risen up and begun pogroms to destroy Jews and the Jewish land. In spite of the overwhelming Bible evidence God had given this land to them in ancient times, they had to buy it back, one square inch at a time, all over again. It was land no Arab had the fortitude to use for anything, but it still came at a premium price when a Jew made the offer. But ever so slowly eucalyptus trees and green pastures were emerging from black pools and blowing sands. As the malaria came under control, even the health of nearby Arab populations was improving.

But as the green increased, the pogroms grew in violence. For self protection these pioneering Jews began organizing into militias they called the *Haganah*, the army of the people. And the *Haganah* kept increasing, much to the frustration of the Grand Mufti and his thugs, until they had some twenty thousand young Jewish men and women under arms. Hard to keep secret, the existence of such armed resistance also infuriated the English who after WWI had the over arching responsibility for the area, and millions of Arabs, whom the English were trying to placate for their oil.

For a while, in a rather cavalier manner, the Jewish leadership would continue to deny this militia even existed-- but neither the British, nor the Mufti's men were dissuaded. They knew that Israel was building an army, and it was getting stronger every day.

A vicious anti-semite, the *Grand Mufti* of Jerusalem at the time was Amin al Husseini, who had previously garnered the duties of this position by intimidation and murder. Several other candidates had quickly abandoned their campaigns for Arab leadership in Jerusalem under somewhat interesting circumstances, some said to save their lives. Finally,

Amin Husseini had been deemed *Mufti* unopposed, and nobody dared run against him again.

Amin's rule was exerted by gangs of thugs on the streets of Jerusalem. But as it turned out this was only the beginning of Husseini's career of intimidation and murder. Oftentimes over the years he had taken the side of the British in the struggle over Palestine. But during the Second World War, the British had run him out of the mandate for causing trouble and acts which were on the side of the Axis powers.

Because of his hatred for the Jews, secretly the *Mufti* had been in alignment with Adolf Hitler all along. And after he left Jerusalem this sinister creature slithered west to Berlin, where for the rest of the Second World War he was entertained like royalty by the leader of the Axis powers himself. Becoming one of the dictator's inner henchmen he began broadcasting Nazi venom to the whole Arabic world. It is even said that much of the impetus for Hitler to write and release the document for the *Final Solution* demanding the death of all Jews came from his fevered mind.

But as we turn this searchlight on Husseini and the Arabs, no discussion of the return would be complete without looking at the origin of this people the Arabs, cousins to Israel itself, and especially their religion, which has so resisted the new state from its foundations.

As it turns out, the intense religion of Islam stems from a terrible mistake Abraham made. Abram, as he was then known, had been taken aside by God and shown the stars of heaven, where he had been promised a special son. A son through whom God was going to bless the whole world. (the seed and the blessing)

*And He took him outside and said; "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And he said to him, "So shall your descendants be."
... "I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."*

Genesis 15:5,7 (NASB)

This promised child would be the beginning of a new thing on the earth, a new people, the *Chosen*, through whom would come a Promise which would continue to grow until it would eventually bless every human being in every family of man. It was an amazing vision, and a wonderful one.

But some years passed, and Abraham's faith wavered waiting for God to send to him the promised child. Worse yet, Abraham and Sarah were getting very old, too old to have a son in the normal way, and still no *promised son* had come.

Panic began to set in between them. Apparently God needed some help to keep his promises. Finally Abraham's heartbroken wife Sarah concocted a plan. She would agree to let him go into young Hagar her maid, and this younger Egyptian woman would have a son to fulfill the promise. It was an early example of surrogate motherhood. But why they thought God would go for this plan seems incredible. It was bone headed to the bone, but that is exactly what they did.

Hagar readily conceived, and bore Ishmael. And the whole thing turned out pretty much as what one might expect of two women and one man. Abraham now had a son by the wrong woman, and no son by the other to whom God had promised one. Such is an absolute recipe for a man to bring havoc into his life. By putting two contentious women under one roof, especially when one is jealous and the other can't stop gloating, Abraham certainly demonstrated that he was not following God. We wonder if Abraham ever got a moment's peace between them.

And God wasn't pleased with this arrangement either. It could only be the promised Son through whom Abram's great seed would come. Though God did declare that Ishmael, Hagar's son, would also be blessed. Nations would also come out of him. Since God's word never fails, even when it is an unmitigated disaster, Abraham reaped what he had sown. Nations have come out of Ishmael, who is the father of the great tribes of the Arabs. There are millions of angry Arabs in the world today because of Abraham's foolishness, and every single one of them is still jealous of the Jews. Because, as God commanded, Sarah would still bear the child of the promise.

Hagar, the Egyptian mother of Arabia, was told that her son's seed would be a wild ass of a man, incapable of getting along even with his own people, and especially with the Jews. And how this prediction has played out in history; Arabs have been fighting among themselves and others for thousands of years. Much more blood has been shed by Arab against Arab than against the Jews, and they have never been able to get along with each other, and are still busy killing each other today.

But if that was where the story ended, it would have been bad enough, but some 500 years after Christ things really went into overdrive with the birth of a man out of Saudi Arabia called Mohammed.

Young Mohammed began to have visitations by what he first thought was a demon, deep in a cave. A being calling himself “Jabra’il” appeared claiming to be from Allah, a deity related to the moon. Mohammed was afraid this was a visitation of evil, but one of his younger wives convinced him the angel was not from the devil. She convinced him that he was being tapped out by god for greatness.

What followed after is a bit confusing, since there are several renditions; but we know Mohammed’s own tribe, the Quraysh of Medina, refused his wild-eyed prophecies of a new desert religion. Apparently in anger he turned on his own people and wiped them out to the last child, and from this bit of arcane Arabic history derives the religion some politicians call the religion of peace.

Moreover this new religion was supposed to supplant both Judaism and Christianity, according to the angel. But when the Christians and the Jews refused him Mohammed, and those who followed after him, began a “jihad,” or a holy war against everyone, of such stupendous magnitude that within two hundred years, it swept Islam into power over the Middle East.

Soon North Africa had fallen to Mohammed’s crazed marauders, and this religion even crossed over Gibraltar into Spain. And from there it very nearly took over all of Europe. If Charles Martel and a host of French knights had not met the Muslim Moors near Tours in 721 AD, all of Europe might have fallen to them, as well.

Over the years, it has been suggested that the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all were attempts by men to worship the same God. This is clearly not the case.

Such a view does no service to any of the three, and misrepresents them all. It is clear to those who have studied Allah, that whatever else he is, he is not the same as the God of Israel. Even the English word “God” is rejected by his devotees as being inadequate to describe him. The *Quran* (the religious book of Islam) does make some overture to Jesus (calling him Isa) as a prophet, but he is never the Son of God. For according to Islam, Allah has no son. Moreover, writings in Islam subsequent to the *Quran*, require the eventual death of all Jews and Christians. So Allah is not *Yahweh (Jehovah)*, nor is he *Yeshua (Jesus)*. And even if Christians and Jews tried to equate their Biblical God to this deity of the desert, Islamists would never allow it. Islamists never allow Allah to be in any way equated with others' gods. But Islamists do believe in peace. There will be peace when all the world is in the hands of Allah.

So having given such a background, we return to Abram.

Though Abraham had grown tired of waiting for him; eventually Isaac came in fulfillment of the promise to Israel. It took a wait of twenty-five years, but God finally gave Sarah a baby of her own. She named him Isaac, which means laughter, but the joke was on Sarah. When told that God was going to give her such a child in her old age, she had laughed in unbelief. But like so many of God's surprising works, her unbelief had changed into joy when the child finally came, and little Isaac was "Sarah's laughter."

Once there was Isaac, Ishmael would always be in the background.

Though the normal progression in the Middle East is from father to first born Ishmael, but because of Jehovah God, Isaac, born second, would be God's *Chosen* child, and from his "seed" would come Jacob and twelve tribes of Israel. But this was not very satisfactory to Ishmael. And because of what happened with Isaac and Ishmael, there has always resided between the two half brothers a huge question. And that question is still the issue of the Promise.

Who has been given the Promise - Isaac or Ishmael? In the minds of Arabia the Promise came to their forebear, Ishmael. He was the first born. Since Hagar and Sarah, this has remained a white hot issue, and has never gone away, despite four thousand years, and the efforts of the UN and modern man.

In the *Quran*, Ishmael is pictured as the *son of the Promise*, being offered up to God on *Mt. Moriah* by father Abraham, slightly different from the story as presented with Isaac in the Bible but near enough that secular men say the Bible and the *Quran* are nearly the same. And because of that, many argue that this shows the kinship between the *Quran* and the Bible. Some even argue that these two religions are really the same. Their books tell almost the same story. But this is an incredible misunderstanding.

This difference of Ishmael and Isaac, the chosen one of God on that altar, who is the child of the Promise, is the basis of open war between the half brothers, and their heirs. If Ishmael was really offered on *Moriah*, the *child of the promise* is Arab, and Jerusalem belongs to Arabia. But if the child of the promise is Isaac, then all belongs to Israel, and the Jews are the *Chosen* people.

Abraham is shown in each book offering up one of the two in what is believed to be the very place where someday the *Holy of Holies* of the

temple will be built. In the Quran the position of the promise is dishonestly given over to Ishmael, and it is Isaac who is the troublemaker and usurper. Abraham's sin is still being played out daily, in every encounter between these two.

The very existence of Israel and the Jew, is an affront to the claim of Ishmael and Islam, and most especially and acutely so with the return to Jerusalem by the Jews. Isaac the Jew must be removed to make room for Ishmael. The usurper has to get rid of the one to whom the promise was due. And after all these years, the Arabs still see the struggle as between Ishmael and Isaac, and they care very little for western solutions. No political solution exists. That is why American interference rarely accomplishes anything over there.

Like the Mufti preaching Jewish annihilation in Berlin, strict Islamists would not mind a return to a World-War-II-style extermination campaign. Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, though not an Arab but Islamic, has called for the vaporizing of every last Jew; and with an Iranian nuke, he and the Mullahs of Iran, are more than willing. In international polls, even so-called moderate Arabs find little fault in the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda, responsible for the deaths of 3000 Americans at the World Trade Center in New York. In the mind of the Islamist, America supports the usurper, so America too must die. Strict Islam cannot coexist with any other religion or philosophy.

As the Bible predicted, Ishmael is a wild ass of a man who cannot tolerate anything different from himself. Islam does stem from the Arabic word "salaam," or peace; but peace, as they see it, only occurs after the other side converts or is wiped out.

So it is by both history and religion, Islam despises Israel.

But there is nothing different or unusual about that, for so does everyone else on planet earth to one degree or another. And that too is a puzzle. Why should every people on the face of this earth hate Israel?

It can't be for jealousy over her abundant natural resources. Israel is blooming now, but the Arabs used to laugh about the stupid Jew buying up rocks and swamp land. There is little oil there, certainly not like in the Arab countries nearby, though that is not to say oil might not play a part in the future of the state. Vast gas reserves have been proven off the Mediterranean coast. Where we find large gas we almost always find large oil pools associated. And there is even an obscure prophecy over the tribe

of Asher, who occupies what is called the toe on the Mediterranean coast. “His toe would be dipped in oil,” and apparently the vast gas and oil plays coming on line may be off Asher’s Toe as it points into the sea.

But why should everyone hate the Jew? There can be only one answer. Israel really is different than the nations. God looks upon the gentiles divided up into what he calls nations as very different from his *chosen*.

The world hates Israel because the world hates God, and like it or not they represent him. Such is the very reason which drove Israel to finally seek out for herself a refuge from all the hatred of the world. After World War II it became a matter of survival.

The Second Exodus



The modern Exodus began years before 1948, and the modern state of Israel. Credit is given to a hapless Austrian Jew by the name of Theodor Herzl as the father of the nation. But Herzl never set out to be anything more than a French newspaper reporter.

Austrian born, not religious, and someone who bounced from career to career, he ended up becoming the inspiration for other Jews to join him on the path to *Zion* (the mountain of the Great King). But Herzl was a most reluctant visionary. He had little knowledge of the Bible and could see no difference in his people and others. He regarded the idea of the Jews being chosen by God as fantastic nonsense.

Overlooking Jewish history, he assumed Jews would be treated fairly in a modern European state, just like everyone else. He knew some law, and the law in honorable countries is blind. The law does not favor one class over another, one religion over another, or one people over another. In the law courts of Europe the Jew could expect to be equal to all other men. All of which may have been fairly naive for a member of a people who had already suffered so many indignities at the hands of so many other people.

Nevertheless Herzl was a man of integrity himself, and he believed that if you gave someone a fair shake, they would respond in kind. Thus he was happy to be part of European democracy, and European law. Embedded within such a culture, he supposed his people were safe from the bigotry and persecutions of the past. Then came a shocking scandal.

In civilized France—a country of supposed western-style freedom—Herzl, following the story as it unfolded, watched with increasing horror as an innocent Jewish man, a loyal French Army officer by the name of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, was unfairly charged and condemned for a treason everyone knew he hadn't committed. Dreyfus had served France with distinction for many years, but suddenly and without any proof of guilt, he was charged with spying for Germany and sent to the terror of Devil's Island. Thus began the so-called Dreyfus Affair.

In 1894, it became known to French authorities that military secrets had leaked out to the Germans, and an investigation was begun. Of course, the French were trying to discover the traitor in their midst. A handwritten note addressed to Major Max von Schwartzkoppen, with some French secret documents, had been uncovered, and the culprit's hand had a slight resemblance to that of Captain Dreyfus's. He was arrested and charged, but everyone agreed he had received summary treatment because he was a Jew.

Dreyfus protested his innocence, and most of the military believed him. But his chief enemy, a famous anti-Semite by the name of Édouard Drumont, published accusation after accusation in his news rag, *La Libre Parole*, and the poor captain was considered guilty even before trial.

There was no evidence, save that similar handwriting, and no motive was ever associated with him. But because of his Jewishness, and his natural military stoicism, Captain Dreyfus could not mount a strong defense. Proving a negative is always difficult, and because of his ethnicity, all Dreyfus had in his behalf was the testimony of his comrades-in-arms, men who knew him to be a loyal Frenchman.

But Drumont, and some other French anti-Semites, were obsessed with Dreyfus' death. Drumont went so far as to lead street demonstrations, which usually broke down into riots, demanding Dreyfus be executed. Without evidence to the contrary, Dreyfus was tried, convicted, and sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island.

Incarceration on Devil's Island, the penal island near French Guyana off South America, was considered a death sentence anyway. Men who arrived there were permanently chained and would remain so until they dropped from heat exhaustion and malaria. Those who died were often buried in their chains. Others trying to escape by the sea were eaten by sharks, and those attempting to hide in the forest fell into mantraps, where they were left to die by disease, hunger, and the natural dangers of the jungle.

While serving their sentences in the green hell, these frightful souls worked under the lash to clear land for farming, cutting down trees, and clearing swamps. Disease was rampant. Many simply dropped from the heat, the excruciating labor, and the sickness, every day.

So would have ended the tale of Alfred Dreyfus, in such obscurity and despair, had it not been for an honest member of the French Secret Service, one Georges Picquart, who had discovered the real culprit, another French officer of Hungarian royal descent. But this officer was of noble family, and was thus given special consideration.

In order not to create an international incident, the French High Command chose not to indict the man and left Dreyfus to suffer for the crime. Better to let the wrong man, a Jew, rot on Devil's Island, than to bring a nobleman before a French court.

So it was reported in the media, and Herzl was rightly appalled.

But instead of righting this terrible injustice, Picquart was also made into a scapegoat, demoted, and sent to the French colony in Tunisia to be shut up. Even from Tunisia he would not remain quiet, as the French government wanted. From overseas, he kept up his steady drumbeat of accusations toward the ruling class in France. Eventually, he too was arrested on trumped-up charges and sent to prison. And for the next ten tortured years the Dreyfus Affair split the country, while Dreyfus continued on the chain gang in that stinking island hell. Here was an innocent man, something privately admitted to by almost everyone, kept as a political prisoner to keep the high command of France from suffering embarrassment.

Then more crimes were discovered, crimes committed by Dreyfus' accusers, people involved in a conspiracy to forge more of Dreyfus' writing and frame him for even more nefarious crimes. Apparently Devil's Island wasn't enough. Some bigots still hoped to send him to his death. Some of these ended up in prison themselves, and eventually those in leadership were replaced.

Finally to his everlasting credit, Georges Clemenceau, the new French premier, acquitted Dreyfus fully, and reinstated him into the military. He was given the rank of major, and decorated with the Legion of Honor, but he died five years later from the terrible extremities he had suffered on the terrible island hell.

It was a total miscarriage of justice, perpetrated by human beings who were irrationally hateful of Jews, and Herzl had undergone a radical change. He decided the life of a Jew was not worth anything to all other people in the world. Proving Dreyfus innocent, speaking out, and even uncovering the real culprits had not provided exoneration. Jews were expendable, and could not depend on European courts for justice, as they all would soon discover.

There was to be no due process for millions of Jews headed to death camps in German boxcars. Herzl finally decided that in order to live the life of a Jew one must be separate. He and others of the Zionist movement had concluded that Jews would have to make their own destiny; a destiny away from the anti-Semites of the world, men like Édouard Drumont.

Not that world Jewry hated other people, it was quite the contrary; they were hated, and it was time to find a place of their own. They would have to acquire land and somehow get it declared a new country, no small task when there was no unclaimed place left on planet earth. A new country would have to be built and nurtured, but, where and how? That presented the dual problems of where to locate and how to make a nation out of the land you find. Not being religious, and realizing the determination of the Arabs not to yield up Jerusalem, he couldn't allow himself to dream of the traditional aliyah, a return to their promised land. But being a secular Jew, perhaps that didn't much matter to him anyway. He was not out to deliberately establish an Israel in the biblical homelands. Even if he had known much about the "Promise" God made to Abraham, it probably wouldn't have mattered much to him. He didn't believe in any of those "old Bible promises," anyway. Still, the biblical name *Zion* stuck to his movement, and this probably humored Herzl more than anyone. Being such a man of the world, it would have seemed the greatest irony that a religious title should come to him.

Nonetheless, he knew the so-called Promised Land had long before fallen into disuse. He'd been told it was loaded with stones and stumps, and had become almost impossible to make productive. He also understood that people in such a new Jewish country as he proposed, would have to subsist on what they could grow. They would not be given help from any other source or nation. They could depend on no one but themselves. And being a city Jew to whom the whole idea of agriculture was mysterious, the last place in the world he wanted to try to grow his own food was some place hard to farm.

Moreover most of these Zionists were city Jews like himself. They had little experience on the farm. They needed some place with rich soil and ease of plowing, a place with soil so fine it would be difficult to make a mess out of growing their own food. The challenges of Palestine simply scared them. Out loud he wondered who would ever want such a place as old Zion again.

So far as he knew, the land was ruined, full of snags and stumps and rocks, and without water where it was most needed. Not even the Arabs who had been squatting there for hundreds and hundreds of years wanted it. Everybody knew that.

So Herzl brought to the floor of the World Zionist Convention of 1905 a motion for a migration to almost anywhere else on earth, any place where Jews could be left alone. The American pilgrims had done it in America, and he was sure that the Zionists could do it too. He made no

reference to the Scripture, and in fact there is no evidence Herzl had any knowledge of the Scriptures he was helping to fulfill. He favored a place in the wilds of Uganda, or even in the rain forests of South America. He reasoned from a purely secular position, the children of Abraham could simply getaway from the rest of mankind, and vanish from memory. In his secular mind, it would be good to rid themselves of this chosen people nonsense, and the sooner the better. It was the chief cause of their troubles with the rest of the world.

Then World War I intervened, and the Jews fought in the trenches of Europe alongside their British comrades-at-arms. And in spite of all the good press that T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) captured for the Arabs, a far larger contingent of Jews actually fought in the war. Unknown and unheralded, there had been crack units composed completely of Jews, and many were decorated for their service to the British crown.

Even more important were their scientific contributions. At the beginning of the war, England found herself with a desperate shortage of rubber. In order to fight a modern mechanized war, England had to come up with a source for truck tires. Jewish scientist and statesman, Chaim Weizmann, a chemist of great international standing, produced a method for making acetone, which had hitherto escaped other efforts. This was significant, as it made the synthetic manufacture of rubber and munitions possible.

No longer were the allies dependent on rubber plantations, most of which seemed to have been in German hands. Weizmann produced rubber by a cheaper and quicker method. Truck tires rolled off the assembly line, and they certainly helped in the victory. For this, some in England still believe Weizmann singlehandedly had a role in winning the First Great War, known better in America as World War I.

Whether he did, or did not, England felt gratitude for his contribution; and in 1917, Lord Balfour—personal friend of Chaim Weizmann, representing a thankful England—wrote to Baron Rothschild to thank him for the Jewish contribution to the war effort. And in that letter, he penned a view that prevailed among the Conservatives in Parliament, the famous Balfour Declaration:

His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object

—Lord Balfour, 1917

The old *League of Nations*, progenitor organization to the *United Nations*, quickly followed up with a mandate for Britain to take charge of the Palestine portion of the Turkish Ottoman Empire, which had aligned itself with Germany, and her loss in the war. The League's intention, as contained in their resolution, was for the Brits to establish, with as little delay as possible, a homeland for the Jews in Palestine.

But the Arabs, led by the Grand Mufti, went berserk at such news out of Whitehall, and quickly responded with riots, the Mufti himself making a trip to London to speak several times in favor of a complete halt to Jewish immigration. He also demanded a stop to the accumulation of land into the hands of Zionists, even though they were buying up inferior pieces and doing so at extortionist prices.

Then the Conservatives in Parliament lost a British election. Progressive Liberals under Chamberlain took charge in London, and everything suddenly started to change. To the utter shock of the Jewish Yashiv (their word for community) in Palestine, in 1939 the British published the first of their infamous White papers. The Progressives aimed to limit immigration of the Jews into Palestine to a trickle.

The Mufti seemed to have won. The White papers, a series of declarations by the British government created by Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald, outlined the determination of the British Crown to abandon its previous inclination toward Israel, and to make Palestine into an Arab state.

Thus, the liberal government of Neville Chamberlain began the process of overturning the Balfour Declaration. And in hindsight this decision would be ranked among the most foolish ideas ever entertained by the British leadership. Eventually it made Great Britain appear as if it were in support of the Nazi holocaust, and according to the Word of God, it put a finger into the "eye" of God, his *Chosen* people. This is something Britain would rue for many years to come.

Britain had received this mandate from the *League* to create the new state for the Jews in 1922, but now it appeared to Jews worldwide that England had imperialist ideas of keeping the land for themselves or making it into an Arab client state. But even if Whitehall had no fear of God, which they apparently didn't, they had blundered badly from a purely political perspective.

In one fell blow they alienated most of the world; and from that point on, the great British Empire began to shrivel into what it has become today, only an echo of what it once was.

In the first of the White Papers, the very purpose of the mandate was denied, and the Progressives of London dishonestly made the claim Great Britain had never agreed to a partition of the Jewish homeland for the new nation. Worst of all, the total immigration of Jews into Palestine was to be limited to 75,000, after which all Jewish movement there would be halted forever. This was a measure thankfully never enforced due largely to the rise of the Second World War.

On top of all, the White paper of 1938 had the singularly bad timing of being published on the eve of *Kristallnacht* (The Night of Broken Glass) in Berlin. At the very moment when hundreds of Jews were being burned to death in synagogue fires in Germany, by Hitler's SA thugs, England had begun to tighten a knot which denied many Jews an escape into Palestine, and condemned many to die in the Nazi death camps. On that terrible night, Hitler rampaged throughout the German nation, destroying the shops and synagogues of thousands of Jews, revealing just who he was, while England was stopping Jews from escaping to a new home in Palestine.

The ensuing war with Hitler was largely fought by the democracies to save themselves, and the plight of the Jews was left as a side issue. The western democracies have tried to deny they knew much about the *Final Solution* to eliminate all Jews from Germany and Poland, and afterward they blustered about the terrible conditions in the camps and said that they had been too busy to do much more. But their protests were ingenuous.

Boatloads of Jewish refugees, turned loose on the high seas by the Nazis in inadequate leaking ships without documents, were turned away by Allied nations, including the United States, for lack of proper papers. In some cases these ships ran into heavy seas and sank with the loss of all hands. Hitler mocked the western democracies over such hypocrisies, telling the world nobody wanted these "vermin" Jews.

There actually had been a plan by the Allies to bomb German death camps into powder. But the plan was stopped under the excuse that innocent camp inmates might have been hurt or killed. One wonders at the logic of allowing a certain genocide of millions to continue over the loss of some few hundreds on the ground.

But after the War, and it had been disclosed what horrors were uncovered, England—to her ongoing shame, instead of trying to aid in the comfort of the Jews—continued to renounce their Balfour Declaration,

and stuck by her infamous White papers. The result of which, reduced Jewish immigration into Palestine to a trickle, even after hostilities ended.

During the war, Palestinian Jews who had learned how to fight the Mufti as youths with their Haganah and Palmach units became some of the best shock troops of the British Empire. Whole platoons of Jews performed daring escapades against the German forces, some of which may never be known. These were the warriors of David, come back to life in the 20th century.

General Rommel, often called the Desert Fox, was creating havoc against the British in North Africa by the swift maneuver of his tanks across the desert pan, and the Allied command felt he had to be stopped. Jewish forces, ironically acting under British command, were given the job of breaking his Afrika Corps, and liberating the countries of North Africa. As it turned out, many Jews who had escaped from Europe ahead of the holocaust spoke German like natives. In one well-known operation which broke the back of the Afrika Corps, these German Jews were dressed in Nazi uniforms, and sent in to the garrison of Tobruk.

They came in as guards escorting trucks filled with men posing as English POWs. Because of the quality of their German, the trucks sailed through unhindered. Of course, they all would have been shot as spies had they been suspected and caught, but their job was to get in as a Trojan horse; destroy and not necessarily get out again. Their ruse worked, and during the night they blew up the greater share of the German tanks, tons of ammo and fuel, and returned Rommel to Europe where they met him again on D-day. In such ways Israel fought bravely on the side of the Allies during the whole course of the war, and some of the most highly decorated members of the British Army were from Jewish Palestine.

When D-day, and Operation Overlord, finally came, the Jews, hardened by battle, had been among the first wave onto the beaches at “Sword” and “Gold,” digging in and gaining a foothold, under the withering machine guns of the Third Reich. Israel fought, and thousands of Jews lost their lives in battle, while the vaunted Arab Foreign Legion, so decorated in World War I, never placed one soldier into actual combat on the side of the Allies during the whole of World War II.

No, but in the background, back home in Palestine, they did prey on unprotected Jewish settlements, after the Jews declared statehood in May of 1948. Three towns near the Gaza were slaughtered to the last child by this vaunted Arab League, and some renegade British officers along for the ride. Of course, it was claimed by the politicians that they could not

control the local Arab populations, determined to rob, rape, and pillage the Jews. But it was no deep secret that the Arab war machine, aided by England, committed terrible things after Jewish independence.

The British Foreign Office was still enamored with Arabia, and Lawrence was still larger than life to them in spite of the fact that the Arabs generally lined up with the Axis powers throughout the Second Great War.

London had begun to do what they could to appease the Arabs. Oil was now the issue. A modern state ran on petroleum, and England was on the side of the Arab because the Arab had the oil. Even though the Grand Mufti had been in Berlin during the war as Hitler's personal guest speaking out for the Nazis, England sided with the local Arabs and against Israel during most of the war.

But it was a poor policy. The twilight of the British Empire came as England, to the horror of the average British citizen, seemed doomed to follow in lock step with the Germans. And they continued to do so as they set up their own concentration camps on Cyprus to receive Jewish refugees. They ended up incarcerating thousands of Jews trying desperately to get to their ancestral home in Palestine. Many even bore the Nazi tattoos, the ugly evidence of time served in Buchenwald or Auschwitz, or one of the other Nazi death camps.

In fairness, these British refugee camps on Cyprus, though crowded and Spartan for life, were not Auschwitz. Bedding and medical care was humane and the food while not spectacular, was fairly good. But these camps did have barbed wire perimeters, and there were armed guards in the towers, and they were set up for detention. People being held in these camps were not free to come and go.

No wonder many in England began to ask what the war had been about after all. In the end, England learned the hard way that a nation cannot touch Israel, and long remain untouched themselves. The glory of a nation does not long stand against the crushing stone which is hurled from the throne of God. That "crushing stone" is Christ.

*And it will come about in that day that I will make
Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift
will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth
will be gathered against it. Zechariah 12:3 (NASB)*

The Nazi holocaust, in terms of numbers and methods, was the

worst of all the terrible things which have happened to Israel over the years. Hitler was responsible for the death of some six million Jews, and millions of others, in battles fought all over the world. But the vast majority were Jews who were systematically executed by the millions, using the techniques of mass extermination, many in a gas created to kill insects. And even some sixty years later the crimes of National Socialism still make the head and the heart sick. How anyone could have treated anyone else with such cruel inhumanity is still very troubling. How they could have made it public policy, atrocity systematically committed daily, by accountants and managers, should make us all aware of how easily such things can become strangely accepted. When evil is done with ciphers and charts, rather than guns and razors, it becomes almost ordinary behavior. When it is covered by what has the appearance of law, it becomes respectable. Many of the guards at Auschwitz had been average ordinary people; church members, policemen, and those who deliver milk.

But the Jews, even little children with their mothers, were hauled away in train cars, like cattle going to the slaughterhouse. It was all evidence of a demonic madness taking hold of a nation. And much of it was under cover, using euphemisms to keep reality away. People worked in factories of death run like ordinary worksites. They would bring their lunch pails. It was all so behind board and sanitized.

But even in the depths of the holocaust, God was never taken by surprise. Even in the most hideous of the death camps, the ironies and coincidences of this incredible people called Israel, continued on.

God had his people even in Auschwitz. The little Dutch woman Corrie ten Boom with her family, taken prisoner for hiding Jews in their home, discovered how God could even use the filth of Ravensbruck to see many come to know their Savior. As Corrie and her sister Betsy discovered, in that lice-infested hole, reading out loud to the other inmates from a copy of the Bible God in his providence had provided, could say, "No matter how deep the darkness, God is deeper still."

With the holocaust, tragedy enveloped Europe on many fronts. Millions of Jews lost their lives.

But with all we have said, we cannot mince words. Israel had rejected the Son of God, and his death on the cross. They did not understand the price he paid for them, nor the price they would pay in the aftermath of their rejection. And because of this rejection, the eyes of their hearts had been veiled. As Jesus warned, "having eyes, they still do not see, and having ears, they still cannot hear."

Why? Because Israel wanted a powerful leader. They were not interested in the One who came to save them, and most of them simply cannot see Jesus even yet. They still mistakenly call him the “gentile *Messiah*.” So to be clear, nobody is so evil as to justify the atrocity called the holocaust, which came as a result, but we must attribute it where it belongs, to the sinful heart of man.

And another thing, many Jews still miss is the truth that most gentiles are not Christians. To be a Jew is to accept the religion of Judaism, at some level because it has an ethnicity with it, but that does not follow with Christianity, at least not real Christianity. All gentiles are not Christians. Hitler was not a Christian. Hitler simply heaped scorn on men like the protestant pastors who opposed him saying they sweated like pigs. It is an old cliché, but going into a church does not make you a Christian any more than going into a garage makes you a car.

Even the very religious who call themselves Christians, often misunderstand, and miss the whole thing. And certainly the monsters of the Third Reich, had rejected Christ altogether. To Himmler’s heel-clicking SS, Christ was merely a weak Jew. Jesus was actually disgusting to these jack-booted, pride-laden copies of Satan. The Nazis wanted nothing to do with the meek, suffering *Messiah* of the Hebrews. Their gods were “Berserkers,” Viking warriors of Asgard, casting spells in bloody oaths, as practiced in the ancient myths of the Aryans, the warrior men of India.

Hitler’s Gestapo and SS thugs followed what the New Testament calls “doctrines of demons” and were always more lost than Israel ever was. The Nazi’s, especially those of the SS and Gestapo, made bloody oaths to Hitler and to the devil, and they rejected the Bible.

The Jews have always had the Scriptures of the Old Testament, though they have not always understood and obeyed them. So Israel is still under her discipline, leading to eternal life, while the Nazis thankfully are no more.

But Israel’s discipline is not a topic for any gentile to be glibly pointing fingers about. The very fact that humankind was so evil as to pin the Son of God to a cross, is a fact of history, and there is plenty of blame to go around. But the good news is that Jesus isn’t looking for blame casting. He is looking for honest confession.

When I take responsibility, when I am willingly covered by the gore of his death, only then I am humbled by my own sin, my own responsibility. I helped to kill the *Messiah* with my sin! I ask his forgiveness, and I am

saved. In admitting my part in his death, I admit my part in shedding his blood. My confession allows him to apply that blood over my life. And when I do his death becomes the propitiation, the sufficient payment, and the offended Father God is satisfied.

On the cross Jesus declared “It is finished” (John 19: 30). And the sin which separated mankind from God was finished. Every sin from Adam was now covered by his sacrifice.

Over the centuries, a few misguided so-called “Christians” have called Jews “Christ Killers ” and other equally rude and hurtful things. But this has never been right. All men must have a covering for sin, all men. So the simple fact is that we all were “Christ Killers.”

I killed the Son of God with my sin and so did you. The *Lamb* was innocent, and I was guilty. And yet he accepted the punishment for all my sins as John the Baptist clearly stated he would. And those were Roman nails which pierced his hands, and a Roman lash which cut his flesh, and it was a Roman cross on which he died. So who are the Christ Killers, really? The Jews or the Romans? Both! All of us! Every last one of us. And it is long overdue that both Jews and Gentiles own up together to their individual responsibilities, for this man lifted up on the cross was the *Passover Lamb of God*.

You see, real Christians have a natural love for those who brought forth the Scriptures, and the people of whom their Savior was born. His star over Bethlehem was David’s star, and it is this star which leads everyone who loves *Messiah*. It led the magi who followed it with great awe knowing the Great King had been born. It led them to the city of David, to Bethlehem. Bethlehem’s star, David’s Star, is the Jesus star. He was born under that star in David’s city, and he will rule forever under that six pointed star, from *Mount Zion*.

And in that six-pointed star Christians find their Savior. And in that six-pointed star Jews find their King. And in one of the greatest ironies of all time, it was that same star the Nazis pinned to everyone they intended to kill. What honor it was to die under that star then, and now.

But what happened then? Is there some innate evil in being German? In fact Germany was the most cultured, the most educated, perhaps the best nation on the face of the earth. But Germany, like all of humanity, was composed of fallen sinful men. And they forgot. Given the right circumstances we would all fall in the same way.

Young men and women, full of youthful ambition and good intention, turned out to help their country, as youth has done since time began.

Usually this is a good thing. But Germany set about to exploit the enthusiasm and the energy of her youth, and ruthlessly twisted it to evil ends. Hitler, who had bought into the myths of the pagans, and his thugs, turned much of a generation of German youth into Aryan monsters.

One such youthful officer, SS Colonel Adolph Eichmann, an especially promising young leader, was given responsibility to open the biggest, fastest, and most hideous death camp ever. Covering many square miles, it was a marvel of German technology, and it killed more human beings than any other prison camp in history. Germany needed an efficient machine. There were just too many Jews for killing, and in Eichmann and Auschwitz it got what it wanted.

Eichmann himself was a quisling, capable of tender fatherhood, and in the next breath, cold-blooded genocide. It hardly seems possible to regular people that they could become Nazi monsters. But it is inside of all of us without Christ. Many simply did what they were told, and committed murder in the ordinary course of their jobs. Somehow they could close off that part of their lives, do the unthinkable, and go home to wives and children.

In family photos, Eichmann is pictured holding his own tiny babies and singing Christmas carols in his home on Christmas Eve 1942. Then later in the evening, after tucking his children into bed, we know he drove to nearby Birkenau, and with a shrug, flipped switches killing mothers holding theirs. And he seemed quite capable of doing so without the slightest sense of remorse, or even seeing the irony of singing “Silent Night” just hours before releasing the killing gas.

Only a few miles from his home at Birkenau, in the gas chamber units, they were running people through at full capacity. While Nazis were in their warm homes singing Christmas carols, thousands died on that Christmas in 1942. It was just another shift at the plant. Millions eventually died there, with their “soap bar” of stone in one hand while showers of Zyklon B gas poured in on them.

Macabre to the point of astonishment, the lines outside the chambers shuffled efficiently along, while a full orchestra of Jewish musicians, some of them world famous for their mastery played what came to be known as the “Death Waltz” outside. Guards and victims apparently escaped the enormity by simply keeping the lines tight, and the people moving. Inside, the screams could curdle blood, outside guards were almost kind. And the music continued playing to hide the screams.

But it wasn't like it was a big secret. Even in the lines, many knew what was happening. Perhaps they were too shocked by the silent horror of standing in line to die. For who could think such a thing could happen?

Perhaps they were in simple denial, and most acted almost nonchalant. They just waited their turn, hardly speaking. Most of them knew full well what was going on, but they kept the delousing shower fiction to stay sane, and to avoid embarrassing their guards. And every fifteen minutes, the line moved forward.

During the summer, lush flowers grew along the walls outside. They say it was all a bit inconvenient for the people of Poland. The sky turned black and stank of roasting human flesh.

But against German tanks the Poles were mostly powerless, like the rest of humanity. But they endured this sickeningly sweet obscenity throughout the Second World War, and most just got used to it. The Orwellian shuffle, the billowing remains of what were people, the death march to keep them moving, it had a deathly rhythm. Mothers, sons, daughters, grandparents, fathers, everyone, being killed with impunity; where trees and flowers grew in flourishes of color. It is a shame such ever blighted the face of the ground God made, but it was inevitable from the fall.

And the horror didn't end with their shrieks and cries.

Sonderkommandos (Jewish inmates who cleaned out the gas chambers) would enter with hooks and ropes to pry the dead apart, and drag them off to the ovens. Zyclon B made the eyes of the dead bulge out and turned their purple faces into masks of hideous pain. It was not a quick death, though sadly it was a certain one, this death by insecticide.

The gas would dissipate, ropes were fastened, hooks went in, and more bodies were dragged away to the incinerators. One-way windows provided the SS with good viewing, and there was always a group there to watch. Many of the sonderkommandos quickly lost their minds, and not a few of the guards ended up stuffed into their own ovens.

But though they do not yet know it, even in their suffering, God has never been far away from his *Chosen* people. He has never left them for a single day. And one evidence of this is the Ninth of Av.

In the Hebrew it is Tish B'Av, and the Jews hate this day. Israel's greatest trials are often tied to this date known as Tish B'Av, the ninth day of their fifth month, called Av. This usually hits gentile calendars around the 1st of August.

The Ninth of Av is filled with strange curses and even stranger coincidences. As we have said, in the eyes of God Israel is not actually a

nation in the ordinary sense of the word at all. And the “Ninth” is another such example of this peculiarity. God works with this people for his own purposes and to fulfill his promises.

Herzl’s Zionism began the process. He restored some desire in Jews to find a place to be a nation, but he didn’t get very far. All his plans were interrupted by two very disruptive and destructive World Wars. Millions of Jews were dead, and the Zionist movement had been too little and too late to save world Jewry. But this is the way men think, and God is not limited to our smallish thoughts. For as it turns out there is a great irony embedded in all that came out of WWII, demonstrating again God’s providence and God’s wisdom.

The Zionists never had a chance to go to Uganda.

It may come as a very big surprise, but the modern Exodus of the late 1940s connects the holocaust to the first time Israel was sent back into her land, during the Exodus with Moses out of Egypt. It all deals with what the Book of Hebrews calls the deep “provocation” of God. Israel once provoked God.

*Do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me...
Indeed did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?
And to whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with
those who sinned...to whom did He swear that they should
not enter his rest*

Hebrews 3:15–19 (NASB)

Incredible as it sounds, both temples (the Temple of Solomon, and the Temple Herod remodeled) burned to the ground on this very same day, Tish B’Av, half a millennia apart! The destruction of Solomon’s Temple happened on Tish B’Av in 586 BC, and Herod’s also, burned on Tish B’Av in 70 AD. And if we were not dealing with Israel, where coincidence is commonplace, this adherence to the same date exactly 656 years later would be on television as one of those late night mysteries, along with the mumblings of Nostradamus, and the secret passages inside the pyramids.

Bad things happen to Israel as a reminder of their grave provocation against God at a place called Kadesh Barnea where they did not go in and possess the land of Canaan. This was the land God had promised to

Abraham and sent Moses, their deliverer, to find. Tish B'Av has been used by God to remind them ever since.

The destruction of the Second Temple (Herod's) in 70 AD was terrible; the stench of burning human bodies was like that at Auschwitz itself. As reported by the great Jewish historian Josephus, in the long siege by the Roman army against Jerusalem the people began eating weeds, and leather belts. Eventually they were reduced to consuming their own filth. Roman Legionnaires even encountered some few who had cooked their own children, a crime so heinous, even battle-hardened warriors pulled back in horror.

Titus, the Roman general, had given explicit order not to burn the Jerusalem Temple; but in spite of all his effort to save it, the great building caught fire. Before very long it was burned to the ground on Tish B'Av, just as Jesus had predicted, thirty-eight years prior.

Years later, adding insult to injury, the Emperor Hadrian built a pagan temple to Jupiter on the now empty temple platform, over all the rubble of Herod's temple, on Tish B'Av 136 AD. And this thing stood as a shrine against God for nearly 400 years, much in the way Islam's "Dome of the Rock" now occupies the same place of aggravation. Over the years, many other disasters, pogroms and calamities also happened on this bleak day of all days.

And then came the Nazis. And for some reason, the actual date of the signing of Hitler's *Final Solution*, the document which called for the genocide of Israel, remains in controversy. At the Nuremberg Trial (where the Allies prosecuted German war crimes) a letter from Reich Chancellor Goering to the head of the Gestapo, Heydrich giving him the actual order to instigate and pursue this most hideous of all practices, took place on July 31, 1941, just the day prior to Tish B'Av, in that year.

So most historians tell us it missed the day of the "curse" by one day. Now that does not seem like such a huge error, one day, but God is never approximate. So these say that the *Final Solution* did not get published on Tish B'Av, but they would be wrong.

The Ninth of Av did actually fall on the next day, August 1 that year, according to all gentile calendars. However most forget that the Jewish day begins at sundown. The official letter was signed and delivered on the evening of what we call July 31, which for Israel is already part of the next day!

So whether Goering knew or didn't care, he signed the order for the *Final Solution* at the beginning of Tish B'Av, 1941, and the curse of the provocation continued on in the most hateful way ever. The Nazi High

Command signed the most hellish document ever, calling for the extermination of Israel, on Tish B'Av in 1941.

And one year later, on Tish B'Av again, as it turns out, the gas chambers at Birkenau (Auschwitz) were given their trial run by loading them with the last resistance of the Warsaw ghetto and these were the first gassed with Zyclon B.

But how did it start? How did Israel end up with a day devoted to God's wrath? And does this day really connect to the present and to the most horrible events in the history of Israel, and probably all mankind?

Tish B'Av begins back on the first anniversary of this black day in late summer, during the original Exodus with Moses. Their own decision not to obey God began the first time they tried to enter their Promised Land. For over 400 years the people had been in Egypt, at least 200 of those years "dancing" in the mud pits, making bricks for Pharaoh's cities; and the deliverer was certainly slow in coming.

But in the "fullness of times," as the Bible puts it, Moses did arrive, and after God convinced Pharaoh with many strong arguments, we call the plagues of Egypt, Pharaoh finally let the people go. And they came out and marched by the millions out onto the desert floor, heading straight for the Red Sea, which is not exactly the right direction. Of course the Egyptians thought the God of Moses was very foolish, leading his people into a trap against the sea.

But in what would be regarded by Pharaoh as a trap, God had intended to show himself mighty in their hour of need. So after a few days travel, in which Israel came up against the Red Sea, Pharaoh had changed his mind and had come charging after with his great chariots ready to make the sand red with the crushed bodies of Israel. And so out of what seemed a certain slaughter of millions, backed up against an ocean on one side, and an army on the other, came great deliverance. God had opened the way through the sea. And God had closed the sea over the bodies of Egypt.

God had delivered through wonders. But that was only the beginning of the protection Israel received as she marched through many desert kingdoms with a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of smoke by day. The Jews should have been in awe of their spectacular deity.

Over and over they had watched as God delivered them from their enemies. But for some reason at Kadesh Barnea, at the very doorway to the Promised Land, they hesitated. Instead of going in and accepting the land, they sent in spies. And because of their fear God allowed them.

Incredibly, they were more afraid of the giant people in the land than the gargantuan God, who had parted the waters of the sea.

So after forty days of poking and peeking the spies returned with fruit the like of which nobody had seen since the Garden of Eden. It took two men to carry a bunch of grapes. Joshua and Caleb were excited, ready to go in and sack the rest of the land. But the people had suddenly filled with fear, and grown men were crying. They said they were as grasshoppers before the men of the land. A people who traveled around with a pillar of fire thought they were only “grasshoppers” before the men of the land. No wonder God was insulted.

Caleb quieted the people before Moses, and said ‘We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it.’ But the men who had gone up with him said, ‘We are not able to go up against the people, for they are too strong for us.’ ... all the people we saw in it are men of great size...Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried”

Numbers 13:30–32 and 14:1 (NASB)

In spite of Caleb and Joshua, grown men wept in cowardice, and God wasn’t happy. Heedless of the pleading of Joshua and Caleb they refused to go into the land, and that was a direct disobedience to God.

The Children of Israel wept without cause, [and]G-d declared that He would make that day a day for weeping. ‘You wept in vain. I will establish this date for you as a time of real weeping for all generations.

—Tanis 29a: Mishap Commentary

The Tanis Commentary above is not Scripture, but it is from the ancient writings of the Jews. This was the “provocation” Paul warns about in Hebrews. God very nearly destroyed them for what they had left undone.

Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle meeting...Then the Lord said to Moses: “How long these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence disinherit them.

Numbers 14: 10–12 (NKJV)

God did not “disinherit” Israel, but he would never forget the provocation at Kadesh Barnea. The whole of the *Chosen*, save Joshua and Caleb, had acted like Esau who chose his own comfort and safety over the Promises of God. And God would remember, for a very long time:

*The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness...
but...[will visit] iniquity of the fathers on the children
Numbers 13:18,20 NASB)*

This happened at that first Tish B’Av. God forgave, but Israel suffered the consequences of their act, and so did their children’s children. All the old timers who disobeyed wandered in dry places until they withered and died. They never knew abundance the rest of their lives, and they died in the desolation of the desert. They had gone out from Egypt, but they had never gone in to the land. They never would.

In 70 AD, Israel pulled back again. Instead of trusting in their powerful Messiah, after he arose from the dead, they turned their backs on him. And once more they endured terrible consequences, learning to suffer among the nations in the dispersion.

But amazingly, with the terror of the holocaust, Moses’ sword following them more than ever before, the curse seemed to climax and then in the most unexpected way it was reversed. In fact God had suddenly used the stick that had been spanking Israel for two thousand years to finally send them back.

God always turns evil around for good. There is no better example than the cross itself. The cross of Christ was the most terrible crime mankind had ever committed, and yet God has used it for more good than any other event in the history of this world. Terrible as this may sound to the ears of most Jews, it was time for God to send them home; and they were most reluctant to go. They had grown comfortable in the midst of the tombs of the nations. They would say, “Next year in Jerusalem” but it was meant only as a toast. Many had enjoyed the pleasures of New York and other great cities for generations. They were still trading the promises of God for a full stomach with Esau.

But because of the Holocaust, a new spirit had erupted in the heart of Israel, a spirit like that of ancient Joshua and Caleb’s. After the war, the youth of Israel lined up to board fragile old scows, many of which had

been barges from the Great Lakes, and even worn out ferry boats, to join the *Armada of Zion* going home.

Had Herzl lived to see it, he would have been amazed.

With the horrors of the camps still fresh on their minds, Nazi runes still tattooed into their bodies, they began their migration back to the Land with a vengeance that would have surprised Caleb. They had no place else to go. Their homes were destroyed, their families decimated. Many would never find what was left of their families again. Their former life had been destroyed, and they had nothing left to lose.

In the days of Moses, God had simply waited on death for the last of the older Jews, those who broke the promise God made to Abraham and would not face the hardships of going inside the land.

The extremities of the Nazi camps, in like manner, had taken out most of an older generation, a generation which had only toyed with the idea of going back to Israel. Now a generation arose which had nothing left in the world to go back to. They wanted no part of a world that had treated them in this way.

The vast majority of all who survived the war were youth. A whole generation had vanished inside Poland and left their children to face a new world. So not unlike the days of Moses, it was the youth who were left to tackle the trials of Zion. They had lost all faith in the democracies of Europe, and had little faith even in the God of Israel; but they would stick together as Jews, and they would choose to go to their traditional home in Palestine on their own.

And this time Israel would not fade back. A new breed had come of age. And the holocaust had given these Jews a grim sense of purpose. Tish B'Av had poured molten steel into their veins. Europeans no longer, these were all like Sabra Jews (Jews of the deserts of Palestine).

On Tish B'Av, the people had originally stayed out, craven in their fears. On Tish B'Av, they lost their two Temples and had many other terrible things happen to them over the years of wandering. But now in the last great irony of Tish B'Av they would "man up" on the rebound from the *Final Solution* and fulfill the requirement to go into the land without question. After more than 2000 years of wandering they would finally enter the "land" and make it their own. The dithering was over, the return was on. So began the modern *aliyah* in earnest.

Like the Israelites of old, it was the young who were being pulled home by God. They came in the thousands from every refugee camp in

Europe. Rather than destroying Herzl's Zionist impulses, the Second World War opened the gates of *Zion*. And there was a new energy, and the energy continued to build. To go home, to be a nation, to cross whatever "Jordans" they encountered, and to face whatever giants were in the land.

Two thousand years of disappointment, and the death camps of Adolf Hitler, had toughened their resolve, and they were ready.

They were going back to the land God gave to Abraham or die in the attempt. And just as all the Old Testament prophets had predicted, they began to filter in from every corner of the planet. The "Four Winds" were starting to blow, sending the children of Israel home. First at a trickle, and then the dam seemed to break, and thousands were going home.

Once it began, no power on earth could stop them. The English tried. Their vaunted CID, their military intelligence, fought the *aliyah* with everything known to man. But not even imperial England, at the top of its international power, nor all the Arabs in the world, could put a dent in the flow. An invisible hand was carrying them along, and there is no power on earth that could oppose that power.

Some Jews returned with darker faces and European last names. After 2000 years, some mixed marriages had obviously occurred. But from all over the world though they had taken on some new genes, these were still Jews in custom and character. And when they arrived in the land without jobs and without homes, they kissed the ground and joyfully accepted the hardships. A new world had opened. Through persecution, death, and sorrow, they had emerged, as from their "graves."

Once they had been driven off their land in fear. Once they had failed to go in. But they were home again, and the prophets told them this would be the last time. No power on earth would ever again dislodge them from the land God gave to Abraham.

*I will bring back the captives of My people Israel;
They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them;
They shall plant vineyards and drink wine from them;
They shall also make gardens and eat fruit from them.
I will plant them in their land, And no longer shall they
be pulled up From the land I have given them," Says the
Lord your God.*

Amos 9:14–15 (NKJV)

From the destruction and banishment of Jerusalem by the Romans, to the humiliation of the Islamic Caliphate, to the "Star Chamber" of the Spanish Inquisition, to the pogroms and murders of the Russians, Czarist

and Communist, to the cold-blooded slaughter by the Third Reich, they had seen it all, but they were going home, never to leave their land again!

Soon, Europe was full of Jews waiting to go to Palestine by any means they could find. Some of them actually walked. The British in a panic, still tried to limit immigration to less than twenty thousand, and even that trickle was under withering pressure by the Mufti and his murderous men. But the *Haganah* crept into Europe to take charge of the movement, and all over the continent and even in America, broken down old steamers were being retrofitted by mysterious new buyers. It was enough to keep Great Britain's CID men pulling their hair out at night. And their frustration grew with the day. The Americans were helping these Jews as were Cypriots. Even the newly liberated Vichy French. All had a joyful hand in their return. All seemed obsessed to see these displaced Jews restored to the land of their ancestry.

So without registry, and without papers, the Mediterranean Sea filled with a flotilla of old ships of many kinds. They renamed them *Exodus*, *The Star of David*, and *The Hope of Zion* and there was no doubt they were on their way to the Promised Land. The modern Exodus was underway and woe to the British, or anyone else, who got in their way.

As in the hopeless days of the Nazis themselves, when they set many Jews onto the seas to starve or be scuttled, Israel was once again under sail without a real country save the dream of *Zion*. But far from the hopelessness of those former ghost ships, these were under their own flag and filled with indomitable hope. God was saying once more to Pharaoh, to Germany, to Arabia, and now to England, Let my people go!

For the British did try to fight this flow though it was like fighting the wind. And while it was certain God would eventually see them home to Israel, many of these freedom ships were diverted to Cyprus and their occupants placed into detention there. So instead of getting to their new home right away, many of these Jews ended up in yet another camp. An English camp, with barbed wire, and machine guns on the walls.

For Whitehall did not dare to cross swords with the old Nazi collaborator himself, the *Grand Mufti* of Jerusalem. So English picket boats set up a perimeter to blockade the coast of Palestine. At the point of a gun they boarded these old lumbering lake barges, as they entered Palestinian waters, quickly taking them over. Far from welcoming such refugees from Hitler's ovens in the tradition of English fair play and decency, they were taking the occupants of these freedom steamers back to their concentration camps on Cyprus.

None the less, right in the face of the nations, ancient prophecies were being fulfilled. The British camps formed on Cyprus, but the Jews continued to come. And what was this leaf in the wind, this Great Britain, against that? Until WWI, the sun never set on the British Empire; but after they threw the Jew overboard, and denied they ever meant the Balfour Declaration, they were never the same Empire again.

Up, Zion! Escape “He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye.

Zechariah 2:7,8 (NKJV)

I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around...I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against It.

Zechariah 12:2,3 (NASB)

With the organization of the UN in 1945, old business left over from the League of Nations, was the first thing they began delving into. Among them was a resolution of 1922 creating the British Mandate in Palestine. The stated intention had been the creation of a national homeland for the Jews. When the Conservatives had been in power in England this had been moving towards quick solution. But with the publication of her Whitepapers, Britain had demonstrated a decided determination to stay in control, even turning the whole area into a client Arab state. The UN set about to resolve the logjam.

So while hopeful, the prospects for a Jewish victory looked grim. There were only some fifty members of the UN at that time, and many were under the direct authority of the Stalinist Soviet Union, decidedly against Israel as a free nation. The Jewish community was in favor of a “partition” of area to be set aside for the formation of new Jewish state, the rest of the mandate to become the nation of Jordan.

The communist world was all against partition, as were the Arab states, and much of South America and Britain. As members of the Commonwealth, Australia and Canada were expected to join with England.

So when late in November of 1947, the vote for partition was undertaken, it looked like the Islamists had the thing in hand. But once again the “coincidences” of Hebrew prophecy become amazing.

*I am the Lord, that is My name
Behold, the former things have come to pass,
And new things I declare;
Before they spring forth I tell you of them.
Isaiah 42:8–9 (NKJV)*

Israel was not supposed to win this vote according to all the news analysis of that day. Most of the world under the influence of England, Arabia, and the Communists, should have brought Israel to her knees. The delegate from the Philippines declared his country's determination to vote no, but under pressure from US President Harry Truman the delegate was recalled, and the nation subsequently changed votes to a yes. And Truman, who was totally committed to Israel, was on the phone with most of the leadership of South and Central America, and most of them went toward partition.

For the first time ever, Canada and Australia broke ranks with their Commonwealth directives, and even the Stalinist Soviets decided to surprise everyone and support little Israel. Scandinavia largely voted for partition, and America to nobody's surprise, was first in line to vote for little Israel.

*As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons,
Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery,
says the Lord.
Isaiah 66:8 (NASB)*

Israel travailed like a woman in labor through the blood and the horror of the Third Reich, and through the threats and terror of the Arabs. But like a woman who labors through the night, when the morning comes, and the baby arrives, all the horror of the night is gone. So the new nation was being birthed, and it amazed the whole world. And even though the Jew had returned to the land of his *Messiah* in great darkness and unbelief he had triggered the great sign on the earth that *Jesus Messiah* was soon to come. The great sign was emerging right before the eyes of the whole earth. And who would have thought after all that had happened, the new nation could be born in a day. The ancient prophets of Israel; that's who.

*Can a land be born in a day? Can a nation be brought forth
all at once? ...Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her,
all you who love her"*

Isaiah 66:8–10 (NASB)

To the utter astonishment of Muslims and skeptics alike, and in literally a day, the old British Mandate from World War I was partitioned, creating the new nation of Israel. Politically how quickly it all passed from the despair of the Birkenau ovens to the hora danced in the streets of Jerusalem. War would come and quickly to outnumbered and indefensible Israel. But she had been born. Against all odds she had been born again from the dead, a resurrection second only to Christ's own.

Israel is a land built by God, and thus the prophecies and so-called coincidences are to be expected. Even so they verge on the astonishing. But what we next consider is so amazing, it is controversial even among many who otherwise agree with most of what we have written. Biblical scholar Grant Jeffrey seems to have been the first to note an incredible fact regarding the day of modern Israel's birth. Some of us believe he discovered something awesome, something so beyond the pale of incredible that many just will not accept it. If it were not associated with this miracle "nation" of Israel, nobody would accept it.

Prophets were known to do peculiar things to make their point, but in chapter 4 of the book of Ezekiel the prophet is told by God to do something very odd indeed. There Ezekiel is told to lay on his left side for 390 days for the iniquity of Israel and forty days more on his right side, for the iniquity of Judah. This is all very well, except that usually when the Holy Spirit tells a prophet to do something, it is a symbol of something far greater. When time is involved, the Spirit of God is asking the prophet to make known some timed event.

Ezekiel was to stay put on his side, and even cook his food; from that position—the shorter period for Judah on one side, and the longer period for Samaria, the northern kingdom, on the other. We have all heard of publicity stunts where the local DJ will sit in a tree for some weeks to promote a car sales outlet. Well this was literally a publicity stunt, organized by God.

People must have come up to the prophet inquiring, and it would have given Ezekiel excuse to preach. Like most preachers, he was probably looking for such an excuse.

But before we attempt to explain this strange activity, one must understand how the nation was constituted. Israel was composed of twelve tribes. Each tribe was named after the son of Jacob who was the patriarch of that tribe. Each was a great grandson of Abraham. When the time came

for Jacob, the father of all twelve, to die, he placed his hands on each son and blessed them with a prophecy, just as his father had done for him.

Over his son Judah he pronounced the royal line, from whose ranks *Messiah* must come. Time passed, and David, who was of Judah, was made the great king of the twelve tribes, just as Jacob had prescribed. David ruled well, and his son Solomon followed him.

Unfortunately, near the end of his life Solomon had become a tyrant, forgetting the warnings of the Lord against having foreign wives which would take him in wrong directions. He went into pagan temples and allowed himself to be led away from Jehovah, to lift up his hands to Baal and Molech and all sorts of pagan idols. As his love of worldly things increased, he became more selfish, and less interested in his people, and his God.

So after the death of Solomon, a division arose in the nation. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, attempted to follow him as king, and quickly a controversy developed. A leader of the north, Jeroboam, of the tribe of Joseph, decided his people had suffered enough of the tyrannical rule of Solomon and the rightful kings of Judah. It was one thing to serve Solomon the wise, but Jeroboam was not going to put up with this new upstart who had every potential of becoming more of a tyrant than his father ever had been.

So Jeroboam rebelled, made himself a competing king over the northern tribes, and ten tribes followed his revolt and made Jeroboam king. They called the northern region Israel, and the south became Judah. Only Benjamin in the south followed Judah, and the rightful king.

The northern kingdom, because it was already operating without God's approval, went into sin immediately setting up golden calves, like the golden calf of Aaron, in copies of the temple in Jerusalem, so that Jeroboam is remembered as the man who caused Israel to sin. But Judah was not far behind, as they too went far from God.

Even so, in the northern kingdom, Israel's sin was far deeper, and of a nature more directly against God than Judah's. Thus God gave Ezekiel 390 days to lie on one side for wicked Israel, and only forty days for the lesser crimes of Judah.

As we have seen Moses had warned all Israel not to go away from God. When they did, he promised the land itself would spit them out. But they didn't listen, and so they were headed for exile the first time. Israel would go into Assyria, and Judah into Babylon. In 721 BC, the vile and violent nation of Assyria attacked the northern kingdom of Israel, taking thousands away into captivity.

But Judah, in its turn, was also conquered by Babylon in 606 BC, and somewhat later, the first temple was burned to the ground by the Babylonian conquerors, on Tish B'Av in 586 BC, some twenty years after the original conquest. Thousands, including Daniel, the man for whom the book of Daniel is named, were carried into Babylon to serve the Babylonians in captivity for seventy years.

During Israel's captivity time in Babylon, the Babylonians themselves fell to the Persians, and Daniel and the Jewish captives were handed over with all the rest of the spoils. But in evidence of the grandeur of God's great prophecy, Cyrus, the Persian king who would conquer Babylon and send the Jews home, was named by name through Isaiah. But when this prophecy was stated, Cyrus would not even be born for 200 more years!

It is I who says of Cyrus, He is My shepherd! And He will perform all My desire. And he declares of Jerusalem, 'She will be built!' And of the temple, 'Your foundations will be laid.'

Isaiah 44:28 (NASB)

And just as Isaiah had said, it was Cyrus of Persia who sent Israel home to rebuild her temple in 536 BC, seventy years after her deportation, just as the prophets predicted.

For thus says the Lord, 'When seventy years have Been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.'

Jeremiah 29:10 (NASB)

But that is not the end of the story. It does, however, set the stage for the next, and most explosive act. Remember those 430 days (390 for Israel and 40 for Judah) during which Ezekiel lay on his sides? As Jeffrey noted, very often a day represents a year, in prophet speak, and the Jewish prophetic year was exactly 360 days. Grant Jeffrey postulated that God had already deducted the seventy years spent in Babylon as part of the time of discipline, so that the remaining years of captivity would be down to 360 years. Three hundred sixty years of remaining discipline for both kingdoms. (Each year also being a 360, 360 days.)

But here then is the problem.

Israel never had a 360 year period of captivity, nor did Judah. In fact, looking through the entire history of Israel and Judah there is no place with a 360 year interval anywhere. Bible scholars have studied Ezekiel for centuries and have come up empty handed. Ezekiel chapter 4 has been read over and over through the ages, puzzling everyone. It seems like something important the way it is featured in the prophecy, so it has been examined again and again. But it has remained enigmatic.

Many scholars have simply chosen to ignore this problem as one of those troubling “small points” nobody could quite figure out. It is still thought of this way in the minds of the vast majority of prophecy scholars today. God will explain it someday; and it certainly means something, but nobody knows what. Then another verse by Moses suddenly stood out from the page, at least it did for Grant Jeffrey.

then, you act with hostility against Me and are unwilling to obey Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times

Leviticus 26:21 (NASB)

God told the people if they failed to listen to his instruction, after a first period of discipline, they would incur seven times the penalty. And when they went into captivity in Babylon, they did not listen well enough to see with “eyes that see” when *Messiah* came their way some 500 years later.

And here is where the controversy comes into play.

Since the re-combined and returned from Babylon captivity of Israel deliberately rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah in AD 32, the remaining 360 years of judgment would be multiplied seven times for their next round of exile. (see Leviticus above) Seven times 360 yielded 2520 years. Jeffrey, looking at this data, decided that the Israel/Judah complex would be under the judgment of Almighty God for 2520 more years. But can we show this to have actually happened?

When we multiply this number of years by 360 days (the length of their prophetic year in days) you get exactly 907,200 days. Using this series of logic statements, 907,200 days of punishment exile should be left, after deducting the seventy years already served in Babylon.

The first captivity ended in 536 BC, according to Josephus, in the middle of the month called Nisan, which occurs in the spring of the year, usually in our month of May. So when you add all these days to the days

of the original captivity, starting from May 15, 536 BC, something startling emerges.

We end up exactly at May 14, 1948—the very day that modern Israel ran up the Star of David for the very first time! Out of hundreds of thousands of days possible, it is right on the day, and we are amazed. The very first day of the modern state—could that possibly have been predicted by Ezekiel laying on his side in ancient Persia? Did God tell them the exact day their Great Diaspora would end?

As we have stated, due to the manipulations involved, these numbers of Grant Jeffrey's have caused much controversy, and it has its detractors. But we are sure God is capable of doing exactly what Grant Jeffrey has shown. And for that reason alone, it is very interesting. What makes it doubly interesting are the parallels between the two events: the return from Babylon, and the return from the Diaspora. And because we have already seen God do such detailed wonders, through these fabulous prophets of Israel, we assume the captivity was supposed to end on May 14, 1948, the exact day the modern nation was born. Now I can't think of anything so incredible in all the experience of mankind as this? Can you?

The first captivity ended when Israel returned from Babylon, the second when Israel returned from all the world. And we have come to the prophetic end of the second captivity on the very day modern Israel raised the Star of David over the land God gave to Abraham. Truly nothing is impossible for God.

Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God:

"Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves.

Ezekiel 37:4,12-13 (NKJV)

One thing is absolutely certain, carved out of nations that hate her to this moment, and outnumbered by millions, Israel's Star of David is fluttering in the breeze over the Knesset in Jerusalem.

Theodor Herzl had been wrong. The Jew could not go off by himself and fade away. He could not find some corner in the wide world to hide in. Instead, until the end of time, he will stay out in front of the eyes of the world, the ever-present testimony to God's own existence. Israel cannot

vanish even if she would want to, and even in the midst of such genocide as Hitler committed, she is surrounded by the presence of God.

For God says he has connected the survival of Israel to the stars and the moon and the sun itself. If the sun can be destroyed, and if the stars can be cast from outer space, only then can Israel be wiped out as God's testimony upon the face of the earth. I sincerely believe, that if man ever destroys the Jews, he will destroy the universe, and he will destroy himself.

*the Lord...who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed
of the moon...by night. If this fixed order departs from
before Me...then the offspring of Israel shall also cease
Jeremiah 31:35-38 (NASB)*

The "star" has appeared again. It is not a star over a manger as it was before, but it is still over Bethlehem, and over Jerusalem, and over all the earth. This is the same star, though on a flag, the banner of the modern state of Israel. It is the banner of the Great King, now in plain sight. Like any knight, he has set up his pavilion with his colors flying over the peak. His coming into the lists of war, cannot be far behind.

Shall Know My Name



After partition by the UN, there had been dancing in the streets in Tel Aviv. The original boundaries of the Jewish state, as cut down again and again by the United Nations prior to partition, were nearly indefensible, but they belonged to Israel. That alone was enough to make them dance the hora until the dawn came up.

But ominously, even as the celebrations began, news outlets worldwide reported the Grand Mufti, Husseini, still threatening a stillbirth for the new Jewish state. Once the Brits and their stiff dedication to order pulled out, he promised, all the surrounding Arab nations in the world would move in with thousands of crack troops and make short work of the pathetic little Jewish state. Without exception, the Arab nations declared jihad (holy war) against tiny Israel.

They would throw these upstarts, and their Jewish prophets, into the sea. They even had press releases made up ahead of their onslaught, to be run in papers everywhere, as they plowed over the new nation. It was a foregone conclusion.

They would quickly level every Jewish town in their way. As in the days of Sanballat and Tobiah, who had mocked and threatened Nehemiah, when Israel returned from its first captivity in Babylon, "If even a fox should press on that wall, it will fail," they all laughed. But the Jews had worked with one hand on the trowel, and one on the sword, and the walls of the nation had risen. It was no different in 1948. Israel prepared for war, even as they ran their new flag up the pole.

News sources worldwide said it was remarkable the Jews ever reached a majority in the UN. The Arabs had so many already committed. But soon the Jewish state would have to fight a serious war with few arms, and repulse enemies with trained divisions, and even air forces. The odds makers in Vegas gave them no chance.

The English, angry with the whole world, had pulled out from a well-established fort system in Palestine, leaving their small arms to their friends, the Arabs. Some of the most anti-Semitic of the English officers

had even taken commissions with the Arab League in order to punish these upstart Jews. And of course, many Jews, dragging themselves back from every corner of the world, were just dog tired of the struggle. Huge numbers were still in a state of shock, as was the world, reeling from Hitler's genocide.

The world could hardly believe such savagery was still possible. The Jews had lost their homes, and their families, and they just wanted to go to Jewish farms and raise oranges. But their ancient prophets had said, when fighting for their land even weak Jews would all become like David, and like David they became. The Mufti already in country with several armies of irregulars, mostly Nazi thugs, moved about, causing trouble right up to the very moment of partition. Several kibbutz were singled out for slaughter because they were filled with children, or the aged, or very religious Hasidic who they believed would never fight.

The story of the war of 1948 is fascinating and worth an entire volume, but it is not in the scope of this work, and would require at least another book. In a nutshell, a people, the outflow of the ghettos and camps, along with many born as sabras in Palestine, resisted armies some fifty times their number. It was yet another miracle of a miracle-working God. Many involved had waited for *Messiah* for a long time, and they hoped again for their military *Messiah* to help against Arabs trying to destroy their young nation. But he didn't come. It seemed to many of them by this time that *Messiah* would never come.

Most of the middle eastern born sabras had become humanistic, and like other secularists had long since given up on God's very existence. Perhaps the God of Abraham had died sometime in the past, perhaps he had never lived. They could read their Bibles and the stirring history of their ancient people, but there was no "milk and honey" just lying about on the ground, and all they saw about themselves everywhere were deserts, and rocks, and a desolation they would now have to forge into a home. There seemed to be no supernatural help from above, either. They now owned a small slice of the land promised to Abraham, but the land was in ruins. Only the tiny parcels they had bought from the Arabs and tirelessly worked for years were productive. But it was now clear that Jews and Arabs together had to become a nation. Electric grids, water, and roads were only a few of their challenges. And only the young sabras (the native-born Jews) were really ready and able to build the country. Most wanted no part of their cultural history, let alone the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They had all heard the stories since they were born. They

knew well the story of how God parted the Red Sea, but many wondered why he hadn't parted Auschwitz and Treblinka.

And most of Israel was still in the hands of those who at best mistrusted, and at worst hated, their new Jewish leaders. It was only a matter of time before new wars would break out. In 1967, and again in 1973, wars did come back to haunt these determined people. But in both cases, when things appeared desperate, an unseen hand seemed to open the way. Perhaps something supernatural was going on after all. But after the world war, and the Nazi ovens they felt anything but chosen.

Few of them knew that nearly three thousand years before, God had already given a vision to Ezekiel on this very subject. The prophet was taken out to a very dry and desolate place. And in this desolate place, probably the desert near the Dead Sea, the prophet is shown a field of dry bones. These, he is told, are the dead bones of the house of Israel, scattered throughout their symbolic graves in the nations.

But as Ezekiel watches, the bones begin to rattle, and in a most frightening scenario they fly together, and assemble. And then they stand up. Imagine being Ezekiel, alone in the desert, facing an army of skeletons walking. It sounds like a horror movie, but they are there, and so is Ezekiel. They are a whole people of skeletons. And then the Lord speaks to Ezekiel:

*these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say,
'Our bones are dried up, and our hope has perished. We
are completely cut off!'*

*Therefore prophesy, and say to them
'Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I will open your
graves and cause you to come up out of your graves... and
I will bring you into the land of Israel.'*

Ezekiel 37:11–12 (NASB)

Ezekiel saw his people, as God sees these people. All over the world, in the “tombs” of the nations. They appear to be living and going through the motions, but really they are dead and dry spiritually. But God wants Israel to know this will not remain so forever. One day all Israel will come out of the nations, and they will live again.

But even when they return to the land, they will remain dry and like skeletons walking. This is how they have returned to their land, like

walking skeletons. They will have come out of the graves of the nations, but the graves will not yet have come out of them.

These are Jews who have struggled so long, and seen so much tragedy. What faith they have, a faith based on the laws of Moses, has left them sterile and without hope, and many had lost their faith in the God of Israel altogether. And most have become convinced that all their “Bible stuff ” is just so much ancient superstition. Some of them know ancient prophecy has come to pass, even with their return to Palestine, but most are convinced their survival is based upon hard work, good planning, and good fighting.

To this moment, many in Israel are sure God has nothing to do with this modern state. “God” to these people is a fairy tale. In their own minds, they have become “hardheaded realists” who believe all power ultimately comes out of the barrel of a gun, the very words of atheist, communist Mao Tse-tung. Most are determined to protect themselves against anyone trying to chase them away again. They are a desperate, and a deadly serious people. But as Ezekiel predicted, they would return dried up to the bone.

The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me Out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst Of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry. And He said to me, “Son of man, can these bones live?”
Ezekiel 37:1–3 (NKJV)

Though skeptics, they are still Jewish. And even such skeptical Jews quickly took Hebrew names for the sake of their new nation. As secularist Herzl became identified with a return to *Zion*, men like David Ben Gurion, first prime minister and others with him who were not known to be particularly religious, took on Hebrew names. They called them sabra names. Those with the sabra names were now the free men of the new Israel.

The sabra is a desert fruit which has a tough exterior and can hold in water against the desert heat. But inside of the sabra, one finds a juicy sweet pulp. Like the sabra, the Jew raised in Israel has a tough exterior, but his heart is sweet. Still the sabra is not interested in Bible tradition, except as it proves ownership of the land. They will not submit to outdated

laws, even Jewish laws. They would be Jews, and proud of that fact, but they would not hide in the ghetto, or even the synagogue, ever again.

So as Ezekiel was warned, the Jews have returned. They are hardheaded men and women of the world. And this bothers some visiting Christians, who already know what these young Israelis need. And they have never seen such hardness against Christ.

But it won't last. The Lord patiently will allow his children to get far from him, and then suddenly just like wandering toddlers on a leash, they will all be yanked back. Then to the secularist's consternation, God will quickly reintroduce himself again.

Secularists never reckon on God's real existence. So when the Lord God Almighty does show, as he always does, he always astonishes them. As God promised Ezekiel, one day the sinews would come upon these dry bones of the desert, and then the breath of the Holy Spirit would come into such dead bones walking. Some say it is hard to remain a skeptic when you live in Israel, and the Bible is all around. But it is the living God, and not the Bible lands, which will return Israel to her *Messiah*.

But yes, Israel will soon return. Return to the God of her fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But it will not happen as Christians generally expect. Because too often, Christians mistake religion for truth. Many would like to see a strong form of Judaism take over in Israel. But that would not do at all. Jews do not need to go back to traditional law keeping, as in the case of the Pharisees of old. The Pharisees only acted out their faith, to gain the attention of men. Such faith as that would only make Jews into pretenders, whitewashed tombs for these dead men's bones. They will never become followers of the way through their old retreaded legalistic zeal. If that didn't work for Paul, it will not work for anyone now.

To be filled with the Spirit, they will need the "One Name." The One Name, which is the only way of salvation, the name of Jesus Christ, *Yeshua Hamashia* (Jesus the Messiah), and that day might be closer than anyone now imagines:

Come from the four winds O breath and breathe on these slain that they may come to life. '...I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land...And they will be My people, and I will be their God.'

Ezekiel 37: 9-10 & 23b (NASB)

God is not through with the Jew, though some Christians have tried to say so. It would be God against himself, against his own plan, to reject Israel.

But today Israel is still dejected. Her Temple Mount is still in the hands of Islam, and she seems to have lost hold on God. She can't even connect to her amazing miracle-laden past, save by showing them round to Christian tourists, and telling these visitors of past glories she relates to no longer. But we say on the authority of their prophets, lookout. God is not through with the Jew, and the best is yet to come. For King Jesus will reign over all the earth and the littlest of nations, Israel under his power, will become the greatest.

Messiah is returning with healing in his wings, and your best days, O Israel, are still coming. The city of the great king is not mythology, and the day of the Great King is yet coming. Eternity has not been spoiled by something men did, and God has not forgotten his promises. Israel will live again, and the latter house will be much greater than the former.

Just as when she was pinned between the sea and the army of Pharaoh, at the moment of Israel's direst need, when death is on the doorstep, the true *Messiah* will suddenly stand, and Israel will see his glory at the last possible moment, just as when she passed through the sea. And it will be then, during this new deliverance, with their backs against the wall, that the breath of the Holy Spirit will finally come in, and the life of Christ will give sinew, skin, and even breath to the dead "skeletons" walking.

One day soon the King of Kings will come, and he will rule from the throne of David. And his mountain will rise and become the tallest of the mountains, and his land will increase from the Great Sea to the Rivers of Iran, The King will reign, and he will reign forever.

*And it will come about in the last days That the mountain
the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the
mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will
into it. And many nations will come and say, Come
and let us to up to the mountain of the Lord... And to
the house of the God of Jacob... and they will hammer their
swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, And never again
will they train for war.*

Micah 4:1-2,3 (NASB)

The Israel promised from the beginning will finally become reality, and that reality is not far away. Someday soon, as much as the peoples of the earth have hated her, they will love the *Chosen* people. And the redemption of the nation of Israel will prove the redemption of planet earth.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King.

Psalms 48: 1–2 (KJB)

This is their destiny. But the question remains; what is it that will bring them to life in Christ? I think the answer to this question has been overlooked by most expositors and Bible students for many years.

Most expositors read Ezekiel 38 and 39, and they believe that a great battle is coming near the beginning of the final seven year period called the *Tribulation*, that terrible period of human history to which man has been plummeting since he fell. Most call this battle the Battle of *Gog and Magog*, and some understand that this is probably the terrifying spectre of World War III, but they have little idea why it is fought or why the Lord should drag Magog down to threaten Israel. It is just one more interesting aspect of prophecy, to most of them. But many never stop to ask... why?

Even now clouds are gathering for what history will call the Third World War. A new axis of evil: the major players of the Middle East allied with the North Koreans, Turkey, Iran, and an aggressive and armed Russia, are joining together. And the Bible indicates that God is dragging Magog, the “bear” down from his den in the far north for his own purposes.

But what are those purposes? I am quite certain they are similar to God’s purposes for Israel when she was locked between Pharaoh and the deep blue sea. Remember God drove Moses toward the Red Sea to demonstrate himself before the people, that they might trust in him. He is doing it again.

God wants to save his people, and to do so he must place her into danger. When faced with the almost infinite power of the “bear,” a war which tiny little Israel cannot hope to win, she will turn again to her Savior the very one she denied at his first coming. At the point of a nuke, she must decide to trust God. But how? She does not know his name. She does not know that *Yeshua* she has rejected has been protecting her through all the long ages and returned her to her land.

Somehow, in the day she is faced with Magog, as Ezekiel says, “*they will know his name.*”

So what does the Lord use to drag Magog down?

Perhaps the Lord will use the developing wars of the Middle East to put the hooks into Magog and pull him down. Russia might enter into various battles under the cover of being a peace keeping force, but Russia is an opportunist and when she sees weakness, she takes over and occupies.

The tinder box called the Middle East gets worse by the day. Along with explosive Iran, Syria and Iraq, factions of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Hezbollah, and Al Qaeda are busy fomenting wars themselves, and attracting the Russian attention.

Turkey especially, is angry. It has been a land which was pro-Israel, even part of NATO, and has been trying to join the European Union for years. But due to old animosities, Europe has locked Turkey out. She has been rejected again and again from entry into the EU. She has tried to look west, but the west has rebuffed, so Turkey is following a new suitor—Iran into an axis led by Russia, and the touch of fanatical Shiite Islam with closer ties to Moscow.

They are gathering together into a new coalition of hatred against the modern state of Israel. Iran promises to vaporize its Jewish neighbor with new toys, its’ nuclear weapons courtesy of North Korea and China.

Even more disconcerting, Iran is ever more fanatical, and is looking for what we call it’s *anti-messiah*, the sinister figure known as the 12th Imam. This person, perhaps a purely mythological figure, but believed on with ferocity by the Iranians, is a hero to all of Shiite Islam the Islamic subculture within Iran. This mystery leader, who is also known as the *Imam Mahdi*, is expected to emerge anytime with the power of nuclear weapons to enforce his bid to take over the region, and perhaps the world. Iranian *Shiite* Muslims expect this being to wield the power of the atom, to destroy Israel and her protector America.

But what makes this aspect of the situation so terrifying is the fanaticism of the leaders of Iran, who are convinced they can unleash the nuclear genie and not only survive, but conquer all that oppose Allah. Without so much as a blush, they actually announce that this *Mahdi* has been alive and living in some cave since the seventh century. Moreover

he is about to emerge and change the whole power structure of the Middle Eastern world.

But regardless of how long he has actually lived, or if such a person ever emerges at all, he is predicted by these Shiites to rise up in a time of unrest, and bring war upon the earth for seven years. During the course of these wars they believe he will destroy Israel and conquer the world for Islam.

Neither Turkey, nor even nuclear Iran, is much of a threat to the highly-skilled, nuclear-armed military personnel of the Israeli Defense Force. They feel totally competent to take on both Turkey and even a Mahdi-crazed-nuclear neighbor like Iran. But they will fear Gog of the Magog when he comes.

The Russian Bear:

Seated in the subdued light of a situation room, deep underground, eyes nervously hovering over every screen and dial with growing anxiety, the men and women of the IDF watch their flickering blue and flashing yellow screens. There is no conversation, just a growing sense of tenseness etching the garish blue glow on ashen faces.

The elephant in the room is Russia.

One hundred feet beneath the Mount of Olives, lurid electronic lights seemed to be playing tag on banks of computers. In the gloom, the little points of yellow appear like red-hot beads around glowing panels of blue. Now their operators lean forward catching every nuance they can ring from their electronics.

Such are the men and women of the strategic rocket forces. Old-white-haired veterans of every war since 1948, the gold on their collars speaking of many campaigns, whispering orders to younger smarter IT guys and gals sitting before banks of consoles as data comes in from an American AWAC's flying low over the hills of the Ukraine.

In the garish shades of the room, all eyes are riveted upon Russia's dark outline in the northern sector of the big panel across the front. They would see the attack there first. In the background, a Hebrew commentator on ordinary TV is trying to get the latest from the Mullah's spokesmen who now control Tehran. They have again declared their intention to destroy Israel, just as the great oil platforms off Joppa have started to come on line. Every officer in the room knows if Russia joins this escalating threat, Israel is over.

Tiny Israel cannot hope to fight the Russian bear. No David is strong enough for that Goliath. And then, dismay registers on every face in that gloomy cavern. Without warning, their screens start filling with incoming bogies from the steppes of the Urals. The general in the back of the room hisses out an epithet. How could these Russians be so stupid? And he swears bitterly under his breath.

A flashing light over the main screen suddenly announces what every person in that room of shadows and flickering lights already knows. There has been a launch. And all the brave men and women in rocket forces begin to know fear for the first time in their young military lives.

The general in the back throws out his enormous rolled Cubana. He had been sucking on the thing for long enough, and it had drooped to pathetic. A brilliant young tech beside him whispers what he already knows. These bogies are moving too fast and too high for jet aircraft. By his reckoning most are ICBM's with some atmospheric cruise missiles in the bunch. She speaks into his ear from her perch at his side, but he hears as through a long hall. She tells him the tracking computer is already indicating preliminary target as eastern Mediterranean. He knows the target is Israel.

From Moshe Dayan, who stated clearly that the next big war would be with Russia, Israel had dreaded this attack. On the television over them, broadcasting in English, the crew now hears air raid sirens starting to go off in downtown Jerusalem.

What fools, he thought. The population of Tel Aviv was being urged to move slowly toward their assigned bomb shelters, only there aren't enough. He swore again under his breath at the shortsightedness of liberals who just could not get it through their fat heads that war was inevitable. Peace, peace and there is no peace. He smiled grimly as he tugged at another giant cigar in the humidor on his work station.

Looking at the finely rolled monster from Cuba, he decided there were a few perks for generals still and wondered where that asinine thought had come from. At the same time, he also decided he missed that one-eyed old pirate Dayan, he would be good at a time like this.

In the back of his head, television commentators were instructing about the civil defense, as they were taught to do. It was a major undertaking to issue so many gas masks and Geiger counters. Word had already gotten out. Every bunker in the nation must prepare for WMDs and even the nuclear eventuality. The nuclear "eventuality" he smiled grimly. Everyone would need to be inside a ventilated code red cover; but, thanks to the liberals, especially Tobia, the so-called peoples man of the Knesset, there just weren't enough for everyone.

Well it was doomsday anyway, he sort of half-acknowledged to himself through the puffs on his exotic cigar, he was still trying to get going. It was the day Israelis have been dreading since 1948. As smoke curled around his nose, he was blowing out the match, and his adjutant had begun mildly coughing; to get him to turn on the small portable filter on his desk. He didn't think the thing worked worth a hoot, but it seemed to satisfy the woman. She had made it quite clear she despised his habit.

The background on the map continued darkening rapidly, now not only registering incoming from the Russian, but from Iran too. There was now a black shroud rising; covering over a full compliment of what were probably Chinese Silkworm missiles, also with probable nuclear payloads maybe 200 kilotons, not too much to worry about.

These would have a trajectory of only about ten minutes, though Iron Dome would probably get most of them. But they threw up another curtain to the east. It was a coordinated attack, as they knew it would be.

The sounds these military men never wanted to hear began to clutter the air. Somewhere, military style, a klaxon was sounding to break the silence. A blast door, down the hall somewhere, reached its closing point, and its bolts banged home. Various other alarms now began sounding as automatic systems started breaking into the normal shift of the night, even as the enunciator, a mechanical female voice, demanded their attention, "Alert, incoming," and then the inevitable countdown to impact.

"Estimated forty minutes to first impact, target is Tel Aviv."

Tracking computers automatically begin alerting Iron Dome defenses. Out in the Galilee, they knew batteries were emerging from their underground trapdoors in the desert floor, and most were spinning round to face the Northern Bear.

Next he heard a few cheers as tracking picked up the swift moving lines of Iron Dome anti-missile interceptors reaching out over the atmosphere like David's few stones to stop the Bear.

Circles of energy began to radiate away from the Iranian curtain to the east.

There had always been a risk that Russia or China might get into this. How often had he explained this to his wife who had always felt that the young American president would protect them? Now he wanted more than anything to see her again, one last time.

The Iron Dome Interceptor was proving itself. It was he knew an amazing defense weapon. Out at the edge of the atmosphere a bullet was hitting a bullet, again and again. The flavor of the Cubana filled his senses as he finally got the thing lit and smoking. An incredible leap over America's Patriot, on which it had been patterned, the Iron Dome interceptors already in route would connect with hundreds of Russian payloads, knock their deadly cargo out of existence, but there were so many. On the screen they looked like a plague of locusts. The Dome weapon was made for an attack by Iran, not a full assault from Russia. He knew that, and so did his colleagues, they weren't being fooled for a second. It was so over.

Already shudders could be felt from the granite overhead, as powerful rockets screamed away, accelerating to the speed of sound faster than any human could exercise command and control. On their screens more lines from their side approached the fog on the other, and detonation circles started to erupt on the Russian side.

Hit after hit, the Iron Dome interceptors were doing their doomsday best to knock out a power too great to imagine. But it doesn't even lighten the wall of fog moving relentlessly toward their own position.

In the background, the electronic tones of the simulated woman's voice droned on. Fifteen minutes to first detonations. Ten minutes to first detonations. Large black circles continued to appear. Iron Dome hits on incoming outside the atmosphere. The system is better than expected, he noted from the data stream, but it does not even lighten the edge from the black fog enveloping Israel, now coming in from all sides.

On the television screen overhead, the American president appeared on the White House lawn in the midst of a press conference. That is all the Americans will do, he knew, talk a lot. Warn the Russians with the utmost severity. Promise sanctions, the usual political stuff.

"We need to know what the intentions are for this attack?" he spoke, trying to control what were obvious nerves, though he was doing pretty well for the leader of a country whose power had waned in recent years. He spoke in a tailored suit from the Rose Garden, on the White House lawn.

But why not? The general mused to himself, there are no missiles headed for Georgetown or the Washington Monument, at least not yet. He was biting into the Cubana. He blew smoke toward the screen, as he started data entry into his own workstation. He knew the time was coming in only moments for the red phone on his own desk to light.

It was the one old fashioned communication device left in the whole underground command facility. It was a real phone, except it really did light up. Their own nuclear ICBM's were warming in their silos.

“What are their intentions with this attack?” “What did it matter?” Now he was no longer even amused. “Are they planning to bring in troops?” No, he cursed, there won't be anything left to capture, what was wrong with this American president? Yes, a conservative had been elected, but it had done Israel no good. Were the Russians trying to conquer, or were they just after Israel's nukes? “Nobody had any time for this. But he had heard such language before...in the Bible? In Ezekiel at his grammas' knee? How she had believed that old nonsense.

A news flash shot across the screen.

Russian missiles were now headed for Washington as well, and there was a commotion near to the podium, a scene on the White House lawn, with a group of men in dark suits hustling the leader of the free world to Marine One, whose blades were already thopping. He only heard the choppers hop into the air, as he was much too busy with the launch codes he needed to get into his own computer. He already knew where the American president would go to wait out Armageddon. They were classified pretty high up; his smoke had gone out, and he was just chewing on it.

But the Americans held little or no concern for the IDF furiously working against time in their fortress under the Mount of Olives. They were bound for sites not released to the media.

Damage estimates to the nation, he knew, were beginning to exceed classified thresholds. The red phone's flashing lights indicated to him time to initiate Samson, a call to the prime minister on the glowing red phone was simply protocol as permission to activate “Samson” he knew was automatic, and permission was quickly given. He related to the whole staff that the prime minister wished everyone an easy trip into the afterlife.

His adjutant rolled her eyes. She was right, it really was not the time for telling jokes.

Samson had been one of the ancient Judges of Israel, or so the story went, a man to whom God had given great strength only to see him waste it on foreign women. One of them, a Philistine by the name of Delilah, finally had him captured and destroyed him. But with the last of his strength, he brought down a pagan temple on himself and his enemies. It was a desperate move, but it gave him vengeance.

When all else fails, the whole Jewish inventory of nuclear weapons will be unleashed to damage her enemies as much as possible. It is a program of desperation, and it will randomly destroy vast numbers, before she herself is annihilated. However unthinkable to most Jews, secular or religious, they have this option because it tells the world they will never again return to Auschwitz.

Israel is very capable and can engage armies of greater size with more tanks and greater explosive power. But there are limits. She cannot fight a superpower. She also knows that even with a Republican in the White House, America will never risk nuclear war over a bunch of Jews. No matter how hard they protest, they would, they won't. Israel doesn't yet have enough oil, though if they keep finding monster reserves of gas, someday they might.

But the Samson option is there to say that any victor will get nothing but heavy losses and no spoils, a deal they are betting most other countries will not accept. And it is a maxim among military planners that the Jews mean what they say and will do exactly as they plan to do. They will put into play the "Samson Option" should they be called to do it, bringing down the Philistine temple on their enemies. They would be willing to go off to their own reward rather than go back to the gas and the ovens.

Perhaps, and the thought just flickered across his bushy brow, the Jews of America might survive all this, though he knew that some of this firepower was now headed to the US east coast. But some Jews would always survive somewhere, he decided. Not on the basis of the folk religion his mother had taught him, some sort of nonsense about Israel's existence tied up with the sun and the stars.

He just knew that they were a survivor people. In every nasty dirty prison-based society on this crazy planet his people had survived. But he could ill afford such musings as he focused on the detailed coding of the launch computer. It must be perfect, and he had little time. Surely this

facility would be target priority one. The Russian bear knew where command and control was kept.

Nevertheless, his thoughts were very strange as he hunkered down grimly before his consoles, his adjutant standing by for his next instructions. The quiet in the room seemed so tangible he was sure people must be able to hear him sweat, and he felt beads gathering near his eyes, which had started burning. The tracking computer kept up her frequent annunciations, now seconds to impact. Of course the war must be fought, Samson must be unleashed, regardless of the consequences. Many Russians would die, but they had brought it on themselves.

Now he felt the shudder of the first wave of ICBM's from the Jewish state. The arrow had shot away from its bow, way deep in the bunker, as their own enormous ICBM's began to leave their silos to deliver fire to Moscow.

He had just entered the target codes into these machines of death and pressed the arming button sequence. After that, the computers took over and it was almost instantaneous. Most were bound for Russia but some to Tehran. It felt exactly like someone was outside pounding an enormous hammer on the ground as they roared to life in their containment silos overhead.

His job done, the old general allowed himself some moments reflection. The Cubana was a disgusting mess, but there was no more time to get another out. With a half smile, he mumbled something barely coherent to his nearby adjutant. She looked dismayed.

It was just too bad the God of Abraham wasn't really true, he mused. How we could have used him about now. Who couldn't use a being that could separate the waters of the Red Sea and hold them there? If he could do that, he could probably do some other things too. But like everyone else in his group, he didn't believe in the boogie man any more. He knew the God of Abraham had turned out to be just the writings of a bunch of desert shaman trying to gain the upper hand over his comrades. Mohammed hadn't been too different after all, he decided. Write something religious and get a following, that was what it was all about.

He wondered why he was wasting his last seconds of life on religious mystery men. But it was too late to trace his steps back and think about something else. The experiment called Israel was so over, and he heaved a deep sigh and clicked in the last of the codes.

Far out over the Atlantic a missile was making a tiny adjustment which would vector the warhead several hundred miles north to a direct hit on the colorful ice cream tops on the Kremlin.

All that he could do completed, he placed his hands behind his back and leaned back awaiting death in his enormous leather chair. It dawned on him that he had never considered the chair before. Amazing what one thought about while waiting for a 5000 degree fireball to burst though the door.

And he knew the first detonations, no doubt some of the old Russian fifty megaton MIRVs would begin in seconds. They had to begin in seconds. But actually as he considered it, these last moments were taking a very long time. He turned, and wished his staff Shalom, as everyone in the room braced for the first detonation, which now appeared to be over Tel Aviv. The bunker had been built for Gaza Strip rockets not ICBM's with nukes for warheads. The underground might possibly withstand the energy of twenty megatons, but a direct hit and nothing more.

So the old general, hands still clasped tightly behind his head, struggled to make his last thought about his wife coherent. He was having trouble envisioning what she looked like, and for some reason he thought that important. There was no time to get emotional but it was hard to suppress at least one heave, as one thought about one's family as glowing gases over a new parking lot, that was once thriving Tel Aviv. No life could be sustained through this barrage, he was sure of that. The Russian bear was sending enough firepower to reduce Israel to radioactive dust. Mushroom clouds with heat like the sun would forever obliterate the Jewish aliyah.

Hitler just hadn't had the right bombs. There never would be a "next year in Jerusalem" again. He grimaced for impact. One of the women nearby was now crying.

But something seemed to be wrong. The last seconds seemed to be taking an awfully long time. He glanced down at his watch. Why were they all still here? They had run out of time minutes ago. Where was the fireball? Something had gone terribly wrong.

And was that singing he was hearing? Singing about Jesus? Coming from inside this bunker? What?

The men and women of the brave and highly successful Israeli Defense Force outnumbered from the start of their nation, have fought

their unfriendly neighbors over their indefensible land shape in two major wars and numerous skirmishes, and always they have outshone them.

During the 1973 war, Egypt had infiltrated almost to their observation posts while all Israel was attending services for the *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement) holiday, sleeping, and playing cards. The observation points had been so busy napping and shooting pool, they almost didn't notice an enormous dust plume, rising up out on the desert floor before them.

They were nearly overrun before they could even sound the alert. Egypt had brought with them more Russian battle tanks than the total number of tanks which had fought on both sides in World War II. And for a few hours, the situation looked grim. In the north on the Golan Heights, outposts up there encountered the same thing. The Syrians had come down off the hills at lightening speed. In those days the Syrians controlled the Golan and had the advantage.

But then that unseen hand moved again. And within days the United Nations was calling on the United States to keep the Israeli army from annihilating the entire Egyptian expeditionary force, now surrounded in the Sinai desert.

Similarly up in the north, the Jews had pushed the Syrians back up and off the Golan Heights, and had won them for herself.

So there is no doubt that the IDF (Israeli Defense Force) will exceed their neighbors in technology, military discipline, and battlefield tactics. But nobody thinks for one minute the Israeli army could face a super power for even a day. A war with Russia is unthinkable. This would be a war against an enemy who fills the sky and is armed with weapons of such power the earth itself might not outlast the event. It is a war no Israeli planner wants to even contemplate. But it is coming.

Israel, and probably the whole world, will see this as doomsday, as Armageddon, though that war will not happen for seven more years.

Russia will see no reason why it cannot squash tiny Israel like a bug. And that will be the point. Israel will face an enemy she cannot hope to contend with. David would have been squashed by Goliath, if God had not been there, too. But this battle, between Gog and God, is not yet Armageddon; and God has set it up for a reason. This battle will come at the beginning of the times of trouble, the *Tribulation*.

The battle is actually between Russia and Jesus Christ, and is set up for the same purpose as when God led Israel to the Red Sea, and certain doom by Egyptian power. It must come soon after the *rapture*.

God will simply grab the Russian bear by its jaw and bring it down from the far north. They will probably come with the help of Turkey, Iran and maybe Syria. The invasion will be a surprise, come like a storm and cover the land.

And Israel, faced with this *Colossus*, its very existence hanging in the balance, will quickly come to the conclusion all is lost. The power they will deal with is far beyond their capacity, and in short order they will throw all hope aside. Before a single detonation, Israel will be on the ropes, ready to unleash the Samson Option, which by all accounts is real.

This is how the prophet Joel described what is coming:

Blow a trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm...let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, For the day of the Lord is coming; surely it is near. A day of darkness and gloom... there is a great and mighty people; there has never been anything like it...a fire consumes before them...the land is like the garden of Eden...But a desolate wilderness behind

...with a noise as of chariots They leap on the top of mountains Before them the people are in anguish; All faces turn pale...they each march in line, Nor do they deviate from their paths...they burst through the defenses...they rush on the city before them the earth quakes...And the Lord utters His voice before his army...who can endure it?

Joel 2:1-11 (various) (NASB)

Israel is about to be utterly overwhelmed by the power of this terror from the far north. But then something spectacular happens. It will be completely supernatural, a “God thing” of some enormous description. Israel is about to experience the tug of God on his leash, some supernatural demonstration of the existence and power of *Yeshua*, to make that predicted about face. Perhaps the nukes will mysteriously vanish in flight, never to arrive, as in our vignette. Perhaps they will misfire right in their silos, and Israel, to her own surprise, will survive unscathed.

Nobody knows, but one thing we do know, or rather two. The rising *Anti-Christ* will try to take credit, and the Lord actually will have stopped the invading bear, and many in Israel and elsewhere, will finally know his Name. This is what this battle is for. Israel will finally know the Name.

God will create a huge earthquake and enormous hailstones with fire, like that which rained on Pharaoh in ancient Egypt. But whatever else, Israel will finally know their *Messiah's* name, *Yeshua Ha-Mashiach*. And it will be so plain not one Jew will miss the significance. And perhaps many gentiles will come to know his name too.

*And My holy name I shall make known in the midst of
My people Israel; and I shall not let My holy name Be
profaned anymore* *Ezekiel 39:7 (NASB)*

What drags Russia south is uncertain, save it is taken south by the hand of the Lord. And it is even more uncertain how this war teaches all Israel Jesus' name. But it is going to happen. God himself has decreed it will happen, and it is the expectation of this writer, it will have something to do with nuclear Iran. But Gog is pulled down from his place in the north. He does not come willingly.

For God is using Gog, a power he created for just this moment, to demonstrate something to his own *Chosen* people. The power of his Name, which has been spurned. *Yeshua*, which has been hated and scorned.

Some wonder about that name. What name is God speaking about?

It cannot be the name of the Father. For the Jews have always been very careful of the use of the names of the Father. They cannot so much as spell the word "God," even in English, without a hyphen; as in G-d. And they certainly are not taking the name *Yahweh*, God's name in Hebrew, they are not even allowed to pronounce in vain. And it is not the name of the Holy Spirit, because we don't even know his name, or even if he has a name. So this unknown name is the holy name of Jesus Christ (*Yeshua Hamashiach*), the Son of God whom Israel rejected when he lived and died among them, in the first century. Israel has only profaned the name of the Son. Not the Father, with whom they are quite comfortable. Nor even the Holy Spirit of whom they know very little. But the name of the Son has been rejected, and this is the name they need to know for salvation. That name is Christ Jesus, and there is no other given under heaven through which men may be saved.

And when Israel finally knows that precious name, receives that precious name, and proceeds to be saved by that precious name, she will join the *Church*, or more correctly now in the *Tribulation*, the *Tribulation*

Saints, as the Holy Spirit comes into Jewish believers just as he has done for the *Church*. But Israel must wait until after the *rapture*. Had she already been in the *Church* when the *rapture* hit, she would have vanished, as all true Christians were snatched away, in that blink of an eye.

The prophet Zechariah tells us when they see Jesus, they will return with tears as to a long lost son. And anyone who calls on the name of the Lord, whether Jew or gentile, is saved, and is joined to the group called the *Tribulation Saints* in the aftermath of the *rapture*. The *Church* could remain during the Magog invasion; but if it did, it would be raptured away from earth sometime in the aftermath and Israel too, when they would know his name. Both would vanish and the earth would be doomed without any witness left.

So Zion's Promise God's pledge through Abraham to bless every tribe and family on planet earth, must come out of Jacob's Trouble (the Jewish way to say the *Tribulation*). Israel's destiny lies within the *Tribulation*, left on earth after the *rapture* as a saved people. Full of the Holy Spirit like 144,000 Pauls ready to take the gospel of the kingdom to the last ends of a dark and darkening world.

*I shall...take you [Gog]...from the remotest parts of the north,
and bring you against the mountains of Israel.*

Ezekiel 39:2 (NASB)

*and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to
cover the land. It will come about in the last days that I shall
bring you against My land, in order that the nations may know
Me*

Ezekiel 38:16 (NASB)

*and I shall enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him
and on his troops and on the many peoples who are with him...
hailstones, fire and brimstone*

Ezekiel 38:22–23 (NASB)

*You [Gog] shall fall on the mountains of Israel you and all your
troops, and the peoples who are with you...and I shall send fire
upon Magog and those who inhabit the coastlands in safety; and*

will know that I am the Lord.

Ezekiel 39:4–6 (NASB)

And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace...so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced, and they will weep bitterly over Him...like over a first born...In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity

Zechariah 12:8–10,13:1 (NASB)

It is the day of Israel's double deliverance—delivered from certain destruction, and delivered from eternal damnation. An old song tells the story:

There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

—William Cowper (late 1700s)

Israel will have finally discovered her *Messiah*...and there will be public weeping. Israel had expected the very worst, just as when she was pinned against the sea by Pharaoh. But Jesus/*Yeshua* himself will suddenly step out of the background and make war against the invader from the north. God will destroy Russia and protect his people in that most needful of hours.

Joel said that on God's holy mountain and in Jerusalem there will be protection. Only in Israel will there be protection from the terror of the Russian bear.

But I will remove the northern army far from you, And I will it into a parched and desolate land, And its vanguard into the sea, And its rearguard into the Western sea, And its stench will arise and its foul smell will come up...I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And I will display wonders in the sky and on the Earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke. The Sun will turn into darkness, And the moon Into blood...whoever calls on the name of the Lord Will be delivered For on Mount Zion in Jerusalem There will be those who escape

Joel 2:20, 29b–32 (NASB)

A nuclear battle could not be better described by a man from 600 years before Christ. It is fire and (enormous) columns of smoke—wonders of fire in the sky, and on the earth—turning the sun into darkness and the moon into blood. The nuclear detonations, enormous fire filled columns of smoke, will suck up tons of dust into the high atmosphere, blocking out the sun, and turning the moon into blood red.

But suddenly, in some as yet unknown fashion, Jesus will stand in the way of those who would destroy Israel. So that both the invader and Israel will know that Jesus has protected them.

the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God from that day onward... I hid my face from them...Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob, and have mercy on the whole House of Israel; and I shall be jealous for My holy Name...when I bring them back from the peoples, and gather them from the lands of their enemies...I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I shall have poured out My Spirit on the house of Ireal *Ezekiel 39:22–29 (NASB)*

And when they finally understand the Jews will begin to weep! And I believe it will be literal weeping. They will weep for sorrow and for joy. They will weep for release from the bondage of sin, and for their foolish blindness, a blindness which has lasted for thousands of years.

In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David... for sin and for impurity...And one will say to Him (Jesus) What are these wounds (in) your arms?’ Then He will say, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friend
Zechariah 13:1,6 (NASB)

For in that day....they will finally know *Messiah's* Name.

Battle With Gog...



God had been waiting so long for these people.

But they are skeptics. They deny the battle of *Gog and Magog* is even for this present hour. And they are quite smug about all that because of the very antique sounding battle equipment which the prophet Ezekiel seems to be describing. So in such minds the battle described in Ezekiel 37-39 was at best some minor desert skirmish, lost to modern history, and could be nothing more.

They say emphatically that *Zion* will never be invaded by an army from Russia in the present, and that all this was probably no more than an invasion from Turkey or Syria, and it was something that happened in ancient times, and has largely been forgotten anyway.

The armies in these Scriptures do appear on horses wearing armor. Proof positive that this had nothing at all to do with the modern situation.

So what is the truth in all of this?

I am absolutely convinced that this army of *Magog* will come from Russia to invade Israel in the remaining days ahead before the *Great Tribulation*, and there are good reasons to believe this way.

But first who is Gog and who are his people, the Magog?

A spokesmen of antiquity, namely Herodotus of the ancient Greeks, marked out the people of the regions beyond the northern seas, the Caspian and the Black, as the rough men of the northern mountains and vast plains in today's Russia. According to the Table of Nations in Genesis 10, they were children of Japheth, third son of Noah, as were the Greeks and Romans.

The tanned peoples of the Mediterranean called them the barbaric Scythians, and there is no doubt that the Scythians were the forebears of modern Russia. And although many have tried to move this discussion to Turkey or some other minor player directly to the north of Israel, we land firmly into the region of the tribes of Magog, as they are listed way back in the Genesis table of nations in chapter 10, as the forebears of modern Russia. Some have gone even farther by equating the names “Tubal” and “Meschek” to Moscow and Tobolsk, regional capitals of east and west Russia.

And the names do have sort of an affinity to the modern regional capitals, superficial or otherwise. But frankly such fine detail does not matter, because we do know who the major player, the people known as Magog is. They are the Russians. The major group of Russians within the Scythians was known though antiquity as the Magogites, and the surname Gog is still very prominent in some of the various tribes.

Scythians themselves were a militant group of tribes known for their horsemanship, marksmanship, and the propensity for war. They had the uncanny ability to ride a horse at full gallop restring their bow, and hit a bird with an arrow at the same time. No wonder they were feared by most of the tribes to the south on the continent.

But the strongest evidence lies in the name of the mountain range which marked their southern boundary. That mountain chain, the barrier between the Black and the Caspian seas, is today called the Caucasus, but is significantly known as the “Fort of Gog” in various tribal tongues, and in ancient Chinese, who also feared them.

Clearly the names Gog and Magog from Genesis onward are associated with the people who lived in the region of Russia today.

This means that there is no getting around the identity of the invader.

These are not the people of Turkey or Syria, as has been asserted by various recent commentators seeking to turn the major scriptural portion of Ezekiel 37-39 into a local war of little consequence, because a war of major proportions does not fit into their view of the last days. So apart from the argument over when the Magog War happens, it is Russia who comes to take a spoil out of Israel. We may not yet know the time, but we do know the people. It is not then a question of who is the invader; but when will he invade? Was it in the past? Or will it yet happen in the future?

Perhaps, as in our vignette, it will be a modern attack by aircraft and missiles. We are given such an image of this assault. Ezekiel tells us

“They will cover the land like a storm.” And by invoking the idea of such a cloud the prophet is reminding mankind of how a locust plague descends upon a region. Billions of insects threaten all life, and create such a sound as to break the mind. Such a movement of insects leaves nothing behind. The terrifying nature of a locust plague which covers the land, is just the sort of imagery the prophet Joel wanted to insert into the mind of those listening to him, something they had all experienced, something much larger than just a small invasion by Turkey or Syria, acting alone.

Ezekiel, the prophetic observer, was a man born some 600 years before Christ. Assuming he was seeing a war of the future, how could such a man describe the modern equipment he saw in the vision?

Had he described them with modern ideas and terms, he would have invalidated what he wrote. Writing in such an early time Ezekiel can't know very much about modern warfare save to make an attempt to describe what God is showing him. If Ezekiel would have spoken of the thrust of a modern jet, the speed of a modern helicopter, or even the discharge of a rifle, his words would have been immediately discounted as the product of fraud. A modern reader would immediately realize that such words had been written in an age of science.

But Ezekiel is authentic. He describes such terrible weapons in terms of things he knew and understood. So when he says some of them were “leaping from mountain to mountain,” he may be describing helicopters. When he describes shining armor, perhaps he is describing the surface of burnished metallic aircraft.

But no matter how he relates this invasion to us in the here and now, one idea emerges strongly. Ezekiel is describing an attack of great power and vast consequence, power as to render Israel helpless, just the intent of God in “putting hooks into Magog's jaw” and bringing him down.

because of the constant refrain from Ezekiel about “horsemen and bucklers, swords and shields so that it certainly sounds like an ancient war, does it not? And the prophet certainly knew what shields and swords look like.

So, the skeptics ask, why such antique armaments, if this really is a modern war? To skeptics, even skeptics who do accept the Scriptures, this concludes the argument. The Magog war of Ezekiel 38 and 39 must be some sort of war in antiquity.

The only difficulty with this view is that no such war ever happened. Israel was never attacked from the north in this way. No riders ever rode down from Turkey in such mass that they looked like a cloud coming to cover the land. But far more importantly, no northern army ever invaded an Israel; having returned to the land from a scattered *Diaspora* over all the world. No ancient invader ever came down to an Israel which had been regathered. This regathering only happened to Israel in the modern era.

Thus this battle is yet to happen.

A few have tried to overcome the armament objection by bringing out the horsemanship of the Scythian Russians. They were great riders, so perhaps they will attempt a modern day invasion of Israel by horsemen. Perhaps millions of Russians will mount their horses in the last days and use those to ride all the way down to Israel. And maybe they will all be dressed up in medieval armor and come bearing shields!

Of course this is patently ridiculous, and reminds one of the invasion of New York City by the fictional *Grand Duchy of Fenwick* in the 60's Peter Sellers production of *The Mouse That Roared*. One F-16 dispatched from Tel Aviv could render millions of riders and their horses as carrion within a matter of a few hours, no matter how good they were with that strange shaped bow of theirs.

I am afraid that such an invasion would scare Israel into fits of laughter. But unfortunately this Magog invasion has nothing whatever to do with a latter day horse attack.

It has everything to do with the great King stepping back into the picture for the nation of Israel. He will rescue them in such a way that they will know who their benefactor from heaven, the *Messiah*, has always been, "they will know his name," and their hearts will be broken. They will also know that the *Church* has been *raptured*, and the time is short. Only seven short years will remain. And it will finally be the time of the "blessing going out to every tribe on earth," the final part of the Promise God gave to Abraham.

Behold, I am going to save My people...and I will bring them back and they will live in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God in truth and righteousness...

It will come about that just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so I will save you that you may become a blessing...men from all the world will grasp the garment of a Jew saying,

*“Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.
Zechariah 8:7,8,13,23 (NASB)*

Very quickly God will put his Mark on a very special group of *Seal Team 6* style evangelists to rescue the whole earth. And much of the hatred for God’s *Chosen* will quickly turn into love as God uses them to lead vast numbers to confess Christ with the hope of joining the coming Kingdom as the *Tribulation Saints*.

To aid them in this worldwide endeavor, in all likelihood God reverses the confusion of tongues for those in this group in order to reach every tribe on earth, as he did when Peter preached at Pentecost. That day the many heard Peter in his own tongue, though Peter was probably preaching in Hebrew. We call this army of *Seal Team 6* evangelists, the *Army of Zion*, and it must bring the hope of the Kingdom to every family on the earth.

Because of the testimony of these Jewish evangelists, millions will be blessed in every nation and family on earth. Multitudes around the world will go into the Millennial Kingdom because of the testimony of these evangelists.

“After these things I looked and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;...these are the ones who have come out of the great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb...”

Revelation 7:9,14 (NASB)

God told Abraham his offspring would be countless like the stars; and in Abraham, God would literally bless each family on earth.

Therefore my people shall know My name: therefore they shall know in that day I am he that doth speak: behold it is I. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that saith unto Zion, thy god reigneth! ...The Lord made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Isaiah 52: 6-7, 10 (KJB)

Isaiah says:

“*how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news,*”and what feet are these? The beautiful tramp of 144,000 witnesses on the mountain of *Transfiguration* with Jesus, as John saw in Revelation 7 proclaiming Good News to every dark place left on planet earth. The Magog war is yet to come, and when it does Israel will finally find her true role in the plan of the ages.

This is the *Promise of Zion*, out of the midst of the *Tribulation*. It is God’s final plan to reach planet earth

.

Desolation Temple



On the hillside, just over the valley from the Temple Mount, Jesus held what could be called the first prophecy seminar, with three of his closest disciples. They were high up on the Mount of Olives, overlooking Herod's temple, one of the eight wonders of the ancient world. Perhaps the little group sat in the freshness of a mild zephyr and relaxed for a moment to take in the view.

With good reason, you might say Jesus's disciples were hicks, just fishermen from Galilee, and not at all like the cosmopolitan sophisticates of the teeming city below. Not accustomed to the architectural splendor, and as Jews dedicated to Moses and Abraham, no sight in the world could be more wonderful. Herod's temple was the grandest structure in all the Mediterranean, with its forty-foot doors of inlaid gold, and its majestic setting on an enormous platform, elevated over the rest of the city of Jerusalem, the city of the Great King.

The building was imposing; a cube almost ten stories on a side, one of the most fabulous buildings of the ancient world. Dazzling from the city floor, it must have looked like something right out of heaven to the disciples, from their perch somewhat higher. With all its inlays of precious metal, and the yellow limestone of which much of Jerusalem was built, glowing in the bright Jerusalem sun, it must have appeared like it was made out of solid gold. Today tourists still sit on the same hillside and admire the brilliance of the Islamic Dome.

But as beautiful as the gold dome is, it is small potatoes in comparison to what Herod's temple must have looked like in Jesus's time. For the temple was much larger, and filled the whole mount with the grandeur of gold, in the bright Mediterranean sunshine. Beautiful yes, but the temple was a fraud from top to bottom.

When Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant into the most holy place, of the original temple, the whole edifice and even the surrounds had been so charged with the presence of God, no man dare even lift his head for fear of it. But that temple burned, and Israel was taken into captivity.

God had made his presence known in the first temple. His light could be seen over the altar by ordinary eyes, and the holy glow of God over the Ark never departed until the people grew distant, and their hearts stopped seeking his presence. Un-noticed to everyone but the prophet Ezekiel, the glory had finally departed from Solomon's temple, never to return. It was a picture of Israel's growing spiritual blindness, a blindness which would be total when Jesus finally began his ministry around 30 AD.

And from the point at which the glory left the first temple, its destruction had been certain. So it wasn't long before Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had come in; first to conquer the nation, and twenty years later to take a spoil of the people. Many Jews went into captivity in 606 BC; and then again as he returned to crush the forsaken temple. All was in flames on that fateful day 586 BC, on the ninth day of the Jewish month Av, when evil things happen to Israel. And so had ended the first great temple.

Then after seventy years, the people had returned and built the second temple. But the new temple never had an ark, nor the light of the Shekinah rising over the innermost altar. Still, nobody ever talked about it. Only the high priest on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) ever saw the darkness at the heart of the sanctuary. Yom Kippur was the one time a year when anyone ever entered that sacred inner room, the *Holy of Holies*. And perhaps the high priests who saw it kept its' darkness secret. But whatever else, the second temple was desolate.

Some might say the second temple, as built by Zerubbabel, had meant something more than the desolation within; new hope and a fresh start. Its' construction had been at the behest of the great Cyrus of Persia, and fulfilled the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah. And there was hope in that return from Babylon.

But when dedicated that building had caused many of the old men to weep bitter tears out loud. Some few of them were old enough to remember the glory of Solomon's temple. Not that Zerubbabel's temple had been ugly; it was beautiful in its own way. But it was much smaller, and above all else, it lacked the glory of the Almighty in the presence of the "Shekinah" glowing on its altar.

Five hundred years later, Herod had been made king of the province of Palestine by a pagan Roman government; interested only in the "pax

Romana,” the peace of Rome. And what an unhappy peace it was, under the crushing control of an ancient totalitarian government. As such, the temple had become a pawn in an evil game of political chess between Herod and the Jewish leadership. There was no spiritual reality on either side, just a spider’s web of deceit and lies. It was remarkably like this present world.

Herod’s personal friend, Emperor Augustus, had placed him on the throne of Palestine; and Herod, who understood clearly that only a descendant of David could rightfully rule Israel spent the rest of his rule trying to insert himself into the royal line. Herod was a pretender, trying to buy off his subjects like any modern tyrant, and knowing the Jews national pride in the face of the Romans he had done a complete facelift on Zerubbabel’s temple, a building he had deemed too small and parochial to be worthy of someone in “David’s” line. Seeking glory for himself, Herod wanted his temple to rival Solomon’s of old. And hoping to be accepted as something like a descendant, the pretender began living the pretense of Jewishness, trying to insert himself into the royal line.

But Herod was a descendant of despised Esau, Jacob’s slightly elder twin. Both the children of Isaac; both grandsons of Abraham, but as the firstborn between the two, Esau should have the right of inheritance from God, not Jacob. But Esau had despised the *birthright*, nothing less than the great *Promise of Zion* given to Abraham by God himself, given when Abraham had sat with God and looked out at the stars of heaven.

Esau had been a little hungry one day coming in from the field, and had filled his belly, promising to give away the birthright in trade for a bowl of red stew. Little did he know he had given away the world, for a pot of stew. He had given away eternity to fill his belly. Flippantly before God, he questioned the reality of the whole thing, saying, “what is that to me?” So with no more than a shrug, Esau like all worldly men, had thrown away the most precious things of the Spirit which still divide the Middle East—promises over who owns the land, and who are the *Chosen* people.

Because Esau despised his birthright God declared his hatred for him forever, and all who are like him. Esau reminds us that God despises those who despise Him. God is not arbitrary in this, as some in the Reformed camp think, saying some are chosen and some are not. Esau chose his belly over the things of God, and the curse of Esau still comes to those who put their own sexuality, their own greed, or anything else ahead of God and his promises to them. It is those whom God despises. It will be the same when people someday make the dreadful choice of the 666.

But Herod was of this hated lineage in both ways. He was an Edomite, an actual great great grandson of Esau. But more in line with his character, like his hated forebear, all Herod did was for his belly. He had no care for God and no fear. All Herod craved in life was the throne of Israel, and to get this he had to create a pretense of being like David. But such lust for power finally drove him insane. Fearing rumors of a heavenly born king coming to take away his rule, he lashed out and killed the children in Bethlehem, in a crazed and futile effort to defeat God's plan.

This lust even made him suspicious of his own children. He executed a number on only the suspicion they might try to assassinate their father and usurp his throne. It is what he would have done. It was said by Caesar that it was safer to be Herod's pig than his son.

And like his life, his temple was a sham.

It fit Jesus's description of the religious Pharisees, who had the appearance of being outwardly white washed in word and deed, but inside they were filled with hypocrisy and death. The beautiful temple inspired awe but was nothing but a shell. The real difference between the edifice Herod built and Solomon's temple, touched as it was by awe within and without, was what was hidden inside. There was no miracle inside Herod's temple.

When Jesus was carried in by his parents on his first visit to the temple on his eighth day of life for his circumcision, the glory had again returned to a temple in Jerusalem, but it had returned in secret dressed in the tiny body of Jesus. Most people couldn't see God's glory hidden in a baby. The glory had returned in the greatest measure ever, but few of that generation would ever even know.

But there were always a few with eyes to see.

Two awaited him. Abiding inside the temple for years and years, they had grown old and nearly blind, waiting for the *Messiah*. But old Simeon and Anna knew him instantly. The glory of Israel had returned, and Simeon, holding the *Child* to his breast said:

And when eight days were completed before his circumcision... they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord... and behold there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon And it had been revealed to him...that he would not

see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ...and when the parents brought in the child Jesus...he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 'Now Lord let Thy bond servant depart In peace...for my eyes have seen Thy salvation

Luke 2:21-30 various (NASB)

But not only was there no glory in Herod's temple, there was no holy Ark with a mercy seat where the high priest could put the lamb's blood each year. The Ark, that golden box with the angels over it and the mercy seat on top, which received the blood of atonement seems to have been lost with Solomon's first temple, perhaps destroyed, or hidden in some deep vault somewhere underground.

But returning to our little band seated on the Mount of Olives with Jesus, this was all past history. Perhaps Jesus was feeling a bit nostalgic a bit alone in a crowd, as his own destiny was drawing near to him. We forget as a human being; he had the same emotions with which we are born. This would be his final week, and the cross was looming over him.

On the previous Sunday when he came riding triumphantly into the streets of Jerusalem, with shouts of "hosanna," and "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" the little people had called him King, but they would soon be calling for his blood, and he knows it.

His destiny approaching, he may have been feeling very much alone. Especially since his followers with him, Peter, James, and John, are all on another wavelength. For his men, it was a given the temple, so dazzling on the other side of the valley, so precious to Jewish religion and culture, would be something Jesus would love and protect.

And I'm sure they were nearly giddy with the prospect. The people were ready to make Jesus their king. Just a few days prior, they had been with him at his triumphal entry. They were on the crest of a wave. In their minds, Jesus was just about to declare himself, and it was obvious to them the people would want him, and that magnificent temple would figure prominently in it all. No doubt Jesus would rule his people from that beautiful edifice over there. It would become his palace.

And they were exalting with the anticipation of ousting Rome and the glory that would follow. Perhaps, being fallen human beings, it excited them that they would share some of that glory. To sit on his right and his left, that was something to think about.

He understood them perfectly, but he had a different sort of love for his Father's house than they did. Some might say, typical to his way of keeping everyone off balance and to teach an important principle, he could be almost contrary. To his giddy apostles he announced simply, "Not one stone would stay placed upon another." In fact the whole temple was coming down, and soon.

One can only imagine how these words left the three Apostles reeling.

I am sure they wondered what Jesus could be talking about. They had felt the energy during his triumphal entry, less than a week ago. The crowd in Jerusalem had been ready to crown him. Jesus would soon be in charge. Jesus was going to be king, and they would sit on high thrones beside him. All the city was coming to him. So what was all this talk about the temple being torn down? Was he going to build an even bigger one? The temple had stood in one form or another for over 500 years; it would not soon fall down. What was Jesus talking about?

So these apostles could hardly believe what they had just heard. It was God's house, his Father's house. Hadn't Jesus already thrown out the money changers more than once? Hadn't the Old Testament prophets said *Messiah* would be taken up with a zeal for his Father's house? Wasn't Jesus the *Messiah*? Hadn't he just ridden into town in fulfillment of the prophecy the King was coming on a donkey? Wouldn't he soon be taking charge of that temple down there, to set up his court, and run Herod and the Romans out of town? What was going on here?

But Jesus had never been impressed with the externals of human politics. He would leave that to the Pharisees, and their less spiritual partners the Sadducees. No less a power than the devil himself had offered him all of the prestige and all the military power of humankind, in one great package, and he had spurned it as nothing compared to the unending privilege of doing his Father's will:

the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory and he said to Him, 'All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.'

Matthew 4:8-9 (NASB)

Esau sold the Promise for a pot of stew while all the wealth and power of the world made no difference to Jesus. The accolades of the people had

no hold on him at all. Power had no draw, and wealth seemed unimportant to him. His disciples were all eager and gleeful at the thought of becoming earls and dukes, and whatever other landed royalty they would be. Perhaps they could accompany Jesus on a mission to visit with the Roman Emperor himself one day. King Jesus, he would be greater than Solomon of old.

But Jesus was never impressed with any such trappings of the world. He was always about personal reality, and even risky personal reality. He wanted his disciples and anyone who would follow after him to place their hope on him only, and throw off any other source for their stability. To lean on anything not the Lord God Almighty is idolatry. He wanted those he taught to see that what they were depending on was their true god. Money, power, military might, education, sex, personality, good looks—all that entices men to trust in its’ strength, instead of him, is idolatry. Faith is simply another way of asking each one of us to choose where we will plant our feet, and stand. Will we trust the Word of God, or human experience? And he kept positioning this question to the front with his own disciples. Would they trust the size and beauty of the temple? Would they trust the size of the crowds, even with palm branches in their hands? Or would they trust in the Lord when his words seemed so wrong to them?

I would imagine these disciples probably went aside to rethink and reload, after Jesus told them the temple would be coming down. And when they approached their Master again, they did so in the risky business of truth and finally dared to ask him the next logical question. Perhaps for the first time he has gotten their attention and they are frankly frightened.

“Jesus, if the temple is going down,”—they ask— “what is going to happen to us?” Within, their minds were jangling. This temple was going to be your throne room. “Don’t you remember, Jesus?”—queried James —“when our mama asked if John and I could sit on each side of you?” “We thought we were all going to be sitting in high seats over there in that beautiful temple, and now that we know different, Jesus, what is going to happen to us?”

the disciples came to Him privately saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?’

Matthew 24:3b (NASB)

So they ask Jesus two great questions. Jesus, are you coming

back? And its subsequent, When? When will you come? Every other question falls beneath these two. Is he coming? And if so, when will he return?

Everyone wants to know. And so we should thank our puzzled disciples for asking. So yes, Jesus, we all press in, “Are you coming back, and when?” Everyone wants to know.

One of the most fascinating subjects in the New Testament is the issue of Jesus’s announcing his own death. He has already told the disciples he would die several times, but the disciples never seem to hear him. But here on the Mount of Olives, in this intimate little conclave, discussing future events, these disciples have finally heard his words.

He is going to die. He is leaving them. In previous days he told them; he would have to leave, and the leaving would require his death. But they have always refused to hear him. *Messiah* can’t die. *Messiah* has to come and make everything okay. *Messiah* can’t be *Messiah* if he dies, can he?

His words have never made any sense. Now they know. They still do not understand, but they know he will do exactly what he says. He always does. So the disciples have finally snapped out of denial. But now they face the question directly. They want to know what he is doing. And he is asking them to trust him through the process.

And it brings up a bit of panic. So it ought to do the same in us as we face the walls of faith in our own lives. Faith always demands something of human beings we are reluctant to give; it requires us to go through things we would rather avoid.

So to steady them, he begins to tell them about a series of signs that will mark the run up to his return. In the process he gives them an introduction to the great book of *Revelation*. Because the good news to these apostles was--yes. Yes he is coming back, and yes he will open to them the signs of his coming.

At which point, perhaps while the sun was setting, the little group must have walked down to the temple. At least he did. For later, as he left the temple for the last time, he pointed back to the building and began his most detailed prophecy lesson of all. It is found in Matthew the twenty-fourth chapter.

He told them to look for the “*Abomination of Desolation*” as spoken about by the Old Testament prophet Daniel. When they see the abomination in the holiest place in the temple, then his coming will be

drawing very close. This he said was key. When the people of Israel would see the desolation of a temple, it was time to run away.

But for us to understand his words, we enlist the agency of the greatest scholar on Daniel chapter 9, anywhere, Sir Robert Anderson.

Near the turn of the century an Englishman, Sir Robert Anderson, penned a book, *The Coming Prince*, which demonstrated the unparalleled accuracy of the Bible in foretelling the future. He focused on a small section of the book of Daniel chapter 9, a section which is so astonishingly clear that the critics have long held this prophet up for contempt. It is not Daniel's errors they complain about; it is his accuracy. They say he must have lived after the facts because nobody could see the future with the clarity he saw. Daniel is just too close to telling history in advance of his time, and how exciting!

To secular minds, blinded by the way this present world has always worked, it is inconceivable that there is a personal God who actually intervenes into time, space, reality. Skeptics rarely mind religious people. They just don't put any weight on what they say. So long as religious people mouth proverbs they are fine, inconsequential, but fine. But when they avow a deity who actually intervenes into human history, that is not fine. In fact, the secular mind actually runs from the clarity of the Bible and prefers the gauzy quatrains of fakirs like Nostradamus, who has become very popular right now.

But anyone who has read even a little of the mysterious Frenchman knows his work is just plain murky. If he was a prophet at all, he was most certainly not a Bible one. As a matter of fact, he doesn't communicate very much about anything. People say he predicted everything from the moon landing to the rise of nuclear Iran. But it's because his words are cleverly designed like a fortune cookie. They can mean anything.

But when a prophet of the Bible speaks, he does not try to dodge his critics. He cites dates, places, and even on some occasions the actual names of individuals. Both King Josiah and Cyrus, Emperor of Persia, are mentioned in the Scriptures by name, hundreds of years before they were even born. And all the rest were so clearly presented one can easily fill in the blank of his name. For a true prophet of God, there are events which can be cross referenced against their prophecies. But no matter how intently they are examined, the prophets of Israel bat at 100 percent.

But Daniel is too accurate, so he is doubted.

Skeptics cannot fathom that a man of 600 BC was able to predict the day of Christ's death, which we will show Daniel did, so he is often late dated. In the mind of the skeptic, history cannot be told in advance, because in the mind of the skeptic what is to come does not yet exist. That would prove a God living outside of time, and they can't have that.

So, they reason, he must have written about the events from the historical-perspective, rather than looking ahead. In their skeptical minds, Daniel had to be looking back. Since we simply accept the Word of God we believe that Daniel, the real Daniel, was given one of the most amazing prophecies ever.

It is a clock. The clock deals with 70 sets of 7s or weeks, because a week is a seven. Moreover this clock is the timepiece of Israel alone, for Daniel's people, not the people of Greece, or Rome or America. Not the famous Mayan calendar, just the great clock of Israel.

But as I stated earlier, it awaited the advent of the 20th century, and Sir Robert Anderson of Scotland Yard, to discover how incredible this little prophecy of Daniel really is.

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people...to finish transgression....

Daniel 9:24 (NASB)

The first thing Anderson determined was that this clock did apply only to the Jews. Seventy weeks were given for the people of Daniel to finish their transgression. Their "transgression" was their rejection of God's plan.

Still one observation more: The *Chosen* are intended by God to be a testimony to all mankind. This clock tells us prophetically where Israel is at, and Israel in turn, tells us how far along the road the whole world has traveled. Israel is always God's timepiece for the human race.

But in order to have a clock, you have to be able to set the time. And it is a miracle in itself that we can actually set this ancient clock. We actually know when it starts. Thank Robert Anderson for pointing out the obvious.

*So you are to know and discern that **from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem** until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty two weeks it will be built again,*

with plaza and moat, even in times of distress

Daniel 9:25 (NASB)

It is clear that the beginning of this seventy-week clock starts with “*a decree to return and rebuild the city of Jerusalem.*” This prophecy is not talking about rebuilding the temple. It is speaking about “the city” and that city is Jerusalem. (We must make this emphasis because there was another decree by another monarch to rebuild the temple.)

While Israel was still in the captivity, their captors, the Babylonians, were conquered by Persia. So it would be a Persian monarch who would issue the decree. What is so wildly improbable is that the date of such a minor decree is known after nearly 2,500 years. According to Anderson, and verified many times since, this decree was given by the Persian Artaxerxes Longimanus, and it took place on March 14, 445 BC, the ancient date converted to our current calendars.

But how in the world can we possibly know this bit of ancient trivia? Well, actually it is because God wrote it down in a memo and kept us informed. And I am only jesting slightly. God wanted this date retained so that Robert Anderson could package it up for the world. Well we don't actually know that, but we do know the date with great assurance. Because it too is in the Bible, in the book of Nehemiah chapter 2:

And it came about in the month Nisan [March in that year] in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes”

Nehemiah 2:1a (NASB)

So who in the world was Nehemiah?

Nehemiah was also a Jew in the captivity in Persia with Daniel. But unlike Daniel and his friends, Nehemiah was not among the magi, or the wise men of the Babylonians. He was a cupbearer. The cupbearer was a servant who protected the king from the dangers of poisoning by one of his less loyal subjects. And the cupbearer provided this service by drinking some of the cup before the king. Needless to say, it was a pretty intimate relationship that the cupbearer shared with the king.

And one important qualification for being a cupbearer was to put on a joyful face. The last thing the man with the burden of ruling an enormous empire wanted was a sad table attendant. To be sad before the Persian

monarch during the meal could get you beheaded. Nevertheless, Nehemiah was sad, and the king noticed, and asked him about it. And so, perhaps with fear and trepidation, Nehemiah told the king about his people.

Israel had already been back in the land of their forefathers for some years, and the walls of Jerusalem were still flat on the ground. The Jews had returned with such excitement, built the Second temple, and had expected to live happily ever after. But as such things go, not all had panned out as planned.

While the Jews had been absent, others had moved in and squatted, and these others were not too willing to give the land back to its rightful owners. So the Jews in Jerusalem were still without walls around their city, unprotected, and growing increasingly tired of being hassled by the brigands of the countryside.

[Nehemiah]...said to the king, 'Let the king live forever Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my father's tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?'

Nehemiah 2:3 (NASB)

At that point, everyone in the throne room must have held his breath, knowing the law, and wondering what this absolute monarch might do. But instead of dropping his scepter, indicating Nehemiah's life was over, he raised it up, and asked if he could help.

And I said to the king, if it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to city of my father's tombs, that I may rebuild it.

Nehemiah 2:5 (NASB)

To the amazement of all, Nehemiah was given grace by Artaxerxes, and a decree to empower him to return to the city of Jerusalem and rebuild the wall. And as Daniel describes it, this is the exact decree Daniel's great clock depends on for a starting point! God allowed those of us in the far-flung future to have a bench mark from whence to know the start of Israel's great clock. How often do great wonders turn on the fulcrum of little deeds? All this came about because an ancient king asked about his servant's down-turned face.

Sir Robert Anderson believed he could use the great clock of Daniel 9, with the date provided by Nehemiah chapter 2, to determine another date which had been obscured by the passage of time. He wanted to know the exact day Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, he wanted to know what date was the first Palm Sunday.

What an audacious idea. To use a date from the deep past, to find a more recent date, a date which had been lost in history. But being the meticulous police detective he was, he began to calculate. And he came to some startling conclusions.

*are to know and discern that from the issuing of a
decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the
Prince...there will be seven weeks and sixty two weeks;
Daniel 9:25 (NASB)*

At the start of the shorter period, the seven weeks of years, a week being also a seven, ($7 \times 7 = 49$ years), the decree issued by an ancient monarch to rebuild the city would occur. And it did. The city was completed, and all that was predicted happened in about that period of time. (The reader is encouraged to read the book of Nehemiah for a complete rendition.)

*be seven weeks and sixty two weeks; it [the city]
will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of
distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be
cut off*

*[the Messiah will be killed...Messiah killed in the Old Testament!
How awkward for the Jew who denies Jesus]...
Daniel 9:25 (NASB)*

Then after this 49 years, the larger interval—the, sixty-two sevens equaling 434 years, would run to the time of the death of *Messiah*, and also happened, just as Daniel the prophet said it would.

Reading his own prophecy would have been shocking to Daniel and to any Jew who would take the time to think about it. *Messiah* was supposed to be the conquering power of God. The death of their *Messiah* was not something any Jew was even contemplating. It is still shocking to Jews living in Israel today.

Isaiah had written about the death of the *Messiah* in detail in Isaiah 53, and David had mentioned him in multiple places in his Psalms, but Israel was waiting for her conquering champion, and had no time for a “suffering substitution.”

Yes this “suffering *Messiah*” was known by some rabbis who wrote about him after a careful reading of the Scriptures, but he was not someone they were very attracted to, and certainly nobody could have dreamed that the “suffering” *Messiah* and the “conquering” *Messiah* would turn out to be the very same person.

They wanted a political king, not some spiritual person who would die for their sins; something they only vaguely understood anyway. The political problems of man always seem to cause a distraction from the every bit as real spiritual requirements of God.

After all, they were the offspring of Abraham. They had been given the Law from Moses. It never much dawned on them they were also sinners even though the blood of sacrificed animals ran in streams from the temple. They just did not understand their need, very well.

It was no doubt shocking to Daniel. But as the faithful witness of Jehovah he had to say it. Sixty-nine weeks of years after the second temple, *Messiah* would be cut off (which is killed) “*but not for himself.*” Daniel had the audacity to predict in great detail, a series of events that would take almost 500 years to come to pass. For 25 centuries the Jews have tried to ignore this plain and clear fact that the death of their Messiah was in their Old Testament Bible.

Remember we already discovered that this sequence begins in 445 BC (on the Julian calendar) when Artaxerxes Longimanus actually issued the decree to start this clock running, now 2500 years ago.

Using Hebrew years of 360 days, making all the leap year conversions, and taking into account there was no year zero between 1 BC and 1 AD, Robert Anderson calculated that there were exactly 173,880 days represented in chapter 9 verses 23-27. So if we start at the decree from Artaxerxes in 445 BC, and count forward 173,880 days, we end up exactly at April 6, 32 AD nearly half a millennium later, and that is when our jaw drops onto the floor.

Almost too incredible for words we discover this sequence lands us right on top of what the perpetual calendar says was a Palm Sunday, the day Jesus came into the city in preparation for his death near the end of the week. Perpetual calendars simply line out the days of the week. They do not “know” when the commemoration begins. Because of this April 6, 32AD had to have been the first Palm Sunday.

Imagine how unlikely it is to have hit the very day of Christ's triumphal entry, four hundred and eighty three years later. But because of this, we have total assurance, we were on the right track all along. This must have been the original Palm Sunday. Without question then, Jesus made his triumphal entry on April 6, in the year 32 AD, and was crucified on the following Thursday evening at sunset (when the Passover Lambs are all killed), on the 10th, really the next day in Jewish reckoning the day we call "Good Friday."

The incredible thing is that now we know with certainty the year, and the day of Christ's death, and we know it exactly. April 6, 32 AD, must indeed be the correct date for the triumphal entry of Jesus the Christ into Jerusalem in preparation for his going to the cross, to be lifted up for the sake of all men.

How awesome are the Scriptures of the Jews.

And in respect to this, we are utterly convinced of Daniel's power as a true prophet of God. Zechariah, also writing from about the same time frame, would add how this "Great King" would make himself known; riding on the foal of a donkey:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph,
O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you;*

*He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble and
mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Zechariah 9:9 (NASB)

By the end of the week, *Messiah* was pinned to a cross on Mount Calvary for the sins of the world, and his resurrection would come on the following Sunday morning.

But what about that 70th week remaining?

It is the 70th week in which the *Abomination of Desolation* comes, the very event for which we began looking at Daniel in the first place. Remember Jesus told his three disciples to look for this Abomination as spoken of in Daniel?

But this last week of Daniel's great clock is still not accounted for, and what happened to it? Did Daniel finally drop the ball? Or is there some other reason?

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off but not for himself] and the people of the prince who is to come destroy the city and the sanctuary And he [the coming prince of Rome]...will make a firm covenant with the many [all Israel] for one week [missing week of Daniel...but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice...and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate...

[The Abomination of Desolation] Daniel 9:26 (NASB)

It is in this last week where the *Abomination* shows up in connection with the coming prince of Rome, the man John calls *Anti-Christ*. So we back up once more to where we left Jesus enjoying a respite with his disciples on the Mount of Olives. And there he tells them to prepare.

Trouble is coming. Trouble will come to Jerusalem soon; trouble from the Romans. An invasion would soon appear to destroy their fabulous temple. And with the acuity of hindsight, we know all this happened right down to the smallest detail. In less than forty years, the Romans, under Titus, Emperor Vespasian's son, would literally pull the temple down and take it apart, stone by stone, just as Jesus predicted. So Daniel's reference to the people who destroy the *sanctuary*, were the Romans. It was the army of Rome which burned down Herod's Temple.

The Jewish historian Josephus wrote that the fire, which Titus's soldiers set against orders, caused much gold from the temple to sweat into the cracks between the stones. Gold fever soon took over, and the soldiers began to loot. So much gold seeped into the cracks that the soldiers took up crow bars to break apart the stones; Jesus's words "Not one stone left upon another" would be fulfilled right down to the smallest letter.

It is said that Titus wanted to spare the temple; but God decreed that it would not be spared...the Jews could not be, neither with threats or exhortations, to give up their fortified positions, the soldiers realized that the temple could only be conquered with fire; some of the men set it afire. And in that hour the magnificent, exquisite and priceless building, which was celebrated far and wide, burned and was reduced to ashes.

—Josephus Antiquities

So terrible was the siege and slaughter, the smell of cooking human flesh everywhere, it is thought to have been equal in horror to Hitler's gas chambers in Poland. Nevertheless, evil as he was, the demon-possessed man of reconstituted Rome, Adolf Hitler, who wanted a "Third Reich," another thousand years of Rome, even he was a mere shadow of the sinister "prince" Daniel 9 says is yet to come. A man of the same race as those who burned down the sanctuary. He is the one Jesus alluded to, when he mysteriously injected into conversation, "if another should come in his own name, him they would accept." Daniel calls him the "little horn." John calls him the "beast" and he will be.

And in the latter period...when transgressors have run their course, A king will arise. Insolent and skilled in intrigue And his power will be mighty, but not of his own power, by his influence...But he will be broken without human agency"

Daniel 8:23-26 (NASB)

So often prophecy has a tendency to be interpreted by the newspaper. And because of the rise of radical Islam, several commentators, looking at the current world, have concluded that this prince is from Islam, perhaps from an Islamic country once ruled by Rome. They base this upon several lines of reasoning, and it would be good if we stopped for a moment and considered the Islamic *Anti-Christ*.

One of the major reasons modern Bible scholars think that this coming prince is from Islam is based around the ascendance of the so-called "Twelfth Imam," otherwise known as the "Imam Mahdi" who is to come out of Shiite Islam, and rule the world for a suspicious period of seven years. Of course the last week of Daniel, also known as the *Tribulation*, also lasts for seven years.

This Imam has other similarities. He will conquer the world and destroy the Christians. So the *Imam Mahdi*, in certain ways, mimics the *Anti-Christ* of the Christians. Because of this similarity some Christians have succumbed to the temptation to say the *Mahdi* is the *Anti-Christ*, which must make Shiite Islam the great *apostasy* (the great falling away) spoken about in the *Book of Revelation*.

Beware.

Who is to say the *Mahdi* ever materializes, anyway? *Shiite Islam* has been more wrong than right in predictions of the future. And if he does not ever appear, are we saying Christianity has also been wrong in its predictions of the coming *Anti-Christ*? The Bible is not tied to the mumblings of the desert sheiks. And we should never allow extra-Biblical

sources drag us away from the plain teaching of the Bible. And the plain teaching of the Bible is that the coming evil prince will be Roman, and not from some later Middle Eastern stock, as some are now saying. We presume that he will be as Italian as Titus, the adopted son of Vespasian, emperor of Rome, who crushed the *sanctuary*, this last time.

So in regard to the *Mahdi* we urge caution. Deception is the order of the last days, and while it might be the current vogue, this Islamic *Anti-Christ* is most likely error. In fact, such a scenario would never even be considered were it not for a rise in Islamic power since aircraft slammed into the World Trade Center buildings in New York City.

Imam Mahdi, is not *Anti-Christ*, and Islam is not the religion of the Christian *apostasy* for at least three strong biblical reasons.

The real *Anti-Christ* must declare himself God in the Jewish temple.

No staunch Muslim would ever do this. No Imam would ever be found dead in a Jewish house of worship, except to burn it. In fact no ordinary Muslim would ever do such a declaration in anything so Jewish. He might declare himself in a leading mosque somewhere or next to the Kaaba Stone. But he would never lower himself to so glorify a Jewish temple so as to make his grand announcement there.

Secondly, no prophet of Allah on the earth would ever claim to be God at all, regardless of where he was doing it. But *Anti-Christ* will do this. Not even Mohammed could say he was God. The “deity” called “Allah,” whatever else he may be, he never allows his followers to claim anything close to godhood for themselves. Even when Islamists are on his side, they would never do this. Jesus is denied by them for this very reason, he declares Himself equal to the Father.

According to the *Quran*, Allah has no son. And why is that? Because Islam understands the claim Jesus makes with his Father, and that being of the same essence, he is equal with God, He is God. Muslims would be petrified that Allah would strike down anyone making such a claim. Allah is a proud being who can tolerate no equality with anything or anyone. The *Twelfth Imam*, whatever else he is, cannot be *Anti-Christ*, because *Anti-Christ* will wrongly declare himself to be God in the Jewish temple.

Finally, the *Anti-Christ* will make a seven year covenant with Israel and this will likely include the building of the third temple. It is an absolute that no Imam of Islam would ever allow a third temple to be built by Israel on the Temple Mount, which Islam regards as their endowment.

Moreover, the Imam Mahdi will be too busy fighting and breaking things to stop and make firm covenants with his main enemy, anyway.

No, the *Anti-Christ*, as the White Horseman, conquers with an empty bow that is, with the craft of his mouth. This *Mahdi* will conquer with armies and may even resort to nuclear weapons. *Anti-Christ* and the *Imam Mahdi* are similar, and probably come from the same evil source, but they are not the same person.

So what about this missing last week of Daniel? Did Daniel finally make a mistake? That would be unlikely. But he did seem to end at 69 weeks, not the required seventy. Why? It is because Daniel couldn't see the *Church*. There is a huge gap between the death of the *Messiah* and this last week, because Israel rejected Jesus. It had to happen.

If the Jews would have accepted Christ at his first coming, he would have declared the Kingdom then and the world would have been left out, and only Israel would have been saved. But in order for all of mankind to be blessed in Abraham, as promised, Israel was set aside, but only for a period.

The gap between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel is the age of the *Church*, something which remained a mystery in the Old Testament. Though strangely enough, God from his timeless perspective, regards the *Church* as having taken up no time at all! In fact this is one reason why speaking of the loss of salvation makes no sense. The moment of true conversion God already sees the believer as eternally seated beside him on his throne. Some wonder why the writers of the New Testament kept repeating that they were already in the last days, even in their time, this is the reason.

But Daniel left a marker, which would indicate the start of his last week. It was a "firm covenant" of seven years entered into by Israel and the coming prince of Rome, the *Anti-Christ*. That firm covenant is still coming, and we are still in the gap until the *Church* is gone. So then what marks the end of the *Church*? The *Church* leaves with the *rapture*, about the time that last week begins. Many believe we are very close to the end of the *Church* age and the *rapture* is coming. Then comes that last week, containing the *Abomination* of the Temple Jesus warned his three disciples about. God's House will be made utterly desolate, the very abode of the devil himself.

Perhaps Jesus's thoughts, as he gazed on the beautiful complex over the valley, were taken up with its soon-coming destruction. Perhaps

in his vision he could see the soldiers burning his Father's house to the ground. Or perhaps his thoughts were running into the far-flung future, to that day when Daniel's evil prince would take his seat in yet another Temple, in the *Holy of Holies*, the most sacred compartment of the temple, telling himself and the whole world he is God.

But that would have to await a third temple since the one Jesus gazed upon would be gone in less than 40 years. *Anti-Christ* would need a Jewish temple to declare himself, and commit the *Abomination of Desolation*.

The *Church* having departed, the last "week" of Daniel's 70-week vision is called the *Tribulation*, the worst years on earth, and the last seven years of the transgression (the rejection of Christ) of Israel against God. Daniel's great clock re-appears when the "wicked prince" makes his seven-year pact.

But how can this even happen? How can a third temple ever be built? For there is only one spot on earth a temple can be built. Right where the beautiful building called the Dome of the Rock now exists. It is the aggravation of the unbeliever against Israel. It is the Islamic block to the last days. And where did this Dome come from in the first place? How will it be removed, if the prophecies of Israel are to proceed? Indeed, what connection does Islam have with the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, anyway?

Often you will hear that Mohammed never even visited Jerusalem and if he did there is no mention of it in the Quran. So it is thought that Islam has no connection to the Temple Mount, and this is the case most Jews and Christians avow. But there is a very strange, even eerie tradition among Islamists, which they affirm with the same fanaticism they affirm everything. They say Mohammed once rode some sort of flying creature, he called it "al-Buraq," to the Temple Mount, landed there in the middle of the night, walked into the Jewish temple, and prayed inside. There were no witnesses. But Mohammed avowed that he flew on this thing to the temple, tied it up to a ring which he said, the "prophets had used," and went inside to pray. His historian, Sahib al-Bukhari, reported that the stone under the Dome of the Rock is the place from whence the "prophet" got back onto the creature and returned to Saudi Arabia.

Of course secular historians outside of Islam universally believe he made this whole story up. Mohammed lived in the 500's AD, and Herod's temple was destroyed some 430 years earlier. So the story is either a total

fabrication; or some sort of occultic vision Mohammed had. Many just believe he dreamed the whole thing up. But the rock under the Dome is called the second most holy shrine in Islam because of the midnight ride, not of Paul Revere, but Mohammed.

One thing is certain, the present location of the Dome of the Rock is the only place on earth a temple can be built. And this is such a problem to some Jews and Christians who are unwilling to wait upon the Lord, it has fostered a whole literature on how to place the Jewish temple on the Temple Mount without disturbing Islamists or the two Islamic shrines already there.

Once again some feel they have got to help out God. But they ought to remember this is how Abraham ended up with Ishmael and the whole Arab struggle in the first place.

Perhaps they actually think they could sneak a whole new temple up onto the Temple Mount under the cover of night, and maybe the Arabs wouldn't notice it the next morning. But I am doubtful. Nevertheless, those involved are quite serious. There are books published with technical drawings on how to build the temple around the Dome and Al Aqsa mosques.

Some even postulate that over the years the Arabs lost track of the real location of the *Holy of Holies*. In its stead they propose a small cupola (an ancient domed gazebo), about 100 meters north of the Dome of the Rock, the "Cupola of the Spirits," is the true location of the *Holy of Holies*. There is even a tradition about this cupola, which makes it a little spooky. In the minds of its advocates, God's Spirit is still lingering around this tiny public overhang, whispering to those who pass by.

So what a coup; to build the new temple flush against the Dome of the Rock, without tearing out the dome! That would sure look cluttered. Some actually believe the temple could be placed on the Temple Mount and kept out of the way of Islam. Just one big happy family on the most fought-over two square kilometers on planet earth.

There would be no bothering the Al Aqsa Mosque or the Dome of the Rock. And the Jew and the Arab could get along famously up there together. But as anyone with any rudimentary understanding knows, such accommodation is patently ridiculous..

Muslims, in some of their writings, are taught they will someday kill all the Jews and Christians. And Muslims in control of the Temple Mount start to throw stones down onto old Jews praying at the Wailing Wall the

moment a Jewish contingent even attempts to stroll about the platform. Ariel Sharon tried it some years ago and caused a minor war.

Erecting a full Jewish Temple would make them apoplectic, regardless of where it was placed. Those who are suggesting such a compromise may as well dynamite the Dome of the Rock, and I am not advocating or condoning any such act. But the truth is nobody on either side of this controversy can imagine any Muslim accepting the slightest Jewish tradition on this location. If the Jews start to build their temple anywhere near the Mount, it will cause another full blown war in the Middle East.

But far more important is the issue of the character of God himself.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Creator of the world, the One who placed himself on a cross for the sins of men, the Almighty God; dare we ask the Creator to tiptoe around Allah? Is *Yahweh* so impotent that he cannot even displace the presence of the false Arab god? And do we presume to actually think the Lord God Almighty who cast stars into space, is going to be honored by being shoe horned into what little space Allah might grant to him, on his own Temple Mount?

When David promised to build God a House, would building the house alongside all the gods of the nations as God calls them, have honored him? Could we just sneak it in over there between Molech and Baal? Or shall we just try putting him into Dagon's house, beside Dagon? Perhaps you know that was once tried, and Dagon kept falling on his face, until he broke. Jehovah will not play second fiddle to anyone or anything, and certainly not to the false god of Islam.

But if such accommodation does not occur, how does a new Jewish Temple get built right on top of the Dome of the Rock? It is an interesting question, to which we have but one speculative answer. The *Anti-Christ* himself will arrange it. Not for Israel certainly, but for himself. The *Anti-Christ* will build the desolated temple.

Israel will get a third temple for the coming evil prince to abominate and desolate. And he will do so halfway through Daniel's final week of *Tribulation*. He will proclaim himself the long-awaited *Messiah* of Israel, and God of this world. Both of which will, in one very limited sense, be the truth. *Anti-Christ* will be the one "who comes in his own name." So indeed, he will be the long-awaited false *Messiah* of Israel Jesus warned them about, the military *Messiah* they have long awaited. And he most

certainly will represent the “*god of this world,*” a common New Testament label for Satan.

But after all, a new Jewish temple...can it happen?

After partition, Israel was deemed to be dead on arrival by all the dictators and autocrats in the world. There was no chance so little a country, with an air force of two Piper Cubs against organized middle eastern military forces and tanks, could win. It was thought that the terrible might of the Arab Legion alone would have cut this little rag tag nation to pieces. Israel was so short of men and material, it had to resort to tricks like the “Little David,” a Rube Goldberg contraption which made noises on the battlefield and lobbed charges of dynamite. It wasn't very effective, but it did manage to scare the Arabs. Especially when someone in the *Haganah* managed to trick the Arabs into believing the Little David was a nuclear device of some kind.

The Grand Mufti expected a slaughter, but once again the unseen hand came to Israel's rescue. So that as impossible as it seems, the Star of David still flaps in the breeze over Jerusalem, as if to remind a secular world there is still a God in heaven who is directing the way. A greater power lives than any “*Final Solution,*” or shoreline blockade, or Arab terror can withstand. He is not shaken by the power of Arab oil, British bullets, or even Iranian atomic bombs, and he laughs at all the powers of darkness arrayed against him.

When the *Anti-Christ* concludes his seven-year pact with Israel, “*he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week*”(Daniel 9:27), and at that moment he will probably also declare his intention to build a new temple. And once the building is completed, he will come.

Daniel tells us he comes midweek, three and a half years into the *Tribulation*. He comes with great fanfare, as though to dedicate the new temple. And in the ultimate double cross he will sit himself down in the *Holy of Holies* and pretend to be god. This is the *Abomination of Desolation*. And when it happens, this will mark the third temple, the Desolate temple, as the house of the devil, and all hell breaks loose in the *Great Tribulation*.

The Blessed Hope and Appearing



*“looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory
of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;”*

Titus 2:13 (NASB)

Shortly before the world is disrupted by the Magog War, the *Church* vanishes.

And while it is likely occultists will attribute this vanishing to something arcane; a world wide harmonic moment (Om), or an alien invasion, this disappearance will not be an attack by space aliens. No indeed, the glorious moment called the *rapture* has finally occurred, and the *Lamb* (Jesus) has come and taken his *Bride*. Those who have seriously accepted the offer of salvation have literally been snatched out of this world to be forever with their Savior.

It didn't happen as a complete surprise. God had promised that spiritual men would know the season.

‘When it is evening you say, It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘There will be a storm today, the sky is red and threatening. ‘Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?’

Matthew 16:2–3 (NASB)

But it is also correct to say Christians have believed they were in the very last days many times in the past. At the turn of the millennium, when the year 1000 was approaching, the Catholic Church was absolutely convinced Christ would be coming. So even as the first day of the millennium approached, enormous cathedrals were being constructed with

which to receive and honor him. But Christ didn't come, and they were wrong.

In the 1800s, a group of Christians, known as the Millerites, were so charged with millennial fever they sold everything, donned white robes, and sat on their rooftops awaiting the sign of the Savior breaking through the clouds. And boy did they feel ridiculous by the end of that long long day.

Some years ago, one Edgar Whisenant published a barnstorming book called *88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988*, and it didn't happen in 1988. Not silly enough, he tried again in 1989. It still didn't work out, but having made a small fortune in books, he quietly retired from writing about prophecy. Recently radio broadcaster Herald Camping dispatched large vans across the country in anticipation of the coming of Christ. But May 21, 2011 came and went, and that was not the date of Christ's coming either, as it all turned out.

So while it may appear like walking on egg shells, I do insist that we are very close to this incredible event. But why? What changes the rubric? Why should this author be believed when all these others have been so wrong? Why is it now certain we are near his coming?

It is very simple... The sky is red!

Generation after generation of those who were truly born again, came into the world and died, and did not see what we see. Generations have thought theirs was the time. But God had brought them no sign.

But there is a sign in the heavens, right now. And what is that sign? It is the same as it was over Bethlehem. It is the star of the Great King.

Opposed by every historical, political, religious, and ethnic pressure on earth the Jew couldn't possibly return and restore their nation. The politicians said this was impossible, the theologians thought the Jew forsaken and forgotten, and the Jews themselves believed their great history was simply over. It was over, gone, blowing in the changing sands of antiquity.

Then 1948 came and there it was a star, the Star of David fluttering in the breeze. The state of Israel, back in the land, and yet the sign we now see is still not quite complete. The Jews have yet to assert their control over the Temple Mount, though they have the rest of David's city. Israel now possesses the most holy place, only in theory. As we saw in the last

chapter a new temple must be built, and the Temple Mount is the only place on earth where it can be built. But it will be...

“...will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles [other nations] until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

Luke 21:24b (NASB)

And yet the Arabs of the so-called “Palestinian Authority” continue to keep their regulations in force. They call the Temple Mount their unpronounceable, *Waqf*. Their “endowment,” by which they mean their absolute claim to the whole mount forever. They take such a stand because of Al Aqsa Mosque, and their golden Dome. And they prevent Jews from even the courtesy of the occasional walk up there. No Jew and no Christian can worship on that mount, for the Palestinian Authority goes so far as to watch faces for even the appearance of silent prayer.

But with Israel, things have been known to change very rapidly. Who knows what will happen with God? He is yet holding back his hand of providence, but he is never late, and his timing is always perfect.

Israel must have a new temple, and many feel it ought to be soon. The Arabs are just as fanatical to stop such a thing from happening. It is a very explosive situation in which one thing is certain. Daniel and the rest of the prophets of *Zion* will continue to be right on the mark. A new temple of Israel is about to be built.

Groups of Jews have already made the required furnishings for the new temple, such treasures as the fabulously precious Golden Menorah—the great candle holder—made of solid gold, has already been fashioned by a Jewish group called the *Temple Institute*. This giant candle stand is worth millions. And there are now schools for the new priests, modern day Levites, who have carefully traced their lineage.

An obscure but important text, Numbers chapter 19, speaks about a “red heifer” which must be inspected by the leadership to ensure it’s perfection. God specified the ashes of a red cow without blemish be required for ritual purification before any construction can begin. But even this seemingly stubborn issue has been overcome, and now rabbinical groups in Jerusalem claim they have found the illusive “red heifer” in Texas of all places.

Finally some time ago, “*The Temple Mount Faithful*” cut out an enormous cornerstone to be set into the wall for the new temple by the method prescribed in the Old Testament. And as an aside there is some

amazing symbolism attached to this stone, which the Jews themselves don't yet fully understand. No metal tool was applied to quarry this stone, a picture of the eternal "Cornerstone." This stone reflects a prophetic "Jesus" whose hands will only be pierced by the spikes of sin one time. He is the "*stone whom the builders rejected*" who will become the *Cornerstone*.

Someday soon, the *Temple Mount Faithful* expect to set this stone in one corner of the new temple. In the meantime, on a yearly basis, and much to the frustration of the Israeli Defense Force, the battle for the new temple begins in downtown Jerusalem. For it is about once a year the people of the *TMF* load all four tons of this giant block on a flatbed and carry it nearer to the Temple Mount. The stone is huge, and can be seen coming a long way away. Invariably they are met by a squad of equally determined Arabs in the congested confines of old Jerusalem, and it can get dangerous.

One party is determined to pass, the other never to allow that stone near. It always causes an uproar and the IDF must be dispatched. Much negotiation between the squabbling factions then transpires to turn the *Faithful's* truck around. But it is claimed on their web site that they are slowly making progress as they the stone ever closer. The *Cornerstone* is literally creeping up on the new temple site!

But all this is but the ramp up to *rapture*. The one sign required is now in the earth. David's Star has appeared. There is no requirement for a completed temple. Still the temple's nearness is an indication of a darkening "red sky," and the times of the end. It is likely the *rapture* when it arrives, will trigger final control over the Mount. Perhaps it will fall quickly into the hands of some sort of international committee with *Anti-Christ* in charge. Nobody knows. We know the times, and not the details.

But according to the Word of God, the *rapture* will happen suddenly, in the twinkle of an eye, and will be the moment of closure for the *Church* on earth. Apparently people will blink and one moment the other is there, and the next he is missing. It will be most shocking. But so far, we have spoken rather obliquely of this cataclysmic moment. Now we shall plunge in and examine Christ's appearance in the sky, directly.

Most of what we are told comes from Paul, author of much of the New Testament. He begins by explaining something very important to his Corinthian converts. After Jesus's cross death was supposed to have no

power. But the Corinthians were worried. They were aging, and some had already died. And nobody had expected to die before Jesus returned.

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

1 Corinthians 15:51–53 (NASB)

Don't worry, he tells them. Death for the Christian is nothing but a translation. Your body, your worn-out, sin-soaked body, will become like Jesus's immortal, perfect one, once this translation is completed. And then he adds something startling. Some who live to see his Glorious Appearing will be changed without dying.

The Lord Himself will descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and thus we shall always be with the Lord.

Thessalonians 4:15–17 (NASB)

When I was a kid, attending that liberal church I wrote about, I never once heard the word *rapture*. It makes no difference. We would have called it nonsense, had we heard. And if somebody had been so daring as to teach that one day a trumpet would sound and people would change in the blink of an eye and begin to rise into the air, I would have been rolling on the ground. It would have relieved the unrelenting boredom, but I would have asked what science fiction the teacher had been reading.

To those in a liberal church, the Bible is just a stuffy old leather book nobody really reads anymore. It was there to tell you about right and wrong, nothing more. And most people, if they came from any of the mainline traditions would declare the *rapture* to be the stuff of crackpots and kooks.

I would have shaken my head, rolled my eyes, spun my finger, and smiled. I honestly had never seen any of this, even in the cult magazines I had snatched from the trash. The cults don't seem to believe in the *rapture* either, by the way.

Neither do vast numbers of Christians who are really “*born again*.” Next to speaking in unknown tongues, the *rapture* is the most debated idea ever found anywhere in the Bible. Prophecy researcher Chuck Missler calls the *rapture* the most preposterous idea anyone ever came up with, and the only reason anyone ever believes it, is because it is so obviously taught in Scripture. For as kooky as it sounds, I was wrong. The *Church* will depart this old planet by flying away into the air! And such an event must be ~~is~~ coming soon. Shortly before the point when the gentiles no longer “*trample down*” Jerusalem, the *rapture* will carry the *Church* away to be with the Lord forever.

So *rapture*? What on God’s earth is a *rapture*?

The definition in the English language is a state of euphoria, as in *rapture* of the deep. People with nitrogen narcosis, too much nitrogen in their blood during deep sea dives, can experience this. It causes a mild form of intoxication or euphoria. Divers may drown because they lose all desire to surface, and thus it is called “*rapture of the deep*.”

Certainly when God shouts and snatches his people away to heaven it will include a state of absolute euphoria. But in this case the word does not hail from its English root. The origin of this word is from the Latin *rapturo*, which means to be snatched away. And it is about this time, invariably we hear from some blowhard in the audience, who will tell us the word *rapture* does not even appear in the Bible. So how, and his triumph shows on his face, do we dare use so weird a concept and call it Bible?

Well, and we shrug, besides being irrelevant, such a statement may not even be true. For even if the word *rapture* does not appear in the Bible, such an argument would not support the contention it should never be understood as a legitimate doctrine. Such would not make the teaching invalid. If it did many other important doctrines would also vanish. Many truths are not stated outright in the Bible and must be deduced through study of the whole counsel of God. The word *Trinity* is not in the Bible but all orthodox Christians believe God is *the three in one*. Even the word “Bible” is not in the Bible. In fact, there is not one English word which appears in the original text of the whole of the Word of God.

So we must stop turning out all these English-language Bibles!

But in the case of the *rapture* this may well be one of the very few times when the “big deal” test may prove actually wrong. The Greek word

in this case is *harpazo*, which means to be snatched away. And the Greek, when translated into Latin becomes the Latin word, *rapturo*, a form of the English word *rapture*, which actually does appear in Latin translations of the Bible. So it is sort of not correct to say the word *rapture*, or the Latin equivalent, does not appear in the Word of God.

More importantly, the Bible actually does teach that someday all authentic Christians will be snatched away into the clouds, and most likely in a state of euphoria, whether they believe in the doctrine or not. As Dr. Missler likes to say, "for those who do not now accept this teaching, we'll brief you on the way up!"

Of course the deeper problems lie in interpretation. Many groups confuse this *rapture* or the *Blessed Hope* with *Christ's Second Coming*. This is not unreasonable since both feature Christ in the final days of this present age. Many groups just feel that *Messiah's* coming cannot happen in two parts. It seems to them unwieldy and impractical. So they lump everything into one event and call it good. You will hear such groups say they are not pre-millennial and they are not post-millennial, they are just plain pan-millennial. For them it will all pan out in the end. They don't think it matters.

This is sort of like saying that proper interpretation of God's Word is not always important. I think it is.

But regardless of what people think, there are major distinctions in the two events, and they do reflect on other things. And those who have no idea about what is coming may fall for the deception and into Satan's lies. The *rapture* happens in a moment and literally in a blink of an eye, and not out where every eye will see as will the Second Coming. The *rapture* sends its participants to meet with Jesus in the clouds, not on the ground. Jesus will not yet step down onto the earth. Those who vanish do so for seven years, only to return with Christ at his *Second Coming*.

By contrast, "*The Second Coming*" lasts several days, involves all the people on planet earth in a very open way, and everyone who returns to earth from the sky is mounted on horseback. Jesus's destination is the battle of Armageddon, and for that he must come down to earth.

When the *rapture* happens, it will shock and dismay those left wondering on the ground. Many will be startled; and then appalled, as it dawns on them what has happened. It will be precisely like the moments after Noah stepped onto the ark. People had laughed at Noah for years; and then the rains finally came, God shut the door of the great boat, and then it was too late to get on board.

Similar to Noah's persecution, people will be pointing up, telling the world, getting laughed at. Few will believe in a "cloud" escape, as few believed in the ark. The "sky" will have a certain "color" about it, as current events unfold. It will probably not be a real color, but the metaphor is clear. The sky is turning red now.

Nothing is blocking that trumpet from sounding right now. It could sound this minute, and the dead in Christ would rise up out of their graves and those of us still living would change and leave. One moment two will stand together in the field; and the next, one of them is missing.

And when all this happens, chaos comes to planet earth. Multicar piles on the freeways, planes falling from the sky, and nursery beds will be suddenly empty. Everyone will be looking for someone.

Though not one Christian who holds to it makes the *rapture* a basis for fellowship, some Christians fight this teaching with a determination that seems to exceed the bounds of fellowship. Many feel it is a cop out. When deception, war, famine, and danger fill the world, making it a maelstrom of peril, it is fascinating some want to be cast into such terrible misery. Some seem to want suffering.

Noah got onto the ark before the waters overflowed and Lot was hustled out of Sodom before the fire, but the *Church* apparently must go through sorrow, or these people will never be happy.

Christ took the wrath of God upon himself on the cross.

The Christian who wants wrath for the *Church* because the *Church* has not been what it should have been does not even make sense. God's wrath is not for the *Church*. That wrath already fell, and it fell on Christ. To take it for ourselves is to demean Christ. Jesus took all to himself, or the payment he made was insufficient, and nobody is saved. The trials of the *Tribulation* are not for the forgiven, but for the wandering, those who do not yet know Christ. The *Tribulation* is a last ditch effort to push men back to repentance. While the *Church* hasn't been perfect, it will rise in that day in victory for what it has accomplished.

For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days before the flood they were and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the

coming of the Son of Man be.

Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming...the Son of Man is coming at an hour When do not think He will.

Matthew 24:38-42 (NASB)

Though it sounds a bit over the top to some Christian traditions -- there are no aliens with tractor beams pulling people into the mother ship. In fact *rapture* has happened before, many times before. But for some strange reason it is often overlooked.

The patriarch Enoch was *raptured*:

Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years...and he was not, God took him

Genesis 5:23-24 (NASB)

A chariot of fire carried the prophet Elijah away:

it came about as they were going along...there appeared a chariot of fire and horses of fire...And Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.

2 Kings 2:11 (NASB)

God never seems to do things exactly the same. He likes variety in what he does, nevertheless Elijah too went up in something supernatural like *rapture*.

Jesus was lifted away from the earth in a sort of *rapture*.

And after ... [Jesus] had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight...-

Acts 1:9 (NASB)

Even the Lord himself, when he had completed all that he was supposed to do on earth, simply began to float upward and vanished into the clouds, a *rapture* right before his disciples' eyes.

Phillip the evangelist, preaching to a revival in Samaria, was whisked nearly a hundred miles over hills and valleys in seconds, to speak to an Ethiopian eunuch who was traveling through the Gaza. And then he was zapped back again, a horizontal travel at least similar to *rapture*.

And then there are the other strange happenings during the resurrection of the Lord himself. As Matthew states, other graves besides Jesus' opened and the occupants of those graves came out. This must have happened all over the nation. So where, one wonders, did these Old Testament characters go?

*it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men."* *Ephesians 4:8 (ESV)*

Paul seems to indicate that Jesus led all the faithful of the Old Testament in a mighty triumph up to glory in the aftermath of his resurrection. It was a "host," now that would have been a *rapture*!

Finally the Two Witnesses after their resurrection will be lifted up into heaven.

*But after the three and a half days, the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet...And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here."
then they went up into heaven in the cloud, and their enemies watched them.*

Revelation 11:11-12 (NASB)

The *rapture* of the *Church* is often dealt with as a part of prophecy, but it is actually part of salvation. The salvation of the body, the translation or change, for the *rapture* actually has more to do with saving the "house" for our souls and spirits than the events of the future. The recovery of this doctrine is usually attributed to a member of the Plymouth Brethren, by the name of James Nelson Darby. And did it get him into trouble. His critics, which are many, seem to think he got the whole thing from some crazy priest and a hysterical young woman sometime in 1826. But according to his own records, neither had anything to do with it.

When he first came upon this teaching, Darby wasn't even thinking about prophecy. He had been ill, and he was considering his own death and resurrection. No true Christian denies that the resurrection of the body is coming for all who truly believe on Christ. But until Darby nobody had thought it through very well. They knew about resurrection day, and they knew about heaven, but the two were never put together very well.

But Darby, devoting himself to study, read the following:

*it is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable
...it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown
in weakness, it is raised in power*

1 Corinthians 15:40–43 (NASB)

Now *rapture's* opponents say the teaching of the *rapture* is a very new thing and was never known in the *Church* until he invented it—as we said, sometime in the winter of 1826. And because of the newness of the doctrine, it could only be wrong, and unbiblical, or so say his many critics. One wonders when the idea of “newness” became a criteria for *Church* doctrine. In fact Martin Luther, the great reformer and founder of the Lutheran Church, when posting his famous Ninety-Five Theses on the door of Wittenberg Church, Halloween night in 1519, was going against authorized doctrines of the Catholic Church which had stood unchallenged for over a thousand years. But old did not necessarily mean right in this case either. Luther, far from being unbiblical, even had to remind the *Church* of so fundamental a teaching as the doctrine of grace.

When Luther espoused, “*the just shall live by faith,*” and not salvation by the seven holy unctions of the church, it was new to all who heard him. Most men everywhere called him a heretic, and the Catholic Church brought him up on charges. To be convicted of heresy at that time was serious. It meant death in the flames. But as Martin Luther said, “here I stand, I can do no other.” And if the Word had been against him he would quickly have confessed and accepted the discipline of the Pope. But if the Bible supported his views, there was no power on earth could sway him.

Of course we know that in spite of what the men of his time were saying, his views were not against the Bible nor against believers of the true *Church*, regardless of denomination. People can be wrong, and wrong for a very long time. But at the time Luther's views seemed just as radical as Darby's seem to some today, and Luther's views were correct; and so too are J.N. Darby's, because they fit with the Word of God.

For Darby, like Luther before him, simply read the Bible with seeing eyes, and the unction of the Holy Spirit, and saw what was written on the page. New truth or old was not relevant, if it was truth. Carefully he studied Paul's letter to the Ephesians, and he deduced that since man was created in the image of God who is a *Trinity* (Father-Son-Holy Spirit) God had made man to reflect even this “trinity” like aspect—for man, according to Paul is a tri-unity (body-soul-spirit).

For centuries the Catholic Church had taught only the soul of man could be saved and sent to heaven, and the reformers had never corrected this error. But the old teaching wasn't what Darby was reading out of Paul. He had come to the startling conclusion that mankind would someday have his complete tri-unity restored to him in heaven. Man would live for eternity in a sanctified tri-unity (body, soul and spirit), so that even his body, long regarded as the discard of this present world, would at the resurrection be called up out of the grave, and changed into a body similar to the one Jesus had, a body of purity. For all eternity man would have all three. We would not forever be some sort of disembodied ghosts floating about in the eternal Kingdom. We would have a body like the body in which Jesus was raised.

When we die now, those absent from the body those who have died as true Christians, are present with the Lord. This is a wonderful truth. We go into the presence of God at death. There is no sleep of the soul. But as Darby studied, he noticed something very strange. Obviously some would still be alive, when the resurrection trumpet sounded, and they too would change. A change which would take place in the twinkling of an eye. And he read the same in Paul:

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed...

I Corinthians 15:5 (NASB)

Oft times the obvious becomes the most dramatic of discoveries. Darby simply considered the living when the trumpet sounded. What would happen to them? So he discovered the startling condition of those still living, and his teaching began sounding like things to come. He was interested in the redemption of the body, and made a radical discovery.

For Paul said simply, “*we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...*,” and it became evident God had forever intended to allow the last generation to escape the pain of death altogether. And Darby rejoiced. And from such clear Scripture, Darby began teaching his *pre-tribulation rapture*. And while he is often accused of some strange and cultic desire to erode the faith once delivered to the saints, his views only strengthened understanding of what Paul was saying. And never once did he make them a precondition for fellowship. Moreover, his views had nothing whatever to do with hysterical young ladies like one Margaret McDonald, some have attached him to. She was supposed to have had a “prophecy”

which influenced Darby, and yet accounts of what she said is contrary to what Darby believed and taught. As to his association with the mysterious old priest Manuel de Lacunza, such reports are just strange. To those who know his history, it is most unlikely that Darby ever heard such a name.

Darby's views stand or fall only with the Bible. But as we have said, the critics of his viewpoint seem to exceed the limits of congenial fellowship. There was nothing sinister in what JN Darby said or did no matter how often his critics connect him to such strange "contributors" as the two mentioned. Besides, to this hour no person who accepts the pre-tribulation *rapture* makes it necessary for salvation or even fellowship. But we are unashamed to believe and even preach this great truth to all men.

Darby was castigated for coming up with something never heard of in the body of Christ before, but as it turns out that is not even true. Darby's views were first presented by him alone, and yes he is given credit as the modern proponent, but it appears that Darby was neither the first nor the last to believe in what theologians now call the *pre-tribulation rapture*. There was even one Christian leader who taught this doctrine as early as the fourth century.

In about 370 AD, Ephraim of Nisibus wrote about a gathering together to the Lord to escape the troubled time at the end of this present age, the *Tribulation* as we now call it.

"All the saints and elect of God are gathered together before the tribulation, which is to come, and are taken to the Lord, in order that they may not see at any time the confusion which overwhelms the world, because of our sins."

(Ephraim of Nisibus, ca. Ad 370).

So when the *rapture* strikes; and it will, those who have already died will have their bodies returned to them. And they will rise transformed, their old husk transformed into a body much like Jesus.

So what followed was simply a logical axiom. Those true believers fortunate enough to still be living shall be changed, and then rise to meet the Lord in the air. Yes it is a preposterous thing, this rapture, but it is clearly taught in the Scripture. These are the people privileged to never know the sting of death.

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Those who await the heavenly Groom are to know the look of the weather, the “look” of the times in which they live. Jesus said we would know the age, but never the hour. We would know the season, but never the day. He promises to come, “*like a thief in the night,*” for those not ready. But for those who are, he is coming like a bridegroom, waking his sleeping bride. So he comes for all those who in the *Church*. Those “maidens” who have their lanterns trimmed and vessels filled ready to shine with their Savior for all eternity. All who are true Christians will go with him. There is no such thing as a “partial rapture” with only the “most righteous” going.

The *rapture* is called the Blessed Hope because it represents the victorious flight into heaven for those for whom Christ died. God is taking out his beloved Bride before the great and terrible day of the *Tribulation* begins.

When we see Jesus, we shall be like he is. But get your lamps ready. The sign of the Star of David is flying in the heavens, and the heavenly groom is coming.

The Crown of Scripture



Before we finally take the plunge into spiritual hyperspace, the vast book of *Revelation* itself, we need to set a proper table and gather some translational tools. There are rules of interpretation which are unique to this special book. John, under the control of the Holy Spirit wrote other books, and they too are wonderful, but this book is different than all the rest. Truly we have reached the “crown” of the Word of God, the last and the best, and yet there is so much confusion.

Written by the Apostle whom Jesus loved, it is the story of the great King who still loves his confused and lost subjects, and shows how far he will go to reach them. It is not, as it is often portrayed, a book of horrors about an angry God about to pounce upon the people he made on earth. But quite the contrary, it is the book of the Savior’s unending love. It is the story of a passionate God determined to save his people, even as they spurn him to the very last.

And despite what you might have heard, there are no souls on earth outside that amazing love. His blood, as the old preacher liked to say; covers mankind from the uttermost to the guttermost, and from the outhouse to the penthouse, and each one of us can be saved. To say anything less is not only unbiblical; it is insulting to the One who placed his own body on the tree for the rest of us.

For while the Lord of Heaven is holy--too holy for the highest angel and the most faultless child; and while he knows all, and can do all, before all, this love tempers all. The Author of the holy Word is a lover of men’s souls. And that is the underlying message of *Revelation*.

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
Romans 10:13 (KJB)*

And even though *Revelation* is assigned to the New Testament, it is just as closely related to the prophets of the Old Testament as to those of

the New. In fact you might rightly say *Revelation* stands alone as a third testament, combining the others, and you would not be far wrong.

Daniel's last week of his great seventy-week "clock", which we already discussed, is properly the "glove" for the "hand" which is *Revelation*. Except for the first three chapters when the *Church* is still present on the earth, *Revelation* is Daniel's last week of years. Early in the fourth chapter the *Church* departs, *raptured* away into heaven.-Which brings us to the first interpretive rule of *Revelation*.

The first interpretive rule is to keep the *Church* and the *Chosen* in their correct places. One must never confuse the *Chosen*, who are Israel, with the redeemed, who are the *Church*. The *Church* will depart in the rapture, and the *Chosen* will step up, and perform their special role.

The Jew is related to *Yeshua* (Jesus) by family blood, and the *Church* by Jesus' shed blood. A few, some of those called completed Jews, are part of both. At the end of *Revelation* the two merge.

Finally, there is a third group, "the nations," also known as the "vine of the earth," from which grow the unfortunate grapes of wrath. These three remain separate and every human being who has ever lived belongs to at least one of these three groups.

And there is one more very important fact. God tells John the book he is to write will follow ordinary clock and calendar order. We call this chronological order. Many have tried to put circles within circles; judgments within judgments, and get lost in the process.

*Write therefore the things which you have seen, (the past)
and the things which are, (the present) and the things
which shall take place after these things" (the future)*

Revelation 1:19 (NASB)

There are a few exceptions, but the text explains itself. So except in those few cases, where *Revelation* commands us to look beyond mere chronology, the book is told in sequence.

Finally John Zebedee, who was like the pen in God's hand, was already an interesting character. God had long protected him for the moment when he would write this most incredible book. For years, John now an old man, had been in trouble with both Jewish and Roman authority. But John had been hard to kill.

By tradition he was arrested at Ephesus, brought to Rome by Emperor Domitian, and thrown into a caldron of bubbling oil, a terrible way to die. But John didn't die. Apparently he wasn't even disfigured by the vat of hot steaming oil.

Having failed to execute him, Domitian still wanted him gone and had him banished to the stone quarries on the Island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea. Like the Israelites in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, who escaped the fiery furnace, John escaped without harm. There are many coherences between Daniel and the *Book of Revelation*, such as this one, the supernatural deliverance from a hot execution. One might conclude the same mind wrote both of them.

The second rule of interpretation is more general. While *Revelation* reveals much about God himself and his purposes, and the future of all mankind, this book is addressed primarily to those under the *veil*, still Moses' veil, the veil of the Law. *Revelation* is the unveiling to the wandering *Chosen* people of Abraham. For them, Christ has been behind a veil for a very long time. Thus its' very name, "*The Unveiling*." *Apokalupsis* in Greek which actually does mean "unveiling."

As we have said in a previous chapter, Israel chose to veil itself from its' Savior at his first appearance, and in this way they have remained to this very hour. But the veil has always been nearby as a symbol to them. Moses spoke from behind a veil when he emerged from meeting with God. The Old Testament says it was because his face shone, and it was too bright for others to look upon, but Hebrews tells us something more.

It was bright, but it would fade. And Moses veiled his face because it was a shame to watch the shine pass off from his face. In all the years that Israel served the Lord through the Law of Moses and offered sacrifices in the temple, they served before the great veil of the temple. Only once a year could the High Priest enter, but the nation was always outside.

When Christ died, that prohibiting veil was split, and the people could finally see into the *Holy of Holies* representing Heaven, but they refused Christ, sewed up the temple veil, and put a veil up inside their hearts, a veil that blocks Christ to this moment. Israel took the veil of Moses and was made blind.

They need the *Revelation*, the unveiling of Christ to be saved.

Yeshua (Messiah) has been unveiled to all but veiled Israel, or as Isaiah said poetically, "his holy arm" has been exposed to the whole world, and millions have found salvation in that precious name. But he has

largely remained dark to his own tribe of Judah, and all Israel. The second principle of interpretation is that Israel is the primary target for this “unveiling.”

A third principle of interpretation divides the book into various portions. Chapters 1–3 of *Revelation* are symbolic of an actual history of the *Church*, when the Lord’s main focus is still on his great *Church*, those Paul says are grafted into the root which is still Israel. They actually fill in the years of Daniel’s “parenthesis,” or the great “timeout” after the 69th week. This period is not yet over and we are still living through the “gap” in Daniel’s great clock.

Israel still awaits the 70th and last week at the end of this present age. The great parenthesis represents the worldwide Body of Christ from Pentecost (where the power came to the *Church*) to the *rapture*, when the *Church* will depart. This huge period of at least 2000 years has constituted a break for Israel and is the “Age of the Gentiles.” We speak in earthly terms, to earthly readers. God never stops watching over anyone, especially Israel.

And then in chapter four, John the human author, is called “up there,” and God begins the times known as *Jacob’s Trouble* for Israel or the *Tribulation*, in terms of the gentile nations, down here. This is the period for most of the *Book of Revelation*, when the Jew is back on front stage again.

We thank Daniel for making clear that this period will last seven years, and end with the *Second Coming of Christ*. Christ (*Yeshua Hamashiach/ Messiah*) then returns to sit upon the throne of David, and rule planet earth forever.

One very important side note: after chapter four of the *Revelation*, the *Church* is missing. Why? The *Church* is in Heaven. It is missing altogether from the surface of planet earth, until it returns with Christ. Daniel told us that all would be made clear at the end of the age when *Yeshua* returns to rule.

*And there will be a time of distress, such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time **your people, everyone who is found written in the book**, will be rescued ...and those who have insight will shine brightly like the...expanse of heaven, and **those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever...** But as for you, Daniel conceal these words and seal up the books until the end of time*

Thus the whole point of *Revelation* is to unveil Christ to Israel. But it is not just for Israel's sake. Once the *Church* is removed, *Yeshua* will be unveiled, once more, to his own people, and this time they will find him sufficient, this time they will receive him.

a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written

Romans 12:25,26 (NASB)

Israel will be saved! Saved during the troubles coming. God created the *Chosen* for the times we live in. And he is about to unleash Israel filled with the love and power of God, and will pour out his love upon the bitter waters that are mankind through their last days efforts.

So in these last days, the Jew has a role to play that is vast beyond his wildest dreams. As Daniel is told, “those who lead the many to righteousness” will shine as the stars forever. This is the great moment for which Israel was called and tested through all these years. This is the time of the glory of the *Chosen* people. Like the Jewish Savior himself, who healed the sick, raised the dead, and was a blessing to everyone he touched—just before they took him out and nailed him to a cross—Israel will also turn the other cheek and show forth the never-ending love of God.

Lord of the Seven



As the Book of Revelation opens, the old Apostle has outlived them all and has been banished to a dismal rock washed by the waves of the Aegean; the island of Patmos. It's about 95 AD, and John has spent his life in persecutions and captivities. Jesus has already been gone some 60 years, and by the time of his banishment Jesus has been away most of John's long lifetime.

But today John is in the Spirit; and it is the *Lord's Day*, (Sunday, called such, because it is the day Jesus rose), and he is waiting with expectation. The very atmosphere is pregnant with the presence of God when suddenly the resurrected Jesus appears, in all his unearthly power. And John falls before him like a dead man.

*I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet...
And I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me,...
And his head and his hair was white...Like snow;... and his eyes
were like a flame of fire and his face was like the sun...and
when I saw Him I fell at his feet as a dead man*

Revelation 1:10–17 (NASB)

During all the long years of both temples, the great Menorah (the seven point candle stand) stood just outside the temple veil in the second most important compartment of the temple called the *Holy Place*, just outside the *Holy of Holies* representing Heaven. The veil itself, which divided the two, was a woven tapestry of incredible weight and thickness. Some say the veil in Herod's Temple, was over eight inches thick.

Suddenly Jesus appears standing in the midst of a vision of the candles surrounded by the flames resembling the configuration of the Menorah itself.

And having turned I saw seven golden lamp stand and in the

middle of the [lamps] one like a son of Man...

Revelation 1: 12 (NASB)

It is my conviction that God desires us to see the great lampstand of Israel embedded in this vision of Christ. In fact, the association of the two is deeply implied in all God shows John in this first vision. The lampstand is the national symbol of Israel even today. And Christ is pictured standing and holding up the seven flames, representing the “seven spirits” which are the sevenfold witness of the seven churches. These are the same seven church “ages” or witnesses, which appear in the next chapters of the book.

Perhaps we have discovered something previously overlooked. We sense that Jesus, the light of the world in disguise, has always been spiritually near to the lampstand in the *Holy Place*. The *Menorah* stood its long vigil just outside the veil in the temple, like a streetlamp guiding the way into the most holy heaven. But from out there, outside the veil, the light from the candles on the lampstand could never shine into the holiest place. The light of Christ was always blocked by the veil.

And strangely enough, once the *Shekinah* the glow over the altar departed, the *Holy of Holies* became the darkest place in the whole temple.

The most holy place in the temple was jet black, a picture of the heart of man without Christ. But the *Holy Place* on the other side of the veil was always lit up with the candles of the lampstand representing the light of Christ. Upon the cross, as the body of the Savior was rent apart, the veil in the temple also split and was rent at the same moment. This allowed the light from the lampstand to finally illuminate the innermost sanctum, representing the way to heaven, if only until they repaired it again. The death of Christ is the way through the veil into Heaven! The destruction of his body opened the way into heaven in both the symbol of the temple and the reality of what Paul calls these temples, our bodies.

Until we receive Christ as Savior, the place of our *Holy of Holies*, our inmost sanctum lies dead, and it is black. But the *Holy Place* outside the veil was always lit.

Jesus/*Yeshua* is the light of the world!

The great golden candle stand is the universal symbol of ancient and modern Israel. But it may come as a surprise even to Jews, both ancient and modern, that they have never had a clue as to what to do with it. Aside from making it as Moses commanded, and keeping it lit, the Jews have no use for the seven canded Menorah in their regular ritual. It is just not part of Judaism and yet strangely it is the official symbol of their

nation, even more than the six pointed star, and was even then in the time when Titus invaded Jerusalem.

Under the command of scripture, the priests kept it lit. And it provided light in the *Holy Place*, and that was about the extent of its use. Detailed instructions for its construction are found in Exodus, and there is not much more said about it in all the Bible. In Zechariah the vision of *Two Olive trees* seem to feed the oil for the stand, and then there is this obscure business at the beginning of *Revelation*.

But now we know. The Menorah is an example of the mystery surrounding the cross throughout the Old Testament. Who could have imagined that the greatest icon of Judaism is really haunted by the presence of the risen Christ? In fact, and Paul lets us in on the secret. Christ has been standing there all along, the silent sentinel, the light of the world, and witness of a wonderful truth.

He stands in the midst of the candles waiting for his light to penetrate the darkness of the Jewish inner veil. He stands, never tiring, holding his lamp on the doorway, the only entrance for the most holy heaven. Shocking as it might be to a Jewish Rabbi, the great symbol of Judea, the Menorah, is also the picture of the *Church* inside the temple.

But are there other clues?

The giant golden lampstand is the only true golden object in an environment of other gold-appearing furnishings in that temple room. All appear golden. The altar of incense, and the table of showbread; but they are only covered in gold, and their hearts are made of acacia wood. But the Menorah is solid gold to the heart. And it must be beaten into its final appearance, from one golden brick. It cannot be attached together with other hardware. Christ was tortured, and so was the metal of the *Menorah*. The *Church* has existed on the earth for over 2000 years, and there have been seven manifestations; differences in architecture, in services, and in leadership, but all made of one tortured lump of gold. It all speaks of Christ himself, the head of his *Church*.

The Menorah is heated in the flame, as he was, and it cannot be assembled together with screws. Its' gold speaks of both purity and unity, as the *Church* regardless of the age and location, is also a place of unity and purity, washed in the tested, fiery blood of Christ.

The almond is artificed onto the outside, a symbol of the staff of Aaron which bloomed, and a picture of new life from a dead stick. The oil is piped into its flame cups, a picture of the Holy Spirit flowing through all its arms. But how exciting to know that Christ, the light of the world,

stands just outside the veil of our own inner temples, and wants to come inside.

*the seven lamp stands (seven connected lamps) are the churches .
Revelation 1:20b (NASB)*

The lampstand, not to be confused with the eight pointed lamp of Hanukkah and the Jewish December celebration, has a single lamp at the top of the center post, with three equal arms coming out of each side, making seven lamps all equal in size and height. All the arms end in a light so that the flames are all along one plane on top. Every church was equally imbued with the Holy Spirit in its time.

The center stand represents Christ himself, with his arms extended cross like to hold up what we have called the seven *Churches*, what John here calls the *Seven Spirits* of God.

During all the years serving inside the temples, the Levite priests toiled endlessly to keep the flames lit and to perform the other duties inside. They never sat. They called the center candle the “servant” (or in Hebrew, the *Shamash*). This servant light was never put out; and even when oil was low, it never seemed to go out. The Servant seemed always supernaturally lit and the bringer of light. (Of course from our vantage point we can see this center light as Jesus. The center candle, or the pedestal, is the candle we most associate with Christ who was servant to all of us.) The Levites lit the other candles from the Servant each time they went out. But somehow the Servant always stayed supernaturally lit.

In the Talmud, an ancient writing of the rabbis of Israel, there is the story about a very righteous Jew named Simeon. The Talmud avoids stories about Jesus, but tells stories from his time. And the time of this writing was around the birth of Christ and there is no reason to doubt that this character, an old righteous Simeon, was the very same character as the one mentioned in the Gospels. He was the man who spent his time worshipping in the temple with old Anna, as his companion, waiting for the coming King from God.

And right away these two seem to notice a baby in the arms of a young Jewish peasant girl, and knew the Lord had come back to his temple. Simeon was nearly blind, but immediately came over to Mary and Joseph. Supernaturally, he recognized Christ. It was Jesus’s eighth day of life, and time to be circumcised,

when old Simeon, full of joy, took up the child, and said, “Now I can depart in peace, for my eyes have seen the glory of Israel.” And apparently it wasn’t long after this that Simeon actually did die.

But strangely enough, after Simeon died, according to the ancient Talmud, the Servant candle no longer stayed lit any better than the other candles. Of course the Talmud associates the loss of the Servant with the death of righteous old Simeon, and ignores the visit of the young couple, and Christ. Perhaps Christians understand this vignette better. Perhaps it was because the true Servant had come back to the House of the Lord. The Savior, the true “light of the world,” had entered the temple undetected. The servant candle had only been the symbol of the Savior within the lampstand, and it was no longer needed. This candle was now nothing more than a candle.

Then later, in what is called Yoma 43:3 of the Talmud, it is recorded that the *Shamash* refused to burn at all. It had stopped sometime after about 30 AD, about the time the Lord had inspected Herod’s Temple and found no fruit in Israel. Apparently the true Servant, had taken himself away until the Times of the Gentiles would be completed and the time for his return would be near.

And Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the veil of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom.

Mark 15:37, 38 (NASB)

When the great veil suddenly ripped itself at the very moment of the death of Christ, then if only for a few hours the *Menorah* stationed just outside would have cast its light through the split and lit up the *Holy of Holies*. The symbolism here couldn’t be more wonderful. The way to heaven is found by following the light from the great light of the world, through the doorway of his broken body on the cross. At the very moment Jesus was making a way into the most holy for all of us, through the veil of his own torn human flesh. At that very moment the symbol of his body, the immense veil, had torn and the light of the world was shining into the heart of blackness.

If it had been the first temple, Solomon’s Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, with the covering of golden angels would have shined out of the dark. But this was Herod’s Temple the second, without an ark, so there would not have appeared the golden cherubim, nor even the golden box beneath it. Just a table upon which the blood of atonement could be placed

every year on *Yom Kippur*. But for just a few hours, perhaps a few days, the *Menorah* actually illuminated the part of the temple representing heaven.

It was an allegory lived out. The light of the *Menorah* lighting the way to heaven. But the Lord and his *Church* are the very lamp lighters on the way to heaven all the time. The great lampstand with its seven candles, Christ's *Church*, lit the way literally and were a picture of the "open door" into heaven. It is still lighting that way.

you shall make a lamp stand of pure gold. The lamp stand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece...Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches...from it one side and three branches from the other.

Exodus 25:31–34 (NASB)

The seven candles of the lampstand are still on the earth, as the *Revelation* opens, and Daniel's great clock is still in the silence of the parenthesis. It is still the "times of the gentiles." Then Jesus, in his eternal glory, appears to the Old Apostle and John falls like a dead man beneath his feet. And he hears the voice of thunder saying:

I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades Revelation 1:19a (NASB)

And then through seven small letters, the risen Jesus dictates to John a message to each of the seven candles. Within John's view, across the waters of the Aegean Sea, is the mainland of what is today Turkey, where there were seven small cities. At that time, each of them had a church. And as it turns out each of them represents one flame on the great lampstand. No doubt, John spent hours in prayer over all seven every day seated praying on his lonely rock, for these really were churches of his time. Today they have all vanished, having been overcome by the armies of Islam.

But there are some interesting questions surrounding these seven little bodies which lead us to an understanding of Jesus' seven candles. The first, which immediately arises, is why? Why did God choose these seven? Why not Jerusalem, or Rome, or even Antioch in Syria? There were many well-established churches in those days. These seven were out-of-the-way,

lonely outposts, not nearly as well-known as the churches in major cities. John probably knew their internal situation, their struggles, and as examples to us today these are instructive. And without a doubt their internal situation reflected on the greater message that each one of them brings. But surely God could have chosen major churches for his examples. Why choose these?

They were all grouped together in a sort of elliptical pattern on the mainland of what is today Turkey, and they appear in the geographical order he mentions with the exception of the first two. These first two were on the inside of the ellipse, nearest his island. None of them was more than fifty miles distant from the others. But the Lord had a special purpose for these tiny churches, which brings up their second strange characteristic.

It is found in their names.

Each of these little bodies is located in a town named by pagan Greeks sometime in the misty past, long before John sat writing about them in 95 AD. In the tradition of antiquity, each town's name means something, usually something about the sorts of products the town produced. But strangely embedded in each, appears to be a clue about what the Lord will say to, and through, each one of them.

Isn't it wonderful the amazing lengths the Lord God will go to make his presence felt? It is something which ought to cause us at least some pause for reflection, and it deals with something the Puritans called his Providence. God has a way of using even those who have no knowledge of what they are doing to do what he wants done. In fact, he uses everybody. All things work together for good for those who know God. Even those who do not know him he can use, and he does. From hundreds of years prior to the coming of Jesus, these seven little towns were apparently prepared for the moment John would write about them, even down to their names.

But even the fact that their names said something wouldn't be that important, were it not for the sequence imposed on them by this book of *Revelation*. There is something uncanny about the sequence and meaning of their names; each seems to mirror a part of the sevenfold history of the *Church*. And even that wouldn't have mattered much, except that they appear in the correct sequence.

The church began with the miracles and freshness of the Apostolic Church.

To the angel of the church in Ephesus write; The one who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lamp stands, says this:

Revelation 2:1 (NASB)

The name Ephesus means “first love,” something which the Lord warns this group not to lose. The first *Church*, the first segment of the history of the *Church* began with the “first love” between the Lord and his people. The period of “Ephesus” lasted for about 50 years.

But slowly came the persecutions, the catacombs, the lions, and the human torches in Nero’s gardens, and the rest of the trials of the *Martyred Church*.

And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life, says

Revelation 2:8 (NASB)

Smyrna means “crushed,” and these people who were next in line were under the heel of imperial Rome, a power which despised them. For much of the period the *Church* was hiding in the catacombs, until an emperor came along who testified he had been given a vision to go and conquer in the sign of the cross. The Smyrnan Church suffered for about 250 years, until the battle of Milvin Bridge in 312 AD.

Emperor Constantine at least pretended to be a Christian, and certainly supported the Christians, so that the persecutions of the previous Roman leadership ceased. But he also took charge and declared the statues of the old pagan religion to be the saints of the new.

Zeus was now Saint Peter, and statues filled the sanctuary, making the prohibition against the graven images of the *Ten Commandments*, no longer forbidden as part of general worship. Thus was born the *Compromised Church*.

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write; the who has the sharp two edged sword says

Revelation 2:12 (NASB)

This was “Pergamum,” which means “bad marriage.” In this church, Christians married the world. From the *Compromised Church*, a priestly class arose at the center of political power in Rome. Eventually the priests declared themselves rulers over all of Christendom, and Popes and

Cardinals flourished and became a paid clergy, to rule over the people. This *Church* of Pergamum began with Constantine and blended into the church where Popes ruled. They reached their full ascendancy in about 450 AD.

They constituted a paid and landed clergy of which the Popes were the pinnacle, the *Nicolaitans* Jesus despises. The word *Nicolaitan* means; "those who rule over the people." Bishops forsook their poverty and became men of power and prestige. Thus was born the *Babylonish Church*, full of political power, the occult, and superstition, and especially an "unworthy communion," the consumption of the so-called actual blood and body of Christ which supposedly happens in the Catholic Mass.

And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write; The Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like burnished bronze , says...

Revelation 2:18 (NASB)

This is "Thyatira," which means "unworthy sacrifice," absolutely descriptive of a church which pretends to offer the very blood and body of Christ every week. Moses couldn't enter the promised land for striking the rock twice, a rock which represented Christ; imagine how often these people have struck him. Nevertheless, the church of the unworthy offering was the center church and the pedestal which bears the weight of the rest. And Catholicism has lasted over a thousand years and is still going strong.

Within this body, Jesus points to a woman; some sort of unfaithful woman, as the Bible often uses a symbolic female, a "Jezebel" of the occult in this church, and for good reason. This is the church which has worshipped "Mary" as the "queen of heaven" for many many years. Not the real Mary of course, but an idol created by the confusion of men.

So from the glory of the *Apostolic Church*, to the dogged determination and righteousness of the *Martyred Church*, to the worldliness of the *Compromised Church*, came "the deep things of Satan" found in the *Babylonish Church*. And Jesus warns this body that unless they repented, when the time of the *Tribulation* came, they would be left behind.

But out of the confusion, a few heard the call to come out and be separate, and the *Reformation Church* was born. "Sardis," the church of the Reformers, means "remnant," and it still exists with a reputation for holiness, and it is supposedly very orthodox. And while its doctrine was

better than the occult superstition, idolatry, and false worship of Thyatira, Sardis is a cold hard stone.

And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars says "this: I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive but you are dead."

Revelation 3:1(NASB)

Sardis is dead, and because of this I believe Jesus has more stern words for Sardis, than even the Babylonish Thyatira. The Sardisian Church has a correct stance, but it has no Spirit. The Lord declares they have a name that they are alive, but they are dead. They believe many of the right things, but they have become the *Church of Dead Orthodoxy*. Within their great affirmations, they had lost track of a relationship with Jesus Christ. They were bookish at the expense of relationship, and lasted throughout the Reformation from Martin Luther to about the time of the first great missionary, William Carey.

Many of the mainline protestant churches still belong to this group. My own background in the social gospel church fits solidly into this group, and yet out of this body of lifelessness, because they had held solidly to much truth, a few responded to the call of God to go into the entire world and teach Christ's gospel to all nations. This was "Philadelphia," the *Church of Brotherly Love*. This is the Missionary Church, the Church of the Open Door.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, Who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, says...

Revelation 3:7 (NASB)

The Lord tells this group he is with them to open doors which cannot be closed, and to close doors which cannot be opened. And it is these who have gone to the uttermost parts of the earth with the gospel.

With this church came the great missionary movements of the late 1700s, all the way to the present day, when there are still many presenting the truth in teeming jungles, and frigid ice stations, and everywhere in between.

William Carey, Hudson Taylor, Adiniram Judson, and Amy Carmichael, among thousands, went, and bled, and died to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. These are precious in the eyes of their Savior.

But out of this faithful body emerged the modern mega-church, so wealthy, so full of programs it cannot see its own blindness. The Lord, in sort of a pun tells this *Church* to go to the store and get eye salve so that it might see. “Laodicea” means “power to the people,” and it is the *Apostate Church*.

The city of Laodicea was known for two things, both of which the Lord plays on. Compounding of a very high quality eye salve, and flowing artesian wells with lukewarm water. He calls them so luke warm that he will spew them out of his mouth.

And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write; The Amen, the faithful and true witness the Beginning of the Creation of God says

Revelation 3:14 (NASB)

This is the *Modern Church*, so much like the rest of the world, with such big budgets and programs, it hardly has any distinction from the world around it anymore at all.

A Recap of the Seven Churches

Ephesus—first love: The apostolic church...the church in infancy from Jesus’s resurrection to John on Patmos. Jesus tells them to keep their first love.

Smyrna—crushed: The martyred church...the church under the Caesars from Nero to Constantine. Jesus tells them they may think they are poor, but they are rich.

Pergamum—bad marriage: The compromised church...the church accepted by the world, from Constantine to the Popes. Jesus tells them to press on to overcome, and hold to the sharp sword of the Word of God.

These first three have probably vanished from the earth but the rest, from this church onward, will survive in some fashion, to the *rapture* and coming of the Lord.

Thyatira—unworthy offering: The papal church...the church under the Popes from the Bishop of Rome to Martin Luther. These are told they

have largely missed the truth and will be cast into the *Tribulation* , but for the few faithful Jesus tells them to hold fast until he comes.

Sardis—remnant: The reformed church...the church under the Reformers from Martin Luther and Calvin to the Wesleys. Jesus tells them if they will not wake up he will come upon them like a thief in the night and they will miss him altogether.

Philadelphia—brotherly love: The missionary church...the church under the missionaries from the Wesleys to Billy Graham, David Wilkerson, and Bill Bright. Jesus says I have put before you an open door that no one can shut. They will be snatched away in the *rapture*, and miss “the hour of testing” coming on the whole world.

Laodicea—power to the people: The apostate church...the church under the mega-church movement. Jesus tells them that since they are neither hot nor cold, he would spit them out of his mouth.

Each church came and went in its time, and the last four still have their adherents in the world of today. Each church had a light for its time, regardless of how sternly the Lord approached it. Each one had a witness for Christ, and though lovely or unlovely, the Savior had given his life for each, and loved each one of them to the death.

But the end of the *Church* will come like a thief in the night....and we are well into the time of the last church, Laodicea.

*the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night.
While they are saying, “Peace and safety!”...But you
brethren are not in darkness, that the day should over
take you like a thief...so then let us not sleep as others do,
but let us be alert and sober.*

I Thessalonians 5:2–4 (NASB)

Delayed Bridegroom...



[The heavenly groom had been gone a long time.] But at midnight there was a shout “Behold the bridegroom! Come out and meet him.” Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps[but the]... foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'[but the wise virgins said] 'No there will not be enough for us and you...go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves...And while they were going away...the bride groom came, and those who were ready went in...and the door was shut...

Matthew 25:5-10 (NASB)

The door was shut...

Jewish weddings include dramatic elements. A proposal is made and accepted through the matchmaker. The bride stays at her family home in preparation. She makes her gown and prepares her dowry. And the young man goes off to build their new home.

Then, after all is ready, at a time selected to create the most surprise, the groom returns with great joy. He comes with a wedding procession from his father's house, and the young woman is celebrated. Soon they appear at the wedding supper; and are wined and dined in the home of her new father.

Christ came some 2000 years ago and proposed marriage to a people through his “matchmaker,” the Holy Spirit, and many accepted the proposal, and desired to become part of his great worldwide Bride. Satisfied, the young man departed “to make a place,” promising a home in his father's house.

He would return, but at such a time she wouldn't be expecting him. But “she,” was to be ready. The wedding procession could happen at any moment of night or day.

Such beauty and joy as of young love, bride, and wedding, is a picture of the joy *Yeshua* is about to bestow upon this *Bride*, the *Church* he has taken to be his own, when he comes for her, to take her home to his Father's house.

But there is anguish here also.

Some “virgins” (all professing Christians) were ready, and some only thought they were. They may well have even deceived themselves, until the time to go had come. How awful to be among those who looked right, and sounded right, but had no “oil,” in their lamp, and so were “left behind.” They were left outside, beating on the doors. But the doors are locked inside, and they will never get in. To have understood, and played the part, but never taken the spiritual Groom. What heartbreak.

And this procession from heaven is really coming. It is on its way even now, and the shout is near. The only important question remaining, is my lamp filled with oil? Because the day will come soon, as it did on the Ark of Noah, when the door will be shut and no more will get in.

The Seven Seals



If by chance some chronicler ever does try to make sense out of this jangling, senseless period in the history of the world, he might be swayed to call this the age of the little green men. *Star Wars*, *Alien*, *The Men in Black*, and *Independence Day* are only a few pop movie titles which crowd our shelves and fill the theaters

People are interested in space aliens.

The real kooks then are the alien buffs with a religious twist. *Dune Messiah*, *Close Encounters*, and even the Jedi in *Star Wars*, all seem to be toying around with something they are likening to God. It is also quite interesting that these UFO kooks, and they are kooks, keep publishing material sent to them telepathically from somewhere “out there.”

But where?

They have no idea-- just, “there.”

We might be quite impressed, should this material compose equations from the Pleiades on how to build a warp drive. But star drives are not what these so-called aliens want to talk about. There is not one shred of technical stuff in all the whole mass of material these people have channeled from entities in orbit around Alpha Centauri, to Louis Farrakhan’s “Mother Ship,” supposedly “in orbit on the far side of the sun,” to the deep space denizens of the Andromeda. Be they from the one who calls himself Seth, the name of an ancient god of Egypt, or Ramtha-- J. Z. Knight’s thirty-five-thousand-year-old angry entity, or even all those “Elohim,” space people saucer messiah Rael, of the “Raeleans,” are communicating with these days.

No they never mention technical stuff, but they want to talk about the New Age; and they are packed for spirits, reincarnation, and Jesus.

Personally, I would like to see the chemistry for a cancer cure, or the best method of regenerating new body parts, or even how to grow watermelons in the snow, but these aliens are worthless. All they want to talk about is spirit beings, the Ashekanazic Chronicles, the “White Lodge,” or some other such malarkey of the strange and occult. We have beings traveling from the Andromeda galaxy just to tell us how to interpret our Bible. Yep, that makes a ton of sense, doesn’t it.

Could it be that mankind is being duped? Could these beings from other planets be rather beings from other dimensions? Are they demonic rather than electronic? Jesus warned the last days would be marked by profound deception, especially in the area of spiritual truth. When naïve people hear an occult message they are certain nobody else knows, their pride is enlarged. They become convinced they have been given some special inner privilege known only to true initiates, and they gather together to study the “deeper” truths of the Bible, or become initiates into cults like Theosophy, the Rosy Cross, or the Raelians.

As we said earlier, I still remember thinking these Bible bangers had really strayed over the edge when they started talking about the *rapture* of the saints. I kept seeing bumper stickers; “In Case of *Rapture* this Car Will be Empty!” Surely, I thought, such kooks had gotten into science fiction, and not the religion with which I was familiar. And even to this moment, I understand the human reluctance to accept something so out of this ordinary world.

Prophecy researcher Chuck Misler calls the *rapture* “preposterous, and believed only because it is so clearly taught in the Scriptures.” So can it really be true? Will thousands, perhaps millions, around the earth just vanish into thin air? Will they leave little piles of neatly folded clothing behind? Well, I suppose the clothing is doubtful but amazing as it sounds, those who trust the Word of God are not the only ones expecting this vanishing! The world of the occult is saturated with it. In fact the world is being prepared by the demonic to experience the great snatch.

Satan seems to know, and must have an explanation ready for all the missing. A great lie is in preparation. Apparently the demonic assumes those they call the spiritually negative will vanish only to open up the world for their great initiation into a New Age. The demons will describe it as a great harmonic jump, a quantum leap, which will align all who are spiritually gifted into one grand world order, and one grand world religion.

So while I place no faith whatever in what the enemies of the Bible say about anything, it is still curious how consistent the occult is worldwide on this topic. And for some reason, perhaps just copycat modernity, it is based on environmental concerns. It seems the great enemy of those trying to save the earth are the believers; Bible bangers who think God is in control.

So in the realm of the little green men they expect a “cosmic shift.” And they do not mind, so long as it’s those with “negative energy,” meaning Bible believing Christians, who are zapped. That would be fine with them. They don’t want any Bible thumpers left and messing up the New World Order, anyhow.

So in *Revelation* chapter 4, at the end of the seven churches, John is taken off the earth. He is snatched upward as the *Church* age ends and taken away to spend seven years in the heavenly kingdom with Christ.

After these things I looked, and behold a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said

‘Come up here...’

Revelation 4:1 (NASB)

At John’s departure, the *Church* then vanishes from the *Book of Revelation*, as God pivots to focus again on his *Chosen* people, Israel. After chapter four, you will hear no more about those of the *Church*. Jesus (*Yeshua*) is still the issue, but the *Church* is gone. You will look high and low until the last chapter of *Revelation*, and never find it in the book again. The great snatch called the *rapture* has occurred, and, there is one other thing.

There is no question John’s relationship with the Savior was unique. He is called the disciple “whom the Savior loved,” even by John himself. But I think this special relationship extended into something far more fantastic than resting on Jesus’s shoulder during mealtime. John was uniquely called, and preserved, for the testimony he would present on the pages of this astonishing book.

I am convinced for biblical reasons that in only the case of John’s *rapture*, in about 95 AD, something very peculiar happened indeed. John

shot forward in time. John actually went forward to the time of the last seven years, when *Anti-Christ* will be ruling on the earth.

There was an intimate discussion among three persons at the end of John's gospel by the Sea of Galilee, just prior to Christ's ascension:

[Jesus to Peter] "...when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you and take you where you do not want to go." Now this [was] said, signifying by what kind of death [Peter] would glorify God...

Peter turning around saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who had also leaned back on His bosom at the supper... So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?"

*Jesus said to him, "If I want him **to remain until I come**, what is that to you?"*

John 21: 20-22 (NASB)

I am of the very controversial view that what John experienced goes far beyond mere visions. I suspect the Apostle was actually present in heaven to experience everything which happens in the seven years of the *Tribulation*. Perhaps he was taken through some sort of "worm hole" in time. But however he did it, the Lord, who is not limited, whisked him right past our present age, and on into the future, to see and to experience all that will come at the end of this present age.

To put it all very plainly, I think John Zebedee, Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, was one of the few men to have traveled in time, and perhaps the only one allowed to speak about the experience. John was told he would be present to see the *Second Coming*.

Of course, John had no idea the *Second Coming* was yet thousands of years ahead of his time. He couldn't possibly imagine the magnitude of what was being told. But it appears Jesus was going to need John to chronicle the unveiling for his own people, Israel, far in the future.

Admittedly, most interpreters have placed the emphasis on John seeing the resurrected Christ in antiquity, as he saw him on Patmos, his island of banishment in the beginning of the *Revelation*. John did see the resurrected Lord at the beginning of *Revelation*, and without a doubt that

alone was one of the most amazing encounters ever. It is no wonder John decides that having seen God he will die.

But in their conversation at the end of his gospel, Christ was speaking about his own *Second Coming*, something far future from his appearance on Patmos. I think John lived in ancient times and was moved far into the future to actually experience all that he writes about in *Revelation*.

You may disdain my analysis-- but if so, be like the good “Berean” and check these things out for yourself. If John wasn’t actually there, then all John saw was in a vision. Nevertheless, time traveler or visionary, John’s observations have the feel of a first-hand encounter. He does not say “he sees” things as in a vision. Rather, we have the impression of John interacting with what he is seeing. Angels standing nearby, ask him questions.

And John himself records an earlier situation when Jesus, who had been walking on water, already something extraordinary, steps into the disciples’ boat, and then suddenly they find themselves on the other shore. Can we, in this phenomenal case say “Beam me up, Scotty?” God seems to have no trouble with time and space, does he?

So you might reasonably ask, if this is all true “what ultimately happened to John after the events of the *Revelation* had passed?”

After he finished this book, John presumably was returned to his own era, in which he died, and his earthly remains were placed in a grave somewhere in Asia Minor awaiting the trump of God, and the *rapture* a second time.

Strangely enough, when the *rapture* trumpet actually sounds in ordinary time John’s body will again be called up into the clouds to be with Jesus. He will be *raptured* again, the only man on earth to experience this wonderment two times.

I could be wrong, of course. But the Bible does not seem to prohibit two *raptures*. Lazarus experienced death twice, and so did Paul. So there seems to be no prohibition against John being twice snatched into the sky-- once from 95 AD,-from his prison home on the island of Patmos to compose the *Book of Revelation*, and once in the future yet to come.

It will not surprise me if someday we discover John once rode a flying horse through the stratosphere alongside the heavenly stallion whose rider

was the Son of God. Now haven't I been saying this Bible is full of the most amazing stories and events in all the world?

One thing is certain, this call upward which John experienced at the end of the *Church Age* comes ever closer each day. In fact, the actual moment when Christians depart seems very close, perhaps as close as tomorrow. This is not fiction, though I quite understand it can seem so. But lest one decide these things are fantasy, the times we live in were not the first such times that seemed too fantastic to accept. The people of Noah's day must have thought him out of his mind, for similar reasons.

He was building an enormous boat on dry land because God told him it was going to rain. And though it had never happened before, Noah kept telling them the waters would cover the world and drown everyone. In fact, he kept working at it for over a hundred years while everybody laughed. But Noah had heard from God. And that boat ended up floating above the highest mountains.

And again, since the fall of man, godly men everywhere had looked for a special "One" who would come as "the seed of woman," and he never came. It had gone on so long few believed that he ever would come. Then one afternoon in the questionable city of Nazareth, an angel named Gabriel appeared to a young maiden, and the world has never been the same.

It is always best to listen to what God says, even when what he says seems far fetched. Just remember, the Bible describes the days of his coming like the days of Noah.

So at some coming moment no one expects, all those who are alive and saved will simply vanish. On his island John heard the voice we who know Jesus shall all hear, the voice like a trumpet, commanding us to come out of our tombs and rise up into the air, and be with him forever. It is the same trumpet voice John first heard on Patmos. Paul wrote of that voice in the classic *rapture* verse in I Thessalonians 4, and we can safely say it is the same:

*Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout
and the voice of the archangel, And with the trumpet of God;
and the dead in Christ Shall rise first.*

1 Thessalonians 4:16 (NASB)

This is the *Blessed Hope* of the Church.

looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the

glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.

Titus 2:13 (NASB)

This the day the *Church* departs to be with Jesus. All the past Christians who were real in their faith, be they from any of the sevenfold churches, shall have their bodies called up from their graves. And at that moment nobody knows, a trumpet will sound, and in some way only the saved will hear it. And then in a blink, an eternal change will take place, and those who really know Christ will rise into the clouds. He will be awaiting his children there.

And as we have said, shock waves will follow.

The instant panic of this translation will grip some countries more than others. The US and Canada, with their high numbers of evangelical Christians will be thrust into instant chaos. Worldwide, babies will be missing from their cribs-- frantic mothers tearing about, screaming after them. The staff of facilities built for the mentally incompetent, will be wandering around in a daze. Their patients just seemed to have vanished.

And as we said earlier, wherever there are freeways, airports and high speed rail lines, there will be scenes of instant carnage, as authorities try to separate the merely dead from those who have utterly vanished. Many in leadership, much as what happened in Hurricane Katrina, will have simply slipped away, casting off their uniforms under the imposing weight of the emergency, others having vanished completely. Government already handicapped by the universal inclination of politicians toward immoral behavior and foolish monetary policy, will be in free fall in most places, and completely overwhelmed by the scope of a crisis, a crises which will be enveloping everyone everywhere. Only a few will have any inkling of what has transpired. It will take weeks, and perhaps even months, to clean up and determine who the missing really are.

But as the shock wears off, and people begin to listen to new voices again, the obvious explanation will be some sort of alien invasion. Lurid stories of alien abduction will fill the media and occultists of all types will try to frighten people with the continuing prospect of being captured by alien beings too grotesque to even think about.

People will be told they could be next abducted, and they will stay indoors, and out of sight, pinned to their televisions, starving for news. And there they will be suddenly introduced to the new world leader, who will speak to them in the midst of their shock and weary sadness, as a friend. And soon their fears will be assuaged. Finally, they will feel that

things are coming back under control. He will explain bold new ways out of the current emergency, assert control over the invaders, stand up to whomever and from wherever they have come. And he will even seem to possess magical powers, the only one strong enough and organized enough to make the world go on. And the world leader will promise a New Age of peace and safety, of love and prosperity. And he will even offer a way to solve the age old Arab-Jew controversy in Jerusalem.

Recently, some—most notably Robert Van Kampen, who wrote *The Sign* in 1992—and Marvin Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church*, have advocated for what is called “a mid *Tribulation* rapture” at the so-called “last trump,” which they equate with the last of the trumpet judgments, which clearly end at the mid point in the *Tribulation*. The trumpet, in this scenario, must come midway through the tribulation, and the people of the *Church* must stay that long before they are rescued. Some people are sure that the *Church* must go through at least part of the *Tribulation* because they need to be punished for being a bad *Church*. Van Kampen and Rosenthal believe that the *Church* will stay into the *Tribulation* to get a good dose of all of what God is going to do to the world.

They base this whole idea on the sound of the trumpet, especially on the “last trump,” heard before the *Church* ascends. For them the only “last trump” must be the last trumpet judgment, at the center of the *Tribulation*. This is known in their own circles as the “Pre-Wrath” *rapture*, because they correctly understand that God’s children will never suffer God’s wrath. He died on a cross to cover the wrath.

And had this mid-*Tribulation* position not been made so loudly, and convinced so many, it would not be important enough to answer. But Van Kampen, who is now deceased, was very wealthy and was able to purchase millions of his own books and distribute them across the United States free of charge. Many were convinced by his marketing campaign.

But the Pre-Wrath Rapture is wrong, and not even a difficult position to overcome.

The first observation is already devastating.

What is immediately obvious is that John, representing the *Church*, is “called up here” at the start of the week of *Tribulation*, not in the middle, nor at the end. Since *Revelation* is in chronological order, John’s “calling up” comes right after the seven churches, and just before the *Tribulation*

gets going. But this is not the only, or even the strongest, answer to this viewpoint.

Everyone who has carefully examined the *Book of Revelation* agrees that the trumpets end their judgments mid week, three and a half years into the seven year *Tribulation*. This is because they end at the *Abomination of Desolation*, leaving 1260 days (3.5 years) for the Jews to run away into the hills. And by placing the *rapture* there, the Pre-Wrathers hope to avoid the “wrath of God” falling upon the saints. But it doesn’t work out that way.

They most certainly do not avoid the “wrath of the Lamb,” by having the *Church* hang around during the first half of the *Tribulation*. The sixth seal judgment is actually called, the “wrath of the Lamb,” and the seal judgments come prior to all the trumpets. It is just doubletalk to say that the wrath of the Lamb is not the wrath of God. The Lamb is God.

But it gets worse, much worse. This position also makes the “day and the hour” of the *rapture* known in direct opposition to the words of Christ himself. (No man would know, not even the Son would know.) For at exactly the last trumpet judgment, in the exact center of the “week” of *Tribulation*, the *rapture* has to strike.

The Bible would have to change to, “of that hour knoweth every man,” should the *Church* take hold of that viewpoint, and every believer in the *Tribulation* would certainly know the day, and perhaps the hour, of the moment that “not even the Son” knows.

But I believe there is a fourth, and vastly more significant reason the *rapture* must come at the outset of the *Tribulation* week. It concerns the vision of Abraham, the very vision with which this book *Zion’s Promise* is thematically bound. This view deals with the very existence of the 144,000 witnesses from Israel, Abraham’s great blessing for all the world.

The whole point of *Jacob’s Trouble*, the Old Testament name for the *Tribulation*, is to bring Israel into the fold with Christ and to use them as God’s great instrument to finish sending out the gospel to the ends of the earth. The current mission of the *Church* is “to go into all the world to preach the gospel.” But the *Church* will never complete the Great Commission of Christ. Israel will; it was planned that way.

The *Church*, in all seven formats, has completed the heavy lifting over thousands of years, but will have failed to win some of every tribe and family on planet earth by the time of the *Tribulation*. But that job was promised to Abraham, and to *Zion’s Army*, long before the *Church*.

As God promised, hell has not prevailed against the *Church*; she has won victory after victory, but she will finally run out of time. She was never intended to finish, as some teach. Long before the *Church* that task was given by God to a man called Abraham.

The Great Commission, Christ's order to go into all the world and make disciples, has been reserved for Israel to complete. It was given to Abraham in the first place, and God still wants to harvest every soul possible and will, through Israel. This is the purpose of the *Army of Zion*. This was why the *Chosen* were chosen in the first place. If the *Church* is still lingering around through the first half of the *Tribulation* why should God, at that moment, turn dramatically back to the Jew, and leave the *Church* on the lurch? But God does turn dramatically back to Israel at this time.

The time is called *Jacob's Trouble*. In *Revelation 7: 4-9* we discover a puzzling "army" of Jewish evangelists. Most writers on prophecy have no idea what to do with this army of 144,000, but it was for these that God called the Jew in the first place. He has held these people back in order to use them during the last great call on planet earth.

These are the soldiers of the *blessing* promised to Abraham. The blessing to all the families on earth was given right along with the land and the people. So for all history Israel has had this mysterious blessing, but the Jew had no idea what it was all about.

This is the "*Promise of Zion*" composed of Jews who have discovered their true *Messiah*—marshaled and equipped to reach a desperate human race in the last possible hour on earth, the *Tribulation*. It is this group who have learned the "Name" after God's rescue during the terror of the *Magog* invasion. These Jews now "know his name," as Ezekiel describes it, and they will quickly spread out into a woeful world and win a number too big to count, a people that will not turn away again from God to idols.

After these things I looked, and behold a great multitude which no one could count from every nation and all tribe and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, 'Salvation God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb

Revelation 7:9 (NASB)

The Pre-Wrath position makes this outreach by Israel sort of an afterthought. The *Church* is left sitting somewhere on earth for 3 ½ years

doing nothing or perhaps jealously moping around. Meanwhile Israel is doing great deeds, and completing the *Great Commission*. The *Church* would be trapped in the *Tribulation*, counting the months, awaiting the last trumpet, which must sound in the middle of the seven years. Then would come their *rapture*, timed to the second, with nothing to do but wait until then.

Well I don't think so.

And finally.

If the *rapture* is delayed to the middle of the *Tribulation*, why on earth does Israel stay put on the planet? By then, Israel will know Christ. If the *rapture* hits after Israel is saved...Israel will go into the clouds with the *Church*, or at least it should!

Ezekiel clearly states, they will know "the name," when *Yeshua* rescues Israel from certain destruction at the hand of the Russians in the Magog War. But in the Pre-Wrath scenario, when the trump finally sounds and the *Church* is lifted away, if Israel is saved, why won't they be *raptured* away too? Fact is, they would be. They would be going upward with the *Church*, leaving this world completely without witness through the rest of the *Tribulation*. The *rapture* cannot take place in the middle of the *Tribulation*, or there will be nobody left to tell about Jesus on planet earth!

So in summary, the Pre-Wrath, mid-Trib *rapture* position cannot possibly be correct because this Pre-Wrath *rapture* not only gives away the point in time for his return, a point which Christ himself does not know, it forces the *Church* to hang around doing nothing and makes us wonder why Israel is not *raptured* when the last trump comes too.

Finally it ties the *rapture* to a last gasp and a desperation.

God is running away at the last possible moment, and giving up this world to the devil. One recalls the panic on the rooftop of the American Embassy in Danang rather than the victorious *Church* of Christ lifting up and returning like the dew to its Maker.

The Lord is not evacuating his troops from Dunkirk, with the Nazi Panzers in hot pursuit. The Lord Jesus Christ is not running away from the Beast at all.

No, Paul calls it the “Blessed Hope” and it is the victory of the *Church*. She floats upward as the eternal Bride in a state of triumphant ecstasy, where her heavenly Groom awaits to bless her forever.

To leave the *rapture* for the center of the uglies in the *Tribulation* is anything but triumphant – but rather it becomes a desperate escape, and the *Church* just gets out by the skin of its teeth.

As for the “last trump,” as it was understood in Israel, the nation always took joy in the New Year. You see the only “last trump” Israel knew anything about, was the sound of the great ram’s horn at year’s end. It was the sound of the “shofar,” announcing a great joy, in the celebration of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. It was the sound of rejoicing, and not despair.

This is the trump we long for. The “trump” which will sound to end the era of this present world the way Noah’s Ark lifted before the sorrows of the flood. It is the trump of victory. It marks the climax of the indignation, and the soon inauguration of the Great King.

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.

Matthew 24:36 (NASB)

The Army is Mustered



*In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon
a throne, high and lifted up,...*

Isaiah 6:1 (KJV)

But what of John's *rapture*?

According to the *Revelation* He went through a doorway into the heavens and saw God; potentate over all existence, seated on his unapproachable throne. John was one of the few to actually meet his maker, alive and in the flesh. But as we know, this was not the first or even the second meeting for John with the living God. He had walked with Jesus; seen the resurrected Christ, but here was God in his ultimate form--high and lifted up, and as Isaiah said, "...his train filled the temple."

But since this writer has never seen such sights or heard such voices, I am under an impediment to speak any further on this. The Apostle Paul even tells us, "it has not ... come into the mind of man what joy awaits in heaven." And of course my imagination is covered by such words.

Nevertheless, for the sake of the reader, I will try. I will try to do the impossible, and envision what John saw in that throne room up there, the place no man can possibly see.

John was *raptured* into what Paul calls the third heaven and there he beheld God the Son, seated on his everlasting throne. Co-Creator of the universe, the one slain from the foundation of the world, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. It was certainly the most transforming sight any human being ever dared lay eyes upon.

In his day Moses' face would glow whenever he visited with God in the *Tabernacle*. Afterward, his face became so bright it blinded. He had to wear that veil because no human being could stand the brilliance reflected from his face, even in the limited glory within the *Tabernacle*. But Moses'

experience was less than John's. His face reflected the glory God had placed on a human made altar, the glory present in the tent. –

But John is not inside some small tent of the earthly *Tabernacle*. John is in the ultimate glory of heaven.

And as he enters that ineffable room, if indeed it makes sense to call it a room, we would expect at least some discomfort on the part of this sinful human being named John. In the presence of the Almighty whose flaming eyes escape nothing, we would assume a kind of cringing in spiritual nakedness. We would expect self loathing as when on his island he'd turned to see the spectacular vision of Christ among the candle sticks.

But the old apostle seems at rest, almost contemplative, describing the figure on the throne as though he were describing an old friend. He is in awe, but he seems unafraid. And this is the pinnacle of power in the cosmos. No indeed, it is far more. From this throne the cosmos exists and is held together.

And these are the eyes of God. In the past men like John himself, could not face those eyes. Peter could not even stand to look into the veiled righteousness of Jesus in human flesh. Sin cannot withstand the encounter with the holy omnipotent perfect God. And it seems Isaiah was even more undone.

I said, 'Woe is me for I am ruined! ...

For my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts

Isaiah 6:5 (NASB)

So John's peace is incredible. It is certain no matter whatever encounters had happened in the past what John saw eclipsed anything ever seen before by living man.

behold a Throne was standing in heaven, And he who

was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius

in appearance; an there was a rainbow around the throne

Revelation 4:2,3 (NASB)

The eternal King was before him.

But this is heaven and no longer occupied earth, and the sin of this life left behind. He no longer had anything left to hide and

purity likely flooded his whole being. For John was looking in person at what Daniel only saw in his mind.

His vesture was like white snow, And the hair of His head like pure wool, His throne was ablaze with flames,...A river of fire was flowing coming out from before Him, Thousands upon thousands were attending Him,

Daniel 7:9-10 (NASB)

Language escapes its own use as we attempt to delve further into something which surpasses words. John would have encountered exploding color, brilliant light, and beauty such as never seen before; but such ideas convey no more than a loud and flashy fireworks display, and do not even touch the surface of what John actually experienced.

Nonetheless, withal, the glory came mingled in a perfect euphoria of never ending joy. The *Shekinah* was washing all around John. With a kind of living, throbbing brilliance, a light imbued by fire, and by life itself. And most wonderful of all, he discovered he could now look directly into the source, which would have killed him moments before.

Such was a brightness, so much brighter than the sun on earth. And yet in each instant came the change in color a beautiful change of hue and pigment, and far beyond anything every seen.

And there before his eyes, the eternal majesty reposed, joyful, transparent, and representing himself of something sublime and clear as jasper.

In 1611 when the King James Bible was assembled, a “jasper” was a perfect diamond. Today if you look up the word you will probably find an ugly brown silicate, a rock the American Indians used as flint. But this is not at all like what is being described.

God as he appears in heaven is apparently something akin to a living, sparkling diamond. Precious and unique to such a degree as to even render earthly diamonds as drab as the pictures of arrowhead flints, in the books.

Perhaps he is like earthly diamonds, where light is bent so acutely it can be captured inside, refracting, breaking up the light into its rainbow spectrum, so that it creates a scintillating maelstrom of colors and seethes with luminous beauty inside the stone; perhaps such is happening as he is seated on his throne. Over the enormous figure was what appeared to John

as something like a vaulted sky which could barely contain the multicolored lightnings of a million hues flashing to the size of this figure, one immediately sensed something akin in magnitude to a massive thunderhead cloud, towering miles into the sky. I am man 1 man could stand before such majesty without feeling small. One trembles to think of the power encompassed by so vast a pillar, as in a thunderhead. In such an atmospheric colossus, are millions of kilowatts, more power than the largest atomic bomb. But such magnitudes pale when compared to the limitless power John saw seated on that throne. And before such, a man becomes like a microbe.

And yet even feeling so insignificant, John understood the God he served in a better way. For there, before all that hideous power, John could see with eyes that see, and what he saw was love. Before him in his total majesty was a God who had regard for him and even a deep love for him. But not just him. He knew, as if for the first time, that God has a passion for all mankind.

God is not willing that any should perish, but that all might come to a knowledge of his grace. The One seated on that magnificent throne still loved him as he loved him at dinner in Jerusalem.

And John was left to gaze with awe at such power, but power wrapped in such love. In truth it was terrifying. To match look for look with those eyes which knew eternity. But in doing so, he had never felt such security. For in all that strength he sensed with the certainty of a child, ultimate safety. He felt he was in the loving arms of his own strong father, and he was.

So for the very first time, in the midst of all that life giving "God" energy, he felt truly alive. As if shucking off a chrysalis of dirt, destruction and death, he emerged the butterfly of what he would later describe as true life. For the very first time, there was no lingering sense of death's foul breath, and he could finally see how death pervades everything we experience on earth.

But we must move on.

But in doing so we know how poorly we have drawn this tawdry facsimile. What John really experienced we humans are not yet equipped to know.

But we do know whatever else he experienced, his going up represents the *Church in rapture*. And the redeemed of the Lord shall so return and

come with singing, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. Those in Christ will finally find what they would call home, and it will be perfect.

Some foolishly feel that in going off to heaven, the *Church* will miss out on what's really going on, meaning down on the ground. It's as if the important stuff really does happen down here on earth with the *Anti-Christ*. We are so depraved.

And how utterly ridiculous. The *Church* won't have a dull moment once it reaches heaven. The *Church* will be caught up immediately in the awe and the joy of Jesus himself, with joys that have not even come into the mind of man in this life.

Nevertheless, down on earth, in the terror times of the *Tribulation*, at long last the final week of Daniel's "great clock" starts ticking again. Israel has been delivered from Russian aggression by God himself, and millions of gentiles in the *Church* have vanished, and all is in the uproar of the beginning of the *Tribulation*.

With the *rapture*, the "times of the Gentiles" are now officially over. To the early Christians it was thought after Jesus' departure it would all happen in a few months at best, a brief period, followed by ages of blissful *Messianic* rule.

But it has taken at least two thousand years, and he has yet to return. No wonder he told the people that it was not for them to know how the Father set his epochs and times and days and years.

But it is close to the last week, the last seven years of Daniel's 70-week clock. The *Tribulation's* opening is not tied to the *rapture*, the *Anti-Christ* will make a seven year pact and that starts it. But that pact must come very quickly after the saints depart for heaven. And so the *Tribulation* (*Jacob's Trouble for the Jew*) opens down on earth.

And speaking in human terms, God has returned his attention to Israel.

With the "restrainer" gone, probably a reference to the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit, the power holding back evil has been taken away. How quickly events start to unwind from that moment plunging the whole world into the terrible cesspool predicted. The *Tribulation* has been inevitable from the moment mankind chose to sin.

So as Daniel promised in his 9th chapter, the “*Coming Roman Prince*” concludes a seven-year pact with the Jews and the agreement they reach electrifies the entire earth. God calls this a pact with death.

Israel will build her third temple on ground not occupied by the golden dome. But the temple they build will not be like the others. The new Jewish temple will most likely become a monument to world religion, an ecumenical edifice watched over by the committee of the United Nations, Islam, Catholicism, and the Jews all together. All parties will give up something to make it work.

Because the new world leader, in concluding his seven year pact, somehow is able to orchestrate the diverging interests and needs of Arab and Jew, when nobody else has been able to do so. He seems to get men to cooperate even when they promise to do something else. For some undefined reason, he proves himself to be a wonder worker, a man for all seasons, a man for the hour. Somehow in the aftermath of the greatest crises ever, he manages to bring all warring elements to the table, and all to sign onto the pact. Peace appears to be breaking out everywhere, and there just seems to be something supernatural about the way he speaks. People wonder after him on a worldwide stage.

The Jews would no longer exclusively claim ownership of the Temple Mount; but in exchange, they would finally have free access and could begin unmolested construction. The Arabs would amazingly allow this, but with UN oversight and freedom for Islam to continue in her mosques unchanged.

Catholics, quickly morphing into a worldwide assembly of all religion, would build a cathedral of tomorrow. Inside they would have representation of all three major monotheistic traditions and all other world religions would participate in some sort of United Nations of religion.

Rabbinical Jewish Council are uneasy, not knowing how this could all play out against their traditional religion. But they had been particularly tongue tied when facing the power of the world leader. And the temple would be officially called the “Palace of Peace,” regardless of what these rabbis in Jerusalem wanted to call it.

In addition, Israel would give up some more of her land, and allow a permanent international peace-keeping force inside her borders. Finally, she would no longer seek to call Jerusalem her national capital. Jerusalem would become the home to all peoples and all religions.

This ecumenical multinational UN of religion would keep the temple open to all. The new temple would not only serve as a historical reminder of David and Solomon, but also become a monument of peace for all mankind.

Meanwhile in the far north the “Red Horse” had begun to ride. Magog (Russia) pulled by her need to resist the power emerging in Europe, would be plotting and taking “peace” away from the surface of the earth. The Red Horse, with God’s hooks in its jaw, would be mobilizing to destroy the seven year pact, destroy Israel, in a secret bid to please her Arab friends, and emerge as masters of the world. The Red Horseman had thrown the switch to WWII.

At first in all their exuberance, the world does not seem to take notice, but soon, with the Red Horseman riding, earth is in seething turmoil. Down in the bunker under the Mount of Olives, the IDF watches for signs of a launch.

Already North Korea, determined to use new toys, her nukes and missiles, had been making belligerent moves against the South. Conventional artillery had already struck Seoul, and the South was reeling, preparing for a full invasion. Pakistan and India had been engaged in a regional struggle for Kashmir forever, but the intensity notches upward to full scale combat, with China looking over the border from the north.

And China, for her part, had just given her army the signal to mobilize for a landing on the island of Formosa, claiming the so-called nationalists for her own. In Saudi Arabia, nukes purchased with petro dollars, were being rattled at Iran. And the nuclear option for numerous countries was already being discussed.

But in heaven where John had been *raptured*, there is total security and peace. He found a place where nothing is ever wrong. A place where there were never emergencies, no stress, and nothing ever got tedious or boring.

But even there John, to his utter amazement, quickly discovers weeping.

I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written and on the back, sealed with seven seals...and I saw a strong angel proclaiming...Who is worthy to open the book and break its seals? And no one in heaven, or on the earth, or under the earth was able to open the book, or to loo

into it. And I began to weep greatly, because no one was found worthy to open the book, or to look into it
Revelation 5:2–4 (NASB)

Scholars debate this book “in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.” It has been called a book for the sake of modern readers, but it is a scroll in the hand of almighty righteousness-- the Father.

But what scroll is this?

There are many theories. I have heard preachers say with great assurance it is the deed to the earth. For some reason if God does not give up the deed to the earth there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And some float the theory it is a divorce decree between God and Israel. This from “replacement” Christians who believe themselves to be the new *Israel*. Such Christians sincerely believe that God has rejected the Jew and has now remarried the *Church*. He has become the eternal Groom to the new *Chosen* people the *Church*, and Israel’s special promises are revoked, and she must be shunned.

But it is all twaddle.

This is the *Book of Life*. It can be nothing less.

The *Book of Life* lists all who are saved on the earth. Faith in Christ, and trust in his resurrection, is the only way into this book. Yes only *Yeshua* saves, but only God the Father can declare his sacrifice sufficient.

And that is why John hears weeping. That is why he is weeping.

It is the weeping of souls because every soul of man depends on just one thing; that God will accept an offering of Jesus’ blood to cover their sin. And John, watching from the sidelines, along with all the host of heaven, and all who are on the earth hears the weeping, and weeps himself. For the fate of all that lives and breathes rests upon this one thing. Can anyone take the scroll of grace from the hand of everlasting justice, and open the book?

And no one is found worthy to take the book, and so the weeping. And John too weeps, as he watches in dismay.

For it seemed to him that no champion of present or past could take the book, or break those seals from that all powerful hand. Moses and his

laws could not. Legalism never could and never had. Michael the archangel, with all of his strength for battle, could never lift those enormous seals, and open that unearthly book. Nor could any cherubim or seraphim, or any power from any of the mighty watching gallery of the angelic host.

Nor could the strongest of the prophets; not Elijah, nor Daniel, Isaiah or even Jeremiah; much less so-called religious gurus who claimed to “bear the light.” No Gandhi or Mohammed, Socrates, or any other worthy of the present or past could bare to stand before him, much less pluck this scroll from his hand.

No mighty warrior, prophet, priest, or king who ever walked upon planet earth, could brave that throne or break those bonds. And certainly no power or principality from the nether worlds of death and hell would dare the approach. Not even the mighty accuser himself, who rises to shake the world. None of them would dare touch that book. None anywhere would dare.

So John weeps, with all cosmogony; worlds within worlds. For every human soul is guilty. And every guilty soul goes straight into hell. So
Who will open the book and save?

And then an angel, standing nearby, taps John:

*Stop weeping the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book...
And I saw the throne...and the elders, a Lamb standing as if slain...And he came and he took it out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne*

Revelation 5:5–7 (NASB)

And at once the weeping stopped.

For the *Lamb* was before the throne. (*Revelation* chap. 5) And all the creation from the cattle to the stars of Andromeda, stopped breathing. Seconds ticked by like millions of years.

And the *Lamb*, the one “*slain from the foundation of the world,*” stepped up and took the scroll. And all that lives and breathes shouted the mighty victory. While all that is evil heard and shuddered. The *Lamb* had been found worthy to take the scroll, and to open the book, the event that forever separated the saved from those not.

For upon that scroll, written in the blood of the *Lamb*, were the names of the redeemed who would live with the *Lamb* forever. Those in the Old Testament who looked forward to his coming. And those in the New which looked back and rejoiced. All that trusted in the cleansing power of his blood had their names written down in glory.

These were the *raptured*, a people who will walk and rule with the *Lamb*. But only those inside the scroll were numbered with the redeemed. From his perspective before Abraham, Job, knew he would be found on that page:

*Oh that my words were written!
Oh that they were inscribed in a book!
That with an iron stylus and lead
They were engraved in the rock fore*

*“As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
And at the last He will take His stand on
the earth. Even after my skin is destroyed,
Yet from my flesh I shall see God:”*

Job 19:23-26 (NASB)

And John described those who wouldn't be there:

*“Then He said to me,... I will give to the one
who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without
cost...But for the cowardly and unbelieving and
and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and
idolaters and all liars, their part will be*

in the lake that burns with fire...”

Revelation 21: 6,8 (NASB)

These are the names written down in glory.

But upon the outside of the scroll were seven seals marking the wrath of the *Lamb*. The seals are all judgments. And we might wonder why such seals would be found on the great book of God's grace?

Amazingly, this is not a hard question.

These seals, which keep the *Book of Life* shut against all who rejected Christ, are called the “wrath of the *Lamb*” for good reason. They show

forth a great demarcation between those safely under grace, and all others left out for judgment. God will make every effort, outside of using force, to add many names to the list during the *Tribulation*, but every soul who had rejected Christ is still outside. When the *rapture* hits, and the times of judgment begin, every single soul that missed the *rapture* will still be outside the book. And during this terrible wrath a fourth of mankind will perish, most into the everlasting fire.

The Bible says that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...” as a sacrifice for the many who would receive him as Savior. There was an open door and yet many snubbed the Son, his Son. Like any father, he is not happy with those who rejected his gift, the blood of his own perfect Son, and has no further obligation to those who did. The call went out over all the earth, and so many ignored it.

The sevenfold *Church* had presented the saving blood for over two thousand years and urgently begged for the world to follow Jesus. But “as in the days of Noah,” when God called those of that age to get on the ark--they rebelled, and they would not.

But there is still a small hope granted. Millions will yet find Christ because of the terror of the *Tribulation*. And perhaps even more than all those who came to him during the long years of the *Church* a multitude which no man can count comes out of the *Tribulation* in *Revelation* chapter 7. God will certainly have their attention. But if they find Christ during the fiery trials of this *Tribulation* period, it will most likely be at the expense of their mortal lives, just as when ISIS beheads a Christian nowadays. Some will continue to hold out for whatever reason, and at the end of days step up to the Great White Throne, and face Christ as the final judge of men.

At the Great White Throne they must prove they had a perfect righteousness of their own. They must prove they obeyed every detail of the Law. Indeed, every soul will be given its day in court. Upon resurrection, a thousand years after the Christians appear at the Bema of Christ or the Judgment Seat of Christ, such souls will appear before the terrible tribune called the White Throne to prove themselves righteous apart from Christ. They must, or be forever guilty of Hell as charged in the high court of God. All will fail, of course, and will inevitably fall into the Lake of Fire forever. What terror lies ahead for the man or woman who will attempt to satisfy the great Judge with his own defense? And what will he say? That the death of Christ was not good enough?

There is no way to debate with God, and there is only one fearful end for those who try.

And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from Whose presence earth and heaven fled away...And I saw the dead great and the small, standing before the throne and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds...and if anyone's name was not written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 20: 11-15 (NASB)

But there is a contrary teaching which is still around, which used to be held more often than it is now. There are a few who still say the door closes once the *Tribulation* begins and as in the case of Noah, after the *rapture*, it is over. There is no such thing as a second chance, for anyone. Every soul plunged into the *Tribulation* is doomed, as in the famous song by Cliff Richard "...it's too late to change your mind, the Son has come, the demons dined; how could you have been so blind?... and you've been left behind."

Such teachers would issue a rebuke to me for instilling a false hope. They would tell you that once the door to the Ark was closed, those on the outside drowned. And so they did.

But we insist that such a view is wrong and we are happy that it has gone out of fashion. If there is no second chance, as they call it, no way to be saved during the *Tribulation*, what is the use of refusing the mark and starving to death? If there is no possible way still open to be saved, then there is no point in trying to stand up for the truth. After the *rapture* you are doomed.

But we know such teaching is false.

In *Revelation* chapter seven a "multitude" appear in heaven, and they have come out of the *Tribulation*. One asks how they manage that if there is no "second blessing"?

So there is a road back to God even after missing the *rapture*. Without question it is a hard road and not recommended. But a multitude will walk that road and be saved in the end. Still such a road leads through the *Tribulation* and is fraught with danger, and there is no guarantee a

person will not die before finding the right way. Those who wait until the *rapture* passes are very foolish, and not a few believe if there was an honest chance before the *rapture*, a soul will be hardened like Pharaoh, and will never again be able to find himself in the aftermath.

But it is God's mercy which brings this tortured transition period called the *Tribulation* to earth in the first place, and not his anger, as some believe. In those dark years so filled with perils millions who have never even considered Christ, those who have never heard the good news, will be forced to consider which eternity they would rather die with. It is God's one last attempt to penetrate into every dark corner of earth and to every darkened heart, which remains.

More human souls will be saved in this seven-year period than have been saved since Adam was thrown out of the Garden. Jesus' parable of the wedding feast is all about *Zion's Army* in the *Tribulation*.

"...The kingdom...may be compared to a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. And he sent out his slaves to call those who had been invited...and they were unwilling to come. Again he sent out other slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner...and everything is ready; Come to the wedding feast.

But they paid no attention and went their way, one to his own farm another to his business, and the rest seized his slaves and mistreated them and killed them.

But the king was enraged and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire. Then he said to his slaves, ...those who were invited were not worthy

Go therefore to the main highways, and as many as you find there Invite to the wedding feast. And the slaves went out into the streets, and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests."

Matthew 22: 1-10 (NASB)

God has invited all people to come to his wedding feast, but most are too busy. So when the invited guests refuse, the Lord will send laborers (his Army) into the harvest (the whole earth) to try to compel the lonely, the ungodly, and the immoral to set aside their sin and follow them back to the feast. These are those literally sent into the highways and the byways of the whole world to compel the least likely to come in to the feast. As

the New Testament states, “*God has chosen the weak things of this world to overcome the wise.*”

And then the Lamb opened the first seal ...I looked and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

Revelation 6:1,2 (NASB)

Under the first seal a White Rider appears. He comes as a masterful person to solve the world’s problems. This is Daniel’s man of *stern countenance*, the Prince of Rome who is to come. He wears a crown representing authority, and carries a bow like a warrior. But the bow is without arrows and he is without armies. He is to conquer without warfare. His conquests come by the words of his silver tongued mouth. And at first he seems like a very good man. There are no horns and he is attractive, intelligent, and well educated.

Some wrongly confuse this rider with the Lord himself. But the Lord releases this rider, and for that reason alone he cannot be the same. Moreover, he is given a crown. Nobody will ever give a crown to the King of Kings. His eternal crown comes from the Almighty God.

Indeed this is that coming “Prince” mentioned in Daniel who is going to conclude a seven year pact with Israel. He is ultimate evil. But he is dressed in white and appears as one of the “good” guys, like the cowboys in the movies with the white hats, and many in Israel will receive him. But he is a deceiver and will attempt to confuse himself with the true *Messiah*. He will announce to the world that he alone is the protector from the power that snatched the people away. But he is an angel of light, a deceiver and he will enslave and destroy the whole world. He conquers with enticing words and without arrows.

A king will arise Insolent and skilled in intrigue, And his power will be mighty, but not by his own power And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree...He will destroy men and the holy people. And through his shrewdness he will cause deceit to succeed by his influence; he will magnify himself in his heart...he will even oppose the Prince of Princes

Daniel 8:23–26 (NASB)

And the *Lamb* opened a second seal, and called out the Red Horse, and with him the great sword of war.

When He broke a second seal I heard the second living creature saying, "Come." And another, a red horse, went out...it was granted to take peace from the earth...

Revelation 6:3,4 (NASB)

With the Red Horseman riding the world moves toward its final wars. When he is unleashed there will never again be peace until the Prince of Peace. And above all else this Red Rider signals the approach of the dreadful war of Magog, and the attack from the north.

The trigger might possibly come from an attempt on the part of superpower Russia to negate the White Horseman, who seems to be gaining stature with the day, rising up to challenge even Mother Russia. The First World War accounted for ten million deaths, the Second about sixty million. A Third World War, a nuclear war, will have deaths in the billions.

Nuclear war has been avoided throughout the second half of the twentieth century because men have feared their destructive power. But they are coming. They and all the other weapons of mass destruction with them. In the shadow of Hiroshima, with pictures of massive mushroom clouds over Bikini Atoll, war planners put the idea of dropping thermonuclear weapons into the realm of the fictional motion picture, *Doctor Strangelove*. The crazy image of Slim Pickens riding a fifty ton warhead to the ground figured largely in the minds of people during that time. Many believe they will never be used again.

This is error.

Because "Strangelove" is forgotten and so is the worldwide fallout from the Russian terror bomb. The world has moved on, and mankind has never failed to use a weapon it has developed. Moreover nukes have already been used, and that means they will likely be used again. When war planners need something extra to correct the odds, they will quickly resort to heavy explosives and even tactical atomic weapons. Many have now have been designed for ordinary artillery, and when nuclear weapons are considered tactical solutions, they will quickly be used and their use will escalate. Thus they are no longer crackpot weapons outside the realm of possibility. The size and power of chemical weapons now approach some of the smaller nuclear weapons, anyway. And when they are needed, they will be used.

Already on the Korean peninsula, the use of nukes is being discussed by both sides. The South sees them as the only equalizer against an invading horde three times larger from the North, and North Korea has already decided to use nukes as a first strike to negate the superior armaments of the South. Once the initial shock of going over the anti-nuke barrier is breached by such a tiny player as Pakistan, atomic bombs won't even be considered outrageous anymore. They will become standard armaments in an ever more dangerous world. And over it all, the Red Horseman is riding.

And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars... For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom
Matthew 24:6,7 (NASB)

As regional wars proliferate and metastasize into a patchwork of overlaying causes, small wars will merge into the next global war. The Bible is clear that it will be ignited by the mobilization south of "Gog and Magog." As the largest country on earth, Russia has always believed its' destiny was to rule the world. They believe that one day they will rise, and when they rise they will shake the world, their words not ours. When Russia comes south they will be doing so in an attempt to bring this belief to completion.

The truth is that WWII erupting from war in the Middle East has been dreaded since the end of WWII. It is the war which has been brewing since the formation of the modern state of Israel.

Arabs, who have trouble getting along with anyone, have always been jealous of the Jews. As we have said, the roots of this conflict go back to the family of Abraham, and they will never be resolved until *Messiah* comes.

But the trigger resides with Magog (Russia).

As it was during the Exodus when Israel was caught between the Sea and Pharaoh's chariots, the Jews will assume their own deaths when facing the superpower Russian bear. But even as Israel faced death beneath Pharaoh's chariot wheels, and God delivered by parting the great sea, so again Israel will have her back to the wall and be divinely saved.

God brings up Gog and his Magog for just this purpose. So that the *Chosen* will suddenly "know his name," even after millennia of denial. Israel will be supernaturally delivered so as to know the "the *name*" (see

Ezekiel 37-39) And of course the “Name” they need to know in order to be saved is *Yeshua*, Jesus. The so-called “two houses” theory of the Hebrew Root movement is a lie from Satan, “*for there is no other “Name” given among men by which we may be saved.*” Acts 4:12

In this coming conflict God himself will deliver his people. But the deliverance will not come until the moment of greatest need. When all else has failed them, and when they finally call on the “Name of the Lord” at that moment God will show why they were the *Chosen* in the first place.

Russia will come in like a storm and with him other countries, among them Iran, Turkey and possibly North Korea. For the sake of Islam, Israel will be their target. But secular Russia will have a much larger agenda in mind than the tiny land of Israel. They will believe that with one great thrust they can destroy hated Israel, gain a warm water port and wrest power from the world leader, the White Horseman. Their object has always been to take over the world for themselves. But at the moment of their greatest success, when they feel they have reached their objective, they will experience the sort of plagues that hit Egypt, and the many factions will diverge into fighting among themselves.

Somehow because of *Yeshua (Messiah’s)* great deliverance, many in Israel will finally know the “name of Christ,” and be saved. The streets of Jerusalem will fill with worshipping Jewish believers, and a call will go out to mobilize 144,000 Jewish evangelists found in *Revelation* chapter seven to reach the world. This is the *Army of Zion*.

As when Jesus sent out the 70 of his followers in the gospels this *Army* will go without food, and without provision. Those they minister to will make up this provision as they go. But in that commissioning of the 70 Jesus said he saw Satan fall, a vision no doubt of the far flung future, for the 70 were a picture of what was to come, and the *Army* to come of 144,000. For Satan must crash onto the earth, like a lightning stroke.

*Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees,
till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.
And I heard the number of them which were sealed:
and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four
thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

Revelation 7:3,4 (NKJV)

But this *Army* will travel without fanfare, and vanish like a gathering of smokes. They will blend into the local culture, moving through the earth like the four winds stopped for them in *Revelation* chapter 7. Few will know they even exist.

Although it is God who delivers Israel from the northern invader, most of the world will lift up the deceiver, the White Horseman, as the savior from Russian armament and Russian occupation. And Anti-Christ will be most willing to take credit for such protection.

Eventually he will even have some explanation for the vanishing. And by proposing world government to stop regional wars, he will insert himself into the office of world Prime Minister and eventually king, but he will be satisfied with the office as head of world government for a short while to come.

Zion's Army will form in Israel near the beginning of the *Tribulation* and Jesus will probably appear to send them off from the mountain of transfiguration near Jerusalem, as they disperse. These are God's bond servants, his ultimate secret weapon, who are like shadows flitting over the landscape with a mission to fulfill. God's great time of *Tribulation* is meant to drive the people to call on him and eternal safety. How much better to face even the terror of the *Tribulation* than to rot for eternity in a place of torment called hell. God's final provision for the rebel is the terror of the *Tribulation*.

In the gospels one day Jesus led Peter, James, and John to a mountaintop where it seemed that the blinders were pulled away. And suddenly the apostles could see Jesus transfigured and brightened with a heavenly light. And there also the Father spoke and two Old Testament witnesses, Moses and Elijah, seemed to materialize out of the thin air. These are most likely the Two who appear again to speak during *Tribulation*.

Bible scholars have no clue as to the point of this transfiguration other than to testify of Jesus divinity. But it is believed by this writer that the whole episode was a rehearsal for the *Army of Zion*. From this mountain to the ends of the earth, Jesus will muster his *Army* to carry news of the coming Kingdom into all the earth.

This I believe is the very mountain from which someday God's *Army* would be dispatched into the far corners of the earth, fulfilling his promise of blessing to every tribe on earth. And yes, as they roamed, they would live in tents and shacks and some in castles on the Rhine. But they would

never build those tabernacles on the mountain Peter desired for Jesus and Moses and Elijah. Instead they would be dispatched with “beautiful feet.” For it is from there they will come forth bearing the message of the soon coming King. But the tabernacle idea fits because these booths the Jews build at their feast of Tabernacles are really made to be portable houses, and they will need portable housing during all their tramp over all the earth, and incidentally it really was on the Feast of Tabernacles when the transfiguration occurred.

*How lovely on the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news,
Who announces peace
And brings good news of happiness
announces salvation,
And says to Zion, “Your God reigns*

Isaiah 57:2 (NASB)

Meanwhile, back in the world of the tribulation, the UN and the terrible White Horseman will continue to promise much and produce little. Food stocks will be low everywhere after the Magog War. Men of power and prestige will have plenty; the wine and the oil will hardly be effected. But the common person will only have the street, the garbage, the terrorist, and the constant struggle to live in a world of absolute peril.

Following the Red Horseman, the *Lamb* breaks a third seal and out comes the Black Horseman of famine, with a set of scales for weighing out foods.

Famine is terrible. It robs the soul, as it kills the body. Worse even than war is the vision of roving bands of renegades ravenously rummaging in dumps, raiding stores, and creating mayhem in search of food and drinking water.

When men lack food they become like animals. People have been known to consume their own filth, waylay cook and eat their fellow men, and even consume their own children.

Already governments will have been stretched to their limits and begin to join with the Anti-Christ in seeking world government for assistance. Radiation will spread with radioactive fallout poisoning the air and the water, as it slowly wafts through the wind patterns of the planet. Third

world countries, already at risk, will quickly become basket cases. At some tipping point the World Leader will declare himself the planet's first citizen and demand total obedience to counter the great problems which seem to be everywhere.

On the ground people lacking water, food, and medical care will begin to wander in mass movements. With great sores appearing among hosts of dying people as they shuffle about aimlessly the persistent zombie nightmare will seem to be coming true. People half alive, their skin covered with scabs and wounds wandering about in a daze looking for anything to eat. Governments and police will be forced to fire live rounds to keep food distribution going.

Finally, with all these curses will come the brother to famine, and the handmaid to war, death itself. As the Pale Rider, the fourth horseman, exits from his seal into the world, plagues of diseases new and ancient, further weaken those in search of food. The Pale Horse is death, and all that he touches withers. Truly perilous times will have come in a situation spiraling down everywhere. This is the *Tribulation*.

But God is still calling. It is not yet too late.

The rejection of Jesus's cross has led inevitably to these four horsemen. And as they are released the world begins to chaff at the sound of their terrible hoof beats. Before they finish they will have killed one fourth of the human race. This will number some two billion people.

Soon in every major city bodies will be stacked and left to rot in the streets. But as bad as it will be in Denver, it will be much more terrible in New Delhi or Mexico City.

There will be no remaining morgue space. There will not even be space on the sidewalks and the stench itself will soon be overwhelming. Millions will be ill just for lack of clean air. The lack of proper sewage and disposal of the dead, will make diseases like cholera spread like wildfire. Thousands in every major city, their own civic budgets depleted, will began calling for the world leader who by this time is regarded as a miracle worker, to solve things. National legislatures will quickly capitulate giving the world leader dictatorial powers. Soon there will be a general call to make him king.

But his mouth will be his one great asset. For he seems to infuse his listeners with a sense of well being and power leaving them wondering after it is all over. The leader will rule the world by decree, as his amazing abilities, deceptive or real, are boldly asserted, and will be sought by

millions. It will be said that only this man can save the world, an idea he constantly will be encouraging.

Pretending to be a man of deep humility, he will convince the world of his own *Messianic* pedigree with superiority to the Jewish/Christian *Messiah*, Jesus. Charging Christ with being a “do-nothing” religious guru, he will claim accomplishments against poverty, violence and crime of all sorts. And he will have the uncanny ability to “solve” many problems, though his so-called solutions may not last. In worldwide televised speeches he will quickly adopt a mocking attitude toward the “useless business of getting oneself killed on a cross.”

He will assert that only a *Messiah* who comes with real practical solutions can save mankind. And he will be quickly received by those who have never had much interest in God.

And even at the beginning he will pull in his inner circle with a Mark of special loyalty; those who will be initiated into the deeper secrets of the New Age; those who will bow down and worship him directly.

They worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war against him?”
Revelation 13:4 (NASB)

Even some of the newly saved Jews will have second thoughts and begin following him. They will follow a problem solver amidst the deception growing for all men. Life will become ever more perilous to the degree that all the historical plagues and wars no longer provide clues to the vastness of the new catastrophe. And many authorities will simply rip off their uniforms and vanish.

But God is not interested in ruination, not even of an anti-god world, like this.

Against the back drop of a world in despair, God will be sending his *Army* with hope to every nation and tribe and family. Even to the millions lost in Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism, the *Army* will appear to preach in Mosques, and temples, and at shrines in their own languages. God is unwilling to let them perish and begins the last call with the pressure of the *Tribulation* quickly pushing millions into the kingdom.

Simultaneously two mysterious prophets who look, sound, and dress like they just stepped out of the Bible, will appear in Jerusalem with an

enormous voice to preach to the nations. They will quickly have a presence on television and over the Internet, and everyone will be following them. Soon they will attract immense audiences and after only a few weeks under the mysterious fifth seal revivals will start to break out in spots all over the world. But with these shall also come vast and bloody persecutions, and massacres of those who are saved.

John tells us that at the same time at the throne of God in heaven, appear the leading edge of an uncountable group of souls slain because of their testimony. Many are won for Christ around the world, as Jewish evangelists with amazing powers appear as out of nowhere.

when He broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because the testimony, which they had maintained.

Revelation 6:9 (NASB)

In places like Saudi Arabia, where the gospel had always been forbidden, preachers from the *Army* simply start appearing. Somehow they step unnoticed into the midst of groups and then vanish before the local authorities can catch up and arrest them. The World Government, and its World Church, enraged by such tactics, begin taking steps to put a stop to all this gumshoe evangelism. Within weeks such preaching is made illegal, and even a capital offense. Beheadings become common in Islamic nations, and Christians are filmed on the internet being torn to shreds in places dark with Hinduism. By the thousands believers begin dying in every dark and dangerous place on earth. And there is celebration over the beheading of every one of them.

But instead of fleeing for their lives others notice they die in triumph, declaring they're on their way to heaven, and going on to joys unspeakable and full of glory!

Pursued by Anti-Christ's intelligence operatives all over the world these Jewish evangelists prove themselves fearless, work wondrous miracles, and find some way into every dark hole—from inner city brothels and drug shops in Singapore, to secret government installations under multiple security regimens in North Korea they are there.

Massive meetings take place among the refugees on dry desert pans in the Sudan, and on enormous sand hills in the Sahara. At these meetings people surge forward by the thousands to be greeted by the sound of water gurgling; drinkable water for their own baptism. Flights of quail are reported to have fallen on the starving, and many report miraculous

healings. People weak with radiation sickness apparently feel wondrously healed after such meetings.

Even in the heart of darkness, in the terrorist camps of Al Qaeda—the Jewish evangelists speaking perfect Arabic find their way inside, much to the fury of the fanatics in charge. No trap, no security, and no fear of the enemy seems to stop them. They are the *Army of Zion*, and they sing as they fan out over the globe.

Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations on account of My name. And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one another and hate one another... But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved. *Matthew 24:9,10 (NASB)*

During the times of the *Church* these words of Matthew made no sense. Where was the grace? Where was unmerited favor in words like holding on to the end? Grace was never earned. To the New Testament *Church*, salvation is a gift and cannot be earned nor can it be kept by doing good works. So “*to endure to the end*” was legalistic, and not of grace, and many Christians struggled with these words in what is called New Testament Matthew.

But many did not understand to whom Matthew 24 was addressed.

It could not be ordinary Christians. To maintain endurance as the way to heaven is to make salvation a matter of works. To Christians, all salvation is based upon faith; simple trust, not trying to obey the law by works. But those with the seal of the Holy Spirit went away in the *rapture*.

Now, in the *Tribulation*, when the eternal holding power of the seal of the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, all believers must simply hold on by not taking the Mark of the Beast to their eternal damnation. Understanding that, Matthew 24 makes perfect sense. Because Matthew 24 was addressed to Israel in the depths of the *Tribulation*.

But how do we know?

Because 24 includes all sorts of issues which would confront Israel, not in the days of Jesus in his first appearance, but later in the *Tribulation*, and nothing of the *Church* is left in it or it is strange doctrine indeed.

The “*Abomination of Desolation*,” or the modern day pollution of the temple, which takes place half way through Daniel’s last week is there. This is a distinctly *Tribulation* week verse. So we discover that this whole section of Matthew is written primarily for the Israelite who has been

saved, but has fallen into the *Tribulation*. *Zion* (Israel) is still in the world after the *rapture* to be witnesses to the coming Kingdom, the very reason why it is called Jacob's Trouble for Israel.

So regardless of how sold out for Christ a man sounds during Jacob's Trouble, if such a man swears allegiance to the Anti-Christ and takes his Mark in his forehead or right hand, that man is lost forever. This in spite of his earlier profession.

The unbreakable "seal of the Holy Spirit," (not the whole Spirit himself) which is resident in believers of the *Church* during our own time, and was given as a pledge by God, seems to be withdrawn as the *Church* leaves at the *rapture*. The pledge, or seal, is unique to the *Church* and came at her birth at Pentecost and it seems to have left again at the *rapture*. It may well be at least part of the mysterious "restrainer" which holds back the appearance of Anti-Christ until he (the restrainer) is taken out of the way. Of course the Holy Spirit himself will still be present, as he was present in the Old Testament, but his New Testament ministry of the unbreakable "seal," promising eternal life (Ephesians 1:13) is now gone. The "restrainer," a *Church* filled with the unbreakable seal of God's grace, is gone.

Matthew 24 is a list of survival tips for the Jew (or gentile) who missed Christ, and so missed the *rapture* and finds himself in the jaws of the *Tribulation*. These are things Jesus told his disciples in warning of what would be coming.

*they will deliver you to tribulation and will kill you and
you will be hated by all nations on account of My name
Matthew 24:7-9 (NASB)*

Jesus tells these Jews that during the *Tribulation* the Anti-Christ would eventually hunt them down and bring them before courts of the world system. The courts would criminalize their Christianity, and because they would refuse to reject Christ, they would be hated and even killed. But the true believer would cling to the name of his *Messiah* forever.

Some would capitulate and take the Mark at the price of eternal loss to their souls. They will fill their immediate need, just as Esau filled his stomach, despising what God had given, and with the same result. God said "Esau I have hated and Jacob loved." So it will be for those who turn true believers into the authorities.

Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

Matthew 24: 9-10 (NASB)

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

Matthew 24:14 (NASB)

The Army of Zion is coming.

Zion's Promise



When the army of Zion, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel spreads out over all the earth, God will be leading. In fact, to the people around them who will love them, take them in, and protect them, they will seem to possess strange powers. While appearing to be speaking Hebrew, as in the case of Peter at Pentecost, I believe God will translate their words into all languages so that their words will be understood.

This is only conjecture, there is no place that the Word teaches this directly, but it is based on what happened at Pentecost. Peter chose to preach out of an end-time text in the book of Joel during the events surrounding the coming of the Holy Spirit into the *Church*, and all the people from various countries visiting Jerusalem understood his preaching in their own languages. The text out of Joel Peter quotes is about an end-time army of Jewish evangelists.

And from this I surmise that God is giving us a clue. I think for this special *Army* of end-time “Peters,” God will again reverse the confusion of the Tower of Babel and restore a common understanding, so that everyone will hear in the language of his home. God is saying that when the Holy Spirit takes away the *Church*, such times as when he first brought about the *Church* would come again to the Jews. To reach the entire world in three years this *Army* will be able to communicate to everyone!

And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; and he cried out with a loud voice...saying “Do not harm the Earth or the sea...until we have sealed the bond-servants of our God on their foreheads.”

Revelation 7:2-3 (NASB)

As the world leader will mark his own with the Mark of the Beast, the *Army of Zion* will be marked with the Mark of God. And most likely that

mark will be visible for all to see. For these are God's shock troops, the third part of God's promise, the "blessing of Abraham." And they will tell the world of the Kingdom of the Great King, *Yeshua* (Jesus), soon coming back to rule the world from the throne of David.

They will finish Jesus's Great Commission to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth, a commission which the *Church* began but was never intended to complete. Every tribe on earth will hear, every family find blessing before the darkness falls and Armageddon comes. For the night is coming in the world when no man can work.

Most of this evangelism will take place in the first half of the *Tribulation*; when the *Lamb* is peeling away the seals on the Book of Life. The Red Horseman will have reached the pinnacle of his power; in the battle of Magog. And Russia will have already come upon Israel, and stirred up the whole earth, now plunging steadily into World War III.

The final chapter of all these wars is the Battle of Armageddon, and many millions of those who have survived the other troubles will perish there. The wars of the Red Horseman will feature at least some strategic nuclear warheads, and the men of the earth will cower in their bomb shelters, dug out from beneath the mountains. They will say:

*...hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne,
and from the wrath of the Lamb...for the great day of their
wrath has come...*

Revelations 6: 17 (NASB)

*And I shall send fire upon Magog and those who inhabit the
coastlands in safety,...*

Ezekiel 39: 6 (NASB)

It is hard to imagine a clearer picture of a nuclear war as written by a man seeing it happen without the science to understand it from 90 AD, than the following:

*The sky was split apart like a scroll when it is rolled up, every
mountain and island were moved out of their places.the kings
of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the
and the strong and every slave and man hid themselves in the
caves and among the rocks of the mountains*

Revelation 6: 14-16 (NASB)

Such words of the prophets so describe a nuclear war, that it cannot be dismissed for something else. The sky splits at the detonation and the resulting surge moves mountains and islands. The moon turns red and the sky is darkened-from dust and nuclear material blown high into the upper atmosphere. In theory such dust and matter can so shade the ground as to Bring on nuclear winter. By the sixth seal even the non-believer knows this doomsday scenario comes from the presence of the *Lamb*. And when those days arrive they will call on the rocks to hide them from the blast and the radioactivity and the *Lamb* Himself. The rich and well connected will resort to bunkers they have already built for such a day, hoping the rocks of the earth can cover them.

This is the wrath of the Lamb.

But the Army of Zion is not detoured by war, by famine, or even by pestulence, and will be with the people in these underground shelters telling each family about Christ and his coming....

And as bad as all this will be, even killing one fourth of mankind, it is nothing compared to what is coming. It is so terrible Jesus said that if this Tribulation were to go on very long, it would end all life on earth.

*...for then will be great tribulation such as has not
occured since the beginning of the world until now.
Nor ever shall. And unless those days had been cut
Short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake
Of the elect, Those days shall be cut short.*

Matthew 24:21,22 (NASB)

Jacob's Trouble for Israel, and called by the gentiles the *Trbulation*, is described by the great prophet Jeremiah as a time when even grown men are under such stress they act like women in labor. But there is more. Jeremiah sees beyond the trial to a time of great rejoicing. He describes Israel as a people God has rejected and scattered and then brought back together, and like a "gentle shepherd" redeemed. When they finally understand he is Jesus and not somebody else. Once they understand they will become a people "who will sing to God on the heights of Zion," to the end that myriads of people will not go to eternal damnation, but to eternal bliss. A people tireless to win over the world.'

For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, And ransomed him from the hand of one stronger than he Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion,-

Jeremiah 31:10–13 (NKJV)

In *Revelation* chapter 14, when the *Army of Zion* returns from their evangelism in all the world, they sing a new song with Jesus perhaps again transfigured on the mountain. In the face of the *Tribulation*, they will stand again on Mount Zion as when they were called, enjoying God and worshipping. In all likelihood they meet the *Lamb* himself upon that mountain, in a kind of second *transfiguration*, and perhaps now they are all radiant as was their deliverer Moses.

Thus the promise to Abraham will be fulfilled. They will have gathered in those from the highways and the byways and they will have turned to God a multitude no man can ever count.

Israel has now been given her three great giftings of the Promise; the land, the seed and now the blessing. And her countless stars, Abraham's seed, will shine forever, children of Abraham after the faith in Christ.

And I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand Having His name and the name of His Father written on Their foreheads.

... And they sang a new song before the throne and before The four living creatures and the elders; and no one could Learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four Thousand...And no lie was found in their mouth; they are Blameless. And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, Having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on The earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and People..."

Revelation 14:1–6 (NASB)

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings Good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "You God reigns!" (And during the coming Millennial Rule He will)

Isaiah 52:7 (NASB)

*For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace;
The mountains and the hills will break forth into*

shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12 (NIV)

Mankind has been lied to by Satan and we have believed him. We have been duped into thinking God's primary motivation for *Revelation* is his anger. Even the word *Apocalypse* has come to mean God's final vengeance against wayward mankind. And make no mistake; God is angry the world has rejected Christ. But it was his love that caused him to send *Yeshua, the Messiah* to be spat upon, and beaten, and finally killed. He loves the young and the old. He loves every human soul. God has always had an unreasonable love for this wayward creature called man, and intends to rescue a huge number at the very last possible moment. And as we have said, the *Apocalypse* means "unveiling." It is not the getting even by a vengeful deity, but rather this unveiling to Israel as his last word, spoken in rescue. Satan, and by this point the reader ought to understand that there is a personal power of evil as real as there is one of righteousness, does nothing but vengeful destroying. God sends the *Apocalypse* to open the way to return a runaway world to himself—to unveil Christ to a lost humanity to make it his own and not to destroy it.

This is the *Army of Zion*. This is its mission, to gather in the last call on the earth. To go into the highways and byways and compel them to come to the Master's feast, just as predicted in the parable.

A man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited,

'Come; for everything is ready now.'

But they alike all began to make excuses... Then the head of the household became angry... go out at once into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'...

And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled

Luke 14:16-23 (NASB)

After these things I looked, and behold a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches were in their hands

And one of the elders...[said]... 'These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?'

These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb

Revelation 7: 9,14 (NASB)

The *Army of Zion* is not stoppable. Even though the Beast (the world leader) will try to stall them and kill them, not one of them shall be lost. They emerge from the text in *Revelation* chapter 7, percolate throughout the world and into the same nations they once wandered through in exile during their long dispersion. And then they reunite to sing together the song of the Lord's victory in *Revelation* 14. And amazingly not one of them is missing. God will supernaturally protect his *army*. Great is the effect these 144,000 Jewish evangelists will have wherever they may go. They will bring joy and honor and truth. Indeed as the psalmist states, "How lovely on the mountains are those feet which carry this good news to all of mankind."

*, awake, clothe yourself in your strength, O Zion;
clothe yourself in your beautiful garments,...
Shake yourself from the dust, rise up, captive Jerusalem;
Wake yourself from the chains around your neck,
O captive daughter of Zion...
Those who rule over them howl, and My name is continually
blasphemed all day long.
Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that
I am the one who is speaking, 'Here I am.'*

*How lovely on the mountains
Are the feet of him who brings good news
Who announces peace
And says to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'*"

Isaiah 52:1-2,5-7 (NASB)

God will marshal his army in the day when the devil marshal's his. God's army will come proclaiming joy, new life, and a New World coming. The devil will bring death and destruction and a New Age of the occult which is coming. The decision for each human being will never be clearer.

At the end of the harvest of the earth, when some have appeared in heaven at the throne of God, from every tongue and family complete, the *Army* meets with the transfigured Christ once more on the Mount of Olives. As Jeremiah said, “Radiant on the Mountain of Zion.”

I looked and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand... And they sang a new song before the thro no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty four thousand
Revelation 14:1–3 (NASB)

This is the moment Abraham was promised.

On Mount Zion will come the fulfillment to the words God spoke to father Abraham more than 3000 years ago. Israel has become the source of the promised blessing to all mankind, even as angels sang over a crib in Bethlehem,

“Peace on earth, good will toward man.”

The Seven Trumpets



The last of the seal judgments moves us into the next register dealing with the seven trumpet judgments. These are terrible; exponentially more severe than the seals which they follow.

The trumpets carry on with the first half of this horrific week of years to the middle point at which time the *Abomination of Desolation* introduces the second 3 ½ years called the *Great Tribulation*, almost too terrible to contemplate.

But even though every person is in jeopardy during these terrible blasts, the sounding of the trumpets are is still a call to grace. They demand attention to eternal things- Moreover the trumpets generally focus on the great payment of the blood of Christ, which had been rejected by every single person still alive on planet earth.

Through the metaphor of blood, God continues to catch the attention of his runaway world. Wide is the gate that leads to destruction, and so many continue to go that way; and for them, the time is running out.

But the narrow way that leads to life is still open, but it is closing. Time is running out. Those who still find grace are is narrowing down to a trickle. In God's great mercy a multitude have understood and come out of the *Tribulation* already. Most have been martyred for their decision, and death for believers is commonplace during this terrible time. God is still not willing that any should perish in Hell but that all should come to a knowledge of the truth. And there is more to these trumpets than most readers of *Revelation* usually see.

And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. Then another angel, having a censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand

And the first angels sound their trumpets.

As they sound, a series of judgments fill the earth with blood. Now God is reminding man of what it cost to buy his freedom even when they have spat on it. As Jesus said just before his own death, even about the blood of his followers:

*Therefore behold I am sending you prophets and wise men ...some of them you will kill and crucify...**that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth**, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah...whom you murdered between the temple and the altar...all these things shall come upon this generation.*

Matthew 23: 34-36 (NASB)

The first four trumpets speak of the creation; this wonderful world of color and living things God made for man to enjoy. The world God made is bleeding and sore from sin.

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly...that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption...for the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of child birth together until now.

Romans 8:19–22 (NASB)

The very oceans start to bleed.

God gave mankind a blue gem of a world, a world of sparkling fresh clean water. God made the world on a glorious morning when the angels sang. The Bible tells us that it was actually formed from a matrix of water gas in the darkness of space. Formed out of this water, and filled with life when the Spirit of God had been there over the surface of the water.

And God spoke saying, “Let there be light! And there had been light.” Water, light, and life, and it all was a wonder, a garden which allowed Adam to sit with God himself in the cool of the morning and fellowship together. So wonderful in fact that the angels sang about it, and God had looked upon what he had made, and it even seemed good to him.

But now some 6000 years later, the creation itself is bleeding.

And each time the earth is struck with the rod of a new trumpet it screams in an agony of death and defilement. God had not planned for this. This was not his way. But because he knows all; every end from every beginning, he knew it would all come to pass. God had explained as much to the first couple. They would enjoy all things in innocence so long as they remained obedient.

A knowledge of good and evil would never help them to enjoy their garden, or their world. Ethics and rules cannot enforce goodness. All that such ethics do is to give understanding of how far from the standard one has come. In innocence such issues never come to mind. One does not try to be good because one is intrinsically good. In innocence, God himself would always be nearby to help them.

But afterward, when their eyes were opened to understand good and evil for themselves, all they could do was evil. They belonged to evil. Yes they now had more sophistication, but it was worthless and only made them unhappy as it has done for all human beings ever since.

There was only one way back, and not to innocence, but to something quite different, called righteousness.

To the Father's great sorrow, the only road back passed right through the heart of his own dear Son. God put his own Son on a Roman cross to pay for all that had been done. But men filled with selfishness and rebellion revolted even from God's grace, and now this was the hideous outcome. Sin had changed the Garden of Eden into a reeking, dangerous, blood bathed noisome swamp.

To nail the Son of God to a cross without accepting his payment yourself, is to become guilty of the murder of God. And once done it is to aid Satan in destroying the world. It is to become guilty of deicide. It is to have the righteous blood of Calvary on one's own hands.

God said the ground shouts to him about all the blood shed upon it from righteous Able to his own dear Son. Not a drop of this righteous blood spilled by sin has been forgotten.

...upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah...whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

So now the world will bathe in its own wicked violence. Vengeance is God's and he will have it. He will righteously judge men forever.

So the first trumpet of God's righteous vengeance sounds, and hailstones fall with blood and fire. The next rings out and a mountain, perhaps a small asteroid falls into the sea, and the oceans are transformed into blood. Another trumpet, and a burning star falls into the rivers, and the rivers also flow in red. And all the heavenly stars are darkened, as if they were struck, and they too dim as they shine through an atmosphere filled with a haze of blood. Man has filled God's beautiful world with death, and now it has come back to speak of what he has done.

The men of the earth rejected the saving blood. They have been given a world made out of the horror of blood. And by this point the world would look like a dark and dying ruby, an orb of bloody red with garish pink swirls in it.

Finally the environmentalists and Al Gore have been proven correct, but by misdiagnosing the problem. The problem with mankind is not pollution of the soil and water; it is the pollution of the heart. From space the beautiful sapphire is now a scabby looking ruby. The creation God made as a gift man was to enjoy, he has soiled with the ghastly stain of sin, and left it wounded and bleeding. It has become too poisoned for life to continue upon it. Even the animals God gave man to rule over, and to share his journey, are all wounded and slowly dying.

But the trumpets are far from over.

Across the sky with a voice audible to every human ear, an angel soars in appearance as an eagle and he comes proclaiming three deadly woes. Perhaps the same angel who once proclaimed Jesus's birth, now proclaims death in a dying world.

Three woes are coming, perhaps one woe for each of the Trinity, one woe for each who contributed to the making of the world. For those on the ground, it will be hard to contemplate. After what they had seen, and what they had experienced, what worse things could follow? But These "woes" will switch focus from the physical creation to the world of the spiritual. *Our battle is not against flesh and blood but against powers, against principalities, against the world forces of this present darkness.* These woes deal with the wars that go on in the unseen. And as the spiritual is of

a higher order than the physical, so are these woes. Hell is about to be unleashed.

For those who still choose against grace, they will now be shown just what they are about to embrace. Now they will understand what is waiting for the rebellious soul on the other side of death without Christ. But many will choose to join with death.

A fallen angel, Apollyon, whose very name means destroyer, is dispatched to open up the abyss. Apparently this door, forever guarded by hosts of angels, is left open to him. Predictably Satan, who always believes in attacking weakness, senses a flaw in the watchfulness of heaven. This dark lord of destruction opens the door.

The abyss is the bottomless pit, a pit so deep it is probably at the very center of the planet where there is no bottom. And therein, in a blackness like death itself, where not the slightest scintilla of light penetrates have dwelled monsters the Lord put there near the beginning.

At the time of the flood some of the worst demons were placed in the depths of darkness because they went after “*strange flesh*.” In this case the “*strange flesh*” had been a sexual relationship between angels and men. These had seen the daughters of men and had lusted after them.

angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, he has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day...these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

Jude 6 and 7 (NASB)

These were the angels of Genesis chapter 6 who somehow went in to human women and produced a new breed of men, the Nephilim, still known in many folk lores as the six fingered ones. These were a great terror in that time of rage against God, a race of giants. This was perhaps the final sin which acted as a tripwire to open the gates to the waters of the great flood.

When the fifth trumpet sounds, the first woe begins.

The fifth trumpet accompanies the opening of the abyss by Apollyon. It sounds out doom to all who refuse to be governed by their Creator. It is

a picture of what happens to the creation without God's limits. Even as this trumpet sounds from down in the bowls of the earth an ancient evil is released. When this accursed door cracks open, a coal black cloud erupts; the very breath of the pit, flowing out into the atmosphere of the world. An inky cloud of utmost evil quickly fills earth's atmosphere, snuffing out all light and suffocating all hope and joy and good.

Following the winds aloft, black streamers flow out in all directions covering the land, and shielding it from the sun. From bleeding red, the world quickly darkens into coal tar black, and it leaves Satan laughing at how he has finally obliterated all the beauty God made.

Men have always loved darkness and hated the light. But no man will embrace the menace inside this darkness. There seems to be some sort of primal fear of that which is hidden in the dark. Perhaps that is the attraction for horror films. Attracted by the adrenalin surge in such films, and afraid of them too, and now they will find out what the horror is hidden within the dark.

For inside this black cloud, billowing out from the abyss, is a demonic plague of what the English Bible has forever labeled "locusts," because the King James scholars had nothing else to compare them with. So the word "locust" has stuck in English translations to the present. And it was a good comparison in one sense. These things surely do remind the reader of the plagues of insects which still emerge from the sands of the Middle East.

Even today, it is a fearful thing to behold when insects start to combine by the billions and move as a seething cloud over the land, decimating everything. They have been known to eat whole trees, animals, fabric, and even people. And this horrible image is bad enough, but these things during the *Tribulation* are hellish and worse. They are demonic, and they are more like a ear breaking cloud of flying scorpions, than locusts or grasshoppers.

But they are more than witless insects, they have the minds of demented human beings. They have hideous humanlike faces swarming in the darkness with a mind-shattering, high-pitched vibrational sound, creating terror somewhat like a traditional plague. And like airborne scorpions, they sting with the poison in their tails, and the venom is something no human being can tolerate. With these, they torment those who are still alive on the earth.

Thrashing about in the dark people will desire to die from their stings but for some reason God will make their deaths elusive. These are people who have gotten through the wrath of the *Lamb*, the Four Horsemen the

war, the starvation and even the radioactive pestilence. They have experienced a world with only blood to drink, and now they are under torment from these flying horrors.

Only those people who carry the Mark of God will be excluded from their-sting; but all will suffer the horror, the dark, and the ever mounting insane noise, of these creatures. Even believers who will have God's mark will be struggling in the midst of the bleak coal blackness which can never relent to the sun. A blackness which will drive those who cannot stand claustrophobic conditions to go insane.

And these demon insects will have intelligence and a special hatred of all that is wholesome and good. They were fashioned into these hideous forms from what were once God's fallen angels. And because they have lost their original angelic majesty, they despise the human race and beauty, delighting in its anguish. Humanity is driven wild with suffering, and worse than death might be the longing for death when death cannot be found.

It seems a merciful God is giving a taste of that sort of torment which never ends. The only thing worse would be an endless Hell, to be locked up forever in the dark of the pit beneath. How tragic are those who have decided Hell would be the better decision. It is not. Hell is forever, and Hell is just not do-able, but the bad news is that we are all headed for Hell until, we find Jesus.

Hell is a burning blackness for which there is no end and no way out, and no way to change one's mind. Some teach the soul burns until it is extinguished and vanishes forever. And with all sincerity I wish such teaching were true. It is almost unbearable to imagine even one's greatest enemy in Hell forever. But alas, as we read in Revelation 14, "*the smoke of their torment goes up forever.*"

Is this, the trumpet of the first "woe" horror? Yes it is horror. But through the horror contained and accompanying this trumpet God has once again shown his grace. Perhaps it is only with such a frightening exhibition that God can still get through to hardened sinners, those who have survived the *Tribulation*, and are still tempting Hell, still determined to take their own sweet eternal soul and go to that place.

Many treat Hell as a joke, but the description of Hell in the Bible shows it will be anything but funny. A drill instructor I had in the Marine Corps during Vietnam used to make us shout out that old Marines never die but go to Hell and regroup. Hell was a laughing matter. I never laugh anymore. Hell will not be a party. In case you are still deceived, please

listen, Hell will not be everlasting booze, chicks, and eternal sensuality. Hell will be utter aloneness amidst everlasting agony. Hell will confine its inmates in with their own personal hatred forever. But this trumpet calling out the doom of the world still announces safety can still be had. While there is life people still may repent, even at so late a time as this. The thief on the cross called out in his own death agony and his savior took him to eternity.

So ends the first “woe” on the earth.

And one might imagine these trumpets could never get much worse. But that imagination would be in error. For the next trumpet, the sixth, allows Hell to truly convene and take control over the surface of the earth. Hell will be in session all over the globe.

Four evil angelic beings have long kept captive in the land of Shinar where men returned to sin after the flood; and built the Tower of Babel. With the sixth trumpet, the second “woe” these evil angelic powers are released to do their worst. This will spell the utter doom of hundreds of millions who are still unwilling to follow Christ.

the four destroying angels, who had been prepared for an hour and day and month and year, were released to kill a third of mankind. Now the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them.

Revelation 9:15,16 (NKJV)

Bible scholars argue over this army.

Chairman Mao of China once bragged his People’s Army of China could mobilize 200 million into battle. And certainly China would constitute one of the major “Kings of the East.” So that even Hal Lindsey in his famous book on prophecy, *The Late, Great Planet Earth*, said this vast Communist Chinese land force would become the core of an enormous army of the east, an army of 200 million.

This army would march westward, cross the dried up Euphrates and come into the west to fulfill the sixth trumpet. It would be an army of human beings primarily composed of the Chinese with help from the Japanese.

But without question, he was wrong.

For one thing it is too early. The call to come to the great battle at Megiddo (*Armageddon*) has not yet been called. The *Battle of Armageddon* when all the remaining armies of earth are called to the Middle East comes at the very end of the *Great Tribulation*, which is yet some six years distant.

China will eventually march over Euphrates and through the Khyber Pass; to get to the plains of Jezreel and the great “Valley of Decision,” mentioned in the book of Joel. But this is still the first half of Daniel’s week, and as we have stated *Armageddon* comes years later.

But even were that not so, there are huge problems with this Chinese explanation, the least of which is the practicality. An army of 200 million human beings marching on their feet is just not reasonable. This would be like taking more than half the population of the United States out on a hike.

Just try to imagine getting more than half the population of this country to march a thousand miles to southern Mexico and there to organize and fight a war. Getting them all ready to line up and move at one time would be gargantuan.

But where would you put all their refuse? You would need to carry along a billion porta-potties for the billions of gallons of urine, and the millions of tons of plain old fashioned feces. Such a group would literally produce mountains of this stuff. What would you do with it?

And this is only the beginning. Every time you camped you would need a new lake on the scale of Michigan for drinking water and cooking. Food would require a constant line of semitrailers and trains just to haul it along. And where would you get the facilities for anyone to prepare all this food? Cooking would have to be done by the multiple train load at a constant rate, all day and all night. And there would not be enough time in the day to feed all these men.

So a marching army this size is simply ridiculous because it would be completely cumbersome and pointless in a world with nuclear weapons. You just don’t need the Golden Horde to accomplish great things anymore.

But this army of the second “woe” is not human. The second woe does unleash something of such vast proportions it is beyond human imagination. So enormous it boggles the mind. There will be 200 million of these riders, but they are not human beings.

The number of the armies of the horsemen was two hundred

million; I heard the number of them. And this is how I saw in the vision the horses and those who sat on them; the riders had breastplates the color of fire...and of brimstone; and the of the horses are like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths proceed fire and smoke. A third of mankind was killed by these

Revelation 9:16–18 (NASB)

These soldiers are all dressed in the livery of an ancient cavalry, their chests bearing a breastplate of hyacinth, yellow, and red. These riders are not human, they are from the pit. These are demon knights of the netherworld, they smell of burning brimstone the very smell of Hell. These riders are the angels thrown down from heaven. They are the ministers of death sent from the pits of darkness. These riders cross great oceans and spread all over the globe with but one sinister purpose. They kill.

Their demonic eyes glitter with the reptile eyes of their father the devil, and their mounts certainly have no resemblance to earthly horses. The beasts they ride kill from front or back with teeth and with fire. Even their breath is poisonous and they are certainly monsters. These are not regular horsemen at all, and they remind us more of the “black riders of Mordor” than anything human.

Here is a picture of the evil spirits of Babylon being released to destroy the whole earth and to kill the third of whatever can possibly be left of mankind. And the worst horror movie pales when one thinks of a world filled with such grinning monstrosities coming from every direction. There can be no safety in such a world. Two hundred million of them herding people by the millions and butchering them at will. They have no mercy about them. And since these things are demonic they may be able to pass through walls.

Imagine a world in which there is no place to hide. No place safe from them. They catch the traveler unaware in dark and lonely places. One moment a family is huddled in the relative safety of their home and the next they are confronted by a being leering at them through devil’s eyes, riding right through their walls. No one would ever know when they would suddenly appear; and kill.

By this point, only three and one half years into the *Tribulation*, only half of the human race has managed to survive. Some four billion have already perished but the *Tribulation* is only half over and mankind leans

over the precipice. For what is coming is much worse as the world plunges into the *Great Tribulation*, the most terrible time of all world history. And while millions have perished as martyrs in the greatest ingathering of souls for Christ in all history, most of mankind still remains hardened against God, and against his Son.

And the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons...and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries, nor of their immorality

Revelation 9:20 (NASB)

How the Lord strains to make his point. But even one of his own disciples who lived and walked and worked for three years with him was lost. This terrible thing called sin lies deep in the heart of man. So while millions have passed into heaven and are part of the multitude under the throne of God no man can count, many continue to resist out of pride, unwilling to turn to him and live. And many continue dying in such perilous times without Christ.

They resisted the gospel prior to the rapture. They resisted the seven seals of the Wrath of the Lamb, and now they have resisted the trumpets and even the two woes of Satan, and time is running short for them.

For by the end of the Trumpets we are at the *Tribulation* halfway point, and the last trump makes all that has happened pale by comparison. For the last and seventh “woe” is the *Great Tribulation*. When this trumpet sounds, it means the end of hope has finally come. As God states clearly, such times must be shortened or no flesh would survive on the earth.

But as the earth prepares for the last 3½ years of hellish trial, unseen and in anticipation of the new world, a great landing takes place. An enormous angel, absolutely the Lord himself dressed out as a warrior, as he often appeared in the Old Testament, the Angel of the Lord, descends and places one great foot into the sea, and one onto the land.

His face is like the sun and his legs are pillars of fire, and he has a rainbow all around him. The landing party of heaven has come, and it is D-day Earth. But no one on earth remains with eyes to see him come.

But as he lands this mighty one speaks with the voice of the *Lion of Judah* roaring out over the surface of the earth, and the thunders peal in answer to him. He announces to all creation that the King is coming! He

plants his flag for the universe in the name of *Yahweh*, Creator and Lord of all that exists.

This is the same one who appeared to John on his island. This is the totally unveiled *Lamb* who now returns in secret to claim what is his own. He is the *Lion of Judah*, and his roar fills the universe. The time for the *Lamb* has passed, and the time for the *Lion* has finally come. He will sit on the throne of David, and he comes to make his claim. He has come to present his credentials. He will soon throw out the pretender who calls himself the prince of the power of the air, the devil of hell.

And he bears a document in his great hand, and I think this is finally the title deed to planet earth. It is the document proclaiming him King of Kings, and Lord of Lords and the time of the iniquity draws near to being over. He will rule from Jerusalem over all the earth for a thousand years, and then into the eternity coming.

*The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of
Our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever
And ever.*

Revelation 11:15 (NASB)

And standing upon the earth, looking into heaven at the Father, he lifts his voice in joyful victory, and shouts with the thunder rolling:

*by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and
the things in it, and the earth and the things in it, and the sea
and the things in it, that there shall be delay no longer...the
mystery of God is finished.*

Revelation 10:6,7 (NASB)

For there is no more mystery left. Christ has been unveiled.

There is no further argument over who is the rightful king. When sin came into the world, the title to the earth was given over to a squatter, the devil of hell. And who was it who allowed in the squatter? Sorrowfully it was our forbear Adam to whom the deed to the earth had been given. Adam turned earth over to Satan, and the enemy of God became the “prince of the power of the air.”

For all the thousands of years since the Garden of Eden, earth’s atmosphere has been an occupied space. And so the accuser began to arrogantly trample upon his occupied world, going to and fro over the surface of the earth, as he boasted to God in the time of Job.

But this would end soon. The *Lion of Judah* had returned. The rightful King would soon sit upon earth's throne. And the battle is already won. It was won at the cross. But there will be war none the less.

So even as the seventh trumpet sounds, and the landing party from heaven lands. The great angel of the Lord himself hands John the proclamation, and with the last trump, the last woe...begins the *Great Tribulation*.

Credentials of the Great King



*Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel...I am the first and the last, and **there is no God besides Me**. And who is like Me Let him proclaim and declare it; Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.”*

Isaiah 43:6–8 (NASB)

*But in the days of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then **the mystery of God is finished***

Revelation 10:7 (NASB)

And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Beheld by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

I Timothy 3:16 (NASB)

These are the credentials of the great King.

He was revealed to mankind; and vindicated before all that has breath in the Spirit. He was beheld by angels, and proclaimed among the nations, and finally, taken up into glory. His birth was foretold five hundred years before he was born through Micah and the prophets of Israel.

But as for you Bethlehem Ephrata, too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.

Micah 5:2 (NASB)

And even Balaam, a gentile, and sometimes a false prophet from the nations, was told about his star.

A star shall come forth from Jacob, And a scepter shall rise from Israel...”
Numbers 24:17 (NASB)

And in the course of time he was revealed to mankind—first to Mary.

The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her,... “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.”

Luke 1:26,27,30,35 (NASB)

So simply was the insertion of God into the flesh of mankind explained. Simple shepherds and the wise men of the east came to see God born into human flesh. There was no distinction. God was demonstrating his love for all men. As Micah the prophet promised, his star appeared over his crib side, and the nations saw it. Magi, wise men from the east, trekked long over dangerous and distant roads to find him and to give him precious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; emblems as it turned out, of his throne, his authority, and his death.

And what they saw looked like a baby. And yes Jesus was a baby; but a baby who grew to become a man like no other man. A man in whom the hypostatic union formed, fully man, and fully God, and there has never been any other like him. God the Son had become man. One day he set out on his mission and he was proclaimed the *Lamb of God* by the forerunner, John the Baptist, who simply stated:

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
John 1:29 (NASB)

And with John’s words came the Holy Spirit, who appeared and landed like a beautiful heavenly dove, and the Almighty the Father, spoke audibly.

... a voice came out of heaven 'Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased' *Matthew 3:22 (NASB)*

Once he was grown, the multitudes followed from Galilee to Jerusalem. Never had the people seen such miracles or heard such words. Surely the long-expected prophet like Moses had come. After thousands of years a people who had lived in darkness saw a great light. Jesus was not like their religious leaders. Never had a man spoken the way he spoke. Never had a man performed the miracles he performed.

And when he entered the city of the Great King, Jerusalem, as the prophet Zechariah promised so many years before, riding upon the foal of a donkey, Israel hailed him their King. He was surely their long-awaited *Messiah*. And they threw down their garments and waved their palms branches over him. His scepter was rising among them.

Twelve disciples followed him, watched him, proclaimed him, and believed in him. They saw him heal the sick, give sight to the blind, and even life to the dead. They saw him walk upon the waters and still the sea. They heard the words, which stirred them like never before, saw him alive from the grave, which amazed them like nothing ever seen, and watched him ascend into the clouds which steeled them like no other eleven men had ever been steeled before them. And all but one of them, his betrayer, went to their deaths telling the world the same story. And even the one who had betrayed him never recanted a single word.

Do not be afraid; [said the angel] for I know you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. he is not here for he has risen just as he said...

Matthew 28:5,6 (NASB)

And the people of all the ages; those of the sevenfold churches went to the ends of the earth with this message. Man has been forgiven by the God who made all of us. And in order to forgive us this God has died on a human instrument of torture, to pay for our sins.

Into every teeming city, every jungle, and every mountain pass, with this testimony, went those of the *Church*. Paul, who had once persecuted and killed those who believed, encountered Jesus alive and ever after proclaimed him. Millions dedicated their lives to this man Jesus the Christ.

So mystery ends. God has come down to earth. He is *Jesus*, he is *Yeshua*. The one who was announced by angels, believed on by

shepherds, worshipped by the magi, followed by the Apostles, and listened to by crowds in Palestine, he is the one, yes listen to him. Men have preached his message in all seven ages of the churches for 2000 years. People have been cured from diseases, some raised from the dead. And in his Name other multitudes have received food, help, and medical care, while hospitals have been erected, orphanages supplied, women protected, rescue missions built, and people delivered from addiction, on every dark and lonely street in the world.

Others have been inspired to write music the equal of which had never been heard before, and to make stunning works of art like no art ever seen, and to build works of architecture and beauty, like never before.

And in this same name, science was born; and men began to discover God's works after him. And with science came modern medicine and new discoveries useful to health which have helped all people everywhere.

But far more important than all the rest together; in his name millions have been rescued from everlasting torment and everlasting destruction.- Missionaries left homes and families to trek over deserts, and oceans, and jungles, and swamps. Many went into strange cultures, in constant fear for life itself; to feed the poor, to raise the sick, and to and proclaim liberty to those in the darkness of sin. Many died of brutality and sickness. Some froze in the snow and others perished at sea. But they kept going, to tell of the good news, of this man called Jesus.

So as the Angel of the Lord proclaimed, the mystery is finally solved. He has come in the flesh, and is a mystery no longer. Here is God standing one foot on the land and one in the sea, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He will rule forever upon the seat of David, and as Isaiah said, the government will be finally be upon his shoulders. Soon-the *Tribulation* would be over, and the millennial rule begin. And the Great Mountain of Zion would rise and from thee in there in the center of the earth, he will rule the world.

But before that all happens would come the terror of the *Great Tribulation*.

Intermission: The Two, the Woman, and the Beast



The seventh and last trumpet plunges the world into the *Great Tribulation*. In our sequence we have now reached the exact mid point of Daniel's last week, and the start of the second half of this terrible Tribulation. Here John is told to "measure" the new temple and finds it will be occupied by gentiles for forty-two months, exactly three and half years, the second half of the Tribulation.

Three and one half years prior Israel concluded a seven-year pact with the White Horseman, the world leader. He promised peace and security, and gave them freedom to build their Third Temple. And it apparently takes them a little over three years to put the new temple together, presumably from parts previously made ready for this purpose. And since he was its sponsor and benefactor of the whole project, the World leader will be invited to the dedication.

Without a doubt the world leader will pretend he is coming to share in the festivities, but he has other plans, plans concocted in the halls of Hell. He will dedicate this temple in a different way than expected.

Some might wonder why he involves himself in the construction of a temple dedicated to God in first place. It is certainly not to serve the true God in heaven. No rather Satan needs such a temple to declare his man before the waiting world to be the god of this world.

*Ler no one in any way deceive you... the son of destruction
... exalts above every so-called god... so that he takes his
seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*

2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 (NASB)

So what follows the seventh and last trump, far from ushering in the *Rapture*, as our Mid-Tribulation (*Pre-Wrath Rapture*) friends believe, it

ushers in what is called the *Abomination*, the utter desolation of the temple. From all this it becomes clear what “gentile” is going to install himself as the main occupier of the new temple. No less a person than the *Anti-Christ* (the White Horseman) himself, who has begun to cast off the veneer of the selfless, helpful imitation of Jesus he had been playing, and become the selfish, devouring wolf he really is.

The world leader, now totally possessed of the devil since his recovery from some sort of fatal wound, will revel in evil. He will love destruction and fear, and whatever he touches will yield to hopelessness. Eventually the whole world will understand his purposes. But he is very clever and like the devil he is, he will go forth in deception keeping secret the roaring lion seeking those he can devour.

His arrogance will know no bounds, and he will already feel that it is too late to stop him. He goes to Jerusalem to sit in the temple of God, showing himself and all the world that he is God.

*And they worshipped the Beast saying, ‘Who is like the Beast and who is able to wage war with him?’ **And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant and blasphemous; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God..***

Revelation 13: 4-6 (NASB)

And perhaps there at this dedication, the *Anti-Christ* will reveal someone he has kept hidden, a powerful stranger who comes with the entourage, a man of incredible darkness himself, a man the scripture calls the second beast. *Anti-Christ* will install this stranger as the new High Priest of a new Jewish religion in a new Jewish temple.

He is the *false prophet* to rule over Israel, and ensure the Jews are included in the Mark of the Beast.

This man of darkness, undoubtedly Jewish himself is probably a quisling of the tribe of Dan. He is a person who has been waiting in the wings for the right moment for ages, a man to whom Satan has given supernatural powers, in an obvious attempt to counterfeit the miracles of God’s *Two Witnesses*, of whom we will hear more about shortly. So just as Jannes and Jambres, the wizards of Pharaoh’s court, made their rods into serpents; in duplication of Moses’ staff, so will this man attempt to deceive Israel through satanic counterfeits of the miracles of the *Two*

Witnesses. But we need to look backward for a moment to see the origin of this dark creature, the one called the false prophet.

Near the end of his life Jacob, grandson of Abraham and father of the twelve tribes, gave a blessing over his twelve sons, each to become the patriarch of a tribe of Israel. These words have all proven to be prophecy and most especially he foretold the line of the King, which would come from his son Judah and the line of the pretender who would come from his son Joseph, forebear of Jeroboam. Jeroboam would lead the ten northern tribes into rebellion.

Over Dan he spoke some strange words.

Dan he said would become “a serpent by the way.” It seems strange to tell your patriarch son that he would be a serpent. But from that moment to the present, the tribe of Dan has had a checkered history. Under Jeroboam’s rebellion, it was the tribe of Dan which first erected one of the false temples for the worship of the golden calf, and there have been other events in the history of Israel that set the tribe of Dan apart. So it is likely that the false prophet comes from this tribe and represents a final fulfillment of him being the “serpent in the way.”

And I saw another beast...And he exercises all the authority of the first beast...and there was given to him to give breath to the image the beast, that the image of the beast might even speak...as many as do not worship the image of the beast [were] killed

Revelation 13:11,12,15 (NASB)

So as the *Tribulation* enters the second 3 ½ years, Jerusalem is faced with the coming of the world leader to dedicate a New Temple of Freedom in Jerusalem. He probably comes into town a few days ahead of the events, leaving him time to deal with the *Two*, some Old Testament prophets who have appeared to preach to the world. As is usual for such political pomp, there are many speeches and many introductions, and during all the circumstance related to the opening of the Third Temple the world leader might be content to sit out of the festivities and await his turn to make a major address from the grand platform set up near the new temple.

For hours the political cast would have been congratulating themselves for their almost supernatural success in bringing an end to the

struggle over the Temple Mount. Person after person announcing that peace had finally come to the Middle East, and the representatives from the Catholics, Jews, and the Arabs all giving credit to the world leader for this new kind of peace. Now everyone would live comfortably on the Temple Mount together.

And because of this, and his seeming resurrection, some of the Catholics and Arabs were already calling him the *Messiah* for a new day. But for effect and because of the events of the last few days surrounding the Temple Mount, the world leader stayed out of sight.

But at the right moment, when it was time for his appearance, his cavalcade dramatically drove up to the front of the reviewing area, riding in one of a stream of enormous black limos, cars designed especially by a German manufacturer for his use. The stream of cars approaching the front of the new temple appeared like a winding black snake. And as he came it was obvious that this was the one who the crowd had come to see. The excitement among all the various people assembled grew as the black line of cars slithered in to stop.

From the hillsides above, many Israelites, and visitors to the country, watched and it appeared that many were praying. There seemed to be a tenseness in the spiritual atmosphere.

As the cars swung into the front of the new building and began disembarking their contents, the crowd had become strangely silent. Something about this whole thing seemed slightly strange, and disturbing. The world leader's security detail finally emerged from their giant "snake" cars, black suits and aviator glasses, opening doors for the dignitaries, speaking on radios, keeping watchful eyes on the crowd.

Last of all the leader exited. The silence of the pent up multitude seemed to erupt as they saw their hero at last, the man who had solved all their problems. The man who had given Israel her temple. But the shouts quickly turned to gasps as they saw him falter. He was a massive man, and overweight. But all smile as he is caught by an agent, as he begins the long labor of climbing up the steps.

It is a reminder to everyone how the leader had been recently shot by a religious fanatic and was seemingly dead. All the world had mourned the loss of the only wise person left on earth. At least it had been believed he was dead, but miraculously some said, by the power of God, modern medicine had managed to bring him back to life.

...his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazaed

and followed after the beast;

Revelation 13: 3b (NASB)

But it was clear he was still very weak. And to many he appeared suddenly corpulent, almost a walking corpse, being helped by some of his attendants up the new temple's grand staircase. But in the process of being lifted and carried by his attendants, and as he glances back at the multitude a wave of whispered apprehension ripples faintly through the crowd. Something seems very wrong with the leader's face; something terrible in his expression, something inhuman about his whole countenance. Something corpse like with monstrous glowing eyes. At first it appeared as though he would speak. But instead, he suddenly turned to the side and nodded at a balding individual standing in the wing, while taking a place behind, in front of the temple doors.

Noticing this, a few in the crowd hurled some verbal invective, but the strange bald man with his black goatee and jet black sunglass lenses came over and stood before the microphone. A few hecklers yelled that they had come many miles to see the leader, and not some flunky, but quieted quickly.

The balding man stood before the microphone, and the crowd got very quiet. His eyes were invisible, and again the crowd noticed some small differences. There was something alien about the whole man. He spoke for about ten minutes. Still most eyes were pasted on the disturbing visage of the world leader seated behind, near the golden of the new temple. Pillars on the south and north of this entry had names Jachin and Boaz, and together they meant established in the strength of Yahweh, as a warning to anything of the enemy trying to pass there.

But as the man in the front began to speak, and to the general amazement of everyone present, the world leader throwing all protocols aside, disregarding even the temple regulations of which he had been carefully instructed, signaled for one of his security men to open the great doors. And he, most obviously a gentile, with the help of his handlers, began to stagger over the last few steps toward the opening, the forty-foot-high gold-covered doors gliding silently on great gilded hinges. He began opening the temple proper to the outer court.

Out in the crowd at first there was a growing murmuring, the sound of many whispering. What was this gentile doing, peeking inside the Jewish temple. But as his footsteps crossed the threshold it was becoming obvious that the leader intended to take a tour! By the moment it was becoming

most obvious that the man intended to do the unthinkable, to go inside the temple of God, and he a gentile, breaking all the kosher laws of Judaism.

So as he stepped inside, rabbis throughout the receiving area came out of their chairs with imprecations of horror on their lips. Many others, even the many representatives from other religions still sat in shocked disbelief. Observant Jews from all over the world all begin screaming blasphemy and betrayal in Hebrew, and the whole crowd, Jew and Gentile alike were on their feet erupting in a hundred different ways; a huge contingent from the World Government were now standing in cheering ovation. From every hillside came the same imprecation of anguish and anger.

As the enormous doors closed behind them, there was a pause for a moment as the world leader's party vanished from the jumbo-trons set up for close ups on both sides. But the signal was quickly restored and not from the same professional feed. It had been switched over to some hand held device being carried inside. A camera was recording the historic passage through the restored Jewish temple, by the leader of the world. To the absolute horror of every Israelite watching, the party of the world leader were helping their feeble leader along the corridor moving deeper inside. Everyone on earth was now watching a gentile walking inside the holy temple of God. The crowd saw it all on the massive jumbo-trons outside. And while it was obvious this was no professional production, they were inside where no gentiles were ever supposed to be. Sometimes the camera was pointed in the wrong direction, and the whole world would hear bits of conversation, laughter, and lots of vulgarity, polluting the House of God.

In shock, the whole Jewish nation watched as a modern Antiochus Epiphanes polluted their temple, moving on into the Holy Place, past the flickering Menorah, and behind the great curtain into the *Holy of Holies*. By then, the old Rabbis were ripping their shirts, and screaming “*Abomination*” while tears rolled down their faces.

And the crowd had become a mob, screaming, running, carrying on, while the Israeli Defense Force, suddenly very much in evidence everywhere, seemed at a loss for how to gain control.

Inside, to the ultimate horror of Jews, who hid their eyes from what they couldn't even look at, the *Anti-Christ*—for they now know him as such—had seated his buttocks on the altar of mercy, the very place where the blood of atonement would be placed every year. The new Israeli

believers in *Yeshua* correctly understood this as seating himself on the very place representing Christ's own blood for atonement, is placed every year. And in the attempt to be as odious to God as possible, the *Anti-Christ* sat himself with pomp and circumstance on the very blood stains which speak of Jesus's sacrifice. And there, as though seated on the very throne of Israel, now enjoying the pleasure of raw evil coursing through his bones, he will announce his agenda to the whole world: "You will understand something from this moment on," he began slowly in a growling, demonic, even alien voice, his disturbing eyes now obviously glowing red. "I am the only living god, the god of this world. I built this temple and it belongs to me. And from this moment every man, woman, and child on earth will obey my every order, carry out my every whim, enforce my every decree. And you will do so because I am god, the only god with which you have to do, and the very embodiment of this world. It all belongs to me, and I am about to take it over and run it as it should be run. You will take my loyalty Mark very soon, or you will die. In order to receive this Mark you will fall down and worship me. That is all for now, but there will be more later; much more."

Both Daniel and Jesus speak of this terrible moment.

The utter blasphemy of a man placing his backside on the table of mercy; in the *Holy of Holies*, and calling himself god is beyond comprehension to most traditional Jews and Christians alike. But this event is coming. And the message to Israel could not be clearer.

Matthew 24 warned: when Israel would see the *Abomination of Desolation* standing in the *Holy of Holies* of God, they were to run for their lives immediately. They were not to stop to pick up anything but, wives and babies and run, for they would be in mortal danger.

This is now the beginning of the terrible Great Tribulation. This *Abomination of Desolation* is the trigger.

when you see the Abomination of Desolation which was through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, (let the reader understand) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...

Matthew 24: 15-16 (NASB)

At this point, the *Book of Revelation* is interrupted from its coherence to the clock and the calendar. Here, in the center of the *Tribulation*, at the

beginning of the Great Tribulation, comes what might be called an intermission, where reside three chapters of *Revelation* (11 to 13) more descriptive than chronological. Three chapters of explanation, and they are three of the most fascinating chapters in the whole Bible. In the case of *Revelation* chapter 12, a much-expanded time period is in view, perhaps the span of the entire period of earth's existence.

In the first of these, *Revelation 11*, the *Two Witnesses* of God are introduced. These two are the "Men-in-Black" of the Bible. They step out of the pages of all the scripture at interesting and unexpected times. And they vanish back as quickly as they come out.

We all know the story of Moses and the great plagues which eventually caused Egypt to let Israel go. We have heard about the crossing of the Red Sea, with walls of water that broke down when Pharaoh's chariots tried to follow through the Sea. And perhaps we have even some notion about the Lord taking Moses' life near Mount Nebo for striking the mysterious stone two times in the desert from whence the life giving water gushed. (In this case, the stone represented Christ. The Lord is only struck once for the remission of all sins.) -

God buried Moses in a secret grave near Mount Nebo where no man knows to this day. But amazing as Moses life had been, if he would have just stayed put in his crypt; there would be no more mystery about him. But that is not the case. Moses makes appearances elsewhere in the Bible, strange appearances. Most particularly with another Old Testament figure, Elijah, as on the *Mount of Transfiguration*, where Jesus was shown before all men in his eternal glory. That mount and that revelation is something of an irony to men. Actually it was a prophecy in multiple fulfillment. Jesus would someday appear on that very spot to commission and send off the *Army of Zion*. It was a taste of what was to come.

And Elijah, Moses' companion, is interesting in much the same way.

Elijah never did die. He went to heaven in a chariot of fire. But Elijah too appears there on the mountain with Jesus. In fact throughout the Bible, except in their initial lives, these two (Moses and Elijah) seem to be associated together. Even when they are not named by name but rather referred to by assignment, argument could be made that the Word is speaking of Elijah and Moses. Some even believe the *Two* who suddenly appeared at the ascension of Christ, to remind the Apostles of His return, were these same "*Two Witnesses*." They are specifically there called

“men,” and not angels. Moses and Elijah, “the Two” are the Men-in-Black in the Bible. They pop in at times when God wants something done, and then they pop out again. And in the process, the “Two” become a Bible theme all to themselves. But they appear most prominently as the great adversaries of the *Anti-Christ* in the days just before Christ himself returns.

And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

Revelation 11:3,4 (NASB)

Taking, as we have, the symbol of the Menorah lampstand as possessing the mystery of the *Church* in the Old Testament, these *Two*, Moses representing the law, and Elijah representing the prophets, are a picture of how the Old Testament books became the oil for the seven churches of the New.

On the mountain of transfiguration, when the *Army of Zion*, the 144,000 finally assemble, the *Two* will have words for their people as they mobilize to bring the gospel to all the world. And the Lord himself will probably appear as he did before, perhaps to touch the foreheads and to place his own mark on those of this great army, and as before the Father may even speak.

Contrasts connect these two throughout the Bible. One stands for the prophets (Elijah), the other for the law (Moses). One died and was buried, and one was not; one went to heaven in the ordinary way, and one went up in *rapture*. One wrote extensively (Moses), and the other wrote nothing (Elijah). One led the people, the other led only in the schools of the prophets. Miracles attended both, and as they return to witness on earth as the *Two* they seem to be enabled to perform the miracles associated with each of them during their original time on earth.

And while it is not clear how they are first introduced back into the world sometime early in the *Tribulation* word gets out that two very distinguished personalities have appeared. They are preachers dressed in the style of the Bible, and their fiery appeals to repent and be baptized remind everyone of John the Baptist, who Jesus said came in the spirit and power of Elijah.

So however they appear, they do so with stealth so that they have already been in the background preaching since the start of the week of

Tribulation. Then they seem to take front stage in Jerusalem and bring rebuke before the whole world. Suddenly they are on television and all the electronic media, giving weight to such words as “every eye will see them.” Quickly they become a problem for the *Anti-Christ* and his attempt to set the world in rebellion against God.

In fact, when all the rest of the world trembles at the very mention of the World leader’s name, these *Two* will seem to have no fear of him at all, and that alone will make them attractive to millions. So it isn’t long before they come to the attention of the World Government.

Their constant preaching from the temple area, where the New Temple of Freedom is being constructed, and their constant call for people to shun the power of the *Anti-Christ* and trust in Christ becomes a thorn in the world leader’s every plot. In fact the *Anti-Christ* will probably suspect a mole among his own people.

Because the two ancient-looking “kooks” seem to know his every movement and what is on his mind. Because they identify the world leader directly as Anti-Christ, the *Two* will make the life of the beast, beastly. But there are some peculiar rumors attached to them:

And if anyone desire to harm them, fire proceeds out of their mouths and devours their enemies; and if anyone would desire to harm them, in this manner he must be killed. These have the power to shut up the sky, in order that rain may not fall during the days of their prophesying; and they have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.

Revelation 11:3–6 (NASB)

As we said, the mysterious powers these *Two* seem to project are like those of Moses and Elijah during their Bible lives. Elijah held back the rain for three and ½ years causing the drought that overtook the Northern Kingdom in the days of wicked Ahab and his evil queen. That seems significant. It is the same miracle and the same period as the first half of the *Tribulation* in which the rain appears to be held back and there is a drought over most of the world.

And when Elijah finally challenged the priests of Jezebel to a duel to see which God would accept an offering by sending down fire in answer, he was the one who called down a fire so strong as to vaporize the rocks of the altar.

So it is likely Elijah might have the power of an awesome fire which could proceed out of his mouth, a flash of energy, hot enough to melt rocks and almost anything else. Moses, on the other hand, turned the waters of the Nile into blood and called down plague after plague on the Egyptians. It is likely he would have such powers now. All of which, of course, came from God. No man alone can do these things. Malachi, the last prophet of the Old Testament, warns the world that Moses and Elisha are coming.

Remember the Law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he will restore the hearts of [the people]...lest I come and smite the land with a curse.

[even here Moses and Elijah are associated]

Malachi 4:4–6 (NASB)

In every Seder (Passover) dinner, in every Jewish home, a place is reserved for Elijah to come. At the door a child ceremonially welcomes him into the house. The prophet Malachi warned Israel that Elijah would come before *Messiah*.

“I am going to send you Elijah,” he tells them... “before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.” So Israel has always expected him. But Elijah has not yet come. This is the very reason John the Baptist was asked if he were Elijah, It was a reasonable question to ask, since the people were looking for *Messiah* to come. And *Messiah* had come. But John said he was not (not Elijah). Was the Lord just kidding around?

Well of course not, as the Bible says John was not Elijah, though because of multiple fulfillments of prophecy he did come in his spirit and power, but it was not yet the time for Elijah. The true *Messiah* had come but it was not yet the “great and terrible day,” as specified in Isaiah 61. It was still rather the “favorable year.” Jesus himself explained this when he read from the scroll of Isaiah, to the people of the Nazareth synagogue. Taking the scroll from the synagogue leader he read from Isaiah 61, that with his coming it was “the favorable year,” and stopped before he read the next clause, “the great and terrible day of the Lord.” which is still coming. The scripture is very specific and often juxtaposes multiple fulfillments into the same sentence. The Scripture is always true to itself.

John the Baptist came as a forerunner but we know from Jesus’ words that John was not the final fulfillment, Elijah is still coming. Thus we

understand one of the “*Two*” must be Elijah. The other is less certain, and some actually vie for the ancient father of the race, Enoch, who like Elijah never died. And it would not bother this writer if the other witness indeed turned out to be Enoch. Nevertheless, Moses is listed again just prior to this reference in Malachi as though God is still reminding us of these two together. Because there is no doubt that we see these two prophets as a set throughout the Word of God. For this, and the other reasons, we opt for Moses as the second of the *Two*. But regardless of who they turn out to be, it was inevitable the *Two* eventually would have to be dealt with by *Anti-Christ*.

Since they had mysteriously appeared near the new temple in Jerusalem, they had grown a huge following, and the authorities knew their destruction would not be popular. But the world leader could not long stand their insolence and their mutiny. Soldiers would have to shut them up, and quickly. Their mouths would need to be closed in a permanent sort of way. The *Anti-Christ* could not allow two strange old men, wandering around Jerusalem, preaching that Jesus was really coming back, and soon. Their words had power and tended to frighten ordinary people, a multitude of which had already decided Jesus was the *Messiah*, after the invasion by the northern power, Magog.

Moreover, a great mystery enfolded them. Nobody knew from whence they came or what their motive really was. And for some strange reason, everybody seemed to understand their preaching no matter what language, and where in the world they said it. Everybody seemed to be hearing them in his/her own tongue.

And these two had been on the Internet, television, and other media, prophesying against the ruler of planet earth for three and a half long years. That was starting to bother the “man of sin.”

Out of sight, the *Anti-Christ*, watching them from the privacy of his inner circle, was having apoplectic fits, cursing, and screeching invective at the television screen, demanding their deaths from his subordinates. But the *Two* kept preaching, and they seemed to have provided a distraction to the ruling authorities, so that the other retrograde force, the so-called *Army of Zion*, could continue their mischief all over the world, telling about Jesus. *Anti-Christ* had intel that they were doing this from the Arctic to the Amazon, without much interruption, and this too was making him crazy.

The *Two*, as they were called by millions, had quickly become famous. And now three years after their fame had spread, videos with their warnings began going viral. Millions were smuggling their messages in

media everywhere. Thousands in Jerusalem were following their preaching in person, some to laugh, but the vast majority to listen. After the rescue of Israel from the Russian invader, their crowds had swollen into the hundreds of thousands. Everywhere on the Internet, and live from the Temple Mount, the crowd was visibly burgeoning. Strangely no matter how many stood nearby, everyone could hear them clearly, and in his own language.

Sooner or later, a confrontation was bound to happen. And it finally seemed likely when the world leader came to Jerusalem for the dedication. He would finally have his day with the two old prophets.

That day had come, and a wedge of powder blue UN caps moved through the massive crowd, seeking the *Two* in the Temple Mount. The beautiful new temple, sat on the mount nearby, guarded by several battalions of blue caps, the dedication of the new building soon to happen. The *Two*, noting the change in the atmosphere of the crowd as the World Government troops approached, sat quietly near to the old Wailing Wall, down off the mount where they usually spoke.

Millions there and elsewhere were watching the drama, expecting a bad end for the *Two*. How could two old men hold out against the bullets and the batons of a SWAT team in full body armor. The consensus view was that they would be in custody of the World Government by nightfall.

The wedge of blue caps moved ever closer, the crowd making way when they discovered them in their midst. Suddenly, almost surprisingly, the soldiers found themselves facing the two old prophets, with the wailing wall behind them, and the new temple high up on the mount above them. Cameras all over the world moved in for the showdown, and the betting in Vegas was in favor of the world leader. Surely the old prophets would understand as soon as they saw the guns. It was obvious they had courage but could they continue to press their case when confronted by 45 automatics? Some in the crowd were issuing cat calls to the “bullies” in uniform. But the crowd, not wishing to be arrested themselves, made a wide open area for the men dressed in the UN blue.

A network camera panned in for a close up of the young commander as he approached the biblical *Two*, as the media called them. The commander appeared young, his Mark one of the largest and most prominent types. But the most outstanding feature on his face was his anger. Something about his eyes seemed almost wild. But laid over the mask of hatred, he wore a strange, crazed-looking smile. In fact he

appeared almost giddy, clearly enjoying his task. He was a burley man of size, and not one to be trifled with.

And he addressed the *Two* through some kind of bull horn, telling them they were under arrest, the tension heavy in his voice, "by the authority of the World Unity Government." Gaining confidence, as the old men seem to pause from their preaching, he looked ready to shoot first and ask questions later. He knew he had permission from the very top.

But the crowd sensing the violence in this man, moved away even farther. And then one of the *Two*, the one called Elias, seemed to take note of the soldiers for the first time.

And he held out his hand in warning.

And then, in his Old Testament voice, he commanded the soldiers to stay back. "Oh men of the world," he sounded absolutely in command, "Do not approach further. You remember what happened to mighty Pharaoh, do you not? Take heed." And suddenly the soldiers seemed small in the eyes of the crowd.

But the commander nervously laughed, and waved for his men to go forward guns at the ready. Secretly the young commander was hoping they would give his men reason to put them down. Strangely, and it actually puzzled him, he hated them viscerally. His task group crept forward with caution.

And then something happened which nobody in that audience could ever shake out of their most imprinted memory. From the mouth of the one called Elias appeared to come a beam of some kind, like the ray from an old science fiction movie. And along with the beam came a roar like the sound of a mighty rushing wind, and the soldiers lit up for a moment and were incinerated instantly. Bullhorn, side arms, and M16's, right where they stood, one moment they were there and the next they were gone.

The whole detachment were there one moment and the next they were vanished from sight, totally vaporized. And their backups, several other police and SWAT teams, who had set up near the back of the crowd, monitoring on TV units, began shouting into radios. And some sort of panic took hold of them, looking more like children than a police force, they started loading their trucks as quickly as possible, the words of the old preachers lingering in their ears.

“You who have taken the Mark will suffer the wrath of God heaped upon you without measure forever. As for the rest of you, repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, for now is the day of salvation.”

In the crowd could be heard the chatter of the network commentators trying to make some sense out of what their cameras had just recorded. And there was the crying of thousands around them, calling out for God to forgive their sins as the *Two* had explained to them, moving toward nearby fountains for their impromptu baptisms. Groups called out for anyone to show them how to be saved, literally taking the words of Elias for as real as he meant them. They moved as though in a daze, tears streaking down and some with hands lifted upward, a look of rapture on each face.

But the *Anti-Christ*, in utter frustration, to quiet an intolerable rebellion, had decided that he must kill the two old witnesses himself. Taking a few guards with him from his hotel, in the early hours of the following day, he encountered the old prophets still sleeping with nary a follower around. The whole Temple Mount appeared vacant, and to the world leader they looked very old and feeble. Seeing him coming, they made no attempt to resist, declaring their hour had finally arrived, and stood at attention, staring.

“Your hour has come evil one, you must do what you must do.” It was Mose speaking this time.

The words seemed to impact the leader as swords and in a frenzy of personal hatred, the world leader drew his own 45 and emptied the clip with an uncontrollable violence which seemed to shock even his guards. He kept clicking after there were no more rounds left. The *Two*, riddled with 45 auto slugs, slowly slid down a wall, splattered with their own blood, into a sitting position, and without further comment, their heads fell over, and they simply died.

And when they have finished their testimony, the beast...will make war with them, and overcome them and kill them.

And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city...where also our Lord was crucified...and [nobody]will permit their dead bodies to be laid in a tomb. And those who live on the earth will

rejoice over them, and make merry; and they will send gifts to one another, because the two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. Revelation 11:7–10 (NASB)

The world, listening to the news rotation, awoke to hear of the personal courage of the world leader. It amazed everyone that their leader had personally taken down the two old Bible men, when they had murdered the SWAT team on the previous. But the leader made political hay while he could.

He had personally faced their flame thrower, and caught them unprepared. And he had taken them down as dangerous killers of his officers of the World Government. of his task force on the previous day. His departments of internal security had also discovered the real agendas and powers of these two old fakirs, and it would be released. It seems they had been far from what they presented themselves to be.

To add indignity to their destruction, it had been forbidden for any authority to pick up their bodies for a few days. They would lay in the road in front of the new temple, distorted and bloating until they rotted away. They were already unrecognizable and the stench was terrible in the heat later in the midday. And there they lay, unburied for three more days.

Meanwhile celebs, and the beautiful people in all the places where the rich and connected gather, got drunk and partied in every capital of the world, toasting their hero, and celebrating his Mark. Many received the colorful decorator Mark in those parties.

And after the three and a half days the breath of life from God came into them, and they stood on their feet; and great fear fell upon those who were beholding them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here!’ And they went up to heaven in the cloud, and their enemies beheld them.

Revelation 11:11,12 (NASB)

No doubt the hot Jerusalem sun would cause their bodies to swell, and the stink would become something horrific. And the more their bodies decomposed, the more the *Anti-Christ* and his men mocked and laughed, and waved their fists toward God, leading a worldwide orgy of wickedness and blasphemy.

Only a local Jewish television affiliate had remained with the bodies. The reporter had objected. It had not been her desire to babysit a pile of rotting humanity. But she had been ordered to keep an eye on the stuff so

that nothing would be done to disturb this mess. Why anyone would want to was never asked. But late in the night it was her eyes which first noticed a change.

Right in the midst of the great worldwide debauchery, toasting the deaths of the crazy old evangelists, something was happening. She didn't like it at all. She too had rejoiced at the deaths of these scum who dared insult their leader who had brought them through so much. And when she first took note of something happening, she could hardly believe it herself. At first she had not been certain, she had only caught something out of the side of her eye. But then she was sure that an eye had opened and it had actually made the hair on the back of her head stand up and feel crawly. But she was not being superstitious, that mess was looking at her. And actually she had admit that the "mess" had lost its odor and was looking more human by the hour. Impossible as it could be, the *Two* were moving. But nobody else noticed. And only one or two other reporters, from the local media were paying any attention at all. She had not taken the Mark because she had missed the staff party, and was starting to wonder about a miracle from God.

First Elijah, and then Moses, began to roll over and sit backup, and then, without a word both suddenly stood, raising hands in prayer. And then came the electrifying announcement worldwide. The *Two* were alive! After three days of rotting in the streets of Jerusalem, the *Two* were alive! At glamour parties for the rich and famous all over the world, all eyes turned in horror to flat screens on the walls. Was it their imaginations, or did that new Mark just implanted over their eyes now seem hideous? Why was it burning them so?

"We interrupt this broadcast," the networks intoned, "to take you live to the Temple Mount where the *Two*, believed dead by the hand of the great world leader, appear to be standing up." The Jewish girl on the scene filed her report with tears running down her cheeks. She was praising God with many around her. On international media, to the hellish screams and the rage of those bearing the Mark, the world watched the video, as the two slowly stand, having been resurrected from the dead.

Worldwide those who had chosen the Mark scream obscenity at the *Two* as they watch them stretch their arms toward heaven. And they cover their ears as they hear the *Two* giving praise to Christ their Savior. Meanwhile, from his penthouse in Babylon, the *Anti-Christ* too will be screaming out invective and orders to run the *Two* down with tanks and trucks, but nobody will be willing to move.

And then, before the eyes of the world, the *Two* looking up, their arms raised, their faces filled with raptured peace, they slowly began declaring that the vanished *Church* had gone before them. And by this time the square will fill anew. And many as they watch will fall down on their knees, arms raised like the *Two*, pouring out their sins before *Yeshua*. A storm seems to come up around the *Two*, and then in a blinding flash, lightening coursing throughout the sky, in absolute wonderment many see a hole forming in the sky, a giant door with a kind of heavenly light streaming into our world, music playing. And a gigantic window will seem to stand open in space, just above the *Two*, now fully recovered. And a heavenly light comes flowing down from the open door, as they lift away, the song of angels filling the temple area.

And over all is heard the voice of the archangel saying: “The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he will reign forever and ever.”

No lightshow on earth, no matter how much money was thrown at it, could come close to this vision; for those who could see it. For it seemed that nobody with the Mark could see it. But there in that window in the sky, some could actually see the holy ark of God, in the true temple in heaven with the angels touching wings, and hear the voices pouring out joy into earth’s weary atmosphere.

*And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened;
And the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there
flashes of lightening and sounds and peals of thunder and
an earthquake And a great hailstorm.*

Revelation 11:19 (NASB)

And then, as quickly as it came, the door into heaven swung closed again and the vision faded, while enormous bolts of lightning begin hitting the ground all around the square. Screaming for mercy the crowds run under any protection they can find, only to feel the very earth move in a small earthquake. Then as fast as it came it was gone and the earth seemed to quell, the roar of massive hail falling all over the temple area. And everyone wondered at what had just happened.

Nevertheless those with the Mark of Anti-Christ, found themselves hating the running sore that the Mark had become. There was no beauty there, only the most rank and smelly infection. Many with the Mark,

sensing their doom wept openly, and not a few went home and committed suicide in their despair. Even many of the blue caps abandoned their trucks and just wandered away from their leaders. And the leaders themselves had begun acting crazy, often shooting their subordinates for less than just cause. Nobody seemed to care. It was now too late for anyone to care, and they knew it.

Each one of them now had understanding. They had taken the bait, and now it was already too late for those with the Mark. There was nothing to be done for it, they would all go to hell forever, and most of them knew it, though nobody could bring himself to say it.

But all was not yet lost for everyone. Many had not yet submitted to this Mark, and while it was growing late, very late, God's grace still applied. Joel's promise to the youth of Israel was that they would see visions. And after the mercy seat had opened in heaven, visions became commonplace, and many in Israel saw the woman. Chapter 12 is the second of the Intermission chapters.

It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all ; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions ...I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth...

Joel 2:28,29 (NASB)

The woman in the clouds would be one of those wonders God would display, and it is found in *Revelation* chapter 12, we find the vision of a young woman with her feet on the moon and clothed in the sun.

A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, The moon under her feet...and she was with child; and she Cried out being in labor and in pain gave birth...and a great red dragon...his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and Threw them on the earth And the dragon stood before woman ...so that when she gave birth he might devour her child ...she gave birth to a son,...who is to rule all the nations...and her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

Revelation 12:1-5 (NASB)

God sees his *Chosen* as a woman someone who was supposed to have had a relationship with him as in marriage. Perhaps she is pictured as the young Mary the personification of all Israel. A woman as a symbol in prophecy usually represents a people in relation to their eternal husband.

The *Church* is the “Bride of Christ,” and the false church is the *Whore of Babylon*.

And another sign appeared in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth.

Revelation 12:3-4 (NASB)

The dragon appears as well, stalking around the symbol of the woman in the sky. The old serpent is Satan who has been up to no good in regards to the “woman” ever since the Garden of Eden. In ages past Satan tried to lift his throne above the stars of God and joining in his rebellion came millions of angelic beings. He swept a third of the angels away “with his tail.” Now we know the demons are just one third the number of angels remaining with God.

[Satan] You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect beauty. you were in Eden, the garden of God;... You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there, you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked in the midst of the stones of fire, you were blameless in your ways from the day you were created...until unrighteousness was found in you...

Ezekiel 28:12-17 (NASB)

Satan, the old dragon, as the anointed Cherub Lucifer (the light bearer) once walked with God in the “stones of fire,” the stars, I think. So all the glories of the heavens were once his home. But he wanted to be lord of the universe, and violence and pride were found in him, and he was cast down to the earth where he added humanity to his rebellion. Now why Satan, or any other angel, should have wanted to get away from God is simply beyond human understanding. All we can say is it happened.

But after it happened God had a problem. Men joined Satan in the rebellion. There was only one way an infinite being could communicate love to his creatures, and a real love not simply based upon concept and precept. God would have to become a man and allow Satan to do his worst.

So then with nails in his bloody hands, pinned to a cross in utter weakness, God could finally say I love you; and even selfish human beings would know he was telling the truth. God, suspended between earth and

heaven, was looking down upon humankind having accepted the agony of our sin, and saying, I love you.

It seems inconceivable to mankind, but God created the world, made it the showcase of the universe, and placed upon it this weak creature of flesh called “men” all so that he could perform only one thing. Jesus needed to die, taking the place of a weak creature of flesh so that strong creatures of spirit would understand his love and stop questioning his character and his right to make judgment even over them. This is why, according to Peter, angels long to look into these things.

But in the process, Jesus became man, and so he will remain. Jesus’s sacrifice rescued mankind and at the same time condemned Satan. The war was lost and won. It could honestly be said *Jesus created the whole world, as a way to prop up his cross*. He created man to demonstrate his love. He created the universe to share it with men and angels.

God demonstrates his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8 (NASB)

It was all in God’s plan.

So in order to escape the Lake of Fire himself, Satan had to destroy God’s plan when the child came. So the “old dragon” waited for the child. He would kill the Son as soon as he appeared out of the woman, Israel. The red dragon hovered, waiting long ages for the child.

And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth , so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

Revelation 12:4 (NASB)

And finally after thousands of years Israel through the virgin gave birth to a Son, and all Satan managed to do was kill the boys of Bethlehem. As the vision completes itself, that long-awaited Son, after redeeming mankind on his cross, was taken back up to God, some day to return to rule all the nations.

Finally something happened in this celestial video, which brings us right up to now. She ran, the woman ran, when she saw the *Abomination*.

the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place

prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (1260 days is again, 3 ½ years!)

Revelation 12:6 (NASB)

Once again we run into the second three and a half years of the seven years of the *Tribulation*. The woman of Revelation 12 is in hiding during this entire time. Israel will take the warning from the lips of the Savior in Matthew 24; and flee for 1260 days, when they see the *Abomination*.

And note the symmetry of *Revelation*.

The *Two* of chapter 11 minister in the first 3 ½ years, and then they are raptured away, and the Woman (Israel) of chapter 12 flees into the mountains for the second 3 ½ years. Between these two chapters we cover the full seven-year period of Daniel's last week of years.

So Israel will be in hiding somewhere for the second half of the *Tribulation*. The question often asked is, where? We know why she will flee. But where will she go?

Well actually, we do have a pretty good idea.

The *Army of Zion* returns home to Jerusalem near the beginning of the *Great Tribulation*, and after the *Two Witnesses* ascend back to heaven. The time of the *Great Tribulation* begins and it begins with something we have mentioned, the *Abomination of Desolation*.

Therefore when you see the Abomination of Desolation which Was Spoken of through Daniel the Prophet, standing in the holy Place (let the reader understand) Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains...for then will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall

Matthew 24:15–21 (NASB)

The *Great Tribulation* will transform the regular *Tribulation* into something much worse. And for Israel this means they must hide in the mountains. For the second three and a half years, after Israel realizes she has been betrayed in her temple, she must run away to the mountains or be destroyed.

It is believed by most scholars that the Jews will go away into the Jordanian desert to take over a place Esau prepared for them, called Petra. This is the walled city in the cleft of the rock, the very place as a matter of fact where Harrison Ford filmed one of his “Lost Ark” movies.

Petra was the city of Esau’s people, Jacob’s brother. Esau was the same brother who rejected his birthright for a pot of stew. In the little prophecy of Amos, we find some very interesting words. The prophecy deals with the last days when the house of Israel will be “shaken” in the face of all the nations:

*In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And
wall up its breaches; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it
as in the days of old; That they may possess the remnant of Edom
Amos 9:11,12a (NASB)*

Edom is both a pun and a people. Edom means red, and Esau was a man of red complexion and red hair. The stew he wanted to eat was also red. And the people which came out of him were the Edo-mites.

Herod the Great, who killed the babies in Bethlehem, (under the spiritual control of the Old Dragon) and built the remodeled but desolate temple, was from Edom a descendant of Esau. Herod’s people the Edomites are known in the archeological world as the Nabataeans, a desert people, who built their strong city in a deep gorge running through solid sandstone, in a place called Petra. The canyon itself widens out inside, but at the narrow doorway called the “Siq” there is hardly enough room to ride a camel. It is the narrow slit in the mountain shown in the motion picture, “Raiders of the Lost Ark.”

As this prophecy in Amos predicts, Edom (Esau as a people) was judged for helping others against his brother Jacob. So as a people they vanished from the face of the earth, leaving their city empty and waiting over the centuries for Israel. Their city Petra means “the rock” and it is in south central Jordan. The city is largely carved into the walls. Beautiful “storefronts” like the so-called “Treasury,” complete with carved pillars line the walls inside the canyon. One can still go and see this empty city today.

Esau thought his natural castle was invincible. And it might have been, if God had been its protector. Edom gloated and laughed at the misfortunes that befell Jacob, his twin brother, and God never forgave him.

For the day of the Lord draws near on all the nations. As you

have done [Esau], it will be done to you. [you will become]...as if [you] had never existed. But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape...and the house of Jacob will possess their possessions...there will be no survivor in the house the Esau.

Obadiah 1:15–18 (NASB)

As the “Day of the Lord” draws near to all the nations, “Jacob will possess their possessions,” and there will not be one member of Esau’s clan left. Today the city of Esau, Petra, is a ghost town abandoned by everyone. But when people visit it has the feeling of being “haunted” with waiting, waiting for something very important. It is to the walled city of Petra, where Israel will most certainly run. Not that an ancient city, even one made of solid stone, can keep nuclear weapons at bay, but when God is the sentinel, the souls within are safe. Fanny Crosby’s old gospel song finally comes completely true when Israel takes its refuge in the city of his twin brother Esau.

*He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock That shadows a dry,
thirsty land; He hideth my life with the depths of His love, And
covers me there with His hand, And covers me there with His
hand.*

Song lyrics: Fanny Crosby 1820-1915

Chapter 13 is the spiritual backdrop for *Anti-Christ*, and his “false prophet.” In previous sections we have glanced at the Mystery of the *Church*, and the Mystery of God. Chapter 13 of *Revelation* delves deeply into the Mystery of Iniquity that is the origin and purpose of evil. This section pauses to take up the story of the *Anti-Christ*, and his purposes.

As the chapter opens John is walking beside some sort of nightmarish sea which stretches out into blackness, and nothing about the picture is peaceful. Lightning is flashing in the distance and the winds are stirring up the white foam. Worse than the sea is the company John must keep to stand there on that doleful shore. He is joined by Satan and his monsters. The dragon does not seem to notice him.

*And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. And I saw
a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven
heads, and on his horns were ten diadems, and on his heads were
blasphemous names*

Revelation 13:1 (NASB)

John is only an observer writing about the events of this gloomy sea, but as events unfold, the sea is being stirred up by the wind. This sea is a picture of the restless churning of mankind. The water represents all the churning people of the nations, the black water is sin. And out of this nightmarish sea comes a symbolic creature; a creature of darkness the *Anti-Christ* Daniel's "coming prince," who rules by "his craft" which are the words out of his mouth. The ten horns on him represent ten nations backbone of the confederation that brings him into power. And it is the dragon which calls him up out of the sea as the Beast and into power.

Anti-Christ is here shown coming out of the nations. Over the nations the Beast will rule with absolute power for three and a half years. But at first his rule will be an attempt to mimic Jesus, a soft tyranny, a benign dictatorship of measured words, and nice sounding phrases. He will come in dressed as a lamb but underneath he will be hiding a monstrosity, the rebellion against Almighty God.

During the time of his ascension, he will be helping forge peace in the Middle East, and cleaning up after the Magog (Russian) invasion of which he will take credit for winning.

And by smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people who know their God will display strength and take action.

Daniel 11:32 (NASB)

And of course the *Army of Zion*, and the *Two Old Testament Witnesses*, will not be silent during these early years of the *Tribulation*. (They are the people who "know their God, who will display strength and take action, as in the verse above.) So some will see through his charade, but most will sleep as he mocks all religions, save those which honor him.

Finally when he comes into Jerusalem to take part in the dedication of the new temple, in spite of the many Israelites who now know the "name" of Jesus as Ezekiel promised they would, many in Israel will still be carried away with the charisma of this man because he seems to be the man of the hour, and because he gave them back their temple. Many proclaim the man as a agent of evil, but others will deny that any evil person could help them build the temple of God.

Those who think he is *Messiah* will wave palm branches over their heads, as they did for Jesus. Some will be up on the mountainsides praying for protection while others will fill Jerusalem with cheering as his motorcade slithers by. As Jesus once warned them, "*If another should come in his own name, him you will receive.*"

Thus he will confuse the new believers in Israel, men and women who have discovered Christ through God's protection from the power of the Russian, Magog. They now knew, or most did, that it had been *Yeshua*/Jesus, all along, protecting them, leading them, but there was such pressure to conform.

Because all the earth will regard the new world leader as the man of the hour, a miracle worker, and a very good man who his followers intimate to be in league with Jesus, a new and improved sort of "Jesus," ready to weed out evil and replace it with "goodness" throughout the world, willing and able to protect from the power that snatched the people when the vanishing occurred

And as we have said, sometime before he declares himself the god of this world, *Anti-Christ* stages some sort of phony resurrection. He appears to rise from the dead. Evil cannot create anything new but evil can emulate, and all evil ever manages to do is copycat good for its own terrible ends. So it is doubtful the *Anti-Christ* manages a real resurrection. A counterfeit resurrection must then be enacted in some manner. How this occurs is a good question.

Some believe the dead corpse of the *Anti-Christ* will simply be indwelt and energized by the spirit of Satan himself. They propose that *Anti-Christ* will literally become a corpse walking around. So rather than a resurrection, he might stage a re-animation of a dead and decaying body. Satan will literally put on his body.

But there are problems. There are problems with any sort of cheat that the devil puts on his old companion death. But the world leader might be able to conjure up some devilry to deceive the elect. It might be hard even for Satan to keep a dead body looking fresh and alive even with the ultimate power of evil resisting rot from the inside out. We presume the smell and the decay would eventually make the thing look exactly like a movie zombie, its flesh falling off. But we simply use our best imagination.

So none of this is certain save the *Anti-Christ* getting back up on his feet after a near death experience. But whatever this evil thing ends up doing, it will be deception. And for the vast majority, who are grasping at any straw in the *Tribulation*, it works.

And all who dwell on the earth, will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written...in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Whatever happens, after his “healing,” it is likely the world leader will cast off his cover and become ever more the wolf, and less the wolf in lamb’s covering. With Satan now at the very core of the man however the resurrection is staged, he is evil incarnate. No longer will even the facade of civility cover over so cruel a core. His personal arrogance, and his lack of human compassion will quickly show him for the quisling he has been from the beginning. His boasts will increase in volume and will be directed against the God of the universe. He will declare himself “god of this world,” and the absolute enemy of the true God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself them all.

Daniel 11: 36–37 (NASB)

No longer will he even try to camouflage his hatred for all things good.

So as we back track to where the limos carrying the world leader wind around and stop in front of the temple doors the cheers of Israel, who had been given their temple back to them, reaches an ear-shattering decibel level. All Israel has turned out to honor this man, their great benefactor.

For many he has become their best choice as *Messiah*, even though the people, after the Magog attack, knew *Yeshua*. But the joy of the new temple has caused many to think about this business of *Messiah* all over again, and some had become confused over Who Messiah really is.

So as his attendants help a suddenly corpulent-looking Leader from his seat, the roar is deafening, but the look is all wrong. And since we are now repeating ourselves, we turn our eyes and ears to the new person, a Jew of the house of Dan.

And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth; he had two horns like a lamb, and he spoke as a dragon and he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. And he makes the earth and all that dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose fatal wound was healed.

Revelation 13:11,12 (NASB)

And there was given to him to give breath to the image of The beast , that the image of the beast might even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

Revelation 13: 15 (NASB)

Once his party reaches the microphones, it appears that the world leader will take the podium. Looking very tired, he almost seems to be grasping the podium to stay on his feet. There is a tangible sense of unease. Audible gasps and whispers move like waves through the audience. The man looks to everyone present like a corpse, an animated corpse. Something about his eyes. Then suddenly he seems to draw back, turning to the side, and nods to a balding man in the background. Instead of the world leader, it seems the strange newcomer with the pitch black lenses in front of his hidden eyes, pointed beard, and bald head will address the vast assemblage. In contrast to the leader this newcomer steps up to the microphone, his face expressionless, his shaded eyes like empty sockets.

He also seems a strange looking man; bearing definite Jewish lines of architecture, and dressed like a rabbi, but with the creeping sense of his face being too skeletal, and hardly like a living human being at all.

He began speaking fluent Hebrew with an Israeli accent, describing what honor was his to fulfill the ancient role of the High Priest in the new temple, and it was all news to Israel, who had assumed the World Government would leave them alone to become an autonomous state, guarding the great new temple. Instead, he would, he tells them, work with their people to accept the logic of allegiance to the World Government and its pledge through the Mark.

“It is time to let go of old prejudices and religious stumbling blocks of the past, and mold a world of understanding and cohesion. It is quite obvious,” his voice taking on a matter-of-fact tone, “that the so-called “*Chosen* people thing is a fable, coming as it did from ancient times and ancient ideas. You must understand,” his teeth looking a bit carnivorous, “that the so-called Bible, both Old and New, were important for the times in which they were written, written by sages of the past, but they have been superseded by the revelations of modern science, and a New World Order of peace and tranquility.

“Soon, he declared, there would be marking stations everywhere, even in Israel, to assist with this vital transition from the national Jewish identity toward the unity required to take one’s place in the upthrusting ever brighter future of man. “Once the operation is at peak, he smiled, getting Marked will be a commonplace thing; pleasant, and harmless.” And he pointed to a station nearby already under construction. “All you need do is to go through that entry and I assure you, they will make your time enjoyable, very enjoyable.”

He leaned forward, taking a more intimate stance as if to speak with an old friend about something a bit embarrassing.

“Now then, his volume fell many notches, let me assure you that your world leader is watching you. “For a while he has tolerated a bit of negligence in the area of the Mark, but” and his mouth opened slightly, revealing very serpentine fangs, “ by this time next year, we all (we in Israel) shall all be part of the New World Governance.”

“There is your Marking Station, for Jerusalem, Israel. It is my privilege to announce it to you,” he began, “that in commemoration of the establishment of this new Temple of Freedom, your Marking Station is unlike any other in the world. You ought to feel special in the sight of the world leader. Not *Chosen*, but special. We have made it possible for you to speak with the world leader himself, in great intimacy right here before your temple!” Here he smiled and returned to a straight posture, “we kind of think of it as your own private confessional, with the confidence you are talking to a priest. Through the magic of artificial intelligence, as you linger before our great leader, his image will form out of something similar to liquid crystal on that pillar, but it is in 3-d. His image will seem to live before you. He will be able to speak just like a favorite old grandfather.” He paused for effect, “you will be able to tell him anything, and he will give you his blessing.”

“He will call to you by name, and you will speak with him intimately, and will have the impression you speak with the world leader, one on one, just like a caring old father. And in truth you will be. Now how amazing is that?”

“On every imaginable question, you will have his personal answer. You will know how much he cares for you. He will know you, and know all about you, your family, and your past. The technology is so complete I feel I am talking with him myself when I access his image. Please come to your temple, and speak with your caring new father often, he wants you to.”

“Soon Israel, you will all join the New World Order, for the mutual betterment of us all.” His voice sounded low and comforting. He paused and looked over the crowd, with those covered eyes, and smiled. In truth it looked more like the smile of the cobra than that of a caring High Priest.

Next he pulled back his tightly fitting skull cap, which had covered his head, and continued, “This thing of beauty has been characterized,”—his bland face broke into that snake smile—“as the Mark of the devil, which will send you to eternal damnation, apart from God. How dramatic.” He chuckled. “And by the way, it comes in various colors, the colors of your choice. Isn’t it lovely? The very emblem of joining shoulder to shoulder with mankind, to face the uncertain future together.” He paused, “So you see,”—he sighed—“when you take away all the drama, it really is quite nice isn’t it?”

And he appeared to go back onto script, continuing in this way, explaining how the equipment for marking had first been tried on the world leader’s inner circle. And how he, breaking again into that reptilian smile, being first among the first, had been the very first in all the world to receive the Mark.

“It was, he declared, the Mark of loyalty to the man who I know in my own heart is god, the man who has already saved the world multiple times. Moreover and most importantly, he continued, this Mark is your meal ticket in this world of want. Since the times we live in,” he paused, “seem to be marred by social, military, and religious upheaval, we must all pull together, and do our part, so all may eat.”

“Outcasts in any society,”—he asserted, finally removing the sunglasses, revealing eyes which were just dark slits—“do not contribute, and so they do not eat. That is, do not have a share in the bounty with the rest of mankind.”

He seemed to be moving to his close, as the vast doors of the new temple were swinging wide, allowing in the party behind him, and people were starting to scream from the vast audience outside.

“Since his great resurrection miracle, the vast multitude of the remaining “peoples” who had not yet accepted the world leader will now gladly take his Mark, and worship, him. The great hero who was raised from the dead has become the god of this world. Praise his name!”

And many of the powder blue soldiers from the UN contingency who had come in with the world leader, erupted into a standing ovation, their Marks showing under their blue berets. And just as the new High Priest finished, the jumbo-tron screens showed the party of the world leader just

inside the new Jewish temple, and shouts of “no – he cannot, abomination!” began.

And he causes all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free men and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hand, or on their forehead.

And he provides that no one should be able to buy or to sell, the one who had the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name...Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man and his number is six hundred and sixty six.

Revelation 13:16–18 (NASB)

In the second half of the *Tribulation*, everyone on earth will be forced to make the decision faced by Esau. Is the heavenly birthright more important than the needs of the stomach? Or is that pot of pea soup more important than the way to heaven?

The Mark will allow the buying of such food as will be available under the circumstances of the *Great Tribulation*. But even that food will be uncertain. Food supplies will dwindle as farmers lose the ability to cope with the upheaval. Food will be scarce for everyone except for the *Anti-Christ*, and his inner circle. They will still have access to the grape and the olive, symbols of wine and fine dining. But from the Mark of the Beast, in which a pledge is made to Satan, there is no going back. Anyone who ends up with this Mark on hand or forehead will know they are forever giving themselves up to the one who hates Jesus Christ. They will know without doubt they are dedicating themselves to the enemy of God.

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
my unconquerable soul.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*

from “Invictus” by W.E. Henley 1895

Nobody will end up with the Mark by trickery, or because they slept in one day and somebody marked them. The Mark will be offered as a choice. Renounce God the Father, renounce his Holy Spirit and renounce *Yeshua (Jesus)* and his blood, take your Mark, and eat. Sadly even many in Israel, even a few of those who earlier found the name *Yeshua* during the Magog invasion, will forget their earlier decision and welcome the world leader as their long-awaited *Messiah*.

According to Matthew chapter 24, during the *Tribulation*, only those who “endure to the end” will be saved.

*Then they will deliver you up to tribulation, and will kill you
...And at that time many will fall away and will deliver up one
another and hate one another. ..But the one who endures to the
end, he shall be saved.*

Matthew 24:9-13 (NASB)

Why does that not apply now? “Enduring” implies working and keeping yourself, the very opposite of grace, which is God blessing you with His forgiveness, for all who run to His cross. But those in the *Tribulation* must “endure” by not taking the Mark of the Beast. Before the *rapture* we live in the time of the “open door.” Grace is a gift bestowed upon us. By sincerely asking, we receive God’s forgiveness. The Holy Spirit is still sealing men and women into eternal life by faith. When the “sealing ministry” of the Holy Spirit is upon a life, God will snatch them away from earth in the *rapture*. They have God’s pledge or seal of their eternal life. But in the aftermath of the Rapture, they will have to “endure” by not taking the Mark of the Beast.

*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;
and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and
no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has
given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to
snatch them out of the Father’s hand.*

John 10:27-29 (NASB)

But afterward, when the earnest of the Holy Spirit is gone and the Mark remains, only those who deny the Mark and so refuse to deny God even unto death will be saved. They will have “endured to the end.”

The new High Priest shouted out, “Israel, behold your god!” just as *Anti-Christ* appeared to be entering the *Holy Place* near the *Menorah*

outside the veil of the most holy place on the jumbo-trons outside, and chaos was quickly erupting in front of the new temple. Old Rabbis were fighting the blue hats with folding chairs. Others were running around tearing at their clothing. And just as suddenly the Israel Defense Force seemed to be everywhere.

Members of the IDF appeared with bullhorns making offers of a quick ride out of the increasingly hostile mob now mulling about the new temple, shouting that men and women boys and girls should follow them and get aboard trucks which somehow they had already lined up near to the viewing area.

It was quite obvious the Jewish military, for whatever reason, wasn't supporting the world leader. Nor were they working alongside the UN forces, who were commanding them to do so. Those in their blue berets were pressing Israelis into lines near the marking stations, and becoming increasingly hostile to all Jews, in uniform and out.

Once again, the new High Priest, who seemed to have command of the whole Temple Mount PA shouted: "Behold your god, O Israel! Worship your long-awaited *Messiah*. He will this day take his rightful seat in the *Holy of Holies*! Let all men everywhere worship and bow down, or die."

And on the jumbo-trons, the Beast, for now they knew him thus, was in the *Holy of Holies* taking his seat on the table of mercy, where the atonement blood was to be displayed each year. And it was seeing this final desecration that hit every Jew as if a dam suddenly broke. Everyone was running somewhere, most in their panic not knowing why. More men and women wearing the uniform of the IDF appeared and were dashing through the midst of the crowd, pleading with everyone to leave Jerusalem immediately.

"Run," they were crying, "Israel, run, you must leave, now, for your lives!" "Do not trust these people! They have already activated the marking machines, and they will demand you receive the Mark before you leave this square alive."

Shots rang out, and in the confusion, several of those with the blue beret fell over a railing, and it was obvious a firefight was underway between elements of the World forces and the IDF. Women were screaming and IDF units were taking up positions to guard an area full of their vehicles from being commandeered by the men and women in powder blue.

A woman, dressed in the uniform of the Israeli Air Force had a bull horn, and was now directing Jews to lines of trucks which were running and many already starting to pull away. “Please, everyone, for your own safety, take our vans, the trucks of the Israeli Defense Force, and we will get you out of this danger. Stay away from those in the uniform of the World Government. And you must go now, or the roads will be cut. Do not go into the marking stations! They have already activated the marking machines, it is a trap, and you must go now!”

Then a vast quiet seemed to lap over all the confusion as two new voices rang out from just off to the left of the great temple building up on the raised platform, where *Anti-Christ* and his men had been only moments before.

There stood the *Two*, still dressed in the same ragged ancient garb, and looking just as they had before. And for some reason, the soldiers in the blue berets didn't see them. And they didn't seem to hear them either. No one had seen them, as they came out from beside the building, and only Jews without the Mark heard them now.

“...let all who are in Judea flee to the mountains...do not go down to get the things that are in your house, and do not even go back to get your cloak... but fly Israel, fly for your lives..., listen to Yeshua, and fly for your lives....”

And then Mose in his deep voice intoned:

“Go into the wilderness, go there to hide for 1260 days...”

The Last Call



The *Army of Zion* had been called home from the four corners of the earth. Their time had come, and gone.

Someday soon, this group I have called the “*Army of Zion*,” the 144,000, twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of Israel, will bring the light to every dangerous and lonely street in all the world. From the drug-infested alleys of Harlem to the God-rejecting streets of Brisbane, and from the religious formalists in Moscow to the hedonists of Rio. God will send in his *Army* to all of them.

Jumping the guarded perimeters of North Korea’s “Control Zone 22,” one of the bleakest most horrible places of human confinement and death since Auschwitz, the *Army of Zion* will be there. No power on earth will confine them. To every tribe and family in the world they will bring liberty, joy, and the message of forgiveness in Christ, telling the world of His soon coming Kingdom.

They will hold meetings to thousands in Beijing. They will invade Al Qaeda in Syria, and convince hardened Muslims to accept Christ. They will pray down the glory in the homes of Saudi Arabia, they will even slip into the sewers; porn clubs in Los Angeles, and the drug bars in Paris. They will not fear the sex trade in Sri Lanka, nor the nests of human trafficking in Hong Kong. They will preach to thousands beside the Great Buddha, and to millions along the Ganges in India. They will call down the power of God upon the stiff-lipped Brits near Big Ben, and they will bring mercy to the hallowed halls of Congress.

They will lead thousands to Christ in red light districts from Amsterdam to Singapore, and from the hard streets of Hollywood, to the Stone Age peoples in the Baleen. And they will even penetrate the stiffness of the academy, steeped in atheist foolishness. From Harvard to Oxford, from the Sorbonne to Stanford, everywhere these soldiers of truth will invade the holds of darkness and prevail. Everywhere; and in all parts of the earth, they will bring a multitude no man can count out of a

Tribulation, no man can endure. They are the blessed ones whose feet are “lovely on the mountains,” who bring good news.

In fact, as God said to Abraham on one clear, star-filled night as he was looking out into the Milky Way, his offspring would be like the stars of heaven, and like the grains of sand of the sea. He would have a land, and a seed, and someday Israel would reach out and bless every family on earth. That time was now, and the blessing was going everywhere.

With the coming of the 144,000, the promise had come to pass. And as when Peter preached on Pentecost at the opening of the *Church*; those who knew Christ heard themselves speaking Hebrew, but the nations heard them in every dialect which had come out of Babel, and millions had fallen down and worshipped the soon coming King. They had overcome every bastion of skepticism, every cathedral of paganism, and every base of political extremism, and a multitude no man could count had come out of the *Tribulation* on their way to the Wedding Supper of the *Lamb*. It was the greatest and last harvest of souls, and because of the way the population curve works, it came about when most all the human race was alive and living on planet earth.

And Israel, having overcome by the blood of the *Lamb*, brought mercy where mercy had never been given. And in all those places where they had been Star Chambered by the Inquisition, pogrommed by anti-Semites, and hunted to extinction by the Final Solution, they had turned the other cheek and brought God’s love and mercy. In all places where they were just hated and persecuted by everyone else on earth, they returned in love, bringing God’s Word.

But with the *Great Tribulation* opening, the *Army of Zion*’s work was nearly done. As Jesus had told them, “*Work while it is yet day, for the night cometh when no man can work.*” Night was falling, over all the world, the terrible night called the *Great Tribulation*.

*His love has no limits, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary, known unto men;
For out of his infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.*

—Annie J. Flint (Public Domain)

So as the *Army of Zion* returned to Mount Zion, after three and a half years, all 144,000 delighted in taking turns testifying of the great victories wrought in their midst, and they sing the victory song to the *Lamb*. And

even as the mountain was the site where Christ had been transfigured, on the very place where Peter and James and John first saw the glory of the Son of God revealed, heavenly clouds rolled in as before and they heard the voice of the Father, and the transfigured Lord appeared saying “*well done, thou good and faithful servants.*”

And there also the *Two Witnesses* probably appeared to welcome them home, and to add their blessing to the joy.

From all time, God has planned to show his unfailing love through the instrument of *Jacob’s Trouble*. Contrary to what men say about the *Apocalypse* being a destruction, something men hope will never come, the *Apocalypse* had been the means of the “unveiling,” a time when Christ is unveiled to Israel, and to all the nations through Israel. It will come and perhaps the greatest multitude ever will go to heaven because it has come.

Where there is much sin, there was even more grace, and the *Army of Zion* sang of the great fulfillment of Genesis 12 and Abraham’s stars. When the Promise to Abraham was fulfilled, a multitude no man could count would now be in the kingdom, from every tongue and tribe and nation, who shine like the stars forever, all because God sent a time of trouble, and his own *Army* at the end of this age.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;

...These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation

...they have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 7: 9; 14 (NASB)

Israel’s purpose in being the *Chosen* had been set from the beginning to reach every tribe, every tongue and every family with the Gospel of Christ. And in spite of the danger, they had survived to be counted intact, the same number which had left the *Mountain of Transfiguration* three and ½ years before. Nobody is missing! The whole 144,000 which went out in chapter 7 are still there together singing in chapter 14.

Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four

*thousand, having His name and the name of His Father
written on their foreheads*

Revelation 14:1 (NASB)

Many had been shot, and some of them killed by stones, and whatever else the *Anti-Christ* could throw at them; but here they were if need be raised up again. Certainly they had been spat upon, and locked into dungeons, and electrocuted and whatever else the satanic trinity could conjure up. But there was no power on earth to stop the *Army of Zion*. For like the Apostles of the first century, they followed the *Lamb* day and night. They loved Him because he first loved them. As He said of all of us:

Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands

Isaiah 49:16a (NASB)

The prophet penned these precious words 600 years before Christ. The pens for this inscription were rough Roman nails on a cross through his hands. If only those who will someday take the Mark of the Beast could see those deeply engraved wounds on Jesus' hands. If, in that day, they will still be able to weep, perhaps they will weep looking at their own hands, hands now forever marked with the emblem of hatred the Mark, which could have been saved by a man whose hands had been marked with love.

*...the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the
earth is ripe.*

Revelation 14:15 (NASB)

And an angel in heaven swung his great scythe and the last saved souls appeared under the throne of God in heaven. And then a second angel, with his great blade, swept over the earth and his scythe forever separated the vine of the earth, with its "grapes of wrath," from the true vine of Christ. This angel reaped from the unsaved still on the earth.

*And the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the
clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into
the great wine press of the wrath of God...the winepress
was trodden outside the city and blood came out from the
wine press, up to the horses bridles, for a distance of two*

hundred miles.

Revelation 14:19,20 (NASB)

The sickle of the so-called “grim reaper.” And as his blade flashed over all the land what is taking place spiritually in Heaven begins to be enacted on the ground. The armies of earth begin to assemble for the last great battle. Armageddon is coming.

*For behold...I will gather all the nations, and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat then I will enter into judgment with them there...**Put in the sickle for the harvest is ripe, Come tread, for the wine press is full...**, multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.*

Joel 3:1-2,13-14 (NASB)

But the final battle of the world starts to take shape slowly

Seven Bowls



It will take months to move all the millions of men and material from hundreds of nations in preparation for the last battle on earth. Transport and telecommunications have largely been broken down worldwide, and most of the earth is already decimated by the circumstances of the *Tribulation*. More than half of mankind is dead. Whole nations are simply too polluted or radioactive to support life, and still men have the capacity and resolve to make global war. The world is headed to Armageddon.

Some believe the last battle settles old issues between nations.

Perhaps the final war is between the east and the west. Anti-communists have postulated that it would be between the “eagle” and the “bear,” the capitalists and the communists, and they have said this for years. Some who put a great deal of stock in the “One World Order,” say Armageddon is a conspiracy of the “Illuminati,” those of “the all seeing eye,” the eye of Osiris, which is at the peak of the pyramid on our own dollar, whose goal is to destroy all remaining Christians. Today many say that the last world battle is between the Christians and the Muslims. Some are saying it is the battle with the Twelfth Imam, the Shiite *Messiah* in Islam.

But not a word is true. They are not the real reason armies move toward Israel from all over the world. The objective the *Anti-Christ* has set before the nations is to force the Jew to take the Mark, and join the One World society. But even that is a lie. The real agenda is to finish what Hitler began; the Final Solution of the Jewish Question; genocide of Israel.

Satan must do whatever he can to destroy the last Jew. If the last Jew dies God cannot keep his word in the scriptures and the present universe will unwind, and Satan may not have to go to the Lake of Fire, after all. And he thinks Israel is the weak link in God’s plans because they are only a little people. And for some reason, which eludes Satan, God has

promised them the rule of the world through Jesus someday. Jesus will sit on David's throne and rule the whole globe.

But the dispute between God and Satan goes even deeper than the survival of the Jews. It deals with God's right to judge. Specifically Satan challenges God's right to send him to judgment forever. Earlier we saw how Satan has challenged God on a character basis, forcing Jesus to die on a cross to prove his love. Here Satan challenges God on a contractual basis. God has promised to fulfill all prophecy to Israel, and if he can't, the scripture the contract between God and man is broken. To save himself, Satan is out to destroy Israel, break the scriptures, and declare God a liar.

But men do not know this.

As they gather in the Valley of Jezreel near Megiddo, their political pundits are spinning the events. The hope is in a mere show of devastating power. Surely that will make this errant people called Israel to finally accept the Mark and join the New World Order. Of course to do *so they would* also have to abandon their "fairy tale" of being the Chosen people of God.

So the armies of the nations move slowly toward the "valley of decision," *Armageddon*. They begin to accumulate by the millions on the plains of Megiddo, near Nazareth, in the place in Hebrew called Harmageddon, as the great staging area for the assault on Jerusalem only 50 miles southward.

But even as mankind moves toward this horrific climax, God finally unleashes the terrible judgments of the bowls. These are far worse than either seals or trumpets and are the judgments from God which happen in the second half of the *Tribulation*.

As the seals demonstrated the wrath of the Lamb, the rejection of the free offer of salvation, and the trumpets the rejection of the blood, the rejection of the requirement of salvation, the bowls represent the consequence of the rejection of salvation. The bowls seem to be a demonstration of the terrible consequences of sin. Sin corrodes and destroys everything. In the bowls sin has finally destroyed the earth. And each bowl seems to mark out a particular part of Satan's Kingdom.

But we here abbreviate the tale. Because the details of the bowls become tedious. Hell is tedious, it will never change forever. After millions of years of fire in hell, what is left? Tediousness the same ole

same forever. Once someone falls under the terrible bowl judgments, it is almost too late he is experiencing Hell on a first name basis. Still while there is life, there is hope, and any sinner who repents, refuses the Mark, and lives for Christ, will still find himself/herself in the Kingdom of God. But outside of Israel, who after the Abomination of Desolation is hidden away from the authorities, few remain who have not taken this terrible Mark already. Without it, food has gotten very difficult to find.

John writes of these bowls I think, only to warn those who might read and heed his book of the *Revelation*, ahead of time. He wants his reader to know that such times are coming, bringing near hopeless conditions to earth. The bowls were written for this present darkness, in the hope men may still choose the light, before the darkness starts to close in on them forever.

In the first bowl there is a judgment for those who have taken the Mark of the Beast. The first angel comes out and pours out such a judgment into the earth. It shows up the Mark for what it is, doom to its wearer for all eternity. As this bowl falls I am certain men try to remove this horror, and can't. It will not be cut off. One cannot remove the hand it is on and lose it. It is ultimate horror to suddenly know that the Mark is not protection against the wrathful God as these condemned were taught. The Mark is the ultimate trap. They believed the lie, and it is too late.

*and it became a loathsome and malignant sore upon the men
who had the mark of the beast*

Revelation 16:2 (NASB)

At the site of the Mark people develop running sores both "loathsome and malignant." The Mark will fester, and great scabby infectious blotches will cover the beauty of the face. Welling out from the small location on the hand will erupt a painful infection which will flow up the arm, rendering it gangrenous, and such rot will finally flow into the rest of the body. Soon the wearer of the Mark will most closely resemble what is today called a zombie, full of walking anguish unable to have it stop.

And all this in a day when entire populations will be utterly without medical help. The doctors and nurses remaining will be suffering themselves with such gangrenous sores. The Beast will finally be despised by everyone who was foolish enough to take his bait. The Mark will intoxicate going in and infuriate coming out. Men may try to cut off the hand with this Mark and this infection, but it will be too late. They will despise the hour they ever heard the name of the Beast, for they will know they are headed to his end. Screaming and howling they will join the shuffle

of the night, but they will still have no love for God either, they will blame God for their condition.

The second bowl, like the second trumpet, attacks the sea, turning it into blood. But this time all the ocean is completely turned into a worldwide cauldron of clabbered corpse blood, from whence there is no return. The oceans are dead. When the second bowl falls, the earth starts dying. The ecological catastrophe Al Gore thinks is happening, will really happen then. At this point the earth itself is dying. The same curse now falls on the rivers, and the whole earth begins to reek like the corpse it has become.

All that is left upon planet earth is guilt and regret. Guilt for the wasted blood of Christ, and regret; at not listening to the message of salvation. And since they have refused the saving blood of the *Lamb*, God will now give them a bloody ooze to drink. How sweet are the things of the night to the fallen nature of man. The pornography, the affairs, the homosexuality, and the life devoted to self. Today's heroes are blood drinking vampires; and flesh eating zombies. The reality will be something less inviting when it comes.

The fourth bowl makes the sun turn into a terrible frying heat in the sky, so that it will cook the festering skin and the clabbering seas of the whole world. The lovely life giving sun will become a rampaging terror in the sky to scorch all the men on the earth, men still suffering from their running sores given to them by the infectious thing called the Mark. Such heat will heat up the scum of the waters turned into blood, and make the whole earth stink even more. Into the augur of the oceans cultures of dangerous bacteria will be raging causing rampant illness all over the world. Power grids having largely failed already, the chance for air conditioning, save in the buildings of the *Anti-Christ*, are now nearly nil. Life on earth under the bowls will become a horror story from which there is no escape, save hell.

The fifth bowl, in contrast to the heat of an overactive sun, will cast pitch darkness upon the Beast and his throne in Babylon, so that his own darkness should be made known to all. While the darkness will give some relief from the frying heat of the sun, it will fill the world with a depth of isolation so deep men will have a taste of the shroud, the utter isolation of Hell. Hell is isolation in a burning darkness forever, stuck with your own raging regrets and consuming lusts, and never any hope forever.

It will be clear to all, Satan has lured them into a place to share in his own damnation. This is what comes of believing the lie. But for such creatures all that is left is hatred, and they hurl out their invective and

blasphemy toward God, and toward the Beast, and toward each other. In fact, by this point hell has really begun for these denizens of darkness. They will never see the light again. They scream out their relentless pain, as they will do forever in the everlasting torments they face. What tragedy that humankind should have ever ended up in a place where God intended Satan and his demons to spend eternity.

Then came the sixth bowl, and frog-like spirits are dispatched all over the earth to draw all military men to the place called Armageddon. The grapes of wrath are finally going into the winepress of his fury:

for these are the spirits of demons performing signs, which go out to the kings of the whole world to gather them together for the war of the great day of God, the Almighty

Revelation 16:14 (NASB)

As the frog spirits move out traveling at the speed of spirits, looking somewhat like the “gray aliens” pictured in the imagination of Hollywood, men and machines are moving slowly crawling over the ground, into the air, and over the seas, toward Armageddon.

Where is Armageddon?

Just fifty miles to the north of Jerusalem lies the great valley of Megiddo. This is their destination; men and machines from all over the earth. They have become like zombies themselves by the influence of the “froglike” demonic entities. They move toward certain death in a hypnotic trance, a generation of human beings without hope. Only mindless destruction remains in them, and they no longer listen to reason. They have all been gripped with a suicidal madness. Perhaps the world has avoided the use of huge mega-tonnage, but a vast nuclear war is coming.

The hypnosis of the demons has encompassed and blinded all of them. No more common sense is left in any capital, in any nation in the whole earth. The world’s armies have become like lemmings. The grapes of wrath, those from the vine of the earth, are headed for the winepress. This is Joel’s “valley of decision.” Evil in its final form has no point other than destruction, even self destruction.

*a sound of tumult on the mountains, Like that of many people!
A sound of the uproar of kingdoms, **Of nations gathered***

*together! The Lord of hosts is mustering the army for battle. They are coming from a far country from the farthest horizons, The Lord and his Instruments of indignation, To destroy the whole land. **Wail, for the day of the Lord is near!** It will come as destruction from the Almighty Therefore all hands will fall limp and everyman's heart will melt...For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises, and the moon not shed its light. Thus I will punish the world for its evil*

Isaiah 13:4–10 (NASB)

And the sixth bowl is poured out on the great rivers of the east, making way for the nations of the east to come to the Valley of Decision. And while they slowly crawl by the millions over the mountains, through the Khyber Pass, and down to the Valley of Jezreel, one long column like ants, their boots pounding out doom on the face of the world.

Soldiers who have been in the marching infantry, have heard this drumming on the ground. Marching feet in perfect synchronization sets up a sound like a gigantic drum and the ground literally thunders under their feet. They have to break cadence going over bridges or the bridges will be pounded down. Millions upon millions of feet, moving westward, pound out the doom of the world.

While overhead, the last angel pours out the seventh bowl. And the fabric of reality itself begins to unravel. Under the influence of this last terrible judgment, nothing about life on earth seems to matter any longer. Men become like animals, reptiles, their minds blanked out by demonic activity, and all care about life and order and peace has left them. Great earthquakes wrack at the bones of the earth, and cities crash down. Hailstones fall from heaven, some weighing in at 100 lbs each, wrecking havoc upon everything as they move toward the battle. Pummeled from the sky with ice balls the size of bowling balls, buildings fall, and life is snuffed out.

But to the disciples of the Beast, covered in enormous festering sores, the ice pelting you, killing you, would seem a mercy from heaven. But with the last bowl, it seems all the last vestiges of sanity seem to come undone:

And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there

Not been since man came to be upon the earth...the great city [Jerusalem] was split into three parts, and the cities of the Nations fell...and huge hailstones about one hundred pounds each, came down...upon men; and men blasphemed God

Revelation 16:18-21 (NASB)

Man had been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

Whore of Babylon



There are three symbolic women in the *Book of Revelation*. Each of them represent a body of people. In Chapters 2 and 3, the letters to the Seven Churches, we are introduced to the first, who is the “Bride.” She is the *Church*, who, according to the chronology of *Revelation*, “*what is, what was, and what will be*” leaves earth with the *Bridegroom* and is “*raptured*” away in the fourth chapter.

Then in chapter 12, we are introduced to the second woman, the woman with the child Satan desires to kill, the Child *Messiah*, and she is standing on the moon, with her face in the sun. This is Israel. In this cosmic PowerPoint from God, Satan (the old dragon) is shown waiting long ages in his last ditch attempt to destroy the One promised, break the scripture, and escape his fate in the Lake of Fire. Here also, in Revelation 12, is a reminder of what God said to Eve about the “seed of the woman.” The man normally has the “seed.” But there would come into the world one born of woman who would “crush the serpents head.” No wonder Satan waited and used his servant Herod to put out a hit on the newborn King.

Finally in chapter 17, we meet the third woman. This is the rejected *Whore of Babylon*. Like the other two she represents a body of people. But this is not an attractive group. She is the apostate (the unbelieving) church. She has long been in the world growing alongside the true church, the true *Bride of Christ*, and much of the social gospel I was raised in could be considered of this type.

But she comes to full bloom during the *Great Tribulation*.

And she is not just phony in her affirmation; she is dead set against God. In fact she is such an antagonist she delights in becoming the primary agency for the Mark of the Beast. It will be her job to find true believers, even those who find Christ, through the *Army of Zion*, and Mark

and kill them. She is called *Mystery Babylon* because she brings the dark, satanic teachings of Babylon to their final fulfillment.

As *Mystery Babylon*, her satanic roots go back a long way.

After the great worldwide flood, in the days of Noah, a man called Nimrod built a tower whose top was intended to extend into heaven. No doubt he knew it would not really act as a ladder into God's throne room, but it would become a monument to a race of men in opposition to their Creator. Because Nimrod ruled the world, his tower became the center from which to practice the occult Zodiac. The tower would actually be a high observatory; a place to watch the constellations as men began to read their fortunes by the movements of the stars.

God had judged the pre-flood world with water for their violence, and every thought of their heads had become evil. But even after the waters receded, men quickly strayed away from God all over again, and followed after their own evil instincts. God had commanded men to spread out and subdue the earth. They were to farm and reclaim the land, and the land was rich after the flood. But in their rebellion men decided to stick together around the Tower, desiring to gain power again. By adding to their numbers, they thought they could become strong against God. The Tower was a demonstration, if only to themselves of their own human strength, and a way to keep the people in Shinar united in their opposition to the true God.

From that ancient time to this, the stars have been studied in the Zodiac to find out the future. Instead of turning toward the accuracy of the true prophets of God, (To Abraham, God even used these stars to show forth the promises of Zion) but men turned away again, finding their own fortunes in animal entrails, and in other occultic fetishes. They began superstitiously dropping bones, and choosing Tarot Cards. God told men to leave the "hidden" the occult things to him, but they specifically disobeyed and dove in deeper, into the forbidden things.

When he made them, God had declared the stars would be "for signs" in the heavens for "times and seasons," and it was to the stars that God referred Abraham to receive his great blessing. But from the time of Nimrod, Satan had perverted their use, and they became the window through which the occult takes hold of the world.

In turning away from God, men opened themselves up to contact with fallen angels (demons), and many forms of possession and the darker practices of Satanism, witchcraft, and magic, which all grew around Nimrod the great. He is the man the Bible calls "the hunter" of men's

souls. Even more sinister it is believed his consort was the evil queen Semiramis, actually his own mother, who was possessed of the darkness itself, and brought in many of the “evil practices” of Babylon. And they sired a child who is Satan’s counterfeit to the “seed of woman” God had promised to the world.

When God came down upon the tower and confused the languages of men, these wicked practices were carried everywhere under different names, so that the great evil of the Tower ended up being transported to every ancient culture, as the pagan worship of the mother and child cult.

Sometime after Christian nominalist Constantine became Caesar over Rome, the church picked up this “Holy Family” cult with Jesus pictured as a perpetual baby. Instead of worshipping the *Lamb* who had died on a cross for the sins of men, the cult of the “Christmas Baby” became the way Rome regarded Jesus Christ. Not that there is anything particularly wrong with celebrating Christmas as the time of Jesus’ birth, but this “baby” never grows up. He is not the real Jesus at all. A “Jesus” who remains a baby is not the real Jesus, and when the focus becomes “his mother,” the so-called Queen of Heaven, an echo from Semiramis, consort of Nimrod and the Tower of Babylon is distinctly heard.

Even today he is still pictured in his mother’s arms; and in the Catholic version “Mary” is still worshipped as Queen of Heaven, Catholics call her the “co-redemptrix” (co-savior) with Jesus Christ. Every time a Roman Catholic says the “Rosary”, his system of prayer beads, he calls on Mother Mary many more times than the Lord Jesus Christ. The “Madonna,” (Mother Mary) is considered a safer, more loving person to approach than Jesus, in prayer. And this is not just folk religion, in which many superstitious things might be expected, but since Vatican II it is the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, to hold up Mary as co-redemptrix (co-redeemer/savior) with Christ. The real Mary is appalled.

*Jesus]...presented another parable to them saying, ‘ Kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, **But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat... when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also... And he said to them, An enemy has done this...***

Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the harvest... firstgather up the tares and bind them in bundles

to burn them...but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matthew 13:24–30 (NASB)

The true *Church* would continue to grow with the “tares” until the time would run out. And just before the “harvest,” the two would look remarkably alike. But at harvest time, only the “true grain” would bear fruit. The weeds would be bundled and burned. But a harlot is only a harlot, when she is unfaithful to her rightful husband. This woman must be an unfaithful wife, a woman outwardly betrothed to her Savior. The Whore was betrothed, and outwardly married to *Yeshua*. Even though she has been unfaithful, she still belongs to her the One to died on a cross to save her.

The great apostasy (falling away) does not concern Muslims or Hindus, it only concerns Christians because she is not a common streetwalker, she was engaged to her true suiter, Jesus. So she is a harlot. This false woman had a real invitation to the wedding supper but she has no wedding clothes, a symbolism for a covering of real faith in Christ. With repentance and a change of heart, she could have gone. But her people were always pretenders, and her heart never really belonged to the Savior. Deep inside she really didn't want the heavenly groom; because he would have required too much from her. She liked her old life. Her sin was precious to her. She only acted the role of commitment, until something better might happen along.

In chapter 17:3, she is pictured as having found someone better, she arrogantly thinks she can ride *the Anti-Christ*. Wooed by the “bad boy” who thrilled her, she has taken up with the wrong man who was the Beast, from the pit of hell. Instead of owning Christ and accepting whatever fallout might come, she pretended salvation, never actually accepting the truth, expecting it all to be fable in the end. She dressed in the trappings, and when the *rapture* actually hit, she found herself left behind. At that point she should have understood. But she was a liar in all she professed.

And she had never believed in the *rapture*, and she didn't believe it now. So while a few within her were confounded when the thing happened, and a very few did actually accept Christ afterward, the vast majority would go on as before as the *Tribulation* overtook them. Others refused to be bothered by the facts, and continued to look the other way, certain there had to be another explanation. They told themselves that people do not just vanish from the face of the earth. And so they stuck with her, and refused to come out of the Whore and be saved.

Her leadership would make some excuse. She could prove this so-called *rapture* was only fringe, believed on by only the most extreme, the cult of the fanatical. Something else, perhaps alien or environmental, or even Jungian, had actually caused the vanishing.

So when the *rapture* hit, few professors of religion in the best seminaries, few of those in leadership in the great churches, and few of the bishops of the largest denominations, went with it. It was questionable if even the majority of religious television personalities, the “believe and receivers,” vanished. But why were they not snatched? Why, they ask? If all these PhD’s, pastors, priests and popes weren’t snatched, how could this *rapture* have been related to God at all? These were the most religious of the religious, were they not?

It would quickly become a logical absurdity to say only true Christians were gone. What about all these professors of religion, still fine, and still among the living? And such a mixed group remained, everything from Catholic Bishops to television evangelists. So it became axiomatic among those who missed the *rapture* that the real victims were the missing. And many gathered into great conventions to congratulate each other on their survival, and to prepare against a repeat of the same kind.

The best explanation they decided was still the space alien theory, but there were others. Nobody could prove they had seen any space aliens. But they were worried. Whatever it was could strike again. Whatever had happened to these people, it couldn’t possibly be good. But whatever else—after the *rapture* the “faithful of earth” were finally free to gather without the fundamentalists getting in the way, to accomplish all that religion had longed to do. The long-expected coalescing into the One World Faith of all well meaning people was finally happening. Religion had always had a profound, if not well understood, deep current of common meaning, and that meaning always had been based on the aid of mankind.

Whatever the label, Islamic, Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Mormon or Hinduist, at their foundation, they were all the same. And it was finally time for the beauty and the unity of all the faithful to unite for peace on earth. It wouldn’t much matter if one read the Quran, or the Gita, the Bible or even the Book of Mormon. What mattered most was the sincerity of the devotee, and there was an urgent need to gather all such people together for world peace.

Of course this is all yet fictional because the *rapture* is yet future, though it seems to draw closer by the day. But the desire for world unity is already real and a large part of the thinking of much of the world, we cite noted journalist Ruth Montgomery writing the biography of tabloid prophetess, Jeanne Dixon, a devoted Catholic.

And the following is a commentary on the writings of Ruth Montgomery and Jeanne Dixon.

While Jeanne was in mass on a bright morning in February of 1962, an enormous black serpent seemed to crawl through her window, filling her with the most profound sense of peace. Many of us would have been filled with something else, but Dixon called this one of the most significant prophecies she had ever had, one of her “life readings,” her most important “prophecies” ever. The serpent, intelligent, and communicating with her by some sort of mental telepathy, seemed to be so ancient and so full of peace, she thought he must be God. (One wonders why she didn’t think of the “Serpent in the Garden” tempting another woman named Eve instead?)

And with this vision of the great snake came a second “life reading” about a very popular young man supposedly born that very morning, somewhere in the Middle East. A man who would be worshipped by throngs from every nation. She watched breathlessly as those on their knees surrounded him in all directions as far as the eye could see. And as she watched as a shimmering, ephemeral cross broke out over his head. She was told this man would tear down all the barriers of race and culture, and unite all the world’s religions. He would be a new *Messiah* for a New Age according to the scriptures in *Revelation* chapter 13. (Dixon’s own reference!)

But if she had taken the time to look up Revelation 13 perhaps she would not have been so excited. Perhaps she didn’t know about *Revelation* 13 being the chapter of the *Anti-Christ*, as do readers of this present treatise. She interpreted this as a great religious leader, similar to Jesus Christ, who had been born that very morning in a middle eastern country. He would be great and rise up to unite the world and bring a New Age of peace to all. And Dixon was enthralled. There was never any question in her mind that this man could be the *Anti-Christ as revealed* in *Revelation* 13, announced by the enormous black serpent, perhaps the devil himself.

But she isn’t the only one, not by a mile. In the spring of 1982 a very prominent occultist by the name of Benjamin Crème, a man steeped in the

writings of the well known occultist Alice Bailey founder of Theosophy, began publishing full page notices in newspapers around the world.

“**The Christ is Now Here,**” was the headline of his ad, in seven-inch type all over the world. It appeared in literally every major newspaper in every major city. Introducing, “The New Age Buddha for the Age of Aquarius, the one called Lord Maitreya” was the subtitle, and the claim was made that the New Age messiah was alive on earth, living in London, and would announce himself on satellite television to the whole world in June of 1982.

It created a planetary media storm like nothing since the end of World War II. By the spring of 1982 newsmen were chasing Crème all over the world, trying to get him to introduce them to this so-called “World Teacher.” In his full-page advertisements, he announced he had met with “Maitreya,” himself, and the World Teacher was planning to come out of hiding soon. He would present himself on worldwide broadcasts as the Jewish and Christian Messiah, the Imam Mahdi of Islam, as the lord Krishna of Hinduism, and the New Age Buddha of Buddhism. Not surprisingly Crème himself was the founder and chief spokesman for a leading UFO cult and one would have thought he would not have been given such credibility so quickly. Perhaps, he said, Maitreya would reveal himself as an alien, far advanced from a mere human.

But of course Maitreya passed his date and never did appear to become the *Messiah* of a New or any other age. But the idea is there, and how quickly the media grabbed onto it.

To religious people who miss the *rapture*, a false *Messiah* will someday really be here. And as deception increases, many false *Messiahs* and false prophets will lead many by the wayside. And those who align themselves with the Whore of Babylon, will probably become the first to accept the Mark and be lost forever.

And he [one of the bowl angels] carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names...And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet...having in her hand a cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality... upon her forehead a name was written a mystery BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS. and I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints

Revelation 17:3–6 (NASB)

The “woman,” this false church, is clearly recognized by where she is located. She is “seated on seven hills.” The city seated on seven hills is Rome, the home to Roman Catholicism.

*And the angel said to me, ' Why do you wonder? I shall tell the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and ten horns...Here is the mind which has wisdom. **The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits...And the woman whom you saw is the great city which reigns over the kings of the earth.***

Revelation 17:7,9,18 (NASB)

The beast she rides, we know.

He is Daniel’s evil “prince,” also known as the *Anti-Christ*, the Beast, and the Evil Shepherd. He is the long-awaited military *Messiah* of Israel, and the one Jesus warned would “*come in his own name.*”

Though Rome will attempt to co-opt and conform him to her system, he has no allegiance to any Christian church or tradition. He is the one John calls “the man of lawlessness,” and again Daniel, the “king of stern countenance.” He is the little “horn” with a mouth shouting blasphemous things against the King of Kings, and the one who regards no god but the “god of forces.” He will seek to change times to his own benefit, and he will oppose the “saints,” who are those who find Christ during the *Tribulation* and put many of them to death as the man of sin.

As wicked as she is, the Harlot is just a political animal to be used and thrown away. She has no understanding of who she deals with. She has no understanding that he is the monster from the pit who will oppose God, no understanding that he is filled with the power of Satan. She is nothing but an opportunist looking for the highest bidder. And She will never understand that she is being used. Anti-Christ has no love for her because she is, when all else is said and done, nothing but a cheap whore. No wonder he despises her, exploits her, and then he destroys her.

The beast that you saw was and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and to go to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life... when they see the beast, that he was and is not and

will come.

Revelation 17:8 (NASB)

But at first these two will appear to rule the world in tandem.

Electrifying news releases will tell of the end of religious war. With the merging of all religions under the unifying influence of World Governance around the erection of the new temple devoted to international peace, religions will be forced to get along. This will set the stage for fantastic optimism. Islam will make way for such a temple, and all roads will finally lead to God, regardless of which road the spiritual pilgrim chooses.

The Harlot will rejoice, thinking she has brought heaven to earth. And she will be in control of it all. From her perch upon the Beast she will feel like she is on top of the world. After all, as she tells herself, she is the one riding. She is the one with the reigns in her hands. And she is pictured drunk with power, directing the Beast with her influence, gaining power by being near his power. And at first the Beast appears content.

But secretly he will hate everything about the Whore, especially her arrogance. Doubtless the plan to destroy her among the beast and his 10 national sub-leaders had been in place from the beginning. In the end he will share his power with no one, and there is no honor or compassion in the Beast. Each of the ten leaders will secretly be plotting his own ascension as well.

Moreover, as “she” is associated with all kinds of religious symbols, even crosses, we might imagine she reminds him too much of the true God. The Harlot Church will simply be weighed down with her vestments, her many ceremonies, and other religious stuff. But it is the purpose of the *Anti-Christ* to abolish even the knowledge of God from the face of the earth, so he will not long tolerate the false church. The *Anti-Christ* will aspire to be god himself, and take God’s place. The harlot is a constant reminder of the truth which trumps his lies.

At first her headquarters will doubtless continue to be the Vatican. Even now in the heart of ecumenical Rome, all religion but Bible evangelicalism, has something to offer, in her way of thinking. Every token of religion but that of Bible believing Christianity is on the great altar in St Peter’s Basilica right now. All religion is good, no matter how contradictory or vile, no matter if it worships temple prostitutes or the dung beetle, it is there. The Pope has kissed the Quran and laid it on the great altar, likewise a tiny Buddha from the Dali Lama is there, and sweet

grass from American Indian shaman, and ornaments from Hinduism to Wicca (witchcraft), is all there.

But say the detractors there still remain the age old antagonists, Islam and Christianity, militant against each other, since the jihads of Mohammed and the resulting Crusades. In order to have a worldwide religion these two must somehow come to an agreement and for millions this seems very unlikely. So unlikely, in fact, that some Christians now propose the Harlot (the apostate church) to be an Islamic body which covers the earth. They postulate an Islamic falling away from the faith of Christianity. They expect Christianity to be conquered by Islam.

We have already discussed this in connection with the potential coming of the Imam Mahdi, the Islamic anti-messiah. Islam is on the rise, but this falling into Islam to account for the Harlot church is not possible. The World Church must be essentially Christian, or she is not a false woman. The false woman is untrue to her husband. She entertains her lovers under every tree, but she would never divorce him or she would lose her home. This harlot must be untrue to Jesus as the heavenly groom, Jesus has never taken Islam as his Bride. Islam is already married to Satan.

No, the false church will not be overtly Muslim, though there are now many so-called churches advocating “Christlam,” a supposed mix of the two, but the Harlot must come to some arrangement with Islam.

Is there some way in which the horrific religion of Ishmael and Mohammed can be fused to the Harlot Woman? It does seem unlikely, but can it happen?

In many parts of the world, it already has.

Fatima, Mohammed’s daughter, worshipped as a lesser light in Islam, has become co-mingled with the Catholic “perpetual virgin,” who they call Mary. As we have noted. This “Jezebel spirit” Mary is not the true mother of Christ, but a counterfeit harlot woman from Semiramus antiquity, and the enemy has been able to confuse the false Mary and Fatima, the daughter of the prophet of Islam.

Already, on the streets of the superstitious in many places can be found combinations of folk Catholic and folk Islamic traditions, all mixed with some native religious animism. So the amalgam has largely taken place. In many towns of the Philippines when a statue of the Virgin is carried in a parade, the Muslims also bow down. For them, the celebrants carry a statue of Fatima. At the folk religion level of both cultures in some

places; Fatima and the Catholic Virgin, have been completely merged. There is plenty of meeting ground for the two world religions.

For their part since World War I many Catholics have revered a series of apparitions that a group of children reported seeing at a place in Portugal-significantly called “Fatima.” Many Catholic churches are named after these strange visitations as in the local “Our Lady of Fatima” church. This is a town with a sizeable Muslim population even until today. The town of Fatima got its name when the area was captured by the Spanish Moors, Islamists which crossed from Africa and tried to capture Western Europe during the Middle Ages. It was at Fatima, Portugal where some children saw visions of the baby Jesus, and his “holy Mother;”

After 520 AD the followers of Mohammed raced over the whole of the Middle East in a military conquest, killing thousands for their desert moon god Allah. At one point they crossed the Pillars of Gibraltar, from North Africa and entered into Spain. In only a few short years they moved north, nearly overwhelming France, and taking most of Portugal in their wake. The place farthest north where they planted their flag was named after the daughter of Mohammed, Fatima. It is still Fatima, Portugal to this day.

Were it not for Charles Martel, at the “Battle of Tours” in 732 AD, where French knights finally broke the back of the hordes from Africa, Europe would be Islamic to this day. The spirit of “Fatima” however, seems to have anchored some sort of deceiving spirit to this town. For it was there just before WWI, where four children encountered something amazing and very troubling.

They saw a series of what many call “apparitions,” otherwise known as visions. And at Vatican II the last great meeting of Catholics from all over the earth, these visions were elevated into nearly equal with Catholic scripture, to become part of their official religion. They blessed the message of Fatima though the actual text of all that was revealed is still largely secret to all but the popes. At Fatima they believe the apparition presented itself as the “Virgin Mary,” among some other worthies. Catholics believe these words are the most important prophecies concerning the modern world to be found anywhere, even in the Bible.

How quickly the perfect score of the prophets of Israel are thrown overboard, for folk superstition, and demonic doctrine. Jesus warned in the days leading up to his return, there would come signs and wonders, and deceiving spirits who would lead Christ’s followers astray. The Apostle Paul became emotional about this, declaring:

*even though...an angel from Heaven, should preach to you
a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you,
let him be accursed.*

Galatians 1:8 (NASB)

At Fatima in 1915, on a hillside tending sheep, four children, Lucia dos Santos, and three of her friends had just finished lunch, and in their simple Catholic tradition had begun to recite their Rosary beads dedicated to the Virgin of their Church. Suddenly out of a cloud a woman appeared, declaring herself to be Mary, giving them an incredible scare, and causing them to run home. But when they arrived back at their homes to speak to their family about it, they were laughed at and called little “saints,” and told to keep their fantasies to themselves.

Then later, in 1916, an angel, a “beautiful young man” they said, with a glowing ring around his head,” appeared to Lucia, along with her two cousins, Jacinta and Francisco Marto. They believed he was an angel because he was beautiful to their eyes and wore a halo. He came dressed in light and made them feel very peaceful and full of God. And after some preliminaries, he proceeded to offer them some sort of unscriptural communion, using what appeared to be real blood flowing out of Jesus and appearing out of thin air. And thus began a series of encounters between Lucia and various collections of other children which went on for a number of years. As Lucia reported:

*There in the air, at a certain distance...shines a
unusual ...the light comes toward them...in this extraordinary
light the little shepherds can distinguish the form of
a young man...entranced by the haloed visitor's dazzling
splendor, the children...dare not speak...his first words
are to reassure them: Do not fear, I am the Angel of Peace.
Pray with me...suddenly the heavenly messenger appears...
In his hand is a chalice and above it appears the host [the
Communion bread] From the host drops of blood fall into the
Chalice....he tells the children to] **“Make reparation for their
Sins and console your god.”***

*—The Sun Danced at Fatima by
Joseph A Pelletier*

This is the sort of “angel from heaven,” Paul warned about. It is designed to deceive, to deliver false doctrine, and to make one wonder about spiritual issues apart from the Scriptures. The so-called Holy Family was represented in many of these appearances. And the Jezebel Mary was always depicted as the leader with Jesus in her arms.

Later on in appearances overhead in the skies, whole towns near Fatima will see the sun appear to dance and spin, with many colors forming rays in all directions across the sky. Finally, as thousands watched from several nearby towns, the sun suddenly grew large, and appeared to be an enormous flaming disk falling out of the sky right on top of them. This last vision was utterly terrifying. Thousands threw themselves to the ground expecting incineration. But it was all some sort of optical deception as though the deity were showing his hatred of people, and yet many in three nearby towns saw this falling of the sun.

Most troubling of all was the ability of this apparition to suspend physical laws. The most deceiving miracle of Fatima was the way the physical constraint of looking for hours at the sun was overthrown. Strangely enough, all these people were able to look directly at the disk of the sun for a lengthy period of time with no ill effect at all. Nobody went blind, nobody suffered even the slightest malady. Perhaps this vision had nothing to do with the real sun itself, it was an amazing deception. But it must be asked of these “devoted” Catholics “Does this even sound like something the mature and loving Jesus would do? Suddenly try to scare you, pretend to incinerate you?”

Nevertheless something real happened at Fatima, even if the sun didn’t dance there. It just cannot be denied that some sort of supernatural activity appeared in the sky over Fatima, Portugal, and it has since been declared a true miracle by the Roman Catholic Church. Thousands saw this, and thousands were deceived.

All of these “miracles” focused on a site overlooking a withered tree, some bushes, and some rubble rocks, near to the city, a very inauspicious looking spot indeed. The children, or whomever, would perch on a slope above and look out over this bit of rubble and dead vegetation and the apparitions would appear over them.

And even Lucia at one point begins to wonder if she and the other children had not been confused by the devil, so the apparition promised a real show to try to convince her:

For as the Lady parts her hands, beams of ... light radiate from them and to penetrate the earth. And the abyss of

is unveiled before the children's horrified eyes. They observe an immense sea of fire which appears under the earth. Immersed in the fire are the devils or fallen angels and the souls of the damned human beings...the demons appear in the terrifying and loathsome forms of horrible unknown animals...all the while they emit shrieks and groans...

and [the Lady] asks them to "Sacrifice yourselves for sinners ...this is all for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.—The Sun Danced at Fatim by Joseph A Pelletier p.61

The vision of hell only lasts a moment and the Lady promises to take the children to heaven. But on the same day Francisco must have seen more than he was supposed to. For he ventured down behind the apparition tree, behind the backdrop of rock and other rubble, and emitted a blood curdling scream, and the children find him on his knees sobbing.

they finally do come upon him he is still on his knees trembling with fear and his affliction is so great that he is unable to rise.

"What is the matter with you? What has happened? the two girls anxiously inquire. His voice was choked with fear, Francisco replies: It was one of those big beasts that we saw in hell. It was here sending off light."

—The Sun Danced at Fatima by Joseph A Pelletier p.67

But it seems that the light was coming out of the "hands" of some sort of hideous "demon," and not the "Lady" after all? And the "demon" was not in hell but rather behind the apparition tree. One is reminded of Dorothy and the Wizard of Oz. Who was it behind the "curtain" of the apparition tree? Was the demon the real source of the apparition?

We simply state the case and wonder. But the Bible warns that as the time grows near to the end there will be great signs in the heavens, and on earth, designed to deceive us. These signs happened in 1916, and we are much closer to the coming of the Messiah than ever they were. What should we start to expect in these pagan days? Visions of UFO's? Enormous mother ships parked over our cities like in the movie "Independence Day?"

In Rendalsham forest England in 1981 members of the USAF encountered something that the British Royal Air Force has felt important enough to release to the general public. Sergeant Jim Penniston, 81 Security Police Squadron, was sent out into the forest to investigate strange lights near the base. While in the forest this military policeman claims to have encountered a mechanical spacecraft, warm to the touch. He testifies that he actually circled, touched and made notes about this metallic “craft.” Penniston has shown a notebook in which he claims to have made real-time notes and sketches of the object.

In June 2010, Penniston’s commander retired Colonel Charles Halt signed a notarized affidavit speaking about the same incident. He believed the event to be extraterrestrial and it had been covered up by both the UK and US:

I I believe the objects that I saw at close quarter were extraterrestrial in origin and that the security services of both the United Kingdom and the United States have attempted—both then and now—to subvert the significance of what occurred at Rendlesham Forest and RAF Bentwaters by the use of well-practiced methods of disinformation.”“While in Rendlesham Forest, our security team observed a light that looked like a large eye, red in colour, moving through the trees. After a few minutes this object began dripping something that looked like molten metal.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rendlesham_Forest_inci

What else can we expect?

Images of Gaia, and the living mother earth? One thing you may depend on with spirits which owe their allegiance to Satan, they are clever and they tend to make their lies fit into our current mythology. Since we are so taken with UFO’s they will undoubtedly make that their best effort. Greater signs and greater lies than these may yet appear. And they will always make the believer doubt the Scriptures. We are specifically told the image of the Beast will be made to speak, and to demand everyone take his Mark.

We are all warned. And we are not to follow such fables into some inner sanctum, or to go out into the wilderness to listen to some clever forgery out there.

There are such forgeries even now. The ex-traffic cop who calls himself “Vissarion,” a Russian *Messiah*, awaits the foolish who go to him far out in Siberia, from every nation on earth, and have built whole villages just outside his “heavenly” compound just to hear him come out and say a few words every now and again. Jose’ Luis deJesus from Puerto Rico claims to be the return of Christ and the *Anti-Christ* both, decorating his many followers with tattoos of the 666.

Then if anyone says to you, ‘Behold here is the Christ, or there He is,’ do not believe him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead...If therefore they say to you, behold He is in the wilderness, do not go forth or behold He in the inner rooms, do not believe them. For just as the lightening comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be *Matthew 24:23–27 (NASB)*

The Lord promises that when he really does choose to appear we will all know it and every eye on earth shall see him coming. He will come with the clouds and great power, and he will not frighten us.

The “angel” at Fatima taught the children many unbiblical ideas. Since an angel of the Lord would never do this, he reveals himself a demon dispatched from the enemy, perhaps the very being little Francisco saw behind the apparition tree.

For if the demon is correct the real blood of Christ did not wash away all the sins of mankind. So we must carry on with works to try to appease the rest of the sins. We must carry on with “reparations.” And with what can sinners make reparation for sin? But if Christ did not atone for all sins, for all time, we had better get busy and work hard, because God is insulted.

Of course such nonsense is not the Gospel of salvation but a clever return to a works doctrine, trying to earn ones way into heaven something no human being can do. Paul called such a phony gospel twice “accursed.” Mankind receives forgiveness from God, and it is the free gift of eternal life, but only when Christ’s sacrifice is all sufficient. Not one thing more is needed. Christ has done all for us, and not the reverse. We do not need to “console” the Lord. Such an idea is blasphemy. He is our consolation. He never gets frazzled, and he never can be bought with good works.

This false “woman” is properly labeled “Mystery Babylon” because she is a return to the occult propagated at the ancient Tower of Babel. God

confused all the languages, and separated the peoples into nations and tribes and tongues. She will seek to undo Babel and return all religions and all peoples again to unity but under the false principle that all roads lead to God. She will attempt to rebuild the Tower that leads to heaven, in rebellion against the Lord of heaven, and what he has already done on our behalf.

The so-called “seeker of truth” enticed by this false “woman” will become spiritually seduced with exactly what the World Teacher, Maitreya, Rael, or Vissarion, or whatever his name finally turns out to be wants to teach. Any ole road with do so long as it’s sincerely taken. It’s what he will be saying. All people of faith are going in the same direction, and all are simply the children of God, whatever else they want to believe.

Many modern religions already teach this false idea. In a “Bahai” temple everyone goes into a door from a side of the building which looks like his/her own religious tradition. All meet at the center on the inside, where the monk waits to greet you into the house of Bahai. The Christian goes through an opening shaped to look like a church door, the Jew through a synagogue, and the Muslim into a mosque. But inside all roads come together. It sounds so profound, so reasonable, so kindly, except that it removes the blood of Christ. Satan wants us to be religious, he just does not want us to understand Jesus. Underneath, all roads lead to the same place. This is the message of Mystery Babylon.

When placed against the Bible admonition that *“There is no other name given among men by which we must be saved.”* (Acts 4:12). It must be one name or the other; it must be Allah or Yahweh, Mohammed or Jesus / *Yeshua*. The Bible is true or it is false. There is no deeper interpretation which brings all of them together. There is no “undercurrent of deeper truth” to which all religions agree. Without the cross of Christ there is no remission of sins.

But the essence of mystery Babylon is contained in the sixties rock song, “Aquarius.” It’s beautiful but seductive melody, coupled with the primitive heartbeat of the song, has a pull which calls to the inner rebel in all of us. It is a call away from God; and into the occult. It appeals to what the Bible calls the “natural man,” and despises the “spiritual man,” with his attachment to God.

Mystery Babylon is Aquarius.

*When the moon is in the Seventh House
And Jupiter aligns with Mars*

*Then peace will guide the planets
And love will steer the stars
This is the dawning of the age of Aquarius
The age of Aquarius! Aquarius*

*Harmony and understanding
Sympathy and trust abounding
No more falsehoods or derisions
Golden living dreams of visions
Mystic crystal revelation
And the mind's true liberation—*

“Aquarius,” by The Fifth Dimension

Perhaps a mixture of Catholic and Islamic doctrine will predominate throughout the world. Or some sort of amalgam will emerge, where each religion can continue to worship in its own way but all under the umbrella of Rome. All could probably adhere together as mere choices in the over arching covering by the World Church. But Mystery Babylon is already with us, and after the *rapture*, when all the Bible believers are missing, she will sit upon the Beast. But only for a short time. And she will think of herself as a queen. But instead of a queen, she has sold herself to the highest bidder, and she will come to a sad end.

she glorified herself and lived sensuously...for she says in her heart, I sit as a queen and I...will never see mourning... in one day her plagues will come...she will be burned up with fire

Revelation 18:7, 8 (NASB)

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of his mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of his coming...the one whose coming is in with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved.

2 Thessalonians 2:7–11 (NASB)

The Wedding of the Lamb



Once he has no more use for her, the Beast will simply make an end to Mystery Babylon. Killing a few million within a hundred miles of the Vatican will mean nothing to him. In spite of her venom for real Christians, she will have reminded him too much of the truth, even in its most corrupted form. Christianity still has the title “Christian.”

Then the False Prophet will rise up to proclaim, “Who is like the Beast and who can make war with him?” And from this point onward all worship will be directed toward the god in the midst of the world, the man who has placed his backside on the mercy seat and mocked the saving blood.

Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues...Woe woe the great city of Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.

Revelation 18:4,13 (NASB)

Standing at a distance, because of the fear of her torment, saying, “Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.”

Revelation 18:10 (NASB)

As the false comes to her well deserved end, in heaven it is time to celebrate the great harvest of the earth, time, to throw the greatest celebration of all. There is rejoicing among the *Church*, and rejoicing among the children of Abraham, and all those martyred out of the *Tribulation*. It is the time of the Marriage Supper of the *Lamb*. For the invitations have gone out, the groom approaches and he comes who is the Great King. For the *Lamb* is about to receive his Bride.

*“He leads me to his banqueting table...his banner over me is love”
Song of Solomon 2:4 (the song)*

And I heard as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and the sound of mighty peals of thunder saying, Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, For the marriage of the Lamb has come and his Bride has made herself ready.

Revelation 19:6,7 (NASB)

Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were Prudent. For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, But the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps,

Now while bridegroom was delaying they all got drowsy and began to sleep. But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him! Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps, the foolish said to the prudent ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the prudent answered, No there not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy Some for yourselves, And while were going away to make the purchase, the Bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding Feast; and the door was shut.”

Matthew 25: 1-10 (NASB)

Jewish weddings include some dramatic elements.

A proposal is made and accepted through the matchmaker, but the bride stays at her family home in preparation. She makes her gown and prepares her dowry, and the young man goes off to build their new home.

Then, after all is ready, at a time selected to create the most surprise, the groom returns with great joy. He comes with a wedding procession

from his father's house, and the young woman is celebrated. Soon they appear at the wedding supper, and she is wined and dined in the home of her new father, and she is installed in her new home.

Christ came, and proposed marriage through his “matchmaker” the Holy Spirit, and many accepted the proposal, and desired to become part of his great worldwide **Bride**. Satisfied, Christ/*Yeshua* departed “to make a place,” promising a home in his father's house. He would return, but at such a time she wouldn't be expecting him.

“She,” was not to become sleepy but remain vigilant, she was to be ready. The coming could happen at any moment. Such beauty of a young love, bride, and wedding, is a picture of the joy *Yeshua* is about to bestow upon his *Bride*, the *Church*, he has taken to be his own.

But there is anguish here also.

Some virgins were ready, and some only thought they were. How awful to be among those who looked right, and sounded right, but had no “oil,” and were “left behind.” They were left outside, beating on the door, but the doors are locked, and they will never get in. To have understood, and played the part, but never taken the Groom. What heartbreak.

This procession from heaven is really coming. It is on its way even now, and the shout is near. The only important question remaining, is my lamp filled? Am I ready for that day with the oil of the Holy Spirit?

According to Jewish wedding tradition; a procession often comes in the night. It comes from the home of the Father, the home of the Groom. And she is to listen for the Groom's mighty footfall when the maids awaken. The Groom has been away, sometimes for a long time, preparing a home for his Bride. In such a time, when she does not expect him, he comes.

at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold the bridegroom! out to meet him. the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut.

Matthew 25:6–10 (NASB)

The hall had been prepared and the day had finally come. The invitations had been sent with servants to gather them into the feast. These words spoken in parable 2000 years ago now, but were they spoken hiding truth in plain sight? One wonders how often within poetic parable was hidden prophecy, and how many prophecies composed the parable.

The *Army of Zion*, the great fulfillment of the blessing promised to Abraham would actually be sent into the highways and byways of this world and though many who were expected did not come, a multitude were found who quickly did. They came to the Wedding, the feast of the Great King, where the lowliest water was turned to wine, and the last of earth's vine became the best wine if all.

A certain man was giving a big dinner, and he invited many; and at the dinner hour he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, 'Come for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses...And the slave came back and reported this to his master. Then the head of household became angry and said to his slave, 'Go out at once into the streets and ...compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you none of those men who were invited shall taste of my dinner.'

Luke 14:16–24 (NASB)

Above all the Groom was finally ready. He had been building a place for his Bride for over two thousand years, and it had become a residence to behold. And he had come at last, at a time when the world was not ready for him. He had stood as one glorious figure in the sky amidst the clouds, and called for his Bride. And his marvelous voice rang out over all the universe, but only the sheep heard this shepherd. And she came to him in what is called the Blessed Hope, the *rapture* into the clouds. And millions had suddenly awakened from their graves and found themselves restored to their bodies of youth and beauty and vigor. And myriads of others who never will know death changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and began to ascend to the place in the clouds where Jesus waited. The glory of the *Church* had come to him in the sky. But that had all happened some years before, and the time had finally come for the Wedding Supper of the Lamb.

And so there he was seated at his banqueting table transfigured into his full majesty as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, in the front of a hall so

vast it could hold the world. And the music of a million angels filled this wonderful hall, going up to the stars with such rhapsody as the ears of men had never heard. Such music it was as to make the sweetest sound on earth sound drab and irritating to the ear.

And then the saved, the many in their beautiful white gowns, began to arrive with a light surrounding them too bright for ordinary eyes. A multitude from all tribes and tongues, and every nation under heaven.

Many came in from the Church of Ephesus, sweetened like the new Bride, all dressed in white linen with their first love overflowing. And they took their seats at their tables. One can imagine many of the Old Testament with them. Adam with beautiful Eve and Noah and Abraham with his children Isaac and Jacob.

And then with a bit of sanctified imagination came in those from Smyrna. Those who had faced the lions, “crushed” wearing the crown of the martyr upon their heads. And one can imagine their utter amazement as the *Lamb* pointed to them with his great scepter, and the multitudes stood up to welcome these honored ones.

Next came in Moses with his friend Elijah, the *Two*, only this time they had on their beautiful wedding garments and their faces shown like the sun, and there was no longer any veil on Moses’ face, but only the light of joy was upon him and his companion. And with them came David and Samuel, and Daniel with his three friends and Isaiah and Jeremiah, and there was great clapping for the words they had written, and the deeds they had done.

Following were the men and women and children from the Church of Pergamum. They carried large two edged swords called the Word, and they could rejoice that they had taken hold of this Word, and remained pure when all around were going after the world.

And then an enormous flow came in from Thyatira, cousins of Pergamum, looking amazed at their own garments and in such wonderment that they had no millions of years to face over a false doctrine they had been taught called Purgatory. They were so blessed to see the *Lamb* seated and the angels singing and their own precious robes. Mary was with them, blessing them for staying true to the teaching of the Word. And there were so many, as far as the eye could see, who had kept their garments white and had not gotten into the “deep things of Satan,” the teachings of the “Mother Child” as they are called there. And because this body lasted thousands of years there were miles and miles of those who kept coming into the hall and everyone looked round themselves in awe.

More of the Old Testament saints poured in, Ruth and Boaz, Naomi and Esther, and then the people of Sardis appeared looking a bit sheepish,

because they had misunderstood. Many had been wrongly taught that they would be the only “elect” to find their way inside. And now they understood the height and depth and width of the limitless love, the true meaning of “grace” of their Lord Jesus Christ, and they finally felt the joy of that limitless love, and how happy it made them. And the Savior smiled broadly, at their new humility.

And then came the thunder of the feet of myriads ~~were heard~~, making admittance to the room. The men and women of Philadelphia and they were many as far as the eye could see, and many wearing the crown of the soul winner. Millions upon millions making joyful entry to be with the King. And to the amazement of the whole assembly, the Lord Himself stood slowly to welcome them, and the roar of the feast was enormous as behind them came men and women and boys and girls of every shade and color as far as the eye could see.

From Africa and Asia, and India, and the islands of the sea, they had all passed through the blood of the *Lamb*, and there was still plenty for all. The blood of the martyrs is called the seed of the *Church*, and these brave souls had passed through many such doors. But they had only “given up what they could not keep, to gain what they could not lose,” or so said Jim Elliot as he walked in with the others of the Auca Five. They came through the blood, and the sweat, and the tears of those of the Open Door. And the numbers of them from Africa and Asia dwarfed the myriads who had already come in through the door.

And then, after these myriads, of every shade, and tribe, and nation, came the people of Laodicea finally dressed in the white of the overcomer, and rejoicing in the *Lamb*. And from the throne the voice of the Savior welcomed them. He welcomed those who had been behind the closed door at which he had been knocking for many years, and he called them “*good and faithful servants ready to enter into the joy set before them from the foundations of the earth.*”

And then just outside were a multitude who had died in the *Tribulation stretching out* to the edge of heaven waiting to enter the hall and celebrate the feast with all the rest. And with a thrill John saw that they were more than those millions already inside the hall.

And an angel standing nearby asked John once more, “*From where do these come?*” And John knew; “*These are those who have come out of the Great Tribulation, and they have washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb.*” And they waved their palm branches and cried out hosanna to the King who sits at his banqueting table, his banner over him is love.

After these things I looked, and behold a great multitude, which no one could count from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches were in their hands.

Revelation 7:9 (NASB)

And from there one could see the 144,000 standing on Mount Zion and singing their new song before the *Lamb*, with a multitude of the children of Abraham stretching out in every direction behind shouting “*Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord.*”

And the elders on the throne, and the angelic host, and the four Creatures and all that has breath in the realm of the animals, and even the sun and the moon and the stars themselves joined in the mightiest chorus ever to the *Lamb*, Who was slain, forever glory and honor and joy. And on that mighty Throne sat the *Lamb* with the most transcendent look of victory and happiness on his face, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory and a joy never before felt by a human heart, filled that amazing room. He had given his life for his friends and there is no greater love than his.

And slowly he rose, with the wine in his still scarred hand, and proposed a toast. “And now with the permission of My Father, it is time to drink this cup with you again, as I promised to you on the evening of that last preparation, when I was betrayed. You have done well so now do it this one last time in remembrance of Me,” and his mighty voice shook the heavenly hall.

And the twelve, Paul included, suddenly came from the side, and took their places at a table set especially for them, and they looked to where John was standing and beckoned to him, and they picked up their cups, and all stood and raised the great toast to the *Lamb*. And the dove flew in and landed upon him as before with tongues of fire over every head in the hall, and the Father spoke and shook the universe.

“This is My beloved Son, listen to him.” And all partook again of the cup of the Promise and the wine tasted like salvation, and only those who will someday drink of it will ever understand.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth good will toward man!

Rider from Heaven



*Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied,,
Behold the Lord came with many thousands of his holy Ones, to
execute judgment upon all*

Jude 14 (NASB)

All through the Bible, the climax is always the coming of the Lord. It is estimated that in over 300 prophecies this the most pivotal event of all history is mentioned. But in the days when he came the first time, to be beaten and lashed and hung on the cross, and he faced the crisis night of his trial, a High Priest enraged; Caiaphas pointed a big bony finger his way and he shouted:

Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?

*And Jesus said, I am; and you shall see the Son of Man
...coming the clouds of heaven.*

Mark 14:61–62 (NASB)

In a desperate last bid to destroy Israel and take over the world, three powerful spirits of evil are released over all the earth to call in the mighty men for the last battle of planet earth. Three frog like spirits, strangely like the pictures of gray aliens with enormous almond shaped eyes, and with thin frog like mouths as UFO enthusiasts picture them today, are released from the mouths of the unholy trinity and they go out over all the earth with one objective, and that is to incite the nations to war against the Jews. And the nations, are driven wild by these things, and they gather in the valley of Jezreel, called Armageddon, to settle old scores.

This valley is roughly an oval, pointed toward Haifa in the north, and the Jordan River above the Dead Sea, to the south east. It is a plain of about 150 square miles in size near to Mt. Megiddo for which it is named.

On the west just below the “Toe of Asher,” where the city of Haifa is located on the Mediterranean coast rises Mount Carmel where Elijah defeated the priests of Jezebel. To the north is the city of Nazareth, where Joseph taught young Jesus to build wooden tables, to the south is Megiddo, hence comes the name for this valley Armageddon (better Har Megeddon), the Mount of Megiddo. And finally to the east rises up Mount Tabor, where Deborah and Barak defeated the armies of Canaan under King Jabin.

Access to the valley from Haifa on the coast is along a modern highway into the north of the valley. It is assumed ships carrying troops and materials will dock in Haifa, and move their armaments into the valley. Most are of the opinion that Armageddon is the place of the final battle of the world. Actually this is sort of a misunderstanding. Really it is just the staging area for Jerusalem. For the target is Jerusalem and every other large accumulation of Israel. And Jezreel is the ideal staging area for a mass invasion of David’s city.

Once assembled there, they will travel to the Kidron Valley (the Valley of Jehoshaphat) on the coastal side of the central mountains, all the way to squash Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

Napoleon is said to have marveled at the size of the plain, saying it was the ideal natural battlefield in the world. But with all due respect to Napoleon, Jezreel will not host the last battle, at least not the intended one. It is but the mustering area for an assault on the real target; Jerusalem some 50 to 70 miles to the south. And assuming there are about 10 million men under arms when the battle begins, this leaves about 4000 square feet per soldier, plenty of area for all the armies on planet earth to assemble for a last great assault on the Jewish state.

*For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle,
and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the
women ravished and half of the city exiled, ...*

Zechariah 14:2 (NASB)

The overarching agenda for all these armies is to wipe out Israel once and for all. They come from the four corners of the world. They come as if drugged, and in a trance. They come because they have been called by demonic powers, and they come by the millions their footsteps ringing off the mountains. A steady stream begins to march through the passes from China, India and Japan, armies passing through the ancient Khyber Pass where armies have marched since the beginning of the world.

Many come by sea, from the Americas, Russia, and the new Roman Empire of Europe, and anchor off Haifa to the north of the Toe and because of their size, it will take months for the armies of *Anti-Christ* to reach the Valley of Jezreel. In the meanwhile, at least half of the Jews will listen to their new found *Messiah*, and escape this holocaust by rushing away into the dry desert wilderness to the south.

As the armies of the world accumulate they do so to strike out at Israel as his *Chosen People*. But they are not really angry at anyone save God. They want to tear God from his heaven. There is no talk of limiting actions to military targets anymore. The civilian populations are simply in the way, and few bearing the Mark care about them or much of anything else, any longer. Any hideous weapon of mass destruction invented by a fallen race, now crazed to kill by demons, will be employed. There is no sense of restraint, there is only a terrible sense of doom.

Once the Mark is taken, there is no longer any doubt about God. He is your enemy. As Pharaoh's chariots could not help but go down into the Red Sea even after they saw so great a power; a power able to hold back millions of tons of water, these armies march to certain death. Nobody survives as a foot soldier on a radioactive battlefield, nobody. But what did life matter to dead men walking, with the very emblem of futility, the 666 on their foreheads, anyway?

Such madness had overtaken the men of the earth.

And...the Euphrates...was dried up, that the way might be made for the kings of the east.And I saw coming out of the mouth of the dragon and out of mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the False Prophet, three unclean spirits...For they are the spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the ... whole world, to gather together for the war... and they gathered them together to the place which is ...HarMagedon.

Revelation 16:12-16 (NASB)

The whole world mobilizes and readies itself for the final war. This is the time of which the Lord said, those days must be cut short, or no flesh would survive.

I will gather all nations, And bring them down to the of Jehoshaphat. Then I will enter into judgment with at that place

Joel 2:1-3 (NASB)

Multitudes, multitudes in near in the Valley of Decision. The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness.

Joel 3:14-15 (NASB)

The plan is to aggregate the forces of earth in Megiddo, and move toward Jerusalem and the valley of Jehoshaphat, what Joel called the Valley of Decision, just outside of the city.

Satan still thinks he can destroy the Word of God by destroying the Jew. And what every deluded occultist keeps hidden away even from himself is that Satan does not care if he wipes out every living man, woman, and child off the face of the earth. He would not mind turning earth into sterile ball of slag and ash. In fact it would please him to do so. He has a visceral hatred for mankind and all that God has made because mankind was made in the likeness of the all powerful God. And in this way he would be certain to destroy every Jew, disrupt the everlasting covenant, and break the Word of God.

Men do not understand, but Satan has only one objective, to be freed from his own destiny in the Lake of Fire. A destruction of all Jews in Israel is the best chance to make a final end of the *Chosen* people and so break the Word of God and God's everlasting covenant with all he has made.

Genocide, a new holocaust, has never ceased to be the policy of the devil. At the outset of the seven years of *Tribulation* in agreement with the prophecy found in Daniel's great clock, Israel made a deal with *Anti-Christ* for seven years of security, and to rebuild their temple. God called this a pact with death.

Not just this time but every time Israel made an outside alliance for her own protection instead of relying on the Lord God Almighty, she lived to regret the decision. And it was almost always the nation with which she made the agreement that stabbed her in the back.

Nothing had changed with *Anti-Christ*. Rather than watching their backs, he was always their implacable foe, and had been busy trying to destroy them from the first. In the end, even the United States would betray the people of Israel, because Israel was supposed to depend on God and not on the feeble arm of man.

And for some reason, though the Mark was now accepted and even coveted in some places on earth, Israel had resisted its deployment in their country. Many decided it was the leading of Christ.

The IDF had mistrusted this marking business from the outset, and for the most part had been openly in rejection of the world leader and his infamous Mark. Never-the-less, faced with food shortages, many of the more secular had been reconsidering, until they saw the *Anti-Christ* seated in their new temple, and then even the most secular rabbis had shouted, *Abomination*.

When they saw the *Abomination of Desolation* despoiling their new temple, Israel had simply gone on the run. The whole country, it seemed, was trying to get away, most into Jordan. It was the most reasonable place to go and hide. Go out into the wilderness, and wait out the great battles of the day. And while they drove as far and as fast, as they could in their family cars, most quickly abandoned motorized vehicles, on the jammed up roadways, and took to the remote trails trying to avoid patrols. There just weren't enough roads going out into the desert to handle them all. The whole of Israel had suddenly turned into refugees.

Meanwhile, Arabs, acting as spies for the *Anti-Christ*, in the markets, selling cantaloupes and rugs they still had, were not just pretending they were on a wonderful holiday. They were practically giddy with the joy of watching their over-lording Jewish protectors running for their lives. They had never seen anything like it. The Jews were simply in a panic and running away as fast as their legs could carry them. Soon they would have their country back, and they were delirious.

No doubt this Jewish panic had been reported to the world leader, much to his own satisfaction. It was hard to miss the grid locked highways, roads filled with every vehicle imaginable. And as the roads jammed, and the people struggled, there was a good deal of rising confusion, the biggest being the lack of anyone coordinating so panicked a departure. But even as the refugees scrambled to get away, units of the IDF were taking over, directing Jews to go toward the nation of Jordan. It was anyone's guess what would happen once they got there.

This, the *Anti-Christ* also knew, and it brought a smile. He would let them run, there was no God to part the Red Sea for them this time, and the heat of the desert would take care of most of this rabble. They would die of thirst in some of the most desolate landscapes on the surface of the earth. He could mop up the remnant at will.

After he had killed the Jews remaining in Jerusalem, and the other population centers of Israel, entertaining his own sadistic bent inside, he would gather the remaining numbers up in one trainload. Then if any of

them survived he would take them back to Auschwitz and kill them there as his last insult. He loved the rush that killing gave him.

Even so, for whatever reason, some few Jews chose to remain and be overwhelmed by the catastrophe. Perhaps they were too old or too timid. Perhaps, after nearly seven years of the *Tribulation*, they were just weary of the trial. In the days of Hitler so many had stayed then too. They had just gone off to the camps and vanished. Nobody could imagine how bad it would get. But those that hung around too long were trapped by Hitler's war machine. Now that number who still would not listen to Jesus' words were being trapped by the *Anti-Christ*.

These Jews had heard, they knew about Jesus and the New World coming. When Magog came down almost seven years prior, they knew then. But how quickly men forget the truth when lies are more convenient to hold onto. Yes they knew his name, but for whatever reason many continued delaying in Jerusalem. Some just could not get their heads around a new genocide.

But when the Beast polluted their new temple, for many of them that was the last straw and the remaining vestiges of the veil in their heads broke down -and they finally saw the "*one who would come in his own name,*" seated on God's altar, and they despised him. They finally understood. They had been lied to again. This man had never been the true *Messiah*. And to their horror they did now know, what they saw on the altar was Daniel's *Abomination*.

Taking Jesus's advice, they needed to get out of town and as quickly as possible. Most simply dropped what they had in their hands, gathered their children, and ran. It was easier to join in the flow headed south and eastward. And that was the way to the larger city of Bozrah in Jordan, where they could get water and supplies. But then what? They could only shrug. It was a natural thing for them, the Jews had been refugees so many times before.

But they had never abandoned a new country before, and they wept. In their panic they wept as they went, expecting death from the sky at any moment. Most stampeded as if driven by unseen devils behind them. It was so hard for many, especially the Orthodox and the Conservatives to trust in the prophet from Nazareth, they were so used to resisting, they had resisted Jesus so long. But when the *Messiah* they had waited for finally presented himself, he had not been a savior, he had been a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Most now knew his Mark was evil, and yet he continued neighing after a large group of them, seducing a few. Many of the most liberal “Reformed” simply stayed and took the Mark. They were secularists anyway believing in not much of anything. To these the God of Abraham was a fairy tale, a bit of nostalgia from a long time ago. And it had been so inconvenient to run away, and the holocaust was a long time ago. Things were different now, more civilized. They could trust the world leader, he would be good to them.

In all this the Israeli Defense Force, seemed to have remained faithfully Jewish, and were going door to door, trying to alert their people to the danger. But the trap was snapping shut. In the major metropolitan areas, agents from the World Government police were also moving from house to house with portable machines for marking the people. Every soul that wasn’t flying away to the desert and Bozra, was going to suddenly find his options collapsing, and he would fall into prison and death, or give in to their pressure and take the Mark. For most it would be dreadful to just pick up and head onto the desert, but it was the only way of safety.

Meanwhile near the temple, a new pillar had appeared next to the marking station looking like an enormous standing stone of sold marble. It seemed to be made out of real stone; and was near the grand stairway on the new Temple Square. Periodically, when anyone approached it would seem to reconstitute itself like liquid crystal, and the image of *Anti-Christ* would appear.

It was called the image of the Beast, but it was anything but bestial. It was a gentle face, a loving face, which could move and speak, and seemed quite human. And somehow it knew the name of anyone curious enough to approach. And the thing would call to its victim, enticing the person to relent and join the wonderful New Age. It had a living quality which was more than some electronic recording. It was enticing, it caused many to fall into some sort of trance, as they moved toward the marking station nearby.

At a distance, members of the IDF were watching quite aware of the seduction going on. For their own safety they were avoiding the face of the thing, and would snatch its victims away. Just before they received the Mark, the image lulled the listener into complacency and it promised protection and food, but in reality it could provide neither.

On the networks *Anti-Christ* similarly told the world he would protect the Jews from the menacing armies which were assembling to the north, presenting himself as the champion against those assembling near

Nazareth. "Just come to the temple, receive the Mark and all would be well. Just bow down and worship me, he reasoned, all quite sensibly, because, as he said, "I am the fulfillment of all your desire. I am the true Jewish *Messiah*. " And quite a number would still tarry and be deceived, even so late as it was in the game for taking the Mark.

But the vast majority would remember the words of Daniel and *Yeshua*, and flee in a blinding struggling panic, Jew against Jew fighting to get out of the pack, barely keeping themselves within the boundaries of civilized behavior. But here and there, right at the height of their fury, they would encounter a blond looking person described as a quiet young man walking about in the midst of the panic, and he would tell them not to fear.

He reminded them of what they had come to understand about Jesus. So they began to settle, and they began to have hope.

And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced...in that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David...

Zechariah 12:10, 13:1 (NASB)

Most of those in Jerusalem already knew the Name of Jesus. When Magog had been defeated by the mighty Name, they had found out. The name they had been misunderstanding and dishonoring for so long had been Jesus' name. Somehow, they had been under the impression he violated their Jewish religion. But then they realized he did not. And through all their Old Testament, it had been *Yeshua* all along. Still somehow the intellectual understanding had not been enough. It never is. Some had remained uncommitted.

But now with their temple defiled, the *Anti-Christ* in possession of it, armies bearing down from all sides, and their phony *Messiah* making his purpose plainly known, it seemed time. The world leader was the *Anti-Christ*, and most of them knew and because of that it was time to tell Jesus your story, and ask his forgiveness and flee to the captain of your soul. And those weeping ones, the vast majority streaming out of the city, filling the roads, dodging a few elements of the national powers, slowly finding their way east and south, were new believers.

Most joined in the flow, not even knowing where they were heading, filled with fear and the agony of having nothing and nowhere to go. All

had just one goal, escape from the cities. Like a drop of water in a river, they just flowed.

At first in their minds they were just trying to get away. At first no plan had come into their minds. But as they traveled the first objective to get to the oasis in Bozrah in Jordan started to flood into their feverish brains. It seemed the flow was headed in that direction anyway. But strangely enough, as they traveled their destination seemed to grow stronger in their minds. In fact they all felt the need to travel to the empty city, to the city in the rock. They knew they were all going to Petra, not far from Bozra, and it seemed a secret hand was starting to lead them. It began to be like a flock of migrating birds, they somehow knew. And they continued to weep. But now their tears were for forgiveness, for their foolish proud souls, and how they could have been so blind for so long. Some few are caught and killed by the roving patrols, but for some strange reason the patrols do not hinder many.

As they traveled, now clear on where they were to go, some of the political leaders among them, whispering various strategies, hoping the *Anti-Christ* would not yet understand what was happening and move to catch them. They wanted to organize the refugees, have those in a uniform to take charge according to their training. They needed to keep the people quiet, and the IDF continued trying. The politicians were fearing spies in their midst.

But nobody was interested in their intrigues anymore. They just could not keep the people quiet. Some who would listen to them were still doubtful, faced with the dreadful power assembling to the north, they expected death to come to them at any instant. Many gazed at the sky, wondering what will they would do when a flight of jets clears the mountains. And many wondered what would happen even if one jet came in. Other fretted about Petra. What could ancient walls do against modern weapons? One nuke lobbed into the mountain and it would be all be over.

But strangely enough, inside of most of them a great hope started dawning. Somewhere along the lines threading their ways through the rocks, singing was starting to break out. Out of thin air came the songs they had heard Christians sing for centuries. Happy tunes of deliverance, to which now their hearts suddenly yearned. The sweet lyrics of "We Are One in the Spirit, We Are One in the Lord" seemed special to them; and the song from Corrie ten Boom's *Hiding Place* movie. "You are my hiding place...whenever I am afraid I will trust in You." A few even knew the story of how Corrie and her sister Betsy had helped the Jews in those days, and other stories of "righteous gentiles." As they walked some of them told the stories.

How that seemed to lead into more song. How it all seemed to fit with their present, escaping from yet another genocide. And it dawned on many that Jews have always run away from an unsheathed sword, but never before with songs on their lips! For many in these refugee lines *Yeshua* had become their hiding place. And the song seemed to sweep over the long lines. Soon men and women and even children, were singing together; singing with perfect strangers, those who were strangers no longer. Cantors, the gifted singers of the synagogue, seemed especially desirous of opening up in sweet praise, leading the others.

And the road over the desolation, which strangely no longer seemed so desolate or even so hot, or so damaging to the feet, seemed somehow shorter. Whether by a real miracle, or their songs beguiling the miles, it was working.

It wasn't long before the crack of the "Siq" the narrow entryway into Petra appeared, and the multitude, which had already backed up for miles; awaiting their turn to pass through the narrow slit, were happy no longer in a struggle, singing choruses, helping each other, and nobody seemed the least bit interested in just getting inside, any more.

Though the danger from the sky was real. Though they were baking in the desert heat, and freezing in the desert night, they were simply waiting and worshiping. And for some reason the forces of the *Anti-Christ* seemed to have vanished entirely, which was entirely good. Moreover as they traveled it seemed their movements had become somehow wonderfully supernatural. In only a few hours they had all traveled to the walled city in the Negev, which was puzzling to them. It was some forty miles south of the Dead Sea.- And though it seemed strange to them, miracles even seemed to be breaking out in other ways too.

They couldn't be sure; in so large a crowd, but as quickly as these refugees understood they couldn't survive without each other, they started to share what little food they had brought along. They had taken so little time to pack. But as they passed this meager food about, it never seemed to be running out. Some had started fires and were cooking, and from some place burlap sacks of water had been found. Nobody seemed to know where it kept coming from, and there was always more food in the basket and more water being carried by the IDF.

Some were proclaiming New Testament miracles. Bloody, dirty feet began to feel better, and even began looking better; though they knew such things really made no logical sense. It had only happened one time before, in the desert following Moses, where shoes never wore out.

And soon the human flood had filtered through the gap and into the valley; they found many praying and giving outright thanks to Jesus, for

his deliverance. Others were still weeping, and it was easy to understand. They were just filled with remorse at having rejected their Savior for so many years. But at the same time there was singing, multitudes were singing Messianic songs of their Jewish Christian brethren, though how anybody knew these songs amazed everybody. Others just sat and reveled in the joy surging through their every fiber.

Now they understood what had always been just over the edge of their understanding. *Messiah* lives, and he had been delivering them since they ran from the *Anti-Christ*. The sky remained clear of aircraft. Not one bomb had fallen on the people as they hiked, and still none had been heard or seen. Some were actually preaching, and preaching from the New Testament. Men and women, boys and girls, sat in rapt attention by the thousands. There was no more fear in anyone's face.

It was ironic to think about. The city of the one who sold his birthright, Esau's abandoned city, had become the very place where many suddenly found their own. Esau was the first to take a mark into his heart, and here were the children of Jacob hiding in his city, rejecting the Mark and the devil's throne.

So there was Israel, trapped in the abandoned city of Esau, trapped by the power of the *Anti-Christ* in the ancient city in the "cleft of the rock," which had been waiting thousands of years for their appearance. But in spite of their new Christianity, it was all sort of hopeless, they knew. It was the last hurrah of a people too stubborn to join in world idolatry. The military power building up to the north would soon overwhelm Jerusalem, and come looking for them in the moments following. How could an ancient city, even one inside a gigantic sandstone monolith, protect anything in the nuclear age?

So they looked at each other and wondered what madness had gripped them so that they were no longer afraid? But they had been guided there, and there they would die, should the *Anti-Christ* find them. And without question he would find them there. It could come at any moment. But they had already decided they would rather die as free men and women here, with faith in Christ, than live a coward with the Mark of eternal damnation upon their brow. It had become an easy choice, for most of them.

Meanwhile, the nations continued to mobilize in the Valley of Decision. And the masses of the east approached, their footfalls pounding the ground like the sound of immense drummers, pounding out the rhythm of doom. Even stone, when it is pounded by the feet of thousands of

marching men, sounds like an enormous drum. And the vibration can be felt as the whole valley begins to shake. It is the impressive power of man on display.

Into the valley came the men and the missile launchers and the 155 Howitzers, and every sort of armament known. Out of the valley the roar of jets are heard in the skies. The *Anti-Christ* was determined to squash Israel. Multitudes, Joel said so long ago. Multitudes in the valley of decision.

But something much more wonderful began happening overhead.

All of the skeptics of all the years, have raised up their clenched fists and shouted for God to appear, and then they say they would believe in him. It is said that Madelyn Murray O’Hair, would sit up in a tree in a lightening storm, and cackle out curses at God, daring him to strike her dead. Atheists and agnostics of all stripes, have taunted God to step out of the background and reveal himself since the fall.

One day it will happen.

but immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light...and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn

Matthew 24:29, 30 (NASB)

Almost unnoticed, due to the business going on all over the plain below, the sky begins to darken over the heads of the multitude. Weather experts on the ground started noting a front moving in rapidly. But it is a puzzling change. The barometer didn’t seem to be falling, but the sky was clouding up and darkening rapidly. An enormous storm seemed to be coming their way, and the World Command recommended wing tie downs should be quickly applied to all aircraft.

Then suddenly the black sky seemed to roll back like a scroll. Generals, only half believing their eyes, were shouting into microphones in a hundred different languages, trying to get the latest metrological reports.

And there he will be seated in plain sight upon a white charger, in the midst of the clouds. And all hell will break out in the ranks below.

Why are the nations in an uproar, and the peoples devising a vain thing? The Kings of the earth take their stand, and the take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed; 'Let us tear their fetters apart, And cast away their from us!'

He who sits in the heavens laughs... Then He will speak to them in his anger And terrify them in his fury...

Psalm 2:1-4 (NASB)

Somewhere from his bunker, deep underground, *Anti-Christ* will be screaming curses and foaming at the mouth, his generals marshalling their forces. Meetings will be quickly organized on the ground. The armies of the world will now turn and join together against their common enemy, God Almighty.

And they will make plans to marshal all their fire power against the one person they never did want to meet in this life or the next. But there he will be. I would expect from that immense army below will come a roar like the depths of hell. The gnashing of teeth and a hatred of such intensity one might actually feel it.

And after targeting had been reprogrammed, and after demonic shaman called to make their most powerful incantations, calling on all the powers of Satan to destroy this One seated on his horse in the sky, missiles of terrifying power, armed with thousands of megatons set to detonate at the right altitude, will launch into the air; the target is the One seated calmly above, watching them in the clouds.

The world is at war with God.

On cue these monsters of the megatons begin to lift off out of that vast army below. As flaming missiles lift away on pillars of thrust from all over the valley below, roar after roar will erupt from the armies of the world, as though they could unseat God, and the detonations will begin to illuminate the whole of the darkened sky like daylight. It is the confident expectation from such skeptics that a few tactical nukes should take out a man seating on his pathetic little horse. But such tactical nukes are like fireworks compared to the eye shattering flashes from the megaton blasts of MIRV's and ICBM payloads, destructive on a scale never even considered by those who first uncovered atomic weapons.

Even from overseas in such commands as NORAD; America, England, France, Russia and China pump in the coordinates for the Valley of Megiddo for inter-continental ballistic missiles, carrying such majesties of firepower so that they envelope the one seated above, with absolute energy. The flashes, small suns in their own right, with noise and the blast coming down out of the sky, incinerating by the millions those below on the ground. The blast fronts alone, level multitudes. There is enough mega-tonnage exploding about the figure, to wipe out humanity many times over.

The proud look of man will be abased, And the loftiness of man will be humbled, And the Lord alone will be exalted in that day... When He arises to make the earth tremble.

Isaiah 2:11,19b (NASB)

But eventually, after thousands of nukes are detonated, and the nuclear arms of mankind are expended, and peace has returned to the clouds, over the valley of decision, there he still will be sitting, filled with great glory, both brighter and yet more gentle on the eye than the pyrotechnics which preceded.

Then for the longest period he does not seem to move. Until some of the commanders on the ground began to wonder if he had perished after all. Then to their utter horror, they could hear his laughter. Above their heads sat *Yeshua* in the heavens upon his enormous white charger, and was laughing. He who made the stars to shine, and who calmly stood inside Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, so that only the bonds on the Israelites vanished, was laughing. Their little pyrotechnic display hadn't even tickled him.

Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen.

Revelation 1:7 (NASB)

Then in plain view of the millions still alive on the ground, and without further word, the rider seemed to turn his mount to the right and began to make his gradual descent.

Why are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising A vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand, And the Rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His

*Anointed; let us tear their fetters apart, And cast their
Away from us!*

*He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them
Then He will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in
His fury... Psalm 2: 1-4 (NASB)*

The Bible clearly says every eye on earth will behold him, as he slowly begins his return to the earth. It is as though there is a pause in all activity. It is as though mankind collectively holds its breath. He is in no rush. He has all eternity. And I think that the “triumph” of heaven will last for several days probably the same period of time that the armies marched around Jericho.

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; And in righteousness He judges and wages war. And his eyes are a flame of fire, and upon his Head are many diadems;... And the armies which are in Heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were Following Him on white horses...And on his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords

Revelation 19:11–14,16 (NASB)

As those below continued to watch in a fascination of shock and anguish, their Mark causing them great pain, so that many simply drop their weapons and sit upon the earth in total misery and fear awaiting their inevitable fate; behind the great rider in the sky, as if from some other dimension, materialize millions, coming from far overhead, all bestride their own wondrous steeds, and the line of them sweep up to a vanishing point as far above earth as the eye could see.

And as the world watches in silent awe, the rider moves toward the golden rays of the new day, as unhurried as ever, the muscled legs of his horse reaching out to glide over the sky. And the armies following continue to flow from the vanishing point in the sky. And to the amazement of the world below, little by little their numbers increase until millions of saints and angels flow like a silent river of great glory and beauty behind the golden rider on his white stallion of the sky, and they stretch out until they form a ring completely around the whole earth filling the sky.

Like Joshua marching around Jericho, they continue this pageant until the whole of the air is full, and every eye on the planet below sees this glory. Millions and millions following him upon horses, all of them outfitted in the greatest of glory, but nothing in comparison to the rider in the lead.

First come his saints, those of the seven churches, everyone who has been washed in the blood of the *Lamb*, next the *Tribulation Saints*, who were killed for their testimony in the *Tribulation*, then the Old Testament believers, and finally the angelic host. Myriads of splendid horsemen and angels, but nothing compared to the rider of the skies. Quietly they continue their muster in the skies, quietly they continue their spectacle for earthly eyes. For perhaps seven days they march, in the sky around Jericho earth, until the whole sky is filled with them and every eye on earth, and under the earth will see them slowly, magnificently, and utterly quiescent, like those who have all eternity to enjoy the One in the lead. Meanwhile on the ground, the *Anti-Christ* readies his own forces.

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him Who sat upon the horse, and against his army.

Revelation 19:19 (NASB)

Then after seven orbits in seven days, the Lord descends upon his flying steed slowly, to the city of Bozra, just outside of Petra, the very place where millions of new Jewish believers, the children of Abraham have fled for safety. They have been there for 1260 days.

He touches down far to the south near Petra, where his people are already engaged in a battle with the forces of the *Anti-Christ*, skirmishers sent to breach their rock fortress.

Then you will flee by the valley of My mountains...yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days Uziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will come, and all the Holy ones with Him!

Zechariah 14:5 (NASB)

Jesus will return to the area of Petra and there to rescue his own people Israel. And from the cleft in the rock, he will lead the Army of

Heaven, north through a river of red being shed by nation against nation to the north of Jerusalem. As the battle begins, the blood begins flowing.

The grapes of the earth, the grapes of wrath are now to be crushed, and he will now trample on the “*winepress of the wrath of Almighty God.*”

And the angel swung his sickle to the earth, and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

And the winepress was trodden outside the city and blood came out the wine press, up to the horses bridles for a distance of two hundred miles.

Revelation 14:19–20 (NASB)

New American Standard tells us that when the sickle passes over the “*clusters of the earth*” it creates a river of blood for 200 miles. The King James Bible here is better than our modern translations, saying it was 19,000 furlongs, or exactly 176 miles. The very distance from Petra to Megiddo in the Valley of Decision is exactly 176 miles.

The blood will come up to the bridles, and Jesus will be covered in blood. The Son of God only bleeds for the sins of man one time. He is the stone in the wilderness, which brings forth water from the rock. But he is not struck two times, as Moses struck the rock. Likewise, in his flesh he was struck by being placed on the cross, but only once.

So as he rides, Jesus will become red with the blood of his enemies. This time the blood is not his own. This is the day of the wrath of the *Lamb*. The Lion of Judah has shed the last blood he will ever shed on his cross. It is the day of his vengeance.

Who is this who comes from Edom, [Petra] with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in his apparel, marching in the greatness of his strength?

Why is your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?

—[*the king*]

I have trodden the wine trough alone...I also trod in My anger, And trampled in My wrath. And their lifeblood sprinkled on My garments...for the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come

Isaiah 63:1-4 (NASB)

Slowly the armies of heaven move northward, toward the bulk of *Anti-Christ's* forces, and *Anti-Christ* presses his men to push south, two multitudes moving toward each other, and soon they start colliding. But the Army of heaven is really just One Person, for he makes short work of all who face him. He slays them with the sword of his mouth and their blood comes up to his bridle. And soon, as Isaiah tells us, he is covered with “glowing colors” the crushed juice of the grapes of wrath, staining his garments. He has treaded upon the grapes of wrath in the winepress of the Great Day of the Lord.

And from his mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; ... and He treads the wine of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

Revelation 19:15,16 (NASB)

And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God.

Revelation 19:13 (NASB)

After the battle with the nations, he moves forward to Jerusalem, the armies of heaven following in solemn procession...he enters the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the Valley of Decision. And then turns toward the Mount of Olives overhead, stopping for a moment to gaze upon Golgotha nearby. And then his horse takes wing again, and he lands with the greatest of shouts on the top of the Mount of Olives. And as his foot touches down, the mountain roars and begins to crumble.

And in that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount Of Olives will be split in its middle from East to west by a very large valley

Zechariah 14:4 (NASB)

And with another enormous shout of victory, He will enter David's city from the “Golden Gate,” the King's Gate, on the east side of

Jerusalem, the gate that has been shut for many centuries, awaiting the coming of the King, simply falls before him, it is the Gate of the Great King. And he will rule in the midst of his people forever.

And the Lord will be king over all the earth...All the land will be changed into a plain ... but Jerusalem will rise...and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

Zechariah 14: 9,10 (NASB)

So the great King will rule over all the earth, and his reign will never end. And under his perfect administration all sadness and selfishness, will quickly pass away. For at least a thousand years happiness will follow, unbroken, with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Hated and abused, Israel is the great gift of God to mankind. Far from the curse men now believe them to be, far from the "problem of the Jews," the Jew is the great symbol of God's eternal love, and will be the means of his deliverance. This then is the gift from Israel to you with love, Zion's Promise.

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Isaiah 51:11 (KJB)

For a child [was] born to us, a son [was] given...And the government will rest on his shoulders; And his name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

There will be no end to the increase of his Government or of peace. On the throne of David and over his kingdom

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NASB)

Amen.....and Amen.

Epilogue...



And one final note: I believe what I have written will actually come to pass, except in those places where I indulged myself in a bit of sanctified imagination, and you should take those sections with a grain of salt.

But dear reader, my prayer for you is that God will allow you the grace to see his Son as he is, and so enter into all the joys of this grace, prepared for you from before the world was even made.

He loves you and died in your place. You fell short in your sins, and without him are headed for eternity in a real place called hell. I hope you will miss all the futility and final terror of going your own way, that way. I have tried to faithfully tell you the truth. Beware of thinking these things are all imagination, especially those of you born to Abraham's seed.

You, my friend, are like a raindrop falling on the great divide of the ages. You will flow down the mountain in one direction or the other, and you will forever enter the glassy sea, where the throne of God is placed, or alas you will fall into the lake of fire which never cools, and *"the smoke of their torment goes up forever."*

My prayer for you is that you will find your rest in Christ Jesus by a simple faith that says to him in sincerity, the following prayer:

"Lord I am a sinner, and you paid for me on your cross. My sins placed you there. I accept you now without reservation as my Lord, my Savior, and the best friend I will ever have. I want to give you the rest of my life in service, and only with your help will I be able to do so." Amen and Amen again."

If you have made such a decision, or just want to comment on this book... please let the author know at the following email.

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To discuss this material with Dennis please write me at the email above. I am also open to speaking engagements.

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