

BREATHLESSLY AWAITING THE SOON RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

“All Creation Groans for the Soon Return of Jesus”

We have been taught to pray for the soon return of Jesus. The Bible tells us that all creation groans for the soon return of Christ. Christ's Return will alter the role of our Savior Jesus and move the end of Satan much closer to reality. This study takes major groups and negative emotions that the Bible outlines and show what will happen to them, Biblically, when Christ returns. May those who read this be encouraged to immediately desire the Soon Return of Jesus.



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LESSON # 1: ‘When Christ Returns - Jesus is in Charge of Everything.’

The early Church Fathers (100-300 AD) often said that “*Maranatha*” was one of their most common prayers. It means, “*Come, Lord Jesus*”. This stands in stark contrast to the fact that many modern Christians give lip service to the fact they want the Lord to come back, but seldom with intensity and fervor plead for the Soon Return of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that all of creation groans for Jesus to come back, yet most of the discussion today about creation speaks of the surety that without a doubt the earth will soon have no life on it and will be a dead planet. Destroyed by a heated climate, drowning from the melted ice caps; destroyed by fire as the world gets hotter and hotter or choked on the man-made pollution that fills the earth and the earth’s atmosphere.

What has made such a drastic change in the attitude of the Christian world and the secular world? It might be that people have forgotten or chose to ignore all the Bible says will be a part of the new life Jesus shall bring to earth with Him at His return. This study will focus on many of the things that will be completely altered when Christ comes again. Starting with Jesus and the way in which He is received.

The Second Coming of Christ

I believe that the Second Coming of Christ from heaven will be personal, visible, and glorious. It will be a blessed hope for which we should constantly watch and pray!!! I also believe that before He establishes His kingdom on earth, Jesus will come for His Church, an event commonly referred to as the “*Rapture*.” At that time the dead in Christ will be raised and living Christians will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and be with Him forever. In this resurrection, those who have died in Christ will have their redeemed souls and spirits united with a body like Christ’s glorified body. Christians living at the time of the event will not die but will be changed to be like Christ. This expectation is a motivation for holy living, as well as a source of comfort. No one knows the day or the hour when this will take place.

After the Rapture of the Church, Christians will be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. He will reward them based on the works they have accomplished. This is not a judgment to determine their salvation but a reward for labor for the cause of Christ. The Rapture will also inaugurate a period that the Bible characterizes as the “*Great day of His wrath*”; “*The Great Tribulation*”; or “*The Time of Jacob’s Trouble*.” This time of unprecedented difficulty will affect Israel and all the nations of the world. The purpose of this time will be to prepare Israel for the Messiah Jesus and for eternity.

At the end of the Tribulation, Jesus Christ will return with the heavenly hosts (army) of heaven as well as the Church to establish the Messianic Kingdom on earth. At the Second coming, the antichrist will be cast into the Lake of Fire and Satan will be bound for 1,000 years. The nations and their representatives will be judged. Israel will be restored to her land never more to be removed. Christ will reign with firmness and equity. His kingdom will be marked by material and spiritual blessing, since the curse upon the earth will have been removed.

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This Messianic Kingdom will close with apostasy and rebellion. God will crush this uprising in the last battle of the ages and Satan will be also thrown into the lake of fire. All those who rejected the Word of God will be resurrected. They will be judged by Christ and cast into the lake of fire, the place where they will suffer everlasting punishment.

After this judgment there will be a New Heaven and New Earth, where righteousness will be total. There will be a new Jerusalem and the everlasting presence of God among all the redeemed.

What Will happen When Jesus Returns?

The Second Coming of Christ is referenced many times in Scripture, with over 1,500 passages in the Old Testament and one out of every 25 verses in the New Testament mention the Messiah Jesus' return. The large amount of material devoted to this important event underscores what God says in:

Amos 3:7

“Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing His plan to His servants, the prophets.”

Literally, the return of Christ brings about what is referred to as the Kingdom of God in the Bible—The absolute rule over all the creation of God by His Son Jesus, including all of humankind. To accomplish this, Jesus ushers in two different judgments, two different resurrections, and two different eternities.

When Jesus returns, He will be ready for war **Revelation 19:11-16**. The nations will be gathered to fight against Jerusalem **Zechariah 14:2** in what we call the Battle of Armageddon. On that day that Jesus returns,

Zechariah 14:4

“His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.

It will be a unique day in the history of the world,

Zechariah 14:6-7

“On that day there will be neither sunlight nor cold, frosty darkness. . . a day known only to the Lord—with no distinction between day and night. When evening comes, there will be light.

God's enemies will be defeated, and the Antichrist and the false prophet will be,

Revelation 19:20 *“thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur”.*

Jesus will set up His kingdom and

Zechariah 14:9 *“The Lord will be king over the whole earth.”*

Jesus Establishes His Kingdom on Earth

In establishing His kingdom on earth, Jesus will first set up a judgment for those who are still alive after the tribulation and who are on the earth at the time of the second coming. This is referred to as

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the “Judgment of the Sheep and the Goats” or “Judgment of the Nations” **Matthew 25:31-46**. Those who are declared the sheep of God and survive this judgment will remain on earth and enjoy a time of peace and prosperity with Christ for 1,000 years, called the millennium and written about in **Revelation 20:4-6**. Those who are found guilty in this judgment are condemned to “*the eternal fire*” prepared for the devil and his angels **Matthew 24:41**. Satan is bound and forbidden to act during this time **Revelation 20:1-3**.

The End of the Millennium

At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released, and one final battle will occur which will rapidly be won by Christ, **Revelation 20:7-9**. Satan is then permanently consigned to the lake of fire. At this point a second resurrection will occur and another judgment. Unbelievers will be resurrected and judged at what is referred to as the great white throne of judgment based on their works. They will be assigned to punishment, **Revelation 20:11-15**.

The return of Jesus will usher in two different eternities, one with God and one without him. This truth is found in the two verses in the book of Malachi.

Malachi 4:1-2

“Surely the day is coming, it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and the day that is coming will set them on fire. . .Not a root or a branch will be left to them. But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves.”

In summary, what happens when Jesus returns? Evil is defeated, the earth is restored, and God wins. Your response to Jesus’ return depends on your relationship with Him. It will either be as John MacArthur calls it, “The greatest calamity in all of human history” or “the fulfillment of the Blessed Hope” **Titus 2:13**. Faith in Christ makes the difference, “But when the Son of Man returns, how many will he find on the earth who have faith?” **Luke 18:8**

This summary of what will happen when Christ’s returns should have all of us excited to see it happen. It is clearly a time when the first totally righteous leader will oversee what happens on earth. Jesus will lead the earth as God had intended a sinless Adam to lead the world. It will be marked by righteousness and justice. As we unfold all that will happen to the existing parts of the world that have been corrupted by sin, you will see what a remarkable change this will produce. Can you imagine in your own life if all sin and all consequences of that sin were removed and you lived a faultless and sinless life from that time forward, what a great difference that would make. That in a nutshell will be the new role of our Messiah, Jesus Christ. He will restore the order and direction that our world needs.

Jesus came the first time in humility and poverty. This time He will come in power, majesty and authority. He came the first time to take care of our sin problem; but He will come the second time to eliminate sin. He was persecuted, belittled, and ridiculed the first time but this time He will be so much in charge that no one will even have the chance to ridicule or belittle Jesus. You might say, “I can hardly wait for that to happen.” Now, we begin to see why the first Church spoke so often of

Jesus coming back and the first martyrs often died with the sweet sound of *“Maranatha”* on their lips. *“Come Lord Jesus!”*

Events that Must Happen Before Jesus Returns

As part of this introduction to why we should be “Breathlessly Awaiting the Soon Return of Jesus” it will be good for us to be reminded of what must happen before Jesus returns? The apostle Paul shows us that we are to discern what events must precede the Lord’s coming. When confronted with the apparent hysteria about the day of the Lord being already present, he said,

II Thessalonians 2:3

“Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed.”

Paul’s answer in his day to the question, what events are yet to happen before Christ comes, is twofold.

- 1) The rebellion must come.
- 2) The man of lawlessness must be revealed.

These two events are still to come. Paul does not treat these two events as something that can never happen but instead, they are signposts that Christ is coming at that time. These will both be global. The appearance of the man of lawlessness will be global, sensational, and brief.

II Thessalonians 4:5

“(He) oppresses and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. . .And then, the lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming.”

For any of the Thessalonians who were prone to think that this man of lawlessness was far in the future, or for any of us today who are prone to think that he is far in the future, Paul adds this remarkable warning,

II Thessalonians 2:7 “The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.”

Already, in the first century and still active today.

John, the Apostle, also spoke in a similar way about the antichrist:

I John 2:18

“Children, it is the last hour and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore, we know that it is the last hour”.

Paul does not say *“Many men of lawlessness have come,”* but he could have. What he says is, *“The mystery of lawlessness is already at work.”* In other words, John and Paul are saying, just when you think the end is far in the future, the satanic mystery of lawlessness may so cloud your mind with deception that you cannot see the soon arrival of the man of lawlessness. One more great reason to “Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ.” You will be in tune and stay in tune with what is

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happening and have insight far beyond the general statements that most people are prone to say, ‘times have never been worse’, ‘Jesus has to come back soon,’ ‘this can’t go on much longer.’ God has a plan and as we seek the soon return of Jesus, we will fall in love with the fact that we want him to come. We will be able to see with spiritual eyes that give us insight and Spirit-direction that will flesh out this reality for us.

What is the Coming Rebellion?

The “rebellion” or apostasy is also still in the future. This event is less definite than the appearance of a man who proclaims himself to be god, but it can’t be reduced to a centuries long process of seasons of apostasy. Paul believed that it would be discernible enough that he could use the absence of it as evidence that the day of the Lord was not yet at hand. Paul again says,

II Timothy 3:1-2, 5

“Understand this that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money. . . Then he follows this end-time prediction with, “Avoid such people.”

In other words, Paul views the signs of the end as more or less always with us. What will be different about the end is the degree and intensity of evil. Paul shows this by referring to the present “restraint” **II Thessalonians 2:7** on evil, which will be removed and give rise to greater evil at the end.

The fact that there are historically repeated prefiguration’s of end time events means that most of the precursors of the second coming are not of such a nature that they allow discerning the closeness of the end. They are real, but also imprecise. They are meant to make us vigilant, knowing that very quickly, the common evils of history might escalate into climatic events of the end. One more great reason to fall in love with the Coming of Christ and Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ is that it will keep us vigilant and insightful.

The Return of Christ is Imminent

The return of Christ is also imminent, meaning it is near and when it comes it will happen quickly. The fact that we cannot know with any certainty about exactly when Jesus will return is clear when Jesus states,

Matthew 24:42 and 25:13

“Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. . . Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

Early Christians anticipated that Christ could return in their lifetime and admonished believers to watch and be ready. Because the specific time of Christ’s return is unknowable, believers are exhorted to be prepared by purifying their lives from sin and living in obedience to Christ daily.

The Return of Christ Is Also Final and Unalterable

He will come in victory and judgment. When He first came it was as a babe in a manger and he lived gently and humbly, when he comes again, He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords. Revelation powerfully depicts his return as a triumphant warrior king and judge and says:

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Revelation 19:11-16

“Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is the Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.”

So, I say, and I hope you say, “Maranatha Lord, Maranatha.” Come Lord Jesus—Come!

Key Scriptures in the Gospels for the Soon Return of Jesus:

Matthew 24:42-44

Matthew 25:13

Luke 21:34-36

John 5:18-29

John 6:39-40

John 14:1-3

LESSON # 2: 'When Christ Returns - Satan is Near to Destruction!'

This lesson continues to look at what changes when Jesus comes back the Second Time. His Glorious Coming will change everything in every way.

One being that will greatly change will be Satan. We know the fate of Satan was sealed by the Cross, but that did not stop his evil and nefarious activities. They will not stop until Christ comes again. But they will be changed all the way along in history. The Bible is clear that Satan will meet with a final destruction and will spend eternity in torment in the Lake of Fire.

Luke 18:7

"God will vindicate His elect who cry out to Him day and night by providing them justice."

Romans 16:30 *"Satan will be crushed."*

And Revelation says Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire where he

Revelation 20:10 *"will be tormented day and night forever and ever."*

Satan does not want to go to torment alone, so he is working overtime to take as many people with him as possible. Let's take a chronological look at what the Bible says will happen to Satan before Jesus come; when Jesus comes and when the final judgment is pronounced upon Satan.

What Happens to Satan Before Jesus Comes?

Let's start with the time leading up to the Great Tribulation. It will be a continual slide from what we see today to a point where the world will be filled with apostasy, Satanic teachings, and a disbelief of the Bible. Any falling away in those vital areas of faith will be greatly magnified in the pre-tribulation time. It will be a time when it seems Satan is winning the war for the control of the earth and all humanity.

The word apostasy comes from the Greek word *apostasies*, which means, "falling away." The word refers to a falling away from the truth. It depicts a determined, willful defection from the faith or an abandonment of the faith.

Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus for 30 pieces of silver is a classic example of apostasy and its effects, **Matthew 26:14-25**. He fell away from the truth, perhaps for financial reasons. Later, in remorse, Judas hanged himself after which his body fell headlong and *"burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out!"* **Acts 1:8** Hymenaeus and Alexandre experienced a shipwreck of their faith and apparently engaged in blasphemy **I Timothy 1:19-20**, Demas turned away from the apostle Paul because of his love for the present world. **II Timothy 4:10**

Whether people are enticed by money or the love of the world, or something else, they can be enticed away from their commitment to the Lord.

Apostasy was a problem in the Old Testament and Israel went into exile by Assyria in 722 BC and the southern kingdom of Judah went into exile in 597 BC because of apostasy.

Paul warned church elders that following his death, false teachers would emerge who would seek to lead church members into apostasy.

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Acts 20:29-30

“I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them”

Scripture tells us that there will be an increase of apostasy in the end times. For example,

I Timothy 4:1-2 warns, NASB

“The Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.”

Many of the cults and false religions that are prevalent emerged out of the Christian church. The leaders of these groups received alleged revelations from angels, which we know can be fallen angels or demons and based their entire faith on these supposed revelations by angels. Not God or the Holy Spirit but what they called angels.

II Timothy 4:3-4 offers this warning,

“The time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”

Who can doubt that these words describe the very day in which we live? Channel-surfing on television in the evening, you will come across examples of numerous false teachers espousing doctrines that appeal to people’s passions, such as health, wealth, one-love, and others.

II Timothy 3 provides some specifics regarding end-times apostasy:

II Timothy 3:1-5 ESV

“1 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

Scripture reveals that apostasy is often encouraged by false teachers who are motivated by the work of Satan **Galatians 2:4** and escalates during times of trial **Luke 8:13**. This is prophetically significant, for false teachers and severe trials will proliferate in the future tribulation period. Scripture teaches that apostasy will rise to a fever pitch during the future tribulation period.

II Thessalonians 2:3 we read,

“Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will come, unless the rebellion comes first.”

This is a rebellion against truth and the inspiration of the bible.

Satan looks as though he is the master of the Pre-Tribulation and the Tribulation periods. His followers are not only growing in number, but they are also increasingly pulling people away from Christ and into false teachings.

The Scripture says

II Thessalonians 2:7-8

“The mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed.”

Restraints on Satan Must Be Removed

So, prior to the coming of the antichrist (the lawless one,) one who restrains Satan must be removed. Many believe that the only person who can do this is the omnipotent God, He alone is powerful enough to restrain Satan. He has been one who dwells in the Church and protects the Church. He will step back enough for the Satan inspired antichrist to enter a time of power.

Satan still looks as though this is his time, a time when he has more power, just as he wanted, than he has ever had before. There is one more shift of power that will greatly affect Satan during this time. The northern armies will wage war against Israel and lose the war. With both Russian and the oil-rich Arab nations out of the way, the path will be open for the one-world government of the antichrist, who will be acting directly as an agent of Satan.

This Satan-inspired individual, the antichrist, will rise to prominence in the tribulation period, initially making a peace treaty with Israel, ***Daniel 9:27***. In his desire to dominate the world, he will double-cross and then seek to destroy the Jews, persecute believers, and set up his own kingdom, ***Revelation 13***.

During this time Satan is involved in something that seems very significant. ***Revelation 13:1-3*** we read of the apparent death and resurrection of the antichrist. It seems that the mortal wound the antichrist received and his healing will cause his crusade to bloom in size and number. John F. Walvoord explains it this way, “The final world ruler receives a wound which normally would be fatal but is miraculously healed by Satan.” While the resurrection of a dead person seems to be beyond Satan’s power, the healing of a wound could be possible for Satan, and this may be the explanation. The important point is that the final world ruler comes into power obviously supported by a supernatural and miraculous deliverance by Satan himself. This supernatural event would seem to be a contributing factor to people worshipping the antichrist, for many will believe that this involves a godlike recovery. They will be awestruck.

What Is the Power of Satan at This Point?

Satan has limits since he is a creature—a creation of God and not divine, but nevertheless is extremely powerful and influential in the world. He is called various names in the Bible which speak of this power, John records he is “the ruler of this world”, Paul in ***Corinthians*** says he is “*the god of this world*”; in ***Ephesians***, Paul calls he is the “*prince of the power of the air*”, He deceives the whole world and has power in the government, physical power, and power in a variety of realms.

It is critical to realize that Satan has vast experiences in tricking human beings and bringing them down. In fact, his experience is far greater than that of any human being. By his very longevity, Satan has acquired a breadth of experience that easily eclipses the limited knowledge of humans. He has observed people firsthand in every conceivable situation, so he can predict with accuracy how they

will respond to circumstances. So, although Satan is not omniscient, his life experience gives him knowledge that is far superior to anything any human could have.

Satan has always tried to ape God, Augustine’s description of Satan’s behavior was to mirror God. He has his own church, *“called the synagogue of Satan”* **Revelation 2:9**; has his own false prophets who bring false sermons, his own doctrine of demons, his own throne and worshippers, he employs false teachers, and sends out false prophets. All this mimicking indicates that Satan’s plan has always been to establish a demonic rival rule to God’s kingdom. He can perform counterfeit signs and wonders,

II Thessalonians 2:9 says,

“The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders.

Satan Ousted from Heaven in the Middle of the Tribulation

In the middle of the tribulation, things drastically change for Satan, he is ousted from heaven.

Revelation 12:12-13 says,

“Rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short.”

It is a sobering description of Satan’s ousting from heaven, after which he indwells, or at the very least, fully energizes the antichrist.

Satan is filled with fury because he knows his time is short. More specifically, he knows his time is limited to a mere 1260 days, the last three and a half years of the tribulation period. This brings woe to the earth because of Satan’s wrath. This is a very important point to note in the understanding of what is happening during the middle and second half of the tribulation. Things go now from bad to much, much worse on the earth. Everyone living on the earth, especially believers, must be aware because he now moves among them more antagonistically than ever.

Satan makes war on the saints and will engage them in a time of great persecution. This was prophesied in **Revelation 13:7-10**; **Daniel 7:21**; and **II Thessalonians 2:4**. All who are on the earth, except for those whose names are recorded in the book of life will pay homage to the antichrist/Satan.

Revelation 13:7-10 NIV

“It was given power to wage war against God's holy people and to conquer them. And it was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. 8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world. 9 Whoever has ears, let them hear. 10 "If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity they will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword they will be killed." This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of God's people”.

Daniel 7:21 NIV

“As I watched, this horn was waging war against the holy people and defeating them,”

II Thessalonians 2:4 NIV

“He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.”

What Happens to Satan When Jesus Comes Back?

At the end of this terrible period when all seems bleak, Christ will return and the antichrist and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire, **Revelation 19:20**. Satan will also be bound from this point till the very end of the millennial kingdom,

Revelation 20:1-3

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him so that he might not deceive the nations any longer,

The bottomless pit presently serves as the place of imprisonment of some demonic spirits, **Luke 8:3, II Peter 2:4**. The devil and all demonic spirits will be bound here for 1,000 years during Christ's millennial kingdom, Revelation 20:1-3. This quarantine will effectively remove a powerfully destructive and deceptive force in all areas of human life and thought during Christ's kingdom.

Revelation 20:7-8 tells us however, that

“When the thousand years are ended. Satan will be released from prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle, their number is like the sand of the sea.”

He will move his forces against Jerusalem with fervor. He has always used deception.

John 8:44

“He was a murderer from the beginning, and he has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of all lies,”

Satan Released at the End of the Millennium for Final Judgment

When Satan is released at the end of the millennium, he will lead many of these unbelievers astray in a massive rebellion against Christ. The Bible says,

Revelation 20:8 “their number is like the sand of the sea,”

This will represent Satan's last stand. Following the final revolt against Christ,

Revelation 20:10

“The devil who had deceived the saints was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

Notice that all three persons of the satanic trinity; Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet will suffer the same dire destiny.

One final note that the Second Glorious Coming of Jesus will trigger is that all the fallen angels and demons who have served under him will also be judged.

Mathew 25:41 refers to this when it says,

“The eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels”.

The demonic spirits who have been harassing Christians throughout the ages will one day receive their just judgment. Satan is one who will completely have his life and future turned around for the worse when Christ comes. It will be the beginning of the end for the one who opposed God and God’s people.

The next lesson looks at ‘How Creation Will Be Restored When Christ Comes Again.’ So, I encourage you to **Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ!**

LESSON # 3: ‘When Christ Returns – Jesus Will Restore Creation’

The series continues on what all will change when Jesus returns to the earth. This lesson looks at what happens to Creation.

When Jesus returns creation will receive what it has been promised, restoration. The material universe was originally created in beauty and perfection. There were no poisonous plants or animals, no meat-eating animals, and no conflict among any of the creations. The entire creation lived in perfect harmony. There were no natural cataclysms like earthquakes or tornados. Humans lived in perfect harmony with nature.

But when Adam and Eve rebelled against God one of the consequences of the sin was that God placed a curse on His creation. Poisonous plants and animals suddenly appeared. The animal kingdom turned against itself and man, as well as some of those animals became meat eaters. The natural cataclysms began to take their toll, and now humans had to strive against nature to survive.

But, at the same time that God placed a curse on creation, He promised that one day it would be lifted through “*the Seed of woman.*” **Genesis 3:15** That promise is repeated throughout the Scripture. **Isaiah 11** prophecies that when the Messiah comes to reign, “*the wolf will dwell with the Lamb and the lion will eat straw like the ox.*” The passage further states that “*the nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra,*” because the snake would no longer be poisonous.

Paul deals quite clearly with this restoration of nature and says nature will be just as intent as the desire of humans to no longer have a body that ages, gets diseases, and dies. He writes in

Romans 8:18-23 NIV

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.”

The Earths Restoration Begins with Destruction, the Great Tribulation

This is not a remodel project; it is a complete do-over. It will begin with the Great Tribulation when the Seals of God have been opened and the consequences are started.

Revelation 6:12-17 NIV describes it this way,

12 I watched as he opened the sixth seal. There was a great earthquake. The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair, the whole moon turned blood red, 13 and the stars in the sky fell to earth, as figs drop from a fig tree when shaken by a strong wind. 14 The heavens

receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?"

This start of the reconstruction of creation will only heighten in intensity and results. The next series of judgments on the earth are called the Trumpet Judgments. They will cause the destruction of a third of the sun, moon and stars and they will be extinguished, **Revelation 8:12** The sun will be darkened by smoke from the abyss at the fifth trumpet, **Revelation 9:1-2**. The sun will scorch people with fire and fierce heat when the fourth bowl is poured out on the earth **Revelation 16:8-9**. The destruction continues with a fiery mountain plummeting into the sea that destroys a third of the sea creatures, **Revelation 8**. Also, in **Revelation 8** a series of plagues will come upon the people and these plagues will destroy a third of the people alive on earth at that time. But **Revelation 16** tells of the great destruction that will be poured out on creation through the Bowl Judgements or the last judgements on the earth from God during the Tribulation period.

SEVEN BOWL JUDGEMENT

1. **First Bowl Judgement** - All people who have the mark of the beast on them will be inflicted with harmful and painful sores.
2. **Second bowl Judgment** - Sea life will be sabotaged which causes every living thing in it to die.
3. **Third, Bowl Judgment** – All fresh water will be ruined by poisoning all the worlds fresh water supplies: rivers, streams, and lakes.
4. **Fourth Bowl Judgement** - The sun will become so intense that it burns and scorches people.
5. **Fifth Bowl Judgment** - Darkness will fall over all the kingdom of the antichrist because the sun will cease to shine over this area.
6. **Sixth Bowl Judgement** - The Euphrates River will dry up which will allow the huge army of the East (1,000,000 soldiers under uniform) to march towards Jerusalem.
7. **Seventh Bowl Judgment** – Finally, at the end of the Tribulation, judgements that center around the final battle of Israel and the world, commonly called the Battle of Armageddon.

Christ Sets Foot on the Earth

Nothing will trigger the restoration of creation that Christ will bring more than his touching the earth the second time. Listen as I read two great prophecies that tell what happens to the earth and creation when Jesus appears on earth and touches it again on the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:3-4

“Then the Lord will go out and fight against these nations as when he fights on a day of battle. On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. “

This is just one of the changes of topography to the earth when Christ sits foot on earth. There is more.

Revelation 16:17-21 NIV

17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, "It is done!" 18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. 19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. 21 From the sky huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, fell on people. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.”

Clearly when Christ ascends to the Mount of Olives, some cataclysmic events will bring an end to this period.

1. An earthquake of globally staggering proportions, much larger than the ones of ***Revelation 8:5*** and ***Revelation 11:19*** will affect the whole earth and all will be changed. Mountains will be leveled, islands will vanish, and all large towns on earth will be destroyed and the topography of the earth will drastically be changed.
2. Jerusalem will be split into three areas.
3. The Mount of Olives will split into two parts, creating a brand-new valley.
4. There will be a horrific hailstorm, and the sun and moon will be darkened, ***Joel 3:14-16*** and ***Matthew 24-29***.

Physical Blessings of the Millennial Kingdom

We do not know all that will be present in creation when the Millennial Kingdom is in operation. But the Bible is clear with many unique physical blessings. They are descriptions that will not need to be a part of heaven but seem to speak of life on this earth. Some of the blessings are:

1. People will live in a blessed and enhanced environment.

Isaiah 35:1,2

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the mystery of our God.

2. Rain and food will be plentiful.

Isaiah 30:23-24

“And he will give rain for the seed with which you sow the ground, and bread, the produce of the ground, which will be rich and plenteous. In that day your livestock will graze in large pastures, and the oxen and the donkeys that work the ground will eat seasoned fodder, which has been winnowed with shovel and fork.”

3. Animals will live in harmony with each other and with humans.

Isaiah 11:6-7

“The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together and a little children shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

4. Longevity will be greatly increased.

Isaiah 65:20

“No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does no fill out his days., for the young man shall not die at a hundred years old.”

5. Physical infirmities and illnesses will be removed.

Isaiah 29:18 NIV

“In that day the deaf hear the words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see.”

Isaiah 33:24 NIV

“And no inhabitant will say, “I am sick”. The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.”

6. Prosperity will prevail resulting in joy and gladness.

Jeremiah 31:12-14

“They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the Lord. “

These and many other physical blessings will be abundantly present during the future millennial kingdom.

There will be one other great impact upon the creation and that will be prepare the world for the new heaven and the new earth.

Earth is Cleansed by Fire, God Creates a New Heaven and the New Earth

As we think back to the scene in the garden of Eden in which Adam and Eve sinned against God, we remember that God judged the earth with a curse, **Genesis 3:17-18**. Yes, the universe was subjected to futility and is now in bondage to decay, **Romans 8:20-22**.

So, before the eternal kingdom can be made manifest, God must deal with this cursed earth and universe. And Satan has long carried out his evil schemes on earth **Ephesians 2:2** so the earth must be purged of all stains resulting from the presence of Satan and sin.

In fact, the earth, along with the first and second heavens, that is the earth’s atmosphere, **Job 35:5** and the stellar universe, **Genesis 1:17, Deuteronomy 17:3** must be renewed. The old must make way for the eternal new.

The Scriptures often speak of the passing of the old Heavens and Earth,

Psalm 102:25-26 is an example,

“Of old you O God laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain, they will wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away.”

Isaiah 51:6 is another,

“Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, but my salvation will be forever.”

Matthew 24:35 Jesus said,

“Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away.”

II Peter 3:7-13 tells us how this will be done.

“The heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire; being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. . . .But the day of the lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. “

After the universe is cleansed by fire and God creates a New Heaven and a New Earth, all vestiges of the curse and Satan’s presence will be utterly and forever removed from all creation.

We can clearly say, the earth will no more be cursed, and will produce no more thorns and thistles, man will be no more compelled to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow; woman will no more be forced to bear the sufferings that she does now; and the dwelling of the blessed will be no more-cursed by sickness, sorrow, fears, and death. All things will be made new and how blessed that will be.

The New Heavens and Earth will be this present universe, only it will be purified of all evil, sin, suffering and death. The Greek word used to speak about the newness of the cosmos is not ‘*Neos*’ but ‘*Kainos*’. ‘*Neos*’ means “new in time” or “new in origin.” But ‘*Kainos*’, the word the Bible uses means, “new in nature” or “new in quality.” So, the phrase “New Heavens and a New Earth”, refer

not to a cosmos that is totally other than the present cosmos, but the new one will stand in continuity with the present cosmos, renewed, renovated, and ready for eternity.

It is clear we should **Breathlessly Await the Soon Coming of the Jesus Christ.**

LESSON # 4: ‘When Christ Returns - All Nations Will Change!’

As we continue discovering what will change when Jesus returns in His Glorious Second Coming, this lesson focuses on what happens to the Nations of the World.

The Nations of the World will all receive peace, righteousness and justice when Jesus returns to the earth. They will have the only time in history when the earth will be ruled without war and without nations challenging each other. People have dreamed of world peace throughout history.

Disarmament treaties have been negotiated, peace treaties have been signed, international organizations have been created; but true peace has remained elusive.

The Bible says that permanent world peace will never be achieved until the Prince of Peace, the Messiah, returns. Both Isaiah and Micah prophesied that when the Lord returns, the nations

Isaiah 2:4 (Micah 4:3)

He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.

The hope of the world for peace will never be realized in summit conferences between heads of state. The only hope is the return of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who will rule the world with a ‘rod of iron’.

Psalms 2:4

*“You will break them with a **rod of iron**; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.”*

Revelation 2:26-28

*“To the one who is victorious and does my will to the end, I will give authority over the nations—that one will rule them with an **iron scepter** and will dash them to pieces like pottery’—just as I have received authority from my Father. I will also give that one the morning star.”*

It was fairly easy to see the hand of God over the nations of the world during the time of the Old Testament Biblical writings. Much of what is recorded in the Old Testament Bible is the interaction of God with Israel; Israel with other nations; and the development of the Jewish nation.

The Church Age

But once we come to the New Testament and the start of the Church Age, the focus switches to the universal Church and not as much on any single nation, not even Israel. It will be helpful for us to study what the relationship of Jesus is with the universal Church.

The universal Church is an every-expanding body of born-again believers who comprise the body of Christ and over whom Jesus reigns as Lord. Although the members of the church may differ in age, sex, race, wealth, social status, and ability, they are all joined together as one people.

Galatians 3:28

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

All share in one Spirit and worship one Lord, **Ephesians 4:3-6** This body is comprised of only believers in Christ. The way one becomes a member of this universal body is to simply place faith in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

The word church is translated from the Greek word ‘*ekklesia*’. This Greek word comes from two smaller words. The first is ‘*ek*’, which means ‘*our from among*.’ The second is ‘*klesia*’, which means ‘*to call*’. Combining the two words, ‘*ekklesia*’ means, “*to call out from among*.” The Church represents those whom God has called out from among the world, both Jews and Gentiles. And those God has called come from all walks of life. They are all welcome in Christ’s Church.

The Church has not always existed. Seven Scriptural teachings lead to this thought:

1. The Church did not exist in Old Testament times, Jesus in **Matthew 16:18** said, ‘*He would build His Church.*’ He would bring it into existence.
2. The Old Testament text does not contain a single reference to the Church.
3. In the New Testament, the Church is clearly portrayed as distinct from Israel. It is not a mere continuation of Old Testament Israel.
4. Every single believer in the church age is baptized into the Body of Christ, **I Corinthians 12:13**; the Day of Pentecost was the first day everyone was asked to be baptized into Christ.
5. The church is called a mystery that was not revealed to past generations but was revealed for the first time in the New Testament time.
6. We are told in Ephesians, the Church is built on the foundation of Christ’s resurrection, meaning that the Church could not have existed in the Old Testament times.

Ephesians 1:19-20,

“And his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.”

7. The Church is called the new humanity.

Ephesians 2:15b

“His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace.”

The Bible makes it clear that the Church began on the Day of Pentecost and that ever since that, we have been living in the Church age. This age will continue until the Church is removed from this earth. I believe that the Scripture teaches that will be before the time of Tribulation and that during the Tribulation God will again turn His attention to Israel.

Daniel 9:25-27, 70 Weeks

“After the sixty-two ‘sevens’, the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing’. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolation has been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”.

With the rebirth of the Nation of Israel in 1948, many of the Old Testament prophecies about Israel and the nations that surround Israel have been highlighted and often fulfilled in our lifetime. We will take a look at those nations and how they will change when Christ returns in His Glorious Coming.

Pre-Millennial View of End Time Prophecies

There are a variety of views on the Millennium; Pre-Millennial, Amillennial and Post-Millennial are the most common views. I have taught and will continue to teach Pre-Millennialism because it reflects a literal view and interpretation of what the Bible says and does not categorize many of the end-time prophecies as representative of other things-(the Scripture is only symbolic), does not have all the prophecies about Jerusalem and the Temple ending in the first century AD and does not build its arguments around the concept that God replaced an apostate Israel with the Church, meaning all New Testament prophecies that refer to Israel are really referring to the Church. Why take all these prophecies of the Glorious Coming of Jesus literally; because all the Messianic prophecies telling of the first coming of Christ (more than 120 of them) were fulfilled literally.

Psalms 83 War

Today, the time now, Israel has come under attack by a series of Muslim terrorist groups: Hamas—Gaza/Syria; Hezbollah—Lebanon/Syria, and Houthis—Yemen/Iran-money & arms. This may not be the end of Arab/Muslim enemies who rise up to battle with Israel, but Psalm 83 makes it clear that this coalition of millennia-old enemies of Israel will be defeated and will not be a factor in the great wars before and during the Tribulation. It could be that a defeat of these century old enemies could signal a time of peace for Israel. It is prophesied that Israel will be at peace with unwalled cities when the next attack comes against the nation. But it is also possible that the unwalled cities of Israel and the time of freedom and security will only happen after the Antichrist signs a brokered peace treaty with Israel and other nations in the world.

Ezekiel 38-39 Magog War

The next major prophesied conflict will be the invasion of Israel by a Northern-Military Coalition. This is prophesied in ***Ezekiel 38-39*** and the goal of the northern assault force will be to utterly obliterate the Jews and seize their valuable land. This group includes several nations mentioned in the Bible, but none go by the same name today. History tells us who they are. The list includes Rosh and Meshech-

Author: Dr. Thomas Haney

Russia; Magog, many of the Soviet Union Southern nations—the nations with Mongolian heritage; Tubal, or Turkey; Persia or Iran; Ethiopia, modern day Sudan; Put or Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia; Beth-Togarmah Armenia, and Azerbaijan remnants of a future destroyed Syria, also from northern Iran and Iraq.

This unique alignment of nations has never occurred in the past but is occurring today, which lends credence to the idea that we are living in the end times. An alliance between many of these nations would not have made good sense in the times of Ezekiel but the tie of Islam and the gathering of this coalition to combat the United States and European influence has become quite intense in our lifetime.

According to the Bible this will be a war where Israel stands alone and although Ezekiel says some nations will ask: Sheba, Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, (Saudi Arabia, some Western nations, and European and Mid-East merchants) will ask, “Have you come to seize spoil? Have you assembled your hosts to carry off plunder.” **Ezekiel 38:13**; it will be diplomatic talk only and no action will follow. Israel will appear weak and alone in the face of this Goliath intruder, but God is strong and **Ezekiel 38-39** reveals that the invading force will be annihilated by God before any damage falls upon Israel.

When God destroys the massive northern military coalition, the balance of political and religious power in the world will shift. This will make it much easier for the antichrist to assume military control of the world. This will enable the antichrist to sign a peace treaty with Israel and allow Israel to rebuild a temple on the temple mount.

Tribulation Period

The emphasis on the nations during the Tribulation Period shows the antichrist turning against Israel, pursuing them and finally forcing the Jewish remnant to flee Israel and be hidden supernaturally by God or “under his wings”—the ‘wings’ speak of his ability to deliver the Jews. **Revelation 12:12**

The second half of the Tribulation, called the Great Tribulation, will see the power of the Antichrist continue to escalate and the one-world government will dominate the entire planet. This will cause pressure, retaliation, economic sanctions, and control of every aspect of the life of the people on earth.

It will also be the time when the allied armies of the antichrist will gather for the final destruction of the Jews.

Revelation 16:14-16

14 They are demonic spirits that perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the whole world, to gather them for the battle on the great day of God Almighty. 15 "Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed." 16 Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon."

We do not know all the allies of the Antichrist in the Western world, but we do know that the Eastern world will add many troops to his army. The sixth bowl judgment will dry up the Euphrates River. It is the longest river in the Western Asia region and when it is dry it will allow the kings of the East and their massive army to join forces with the Antichrist.

Author: Dr. Thomas Haney

The goal of this new coalition will be the final destruction of all Jewish people. One other national significant event occurs and that is the economic center of the Antichrist’s world, called commercial Babylon will be attacked and destroyed—supernaturally by God through the supposedly allies of the antichrist. The antichrist and his large army will move south to attack Jerusalem and to find and eliminate the remnant of Israel. It is at this time that the leadership of the Jews will call upon the remnant group to repent and accept Jesus as their Lord. It is sad to recognize that according to ***Zechariah 13:7-9***, some two-thirds of the Jewish people will lose their lives during the tribulation period. However, one-third, the remnant, will survive, turn to the Lord and be saved, ***Isaiah 64:1-12*** and ***Romans 11:26***. They intensely pray for Jesus and part of the answer that He gives them is that He appears in His Glorious Coming.

The Second Coming of The Glorified Jesus

The Second Coming will involve a visible, physical, bodily return of the glorified Jesus. It will be a universal experience in the sense that every eye will witness the event.

Revelation 1:7

“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 wail on account of him.”

At the second coming of Jesus, He will confront the antichrist and his forces and slay them with the word of His mouth. This is fully described in ***Revelation 19***.

Revelation 19:11-16 NIV

11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. 12 His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. 13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. 14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords.

This gives instant deliverance to the Jewish remnant. The antichrist and his forces are poised for attack against the remnant in the wilderness. The remnant has no chance of survival, but the Jewish leaders urge the remnant to repent and turn to Jesus the Messiah.

In answer, Christ defeats all who stand against them. The antichrist will be slain, and he and the beast will be thrown into the lake of fire—the place of eternal punishment. This will proceed a judgment of the nations where they will be separated into saved and unsaved and given rewards and/or punishments.

The Millennial Kingdom

Revelation 20:4-6 NIV

“4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.”

The Millennial Kingdom, **Revelation 20:4-6**, will be a time where Christ will reign globally for 1,000 years **Isaiah 2:6-9, Daniel 7:14**. It will be centered in Jerusalem, **Isaiah 2:22-24, Ezekiel 48:30-35; Joel 3:16-17; Micah 4:6-8, and Zechariah 8:2-3**. Jesus will judge between the nations during this time. Jesus will reign on the throne of David, **Jeremiah 23:5-6**, and Christ’s government will be perfect and effective, **Isaiah 9:6-7**. The government of Christ will bring global peace, **Micah 4:3-4**. In short, the government of Christ will yield an ideal climate for living on earth. Christ will succeed where all human governments have failed!

The inequality of nations, evil nations seeming to succeed and righteous nations seeming to fail, has often been a source of discomfort and questioning by believers; but the Bible makes it clear that the impact of sin and the undermining work of the devil and all of his demons have penetrated the nations of the world and have produced terrible acts of genocide, anarchy, dictatorship, and persecution. These will be stopped when the Glorious Coming of our Lord Jesus occurs. They will never again be allowed to be a part of life. The Millennial Kingdom will be governed by Christ, His saints, and His martyrs and the New Heaven and the New Earth will need no government for God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit will be with all believers and only believers.

One more reason to **“Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ.”** Maranatha Lord, Maranatha!”

LESSON # 5: ‘When Christ Returns - A New Direction for Israel and the Jews’

This lesson will continue to look at what will change when the Glorious Coming of Jesus occurs. It is frequently called the Second Coming of Christ. Nothing will change more than the State of Israel and the relationship of Jesus and the Jewish people.

Israel Experienced a Judicial Blindness Following the First Coming of Jesus

From the time that Israel rejected Christ in the first century, it has experienced a judicial blindness and hardening as a judgment from God. Paul clearly defined that when he wrote:

Romans 11:25,

“I want you to understand this mystery, brothers a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in” (that is, until the full number of Gentiles who will be saved have, in fact, become saved).”

The rest of the story when Christ came the first time to the Jewish Nation, was the Jews in Israel, and later Judah, had sought a relationship with God not by faith but by works, **Galatians 2:16** and **Galatians 3**. Of course, to attain righteousness by observing the law, people must keep the law perfectly.

James 2:10

“For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. “

No one is capable of keeping the entire law for their entire life. The Jews actually stumbled over the ‘stumbling stone’, who is Jesus Christ, **Romans 9:31-35**, so they rejected Him. As a result of this rejection of the Messiah, a partial judicial blindness and hardness has come upon Israel or the Jews. They lost their favored position before God, so the gospel would be preached to the Gentiles to make the Jews jealous so that they may be saved.

Romans 11:11-12

“Again, I ask: did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring?”

Since that time, Gentiles who place faith in Jesus become members of God’s church. Believing Jews also become members of God’s church in the current age.

Colossians 1:26-27

“The mystery that has been the word of God in its fulness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations but is now disclosed to the Lord’s people. To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

God Promises to Save Israel

As we can see from these Scriptures, the Good News is that Israel’s hardening and casting off following Jesus is only temporary. In due time as we shall see in this study, a remnant of Israel will all be saved,

Romans 11:25-27

“I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sister, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written, “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

This verse is quoting the prophecies of Isaiah **59:20-21; 27:9**; and **Jeremiah 31:33-34**.

The birth of the modern, self-governing nation of Israel in 1948 began the fulfillment of specific Bible prophecies about an international regathering of the Jews in unbelief before the period of the Tribulation. This regathering was predicted to take place after centuries of exile in various nations around the world and it was predicted that the regathering would produce a nation, Israel, which did not believe in God.

Ezekiel 36:10 God promised the Jewish people,

“I will multiply people on you, the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities shall be inhabited, and the wasted places rebuilt.”

Ezekiel 36:24 God also promised,

“I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land”.

In Biblical Times, Israel had been in bondage to single nations: the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. In each situation, God delivered them after a time. But never in biblical history have the Israelites been delivered from ‘all the countries.’ This event did not find fulfillment until 1948, when Israel finally became a national entity again, and Jews have been streaming back to their homeland ever since.

Joel Rosenberg wrote, “Consider the numbers. When Israel declared her independence on May 14, 1948, the country’s population stood at 806,000. Yet, today is more than 18,000,000. There have been more Jews in the greater Tel Aviv area since 2007 than in the New York City, and there are now more Jews in Israel than Jews in the rest of the world.”

The regathering of the Jews in Israel is necessary in order for key biblical prophecies about the tribulation period to make sense. The return of the Jews to the land prior to the tribulation period is clearly implied in the peace covenant between the antichrist and the leaders of Israel.

Daniel 9:27

“27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

The signing of this peace pact will signal the actual beginning of the tribulation period. Note however, that for such a treaty to make sense, the Jews must be in their own land, and Israel must be a viable political entity. The point is that Israel must be regathered to the land before the beginning of the tribulation period.

We can make the same point about the rebuilding of the Jewish temple that will exist during the tribulation period, **Matthew 24:15-16, II Thessalonians 2:4**. How could there be a rebuilding of the Jewish temple in Israel unless Israel had been previously reborn as a nation. I would encourage you to remember that Israel at this time will remain an unbelieving nation, but according to **Joel 2:28-29**, a spiritual awakening in Israel will eventually occur.

Israel will be attacked by a great northern coalition, and this will be before the start of the Tribulation. It could even be as much as 3 ½ years before the tribulation begins, **Ezekiel 39:9-10**. Some scholars claim that **Ezekiel 38-39** may refer to an invasion that has already taken place. Here are some reasons why I believe that is not true.

1. Israel has never been invaded on the scale of what is described in **Ezekiel 38-39**. Nor has an invasion into Israel involved the specific nations mentioned in the passage. This has not happened yet, so it must be fulfilled in the future.
2. Ezekiel was clear that the things of which he spoke would be fulfilled *“in the later years”*. **Ezekiel 38:8** and **38:16**. Such phrases point to the end times.
3. The unique alignment of nations as described in **Ezekiel 38-39** has never occurred in the past but is apparently occurring today.
4. Ezekiel affirmed that the invasion would occur after Israel was regathered from all around the earth, *‘gathered from many people’*, **Ezekiel 38:8,12**, to a land that had been a wasteland. Israel was only delivered from one nation every previous time it was in bondage, Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon.
5. Since **Ezekiel 36-37** are apparently being literally fulfilled, a regathering from *‘many peoples’*, it is reasonable to assume that the events of **Ezekiel 38-39** will also be literally fulfilled-the coalition of nations will attack Israel.
6. It is clear to me that this passage refers to a yet-future invasion into Israel that will take place when Israel is in a state of security, likely after the rapture and before the start of the tribulation period.

The Jews will live in relatively peaceful conditions when the tribulation starts because they will have signed the peace treaty with the antichrist, and this will also allow them to rebuild the temple. It had

been originally built by Solomon; rebuilt by Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah; enlarged and beautified by Herod and destroyed by the Romans in AD 70.

Scripture reveals that yet another temple will be built during the tribulation period. In terms of prophetic chronology, there are several important factors to consider. First and foremost, it is a prerequisite that Israel be back in her homeland as a nation. Second, we know that the temple must be rebuilt as least by the middle of the seven-year Tribulation because Jesus in the Olivet discourse warned of a catastrophic event that assumes the existence of the temple.

Matthew 24:15-16

‘When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand) then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.’

This abomination of desolation is the desecration of the Jewish temple by the antichrist, who will set up an image of himself within the temple at the midpoint of the Tribulation. The temple must be built by this time. It is significant that Jesus says this because just previously, in **Matthew 24:1,2**; He positively affirmed that the great temple built by Herod (the Jewish temple of the day of Jesus would be utterly destroyed).

Matthew 24:1,2

“Truly, I say to you there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.”

This prophecy was literally fulfilled in AD 70 when Titus and the Roman warriors overran Jerusalem and destroyed the temple, even removing the foundation stones, and plowing up the ground where the temple had sat. The only possible conclusion is that the temple in the day of Jesus would be destroyed, and that the abomination of desolation would occur in a yet-future temple. This later temple would be built at least by the middle of the tribulation period, (See **Daniel 9:27, 12:11.**)

Perhaps the most harmful action to be taken against Israel and the Jews will be the antichrist breaking his covenant with Israel at the mid-point of the tribulation. **Daniel 9:24-27** reveals that the event that marks the beginning of the tribulation period is the signing of a covenant between the antichrist and Israel. We know it is the antichrist who does the signing, for verse 26 tells us that the signer will be *“the prince who is to come.”* The antichrist will be the covenant maker, and he will come into power by heading up a revived empire.

But he will double cross Israel, for we are told that ‘for half of the week (remember a week in Daniel represents 7 years), he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering, so after the covenant has been in effect for three and one-half years, he reneges on the covenant and causes Israel’s temple sacrifices to cease. He will move to Israel it says in.

Daniel 11:45,

“He shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious holy mountain.”

Taking all this together, it seems that in the middle of the tribulation period, the antichrist will invade the holy land and cause sacrifices to cease in the Jewish temple.

Why, we might ask? Because the antichrist will now seek to assume religious power over the world. Indeed, he will seek to cause the world to worship him **II Thessalonians 2:4, Revelation 13:8**. In order for that to be true, he must destroy all competing religions, including the Jewish religion and its Levitical sacrifices and offerings. He started out as the protector of Israel but ends up being the persecutor of Israel. The antichrist will become a defiler by setting up an image of himself in the Jewish temple, something prophetic Scripture calls the *‘abomination of desolation.’*

The persecution of the Jews will escalate intensely after Satan is cast out of heaven and comes down to the earth, **Revelation 12:13-17**. Though God will preserve a remnant of Jews through this persecution, not all Jews will survive. Many prophecy scholars relate this passage to **Zechariah, 13:8**, where we are prophetically told,

Zechariah, 13:8

“In the whole land declares the Lord, two thirds shall be cut off and perish, and one third shall be left alive.”

Many will die, but a remnant will survive the onslaught.

Scripture informs us that God preserves the Jews for *“a time, times and half a time.”* This refers to the last three and a half years of the tribulation period, **Daniel 7:25; 12:7**. This period also coincides with the 42 months referenced in **Revelation 11:2** and **13:5**. The last three and one-half years of the Tribulation period is often referred to as the Great Tribulation.

After this terrible persecution of the Jews and believing Christians at the midpoint of the Tribulation, the campaign against the Jews gets even more intense. As the antichrist continues to campaign against the Jews and believers; his economic capital, called the capitol of Babylon, is attacked and destroyed by a northern military alliance. The antichrist in his effort to be declared god over all the earth, does not go back to defend his capitol but continues towards Jerusalem to attack and destroy the capitol city of Israel.

The attack against Israel will be successful, **Zechariah 14:2**. The antichrist’s armies gain initial victory. However, as we will see, Israel will soon attain ultimate victory through the direct intervention of the Messiah. Not all Jews are in Jerusalem when it falls, so the antichrist moves south to attack the remnant. The remnant senses impending doom as the forces of the antichrist gather in the rugged wilderness, poised to attack and annihilate them. From an earthly perspective, they are helpless and defenseless. This sets the stage for the next event for Israel.

The remnant of Israel is endangered and acutely aware that the forces of the antichrist have gathered to destroy them. However, the spiritual blindness of the Jews is removed, and they call out to their Messiah, Jesus Christ, and experience national regeneration. This is the regeneration story that Paul told would happen to Israel in **Romans 9-11**. Later in the millennial kingdom, Israel will experience a full possession of the promised land and the reestablishment of the Davidic throne. It will be a time of physical and spiritual blessing, the basis of which is the new covenant.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with

their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

This passage is a pivotal prophecy dealing with the new covenant promising the regeneration of Israel.

Covenant Promises a Complete National Regeneration of Israel

This covenant prophesied in Jeremiah and realized in the Millennial Kingdom promises the necessary internal power for the Jews to obey God's commands, something the Mosaic covenant of the law could never accomplish. This covenant promises a complete national regeneration of Israel, and every Jew in the millennial kingdom will personally know the Lord. ***Isaiah 29:22-24, 30:18-22; 44:1-5; and 45:17, Jeremiah 24:7, 50:19-20, Ezekiel 11:19-20, 36:25-27, Hosea 1:10-2:1, 14:4-8, Joel 2:28-32, Micah 7:8-20, Zephaniah 3:9-13, and Romans 11:2-27.***

Israel will not only experience regeneration in fulfillment of the new covenant, but also be regathered. The land covenant recorded in ***Deuteronomy 29-30*** is unconditional. God promised that even though Israel would be dispersed all over the world, He would gather them and restore them to the land, ***Isaiah 43:5-7, Jeremiah 16:14-18***. This will be complete in Christ's millennial kingdom.

The ultimate destination for Israel will be a part of the day when Heaven and Earth will no longer be separate realms, as they are now, but will be merged. Believers will thus continue to be in Heaven even while they are on the New Earth. The New Earth will be utterly sinless. It will be bathed and suffused in the light and splendor of God, which will not be obscured by evil of any kind or darkened by evildoers of any description. The most elaborate description of the heavenly city is in ***Revelation 21***, and it will be called New Jerusalem.

The eternal city, the New Jerusalem, will be a staggeringly incomprehensibly wonderful city. It will be beyond what a human mind can think or imagine. Christians are merely pilgrims enroute to the final frontier of the New Jerusalem, just passing through this brief dot of time on earth.

Yes, it is best to “**Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ.**” It will be magnificent in every way.

LESSON # 6: ‘When Christ Returns - He Will Fulfill Promises to Believers’

What all will change, when Jesus comes to earth the second time and why we should breathlessly await this coming. This lesson will focus on the promises to believers and show how the promises will be fulfilled and what has been promised.

Why Has the Second Coming of Christ Not Already Occurred?

When we speak of believers, one of the first questions is why has the second coming of Christ not already occurred in the present Church Age? Why doesn't God bring about the end immediately? There is a good answer for this.

2 Peter 3:9 tells us,

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.”

God is patient and is providing plenty of time for people to repent. This is in keeping with the fact that God has a long rich record of showing immense patience before bringing people, to judgement.

Joel 2:13

“Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.”;
Luke 15:20, and Romans 9:22.

We should therefore not be surprised that He continues that patience in the present age.

Sadly, despite God's patience and His desire that none will perish, some people will refuse to turn to God and will therefore spend eternity apart from Him, **Matthew 25:46**. God longs for all to be saved, but not all will receive God's gift of salvation. Revelation makes it clear that is one of the reasons that so many horrific judgments fall on an unbelieving world during the Tribulation period, **Revelation 4-18**. The people living on earth will have the full display of the power of God and will have no excuse to not follow and believe in Him.

Promises to Believers Kept by God Through the Second Coming of Jesus

First Promise - God Will Reward His Followers

God will lift the curtain on His extraordinary patience and will come to reward His followers. It would seem that the time of the Gentiles will be over, and all have come into the Kingdom of Christ that can come without changes that would encourage more to come.

Second Promise - The Church Will Be Raptured

The rapture of the Church is not a belief held by all Christians or even Churches. Many believe that Christ will just come a second time to Earth, and everything will quickly move to judgment and then the new heaven and the new earth. The Second Coming of Christ will be the only event involving

Christ and His followers in the end times. I want to share my thoughts from Scripture about why I believe the rapture will happen and that God truly intends it to be a blessing for His Church believers.

The rapture is that glorious event in which the dead in Christ will be resurrected, living Christians will be instantly translated into their resurrection bodies, and both groups will be caught up to meet Christ in the air and taken back to heaven.

John 14:1-3

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms, if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

I Corinthians 15:51-54

“Listen, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true. Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

I Thessalonians 4:13-17

“Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about these who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the lord forever.”

These passages say that one generation of Christians will even pass through death’s door. They will be alive on earth in their mortal bodies, and suddenly in an instant, they will be with Christ in their immortal bodies. What a moment that will be!

The Bible offers several clues that the rapture will take place prior to the tribulation period. This means the church will not go through the judgments prophesied in **Revelation 4-18**. This view is most consistent with a literal interpretation of biblical prophecy.

Revelation 3:10

“Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come on the whole world to test the inhabitants of the earth.”

Notice the definite article before the word ‘hour’ in this verse. This indicates that a specific and distinctive time period is in mind, not just any ‘hour of trial’ in church history. The context clearly

points to the future seven-year tribulation, which is described in detail in **Revelation 6-19**. This is the hour of trial from which the church is to be kept.

This verse reveals that the church saints will be kept from the actual hour of testing, not just from the testing itself. If the Lord meant to communicate that He would preserve them during the testing itself, He would have omitted the words ‘*the hour*’ and simply said, ‘*I will keep you from the testing.*’

The Greek text supports this view. The Greek preposition, ‘*ek*’, translated ‘*from*’ carries the idea of separation from something. This means that believers will be kept from the ‘*hour of testing*’ in the sense that they will be totally separated from it by being raptured before the period even begins.

Renald Showers comments on this in his book, “Maranatha: Our Lord Come.”

The language in Jesus’ references to this future period of worldwide testing implied that it was well-known to the church saints. It was well-known because both Old and New Testament Scriptures, written years before Revelation foretold this unique, future period of testing or Tribulation, which would take place prior to the coming of the Messiah to rule the world in the Messianic Age or the Millennium; **Isaiah 2:10-21**; **Daniel 12:1**; **Zephaniah 1:14-18**; and **Matthew 24:4-31**.

Notice that **Revelation 3:10** promises only that Church saints will be kept out of this hour of trial coming upon the entire earth. Those who become believers during the hour of trial (we would call them Tribulations Saints) will go through Tribulation. In his book, *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, Arnold Fruchtenbaum explains, “Throughout the tribulation, saints are being killed on a massive scale, **Revelation 6:9-11, 11:7, 12:11, 13:7, 15, 14:13, 17:6, and 18:24**). If these saints are Church Saints, they are not being kept safe and **Revelation 3:10** is meaningless. Only if Church Saints and Tribulation Saints are kept distinct does the promise of **Revelation 3:10** make any sense.”

To bolster the idea that the church will be raptured before the time of tribulation begins, no Old Testament passage on the Tribulation mentions the church **Deuteronomy 4:20-30**; **Jeremiah 30:4-11**; **Daniel 8:24, 27; 12:1-2**. Likewise, no New Testament passage about the Tribulation mentions the Church **Matthew 13:30, 39, 42, 48-50; 24:15-31**; **I Thessalonians 1:9-10, 5:4-0**, **II Thessalonians 2:1-11**; **Revelation 4-18**. The Church’s complete absence in any prophecy of the Tribulation would seem to indicate that it is not on earth during the Tribulation. Also, a pretribulation rapture best explains the massive apostasy that engulfs the world following the removal of ‘the restrainer’, apparently the Holy Spirit, **II Thessalonians 2:3-7**.

Still further, Scripture assures us that the church is not appointed to wrath, **Romans 5:9**; **I Thessalonians 5:9**. This means the church cannot go through the great day of wrath, the Tribulation Period, **Revelation 6:17; 14:10, 19, 15:1-7 and 16:1**.

I Thessalonians 1:10 states clearly that Jesus, “*delivers us from the wrath that is to come.*” When the bible describes this event, it calls it “*being caught up*” and that literally means, snatched up or taken away. Believers will be delivered from this wrath by being completely separated from it and that would require a Rapture of the Church.

Throughout Scripture, God protects His people before judgment falls, **II Peter 2:5-9**. Enoch was transfigured to heaven before the judgment of the flood. Noah and his family were sealed in the ark

before the floodgates were opened. Lot was taken out of Sodom and Gomorrah. The firstborn among the Hebrews in Egypt were sheltered by the blood of the Paschal Lamb before judgment fell. The spies were safely out of Jericho and Rahab was secured before judgment fell on Jericho. So, too will the Church will be secured safely, because of the rapture, before judgment falls in the tribulation period.

This is confirmed by the fact that the rapture involves Christ coming for His saints in the air prior to tribulation, but at the second coming He will come with His saints to the earth to reign for 1,000 years. The fact that Christ comes with His holy ones, redeemed believers, at the second coming presumes they have been previously raptured. He cannot come with them until He has first come for them.

The rapture is imminent which literally means it is ready to take place any time. The New Testament teaches that the rapture is imminent and there is nothing that must be prophetically fulfilled for the rapture to occur. The rapture is a sign less event that can occur at any moment. This contrasts with the second coming of Christ, which is preceded by many events that transpire during the tribulation period, **Revelation 13:11-12**.

Third Promise – Believers Will Gain a Resurrected Body

The next glorious promise for believers is that they will gain a resurrected body. The fact that Jesus rose from the dead and He and His body were witnessed by many is overwhelming; **Matthew 28:1-5; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18; Acts 13:1; I Corinthians 15:1-4, Colossians 1:18; Revelation 15:18**.

The great fact is this, the resurrection of Jesus ensures our own resurrection from the dead. Jesus said to Martha.

John 11:25-26

“I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”

To prove His authority to make such statements, Jesus then went and raised Lazarus from the dead. The believer will be raised imperishable, glorious and powerful and if we are alive when this happens our bodies will be changed to be imperishable, glorious, and powerful.

Fourth Promise – Jesus Will Celebrate the Wedding Feast with Believers

Another promise fulfilled for believers is that Jesus will celebrate the wedding supper or feast with them. Scripture describes the relationship between Christ and the Church as a marriage. Christ is the Bridegroom, and the Church is the Bride. Jesus Christ, the Lamb, frequently referred to Himself as the Bridegroom.

Three aspects of Hebrew weddings that are a part of this fulfilled promise:

1. The Bride will be betrothed to the Bridegroom.
2. The Bridegroom came to claim His Bride
3. The Marriage Fest was celebrated.

All will happen for the Believers in Christ. Saints Alive at Second Coming to Receive Glorified Bodies and Rewards. Jesus Christ will come and take all the Saints that have survived and are alive at the Second Coming to give them glorified bodies and the rewards that they have accumulated. Jesus will set up His kingdom on earth and will appoint His believers to all the positions of authority on the earth during these 1,000 years and they shall reign with him for the entire period.

Fifth Promise - Israel Will be Restored and Possess the Land:

Another great promise is fulfilled at this time. Israel will be restored and possess the land where God had placed them. One of the highlights of the Millennial Kingdom other than it will be without dispute, malice, and evil is that Israel will be over all the land that God had originally given to them, from the great river in Egypt to the Euphrates. It will be a larger kingdom than Israel has ever had.

Scripture promises that Christ will gloriously reign from the throne of David. But Scripture also promises that the saints will reign with Christ.

II Timothy 2:12, Apostle Paul teaches, “If we endure, we will also reign with him.”

Those who endure trials will one day rule with Christ in His future kingdom.

In fact, this promise goes on and on, for even after the millennial kingdom is gone and we are into the eternal state in the New Heaven and the New Earth, the privilege of reigning with Christ will continue.

Revelation 22:5

“Night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.”

What a wonderful promise and a great privilege and blessing!

Sixth Promise – Christ will Bestow Great Spiritual Blessings

Christ will bestow great spiritual blessings in His Millennial Kingdom. These blessings relate to the wonderful reality that Jesus Christ Himself will be present with His people on earth. Christ being with His people on earth will affect the spiritual life of the human race to an extent never realized in any previous age.

Blessings include: Jeremiah 31:1-34

1. The Holy Spirit will be present and will indwell all believers.
2. Righteousness will prevail around the world.
3. Obedience to the Lord will prevail.
4. Holiness will prevail.
5. Faithfulness will prevail.
6. All the world’s resident will worship the Messiah.
7. God’s presence will be made manifest.

The end result of these spiritual blessings is the old world and old heavens will be purified by fire and the New Heaven and a New Earth will be presented by Christ to His Believers. It will be the final destination for all Believers, and it will contain nothing that is not new!! We can hardly imagine what all it will be, because we do not know if new means just a revision and updating of what we presently know and have, or will it be new in the sense that it is something no one has ever seen or heard before. I believe it is the last. Heaven will not be a remodel with reconditioned items; it will be magnificently appointed with items that we have never seen.

So, I am **“Breathlessly Awaiting the Soon Return of The Lord Jesus.”**

LESSON # 7: ‘When Christ Returns - Jerusalem Becomes the Queen City!’

This lesson examines what all will change when Jesus returns in by looking at what the Bible says will happen to Jerusalem during the End Times and after the Second Coming of Christ.

Jerusalem was almost a non-entity from the second century until the nineteenth century. Yes, it was the scene of the Crusades; an important Moslem city; and the home of Judaism and Christianity but it had very little international significance after the Crusades and was primarily part of the destination of Holy Land Trips and Pilgrimages. That was until the rebirth of Israel in 1948.

The divine program of restoring Israel had apparently been in process, even prior to the independence of Israel in 1948. The independence of Israel set the stage for the final days and the future tribulation period. Here are some key dates in the history of Israel from 1881-1967.

KEY DATES IN THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL

1. **1881-1900** - About 30,000 Jews who had been persecuted in Russia moved to Palestine.
2. **1887** - the goal of establishing a home in Palestine for Jewish people received great impetus when the First Zionist Congress convened in Basel, Switzerland, and adopted Zionism as their program.
3. **1904-1914** - 32,000 more Jews who had been persecuted in Russia moved to Palestine.
4. **1924-1932** - 78,000 Polish Jews moved to Palestine.
5. **1933-1939** - 230,000 Jews who had been persecuted in Germany and central Europe moved to Palestine.
6. **1940-1948** - 95,000 Jews who had been persecuted in central Europe moved to Palestine. Meanwhile, more than 6 million Jews were murdered by Adolph Hitler and Nazi Germany.
7. **1948**-The new State of Israel was born.
8. **1967**-Israel captured Jerusalem and the West Bank during the six-day War, which was precipitated by an Arab invasion.

This is the first time that Jerusalem had been linked to Israel and prophecy since the Romans had banned all Jews from living in Israel in 125 AD.

Daniel 9 - Seventy Weeks Prophecy

Scripture reveals that the single event that will start the tribulation period is the antichrist’s signing of a covenant of peace with Israel. This relates to Daniel’s prophecy of Seventy Weeks. In **Daniel 9** God provided a prophetic timetable for the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:25

25 "Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

In **Daniel 9:25**, The prophetic clock began ticking when the command went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem following its destruction by Babylon. According to this verse, Israel's timetable was divided into 70 groups of 7 years, a total of 490 years. The first 69 groups of 7 years, or 483 years counted the years from the going out of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a Prince. The Anointed One, or Messiah, is Jesus Christ. The day Jesus rode into Jerusalem to proclaim Himself Israel's Messiah was 483 years to the day after the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem had been given. We call that day Palm Sunday.

At that point God's prophetic clock stopped, Daniel describes a gap between the 483 years and the final 7 years of Israel's prophetic timetable. Several events were to take place during the final 7-year period in the 69th year, according to **Daniel 9:26**.

Daniel 9:26

26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.

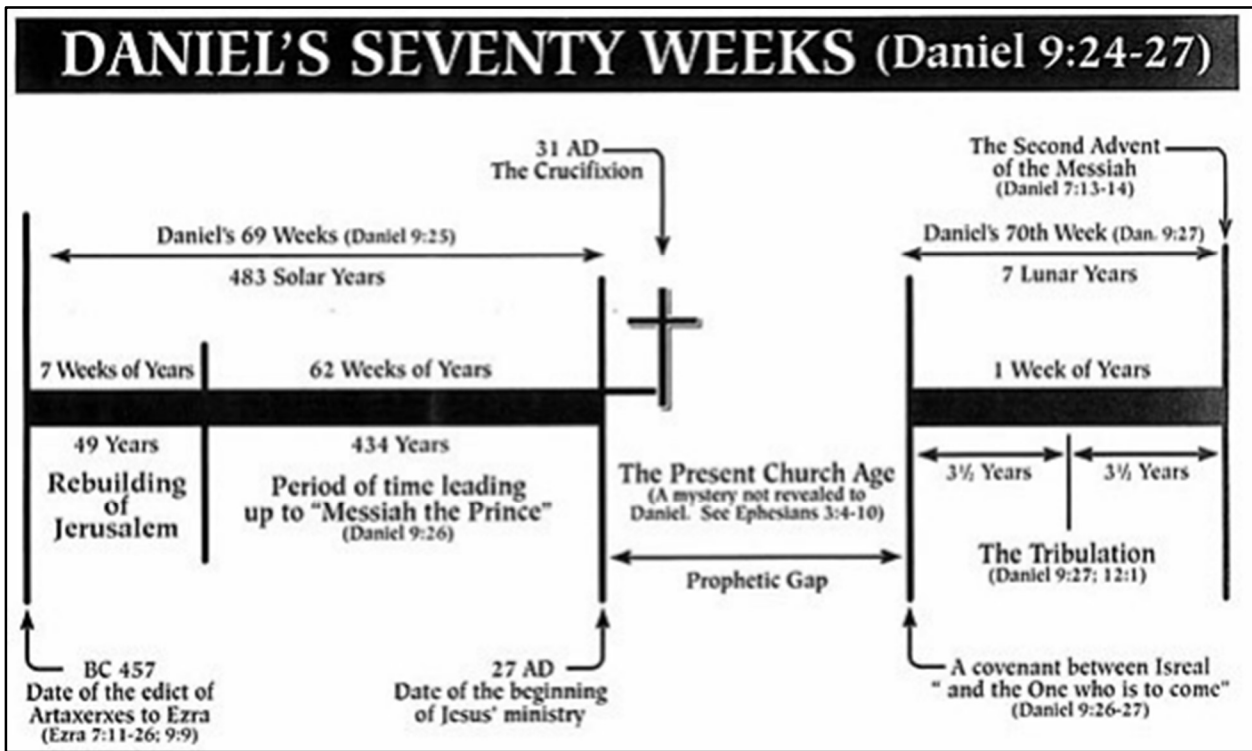
The Messiah would be killed, the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed, which occurred in AD 70 and the Jews would encounter difficulty and hardship from that time on.

The Final “week” of seven years will begin for Israel when the antichrist signs the peace pact, and it will be called in the Bible the Time of Tribulation. It will begin with the seven-year countdown to the second coming of Christ, which follows the 7 years of Tribulation. This seven-year time frame, for the tribulation is reflected in other ancient Jewish literature The Babylonian Talmud stated, “Our Rabbis taught: In the seven-year cycle at the end of which the son of David will come. . .at the conclusion of the septennate the son of David will come.”

Daniel 9:27

27 He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

Raphad Patai, writing on this Messianic text, said, ‘The idea became entrenched that the coming of the Messiah will be preceded by greatly increased suffering. . .This will last seven years. And then unexpectedly, the Messiah will come.’



Some Argue That the Antichrist Will Be a Jew?

Speaking of the antichrist interacting with Israel and Jerusalem, we need to realize that the antichrist will not be a Jew. Some interpreters have tried to argue that the antichrist will be a Jew. Some early tradition held that the antichrist would come from the tribe of Dan, (one of the original 12 tribes of Israel;) they relate this to the fact that the tribe of Dan fell into deep apostasy and idolatry, setting up a graven image, **Judges 18:30**. The testament of Dan 5:6, a non-bible writing names Satan as the prince of the tribe. Irenaeus writing in the later part of the second century, noted that the omission of Dan from the list of tribes in **Revelation 7** was due to a tradition that the antichrist was to come from the tribe.

However, **Revelation 13:1** and **17:15** picture the antichrist as rising up out of the sea, a scriptural metaphor for the Gentile nations. Antiochus Epiphanes, himself a Gentile, typifies the future antichrist in **Daniel 11**. The antichrist is therefore not fulfilling Scripture if he was a Jew. Besides, he will persecute the Jews in the Tribulation period, **Jeremiah 30:7; Mathew 24:15-21; and Revelation 12:6, 13-14**.

An End Times Tribulation Temple will be Built in Israel

The next major way that Jerusalem will be prominent in the end times is is, a tribulation temple will be built in Israel. Scripture reveals that yet another temple will be built during the tribulation period. In terms of prophetic chronology, there are a number of important factors.

First and foremost is the prerequisite that Israel be back in her homeland as a nation. This has been a reality since 1948. The Jews have been streaming back to the holy land from around the world ever

since, Ezekiel 36-37. Obviously, the Jewish temple cannot be rebuilt unless a reborn nation of Israel is in the land.

Second, we know that the temple must be rebuilt at least by the middle of the seven-year tribulation because Jesus in the Olivet discourse warned of a catastrophic event that assumes the existence of the temple.

Matthew 24:15-16

“When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.”

This abomination of desolation is the desecration of the Jewish temple by the antichrist, who will set up an image of himself within the temple at the midpoint of the tribulation. The temple must be built by this time.

It is significant that Jesus says this because just previously in verses 1-2, He positively affirmed that the great temple built by Herod, (the Jewish temple of the time of Christ) would be utterly destroyed:

Matthew 24:2

2 "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; everyone will be thrown down."

This prophecy was literally fulfilled in AD 70 when Titus and his Roman warriors overran Jerusalem and destroyed the Jewish temple.

The only possible conclusion is that the Temple of the day of Jesus would be destroyed and that the abomination of desolation, prophesied by Jesus, would occur in a yet-future temple. This latter temple would be built at least by the middle of the tribulation period, ***Daniel 9:27; 12:11***.

In the Last Days, God Raises Up Two Mighty Witnesses

Another vital event in the last days occurs in Jerusalem, where God raises up two mighty witnesses who will testify to the true God with astounding power. In fact, these witnesses bring to mind such mighty leaders in the Old Testament as Moses and Elijah. There will be two because any testimony had to be confirmed by at least two people. ***Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15***, and ***Matthew 18:6*** among others.

They will wear clothing made of goat or camel hair, garments that symbolically express mourning over the wretched condition and lack of repentance in the world. The reference to olive trees and lampstands is intended to symbolize the light of spiritual revival. Those who stand against these two witnesses will receive a fiery response!

I believe that the two witnesses will do their miraculous work in the first three and ½ years of the tribulation. The reason is that the antichrist’s execution of them seems to fit best with other events that will transpire in the middle of the tribulation, such as the antichrist exalting himself to godhood in defiance of God and His witnesses.

The resurrection of these two executed witnesses, after being dead for three days—would make a much bigger impact on the world in the middle of the tribulation than when Armageddon is being fought and Jesus is coming again.

This death and resurrection in Jerusalem will put much attention on Jerusalem. The Scriptures detail their death, by the beast from the bottomless pit, the time they lay on the streets after their death, 3 ½ days, the refusal of the authorities to allow them to be buried, and the dramatic resurrection of them by God.

Revelation 11:11-12

“But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, “come up here!”: and they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them.”

The passage goes on to say that it will have an effect on Jerusalem when this happens,

Revelation 11:13-14

“At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.”

In the middle of the Tribulation, the antichrist will break his covenant with Israel and will focus attention on Jerusalem.

He will erect an image of himself in the temple and force people to worship the statue. This will make the temple a total abomination and will be one more way to separate the faithful and the non-believers. The righteous will no longer enter the temple. We do not know how long the antichrist will keep up this charade in the temple, but it will become an animated image of him that is able to talk and interact verbally that stays in the temple. He will also demand the world worship him.

We do not know how long the antichrist will be focused on Jerusalem, but we do know that the City will be under tremendous persecution from this time until Christ comes again. Jesus warned the residents of Jerusalem about this time.

Matthew 24:15-21

4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ... 15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel--let the reader understand-- 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let no one on the housetop go down to take anything out of the house. 18 Let no one in the field go back to get their cloak. 19 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! 20 Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now--and never to be equaled again. Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.”

This time will be so threatening that a person should not even stop to get any personal belongings, just flee. The persecutions do not stop against Jerusalem, and the Scripture prophesies that it will be destroyed with a remnant escaping.

Zechariah 12:1-3

“Then declares the Lord, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the spirit of man within him: ‘Behold, I am about to make Jerusalem a cup of staggering to all the surrounding people. The siege of Jerusalem will also be against Judah. On that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the people. All who lift it will surely hurt themselves. And all the nations of the earth will gather against it.’”

Zechariah 14:2 adds:

“I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”

With heavy losses, Jerusalem will fall and be ravaged in the face of this overwhelming attack force. The antichrist and his armies gain an initial victory, but that is far from the end of the story.

Jesus Ascends on the Mount of Olives

No other event will focus on Jerusalem until Jesus returns, kills the foes of the antichrist and his armies and when Christ finally steps onto earth. It will be on the Mount of Olives, from which he also ascended. This is just outside of Jerusalem, and it will trigger great events in Jerusalem. The city will be divided into three parts by an earthquake, the Mt. of Olives will split north to south creating a valley that will allow the Mediterranean Sea to flow to the base of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem prepares to be the Queen City of the World in the Millennial kingdom.

Jerusalem, Queen City of the Millennial Kingdom

A Millennial Temple will be built early in the 1,000-year kingdom and it will be much larger than any other temple ever built in Jerusalem. It is described in detail in Ezekiel 37 and is called the third temple in the Bible. This temple will be a worship center of Jesus Christ during the entire millennium. ***Ezekiel 37:26-28*** tells us this temple will be the dwelling place of God among the people. Even redeemed Gentiles will be included in worship in this millennial temple, ***Isaiah 60:6-7***; ***Zechariah 2:11***; and ***Zephaniah 3:10***. One of the most common prophesies is that this temple will be for the worship of Jesus Christ. ***Jeremiah 33:15-22***, and ***Zechariah 14:16-21***.

The last battle on the earth between any forces of evil and Jesus will occur at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. The devil will be released from the abyss, and he will lead a revolt against Jesus and Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be the headquarters of Christ’s government throughout the millennial kingdom. Fire will instantly come down against this force and the rebellion will be crushed and Satan will be taken and thrown into the lake of fire for eternal punishment.

God Named His Eternal Heaven, the New Jerusalem

The final discussion about Jerusalem is that God has named His eternal heaven “the new Jerusalem” and it will be the most amazing city ever. It will be astounding. The heavenly city will be far more

wonderous than we can possibly imagine. One thing is certain. The city is designed to reflect and manifest the incredible glory of God. The mention of transparency reveals that the city is strategically designed to transmit the glory of God in the form of light without any hindrance. The human imagination is simply incapable of fathoming the immeasurably resplendent glory of God that will be perpetually manifest in this eternal city. This is especially true when we see that all manner of precious stones will be built into this eternal city.

This fantastic, luminescent city will reflect the glory and power of God and will be a focus on beauty and not security or preservation of life. It will be as light as the Lord and as resplendent in all of its light as our Lord Jesus and God our Father –the eternal lights of Heaven.

I am **“Breathlessly Awaiting the Soon Return of Our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

LESSON # 8: ‘When Christ Returns - Ignorance and Unbelief Eliminated’

One of the great changes in the world when Jesus Christ comes back the Second Time is how the World will view ‘ignorance’ and ‘unbelief’ and how powerful they will become before Christ returns. We have looked extensively at the fact that the Bible prophesied that Israel would become an independent country again. This happened in 1948 but since many people consider the Jews as religious Jews as well as ethnic Jews, many are surprised to learn that Israel was an atheistic nation when it was formed, and it is still an unbelieving nation. A majority of the Jews in Israel do not believe in God or at best are only agnostic, not sure if there is a God or not. But according to **Joel 2:28-29**, a spiritual awakening in Israel will eventually occur:

Joel 2:28-29

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days.”

The series of battles that are all wrapped up in the final war campaign of the antichrist, called inclusively Armageddon, appears to be the historical context in which all of Israel will become converted, **Zechariah 12:2-13:1**. The restoration of Israel will include the confession of Israel’s national sin, **Leviticus 20:40-42**, **Jeremiah 3:11-18**, and **Hosea 5:15**. Following this, Israel will be saved and will fulfill Paul’s prophecy in **Romans 11:25-27** that all the Jews at that time would be saved. Israel’s leaders will have finally realized the reason why the Tribulation has fallen on them, perhaps because the Holy spirit will enlighten their understanding or because of the witness of the Jewish evangelists in **Revelation 7**, or because of the testimony of the two witnesses in **Revelation 11**.

Later, in the Millennial Kingdom, which follows the second coming of Christ, Israel will experience a full possession of the Promised Land and the reestablishment of the Davidic throne. It will be a time of physical and spiritual blessing the basis of which is the new covenant spelled out in **Jeremiah 31:31-34**.

So, the Bible makes it clear as the last days go, first on the Earth, then in the Millennial Kingdom (on Earth) and finally in Heaven, the Jews will replace ‘ignorance’ with insight and replace ‘unbelief’ with faith and understanding.

In the Last Days Apostasy Will Increase for the Gentiles

Let’s take a look at the rest of the world, the Gentile world as they approach the last days. First thing we see is that apostasy will continue to increase all the way to the Glorious Return of Jesus and the Church to take back the Earth from the antichrist and to rule with wisdom and with strong faith. The word ‘apostacy’ comes from the Greek word ‘*apostasia*’, which means ‘falling away.’ It depicts a determined, willful defection from the faith or an abandonment of the faith. Judas Iscariot betraying Jesus for 30 pieces of silver is a classic example of apostacy and the effect it can make. He fell from

the truth, perhaps for financial reasons. Later in remorse, Judas hanged himself, after which his body fell and burst open **Matthew 26:14**. Whether people are enticed by money or the love of the world or something else, they can be enticed away from their commitment to the Lord. It was a problem in the Old and New Testament, and it will only increase in the last days.

Scripture tells us that there will be an increase of apostasy in the end times. For example:

I Timothy 4:1-2 warns,

“The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.”

Many of the cults and false religions that are extensive in our land emerged out of the Christian faith. The leaders of these groups received alleged revelations from angels or demons.

II Timothy 4:3-4 warns:

“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”

I cannot doubt that those words describe the very days in which we live. Channel-surfing on television in the evening will show you many examples of numerous such false teachers espousing doctrines that appeal to people’s passions, the wealth and heath gospel is a perfect example.

Scripture reveals that apostasy is often encouraged by false teachers, **Galatians 2:4** and escalates during times of trial, **Luke 8:13**. This is prophetically significant, for false teachers and severe trials will proliferate in the future tribulation period.

Scripture is clear that apostasy will rise to a fever pitch during the future tribulation period,

II Thessalonians 2:3

“Don’t let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.”

I believe that this is a rebellion against the truth. A passage in **Matthew** speaks about the Tribulation period and includes many of these themes:

Matthew 24:9-12

“Many will fall away . . . many false prophets will arise and lead many astray . . . the love of many will grow cold.”

Sobering days lie ahead.

False Prophets Will Deceive Many

Apostasy will only intensify during the Tribulation period, the last seven years of life on the earth as we know it. Prophetic scripture refers to many religious signs of unbelief that will find fulfillment in the Tribulation period.

False Christ’s will arise as Jesus Himself warned about in the end times.

Matthew 24:24

“For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

The apostle Paul also warned of a different Jesus in ***II Corinthians, 11:4***. The danger is that a counterfeit Jesus who preaches a counterfeit gospel will yield a counterfeit salvation, ***Galatians 1:8***. There are no exceptions to this truth. Even in our own day we witness an unprecedented rise in false Christ’s and self-proclaimed messiahs affiliated with the kingdom of the cults and the occult. This will no doubt continue as we move further into the end times. Scripture contains many warnings against false prophets and false teachers for the simple reason that God’s own people can be deceived. ***Ezekiel 34:1-7***, indicates that God’s sheep can be abused and led astray by wicked shepherds. Jesus warned His followers,

Matthew 7:15-16

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.”

Why Would Jesus Warn His Followers to Watch Out If They Could Not Possibly Be Deceived?

It will be a time of false apostles. The apostle Paul warned of false apostles who are deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ, ***II Corinthians 11:13***. The two key characteristics we see here are that these individuals deceive people doctrinally and that they pretend to be true apostles of Jesus Christ. Believing in only Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior will diminish and the false teachings and false-messiahs will only increase. The Bible lists several things that people will deny or do deny when they fall away from the Lord:

Things People Deny When Falling Away from the Lord

1. **God - *II Timothy 3:3-4***
2. **Christ - *I John 2:22***
3. **Christ’s Return - *II Peter 3:3-4***
4. **The Faith - *II Timothy 4:3-4***
5. **Sound Doctrine - *II Timothy 4:3-4***
6. **Morals - *II Timothy 3:1-8***
7. **Authority - *II Timothy 3:4***

We are living in days of deception and these signs of denial will only increase as the End Times progress in growth of ignorance and unbelief.

Technological Knowledge Will Advance in the Last Days

One area stands out as a possible exception to that rule. It is the great increase of technological knowledge and advances that occur in the last days. Many believe that technology is now in place for all needed advances to be made that will allow all the end time Tribulation prophecies to occur.

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Increase on Technological Knowledge

1. **Global Evangelism - *Matthew 24:14*.**

The Scripture tells us that prior to the second coming of Christ, the gospel must be preached to every nation. With today’s technology, satellites, the internet, global media, translation technologies, publishing technologies, rapid transportation, and others. This has never been more possible.

2. **Economic Control**

We do not know specifically what form the mark of the beast will take, but we do know that the false prophet will use it to control who will be able to buy and sell depending on whether they submit to worshipping the antichrist, ***Revelation 13:16-17***. With today’s satellites, the internet, supercomputers, biometric identification procedures (like hand scanners, retina scanners, facial recognition scanners, RFID chips, and smart card technology), it would be easy for every selling establishment and every buyer to have a separate account number that would enable total control by the false prophet. We have this technology today. And it has been misleading, because people have equated this with a great increase of knowledge and intelligence; but without any moral restraint these technological advances can and are used for evil and control so, the overall knowledge level of the world is not increased but just manipulated that allows more deception/ignorance and unbelief.

3. **Nuclear Detonation**

Prophetic scriptures may refer to nuclear detonations in the end times. For example, ***Revelation 8:7*** says,

“A third of the earth was burned up and a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green -grass was burned up.”

Revelation 16:2 says that people around the world will break out with loathsome and malignant sores. This could easily be the result of radiation poisoning, caused by the detonation of nuclear weapons. Jesus also warned,

Luke 21:26

“Men fainting from fear and the expectation of things which are coming upon the world, for the powers of the heaven will be shaken,”

Regardless of use, the nuclear technology and nuclear capability clearly exist for a third of the earth to be burned up and for mass casualties.

As we look at these signs, we see that unbelief is already growing rampantly and that ignorance by deception, control, and negative outcomes is not on the radar of many and so a high level of ignorance is increasing in the world. Even now, these prophetic signs are casting their shadows before them. They are emerging in preliminary form in our own day. The stage is being set for all that is to follow.

Antichrist Desecrates the Holy Temple in Jerusalem

One event in the middle of the tribulation highlights the depravity and superstitious narcissism that the antichrist will have. It is the height of ignorance and unbelief. He will desecrate the holy temple in Jerusalem. The book of Daniel uses the term ‘Abomination of Desolation’ to convey the outrage of a barbaric act of idolatry within God’s holy temple. Such an act utterly profanes and desecrates the temple.

Daniel 11:31, Daniel writes

“His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation,”

The New Testament adds further clarity about this Abomination that causes Desolation. It will apparently take place at the time the antichrist, ‘the man of sin,’ sits up an image of himself inside the Jewish temple, **Matthew 24:15**. This amounts to the antichrist enthroning himself in the place of deity, displaying himself as God, compare **Isaiah 14:13-14**, and **Ezekiel 28:2-9**. This blasphemous act will utterly desecrate the temple, making it abominable and therefore unusable for those who believe in Jehovah. The antichrist will demand that the world worship and pay idolatrous homage to him. Any who refuse will be persecuted and even martyred. The false prophet, the right-hand enforcer of the antichrist will see that this is done.

An abomination took place on a lesser scale in 168 BC. Antiochus Epiphanes erected an altar to Zeus in the temple at Jerusalem and sacrificed a pig, an unclean animal on it. He was a prototype of the future antichrist. The fact that the antichrist will ‘abolish the daily sacrifice’; in the Jewish temple is yet another indication of his self-exaltation. He will not allow competing systems of worship. No one is to be worshipped on earth but him. It will be the bleakest period for true faith and the greatest time of unbelief in the history of the world, even surpassing the day of Noah when only 8 righteous people were found left on the earth.

Christ's Return Will Bring Spiritual Blessings, Blotting Out Ignorance and Unbelief

When Christ does return and sets up His Millennial Kingdom, He will bring a perfect government, full of material and spiritual blessings and the knowledge created will blot out ignorance so that unbelief will not be present. Righteousness fueled by faith will rule the world.

Isaiah 46:13

“I bring near my righteousness; it is not far off, and my salvation will not delay; I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory,”

Isaiah 51:5

“My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the people; the coastlands hope for me and for my arm they wait.”

Isaiah 60:21

“Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting the work of my hand, that I might be glorified,”

The righteousness of the kingdom will be unbelievable. This theocratic kingdom will be a holy kingdom, in which holiness is manifested through the King and the King’s subjects. The land will be holy, the city holy, the temple holy, and the subjects holy to God. One of many Scriptures that verify this is:

Zechariah 8:3

“This is what the Lord says, ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, and the mountain of the Lord Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain.’”

The level of knowledge will be full, the ministry of the King will bring the subjects of His kingdom into full knowledge. Doubtless there will be an unparalleled teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. One of many prophecies that teach this is:

Isaiah 11:1-2, 9

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse, from the roots a Branch will bear fruit. The spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord. . . They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

A great chapter of prophecy about the time of the Christ ruling in the Millennial Kingdom. Prophecy confirms that all the world will unite in the worship of God and God’s Messiah,

Zephaniah 3:9

“Then I will purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the Lord and serve him shoulder to shoulder,”

But nothing compares to the full knowledge and united belief of all people like what will happen in the New Heaven and the New Earth. Nowhere in the Scripture are we given the details of the life in the eternal kingdom of God; but occasionally the curtain is drawn back to give a glimpse of that life. The Bible tells us our present life is only a *‘foretaste of glory divine,’*. The Bible tells us that our knowledge will be complete, and we will know everything.

I Corinthians 13:12

“For now, we see only a reflection as in a mirror, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part, then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.”

What an unbelievable level of knowledge. We shall know completely just as God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit completely know us!

It will be an environment of perfect holiness and there will never be even a scent of unbelief.

Revelation 21:27

“Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life”

These are more reasons to **“Breathlessly Await the Soon Return of Jesus Christ!”**

LESSON # 9: ‘When Christ Returns - Carnality Will End’

One great change when Christ returns will be that everyone will be living a moral life and moving away from carnality. One of the questions that many ask has to do with the role of the United States in the End Times. Some have felt that they have found references to the United States, such as the reference to an eagle sweeping the land; but long before the eagle was the symbol of the United States, it was the symbol of ancient Rome and Rome really did sweep the land and even held Judah and the holy land in captivity for centuries and then destroyed Jerusalem, the Temple of the Jews and finally expelled all Jews from the nation of Israel.

Why would the United States not be a central figure in the end-times? The continued moral and spiritual degeneration of the United States could cause it to implode. Many statistics show the trouble this country is in morally and spiritually. At present, four out of five adults, some 83% say they are concerned about the moral condition of the United States. If this country’s moral fiber continues to erode, its demise is a matter of time.

Judgement on Nations that Willfully Reject God

Because of the high level of immorality in this country, God may bring judgment upon it. Christian leaders have been warning about this possibility for decades, but their warnings often fall on deaf ears, just as the prophets were often ignored during the Old Testament times.

Scripture reveals that God is absolutely sovereign, ***Psalm 50:1, 66:7, 93:1; Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 14:24.***

Isaiah 46:10

“I have made known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’”

In his sovereignty He blesses nations that submit to Him and brings down nations that rebel against Him. In the ***Book of Job*** we read.

Job 12:23

“He makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away.”

Daniel 1:20-23 tells us that God ‘*removes kings and sets up kings.*’” In view of such scriptural facts, is America ripe for judgment? I have cause for concern.

- God is absolutely sovereign over the nations.
- Both the Old and New Testaments affirm that God is a God of judgment.
- America is in a free fall, plummeting morally and spiritually with no repentance in sight.
- We must therefore ask whether God might sovereignly judge America in the end times for turning away from Him.

I feel in reading the following Scripture in the ***Book of Romans, Chapter One***, you have only two choices if you accept the Bible as Scripture.

1. You have to believe that this Scripture somehow does not apply to what we do in the United States. It is for someone else.
2. Or you have to believe that we are moving towards the judgement of God.

Romans 1:18-28 ESV:

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So, they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

For this reason, God gave them up to the dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passions for one another, they committed shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.”

This passage tells us that when a nation continues to willfully reject God and His Word, turning its back on His moral requirements, God eventually reveals His wrath against that nation. God has a long track record of wrath against ungodly nations. This passage reveals that one way God reveals His wrath is by allowing the people of that nation to experience the full brunt of the ravaging consequence of their sins.

Many great nations have risen and fallen throughout human history. In most cases, the nation had no expectation of its impending demise. Indeed, those who lived in these nations probably believed that their nation could never fall. Anthropology tells us that many of the fallen civilizations in history also thought they were superior to their neighbors and forebearers. Few of their citizens could have imagined their society would suddenly collapse. But the harsh reality of documented history is that great nations do fall, and they fall hard.

How about a small dose of real history? The Babylonian Empire lasted less than a century. The Persian Empire capitulated after about two centuries. Greece waned in less than three centuries. The mighty Roman Empire held out for nine centuries. The citizens of these empires most likely thought their nation would last forever. But each empire suffered a gross moral decline, and God rendered appropriate judgment.

Here is a question I have often asked myself.

‘If what we are witnessing in America today, being the pornography capital of the world, premarital sex, extramarital sex, widespread homosexuality, same-sex marriages, levels of abortion, addictions, easy divorce, the disintegration of the family unit, and the trafficking of children were to take place in ancient Babylon, would I think that Babylon was ripe for judgement?’

I think so! The problem today is that many in our country have become desensitized to moral issues because immorality is so common. That is a dangerous position for the United States, because God’s patience will not last forever.

The moral condition combined with a removal of the Church from the United States, (the rapture), would leave this nation in a moral crisis that would be hard to recover from.

The Day of the Lord

The next time that God deals with carnality in the end-times seems to be after the antichrist has signed the covenant with Israel at the start of the Tribulation, also called the Day of the Lord. This term ‘Day of the Lord’ is used to speak about an event that will happen soon and other times it talks about a distant event, but in both cases, it is characterized by God supernaturally intervening in order to bring judgment against sin in the world and especially carnality or idolatry.

The Day of the Lord is a term that New Testament writers frequently use to speak of the judgment that will climax in the end-time seven-year tribulation period, ***II Thessalonians 2:2***. A number of scriptural passages indicate that this aspect of the Day of the Lord has not yet taken place but awaits the end times. ***Isaiah 34:1-8*** for instance describe a Day of the Lord in which God will judge all nations of the earth. None of the past Days of the Lord ever involved divine judgment of all the nations. This indicates that the Day of the Lord here must be in the future, or the Tribulation period.

Not only in the Old Testament does the Day of the Lord speak to the end time of the Tribulation but also the New Testament. ***I Thessalonians 5:1-11*** reveals that this prophesied Day of the Lord is yet in the future. Paul warned that this day would bring sudden, inescapable destruction upon the unsaved of the world. Because the antichrist’s signing of the covenant with Israel begins the tribulation period, we can also say that this signing of the covenant will start the Day of the Lord period that will climax with unsaved nations judged and carnality stopped.

Scripture also speaks of moral signs that will emerge during the future Tribulation period.

II Timothy 3:1-5

“But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power. Avoid such men as these.”

Notice that in the last days, people will love self, we might call this humanism; lovers of money, we might call this materialism; and lovers of pleasure, we might call this hedonism. It is significant that

humanism, materialism, and hedonism are three of the most prominent philosophies in our world today, and they complement each other.

Jesus Himself, gave this warning:

Matthew 24:37-39

“Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold. . .For the coming of the Son of Man, will be just like the days of Noah. For as in the days before flood they were eating 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.

After Christ comes, there will be a judgement of the nations. **Matthew 25:31-46** describes this judgment. The nations are judged based on how they have followed Jesus and obeyed His will and helped, not used people.

Millennial Kingdom Led and Ruled by Jesus Christ

The Millennial Kingdom led and ruled by Jesus Christ will be global in design and will bring righteousness to all the world. Some Scriptures that verify this are:

Isaiah 46:13

“I bring near my righteousness, it is not far off, and my salvation will not delay. I will put salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory”

Isaiah 51:5

“My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait”

Isaiah 60:21

“Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I might be glorified.”

The Millennial Kingdom will be a kingdom that is founded under Jesus and so it will be a theocratic kingdom. It will be holy, and that holiness will be manifested through Jesus the King and all of those who live in His kingdom. It will have no sin or moral violations in this kingdom.

But once again it is in the New Heaven and the New Earth that we really see carnality eliminated. A great description of the New Heaven is:

“There shall be no more curse—perfect restoration. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it—perfect administration. His servants shall serve him—perfect subordination. And they shall see His face—perfect transformation. And his name shall be on their foreheads—perfect identification. And all shall be righteous and pure—perfect behavior. And there shall be no night there and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord giveth them light—perfect illumination. And they shall reign forever an ever---perfect exultation.”

The way the Bible talks about this perfect place with perfect morals is:

Revelation 21:27

“Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Anticipation of a New Heaven and a New Earth keeps us **“Breathlessly Awaiting the Soon Return of Jesus Christ!”**

LESSON 10: ‘When Christ Returns - Fear Will Disappear.’

This lesson continues to look at what will change when Jesus returns to the earth. The idea of ‘fear’ and the Second Coming of Christ have been linked in preaching, teaching, and in encouraging Christians to make life changes now. But is the purpose of the Second Coming of Christ only to frighten people and make them vulnerable to becoming Christians?

I fear it has been effective because even believing people are concerned about being judged and found guilty by God and sentenced to a life in Gehenna or as we often call it, ‘Hell.’

What Does the Bible Say About Believers and Judgment?

The Bible is clear that all believers will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ, the ‘Bema’.

Romans 14:8-10

“If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. It is written, ‘As surely as I live, ‘says the Lord, every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God, “

I Corinthians 3:11-15.

“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which, is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames,”

At that time each believer’s life will be examined regarding deeds done while in the body. Personal motives and intents of the heart will also be weighed.

The idea of a judgment seat goes back to the athletic games of Paul’s day. After the games concluded, a dignitary took his seat on an elevated throne in the arena. One by one the winning athletes came up to the throne to receive a reward, usually a wreath of leaves, a victor’s crown. In the case of Christians, each of us will stand before Christ the Judge and receive (or lose) rewards.

Christ’s judgment of us will not be in a corporate setting, like a big class being praised or scolded, by a teacher. Rather, it will be individual and personal.

Romans 14:10 “We will all stand before the judgment seat of God,”.

Each of us will be judged on an individual basis, not on whether we are Christians or not, but on what we have done in our life as a Christian to produce fruit for the Lord.

The judgment has nothing to do with whether the Christian will remain saved. Those who have placed faith in Christ are saved, and nothing threatens that. Believers are eternally secure in their salvation, **John 10:28-30, Romans 8:29-30, Ephesians 1:13**. This judgment has to do with the reception or loss of rewards.

As we read earlier in **I Corinthians 3:12-15**, Paul lists what the evaluation will be based on, what quality of works did we build on the foundation Jesus gave us. All our works will undergo a testing of fire to see if they were done with value or with mundane actions. The result will be rewards for those who have done good works with value and proper motivation and a loss of any kind of reward for those done for mundane or selfish purposes.

Notice Paul lists the materials according to their combustibility. Precious metals and stones do not burn. Wood does and hay and straw are often used to accelerate a fire. This is the order of their usefulness for the building of God’s House, His family of believers. A house constructed with solid materials such as stones and metal will stand and last a long time. But a house made of hay or straw could easily topple or burn.

What do these building materials represent? Gold, silver, and costly stones may refer to things we accomplish by the power of the Holy Spirit, things we do with Christ honoring motives and dogged obedience. Wood, hay and straw, however, refer to perishable things and may represent carnal attitudes, sinful motives, pride-filled actions, and selfish ambition. This could produce some fear of shame, but it should never produce any fear in our life of losing our position with God. Our salvation is intact and complete. Second John warns us,

II John 1:8 ESV

“Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for but may win a full reward.”

The same thought is in **I John**,

I John 2:28

“And now, dear children, continue in Him, so that when He appears we may be confident and unashamed before Him at his coming.”

We should keep this in perspective, because Christ is coming for us at the rapture and the prospect of living eternally with him are things that should give us great joy. Our joy will last for all eternity. Some people will fare better than others at the judgment seat of Christ, but all of us will be in Heaven and we will all dwell face to face with Christ forever.

The Scripture reveals that this judgment will take place immediately after Christ meets the believers in the air, at the rapture, and takes them back to Heaven. No Bible verse explicitly states this, but several factors lead us to this conclusion.

First, many biblical scholars believe that the 24 elders in heaven that are mentioned in **Revelation 4:4-10** represent believers. They are portrayed as already having received their crowns in heaven at the very start of the Tribulation period; **II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:4; Revelation 3:5, 18**. The fact that they are dressed in white may be significant, for these same words were previously used

of believers in the churches, **Revelation 3:5, 18**. All this would seem to indicate that the judgment of believers has already taken place sometime following the rapture. Fear is gone because **Revelation 4:10** informs us that the 24 elders cast their crowns before the Throne of God in an act of worship and adoration. It seems clear that this heavenly scene takes place sometime after the rapture.

We have one other strong evidence that this judgment and reward will take place after the rapture and before the second coming of Christ, the glorious coming, because the Bride of Christ, the entire church, will return to earth with Christ at the second coming. The church is adorned with fine linen, bright and pure, which we are told represents, “*the righteous deeds of the saints.*” **Revelation 19:8** Clearly, believers in the body of Christ have already been judged, which lends credence to the idea that the judgment seat of Christ follows the rapture.

Fear Will Consume Those Who Remain After the Rapture

On the other hand, fear will be a large part of the life of those who remain on earth after the Church has been raptured to heaven. Scripture reveals that in the future tribulation period, earthquakes, famine, pestilence, and signs in the heavens will increase in frequency and intensity, **Matthew 24:3, 7; Luke 21:11** we read.

Matthew 24:8

“There will be great earthquakes, famine and pestilence in various places and fearful events and great signs from heaven. Such things are said to be the beginning of birth pangs”.

Just as birth pains increase in frequency and intensity, these signs will become more and more catastrophic.

These signs have particular relevance to the future seven-year tribulation period, but I believe that just as tremors, or foreshocks often occur before major earthquakes, so preliminary manifestations of some of these signs may emerge prior to the tribulation period.

What are these fearful events mentioned in **Luke 21:11**. Scripture does not specify this for us, but the Greek phrase literally means “*terror,*” “*sights of terror,*” or “*terrifying things.*” Terrorism has never been more prominent on a global basis than it is nowadays. Terrorism will apparently get worse as we go into the future.

Signs in the heavens could include a number of different things including strange weather patterns, falling stars, a darkening of the moon and other celestial bodies, and large bodies striking the earth, as asteroids. Today’s top scientists are saying that it is not a matter of if such a celestial body will strike earth, but when. The mathematical probability renders this a certainty at some point in the future. And when it happens, it will likely involve a significant celestial body striking the earth with a minimum velocity of 130,000 miles an hour. The sad reality is that this event will, in fact, happen during the tribulation period, and the result will be truly catastrophic. Many will die!

Some have also speculated that the signs in the heavens may also include some UFO phenomena. Countless sightings of UFOs are reported around the world, and many today believe that “space brothers” are contacting us through psychics and mediums. I find it highly revealing that this “alien” contact is not through physical means, such as radios and satellites but through the occult. I see

Satan’s fingerprints all over the present UFO phenomena. Please do not get me wrong, I am not saying that every time somebody sees an unidentified flying object in the sky, it is the devil. Many times, people are seeing space junk floating around the earth, 7000 objects in space now, close planets, ball lightning, a form of lightening that takes an oval shape, sizzles, and can move around the sky at great speeds, instantly changing directions, a high-flying weather balloon, a jet or something else.

Nonetheless, a great deal of occult and psychic phenomena accompanies current UFO incidents. Such phenomena have given rise to many “doctrines of demons” which prophetic Scripture reveals will characterize the end times, **I Timothy 4:1-2; II Timothy 4:3-4.**

Many People Will Become Believers During the Tribulation Period

Christians are affected some by these fearful times. Scripture reveals that even though the Church will be raptured prior to the tribulation period, **I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-17,** and **Revelation 3:10,** many people will become believers during the tribulation period. There will be many conversions, **Revelation 7:9-10.**

Though many believers in Jesus will still be alive at the time of the second coming, which occurs after the tribulation, **Matthew 25:1-40,** many others will be martyred during the tribulation. We have already noted the martyrdom in connection with the fifth judgment of **Revelation 6:9-11.**

This passage indicates that not only are many already martyred but more are yet to come, even in the early days of the tribulation period. Some of these martyred “fellow servants” are the “great multitude” mentioned in **Revelation 7:9-17.** The book of Revelation indicates that such martyrdom in the tribulation period will be nothing new. In **Revelation 2** Christ speaks to the church in Pergamum about one of His faithful martyrs.

Revelation 2:13

“I know where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you hold fast to my name, and you did not deny my faith even in the days of Antipas my faithful witness, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”

Christ urges His people to stand strong and not fear martyrdom. When he comforted the church in Smyrna, He include this exhortation;

Revelation 2:10

“Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold the devil is about to throw some of you into prison. That you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

God’s people will be persecuted during the tribulation period, and some will be killed. But death will simply be the gateway to eternal life with Jesus Christ, the divine Messiah.

Christ’s Second Coming

The prayers of the Jewish remnant are answered as they have all become Christians. The Divine Messiah returns personally to rescue His people from danger. The very same Jesus who ascended

into heaven comes again in the Second Coming, **Acts 1:9-11**. The Second Coming will involve a visible, physical, bodily return of the glorified Jesus. ‘*Apokalupsis*’ is a key New Testament Greek word used to describe the Second coming of Christ. It carries the basic meaning of “*revelation*,” “*visible disclosure*,” “*unveiling*,” and “*removing the cover*” from something that is hidden. The word is used of Christ’s Second Coming in:

I Peter 4:13

“Rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when has glory is revealed.”

‘*Epiphaneia*’ is another Greek word used of Christ’s Second Coming in the New Testament. It means “*to appear*” or “*to shine forth*.”

In ***Titus 2:13***, Paul speaks of

“Waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

In ***I Timothy 6:14***, Paul urges Timothy to

“Keep the commandments unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Second Coming will be a universal experience in the sense that every eye will witness the event.

Revelation 1:7

“Behold, he is coming with the clouds and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the peoples of the earth will wail on account of him.”

Jesus referred to this as well.

Matthew 24:30

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

Also, in ***Matthew 24:29***, Jesus explains that His return will be accompanied by magnificent signs in the heavens. Christ will come as King of kings and Lord of lords with many crowns on His head, crowns that represent absolute sovereignty. His eyes will be like blazing fire, ***Revelation 19:11-16***.

Old Testament prophetic Scripture reveals that Jesus returns first to the mountain wilderness of Bozrah, where the Jewish remnant is endangered, ***Habakkuk 3:3***, ***Micah 2:12-13***. They will not be endangered for long!

Nor will anyone else who believes in the Lord and has made Him the one in charge of their life. They will experience great joy, great peace, and a total absence of fear for the rest of eternity and that is a long, long time.

I am truly **“Breathlessly Awaiting the Second Coming of My Lord Jesus Christ.”** Aren’t you?