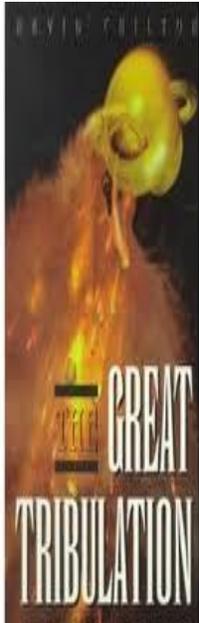


**The Case for a 3 1/2 Year Tribulation** by R J Adams



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## Preface

In 1989 at my pastor's request I prepared a non denominational end times Bible study to present to the Church during a three month Sunday evening class. Rather than just present one point of view from one Christian writer I tried to find the three most common views on every chapter of Revelation and present all three with discussion to follow. It was very successful and we presented the study once a year for many years until I moved out of state.

What I learned by preparing the study is that for every opinion there were many good reasons why the writers held to their various viewpoints. Most opinions had proof texts for their prophetic scenarios. However, one thing I also learned is that in every case it seemed as if we were only looking at one side of the story. ALL scripture must fit together without conflicts for any interpretation to be true. There can be no discrepancies.

This has led me down through the years to continue to search and pray for just one end time's prophetic scheme that would allow all as yet unfulfilled prophecies to fit together into one seamless plan. None have, until now. As I have continued to read and study every prophetic theory both old and new I believe that I have finally found a way by piecing together portions of the hundreds of opposing opinions together to create one seamless interpretation that allows every scripture to find a home without violating any other verse.

Please read the entire work before discarding this new theory. If you find something wrong with it please email me. So far I have found it bulletproof as far as violating any scriptures or principles of God. I am of course still open to being taught from any source possible. I am still seeking more truth as I am absolutely sure that not all of it has been revealed yet.

Go ahead and read it with a critical eye. Try to torpedo it. I welcome it because together we can search out the Word of God and make our understanding perfect and complete with the help of the Holy Spirit. I am hoping to have some of the best Holy Spirit filled Biblical prophetic scholars in the world critique this work for the purpose of guiding us, the end times generation into all truth.

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Proverbs 9:9 Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning.

Email Comments to: [countdownto6000@aol.com](mailto:countdownto6000@aol.com)

Website: <http://www.countdownto6000.info/>

## Section One

### Prophecy Update - 2012

This is a new idea that I have conceived for 2012. I have been studying prophecy since 1973 and publishing new books on the internet ever since Al Gore invented it, :) and it became available for doing so. Every year or so I would write a new booklet with the prophetic updates. Sometimes many during the year.

One word of caution, sometimes you may find references to things from the 1960's and 1970's you may not understand. If you encounter one don't let it bother you. I'm an old hippie having been on Haight-Ashbury in 1970. Just disregard my comments about my younger days. Remember young people, when I was growing up we had outdoor toilets, a hand pump for water, black and white TV with a coat hanger for an antenna. We called a refrigerator an icebox and a record player a Victrola, and the RCA dog (Nipper) was listening to his master's voice. No computers, no cell phones, no ipod's. High technology was a party line phone.



Beginning in March 2012 I plan to publish and update the work once each year at about the same time with a summary of what has happened during the past year, events that have been fulfilled and what is next on the list to happen. Also I want to update if there have been any new discoveries by biblical scholars in understanding prophetic truth. Has anything changed in that arena? This year's theme is the possibility of a 3 ½ year tribulation. That is what the ancient documents that are now coming to light show that the early church fathers believed.

As an example Next years update may be named Prophecy Update 2013 and the headline may be "Ezekiel 37-39 Fulfilled!" "Temple to be Rebuilt Next." I'm not predicting that, it's just an example to show you what I plan to do God willing and if I'm still alive and kicking. This will save me work because I can update it at home on my computer as events occur all year and then just upload it once a year. I'm getting too old to work on new things all of the time. One book update a year will be plenty to keep me busy. I already have books on just about every Biblical topic imaginable on Martview and on the "Countdown to 6000" website.

So, this is the first edition. There will only be a few news items this year as we are going to cover where we are and what is happening during the course of the regular material pertaining to the 3 ½ year Tribulation. Next year I expect the first 25 pages or so to reflect what has happened in the past year and expectations for the coming year. The prophetic scheme that appears to be most likely to occur given the latest information will be updated if necessary. If

there are no changes it will remain the same for the coming year. I expect that there will always be changes though as we approach the time of the end of the age.

This year's news is a little disorganized as I just came upon this idea in January of 2012 and did not save the news articles I used in teaching Bible classes. I'm just hitting the high points, mostly from memory. Next years update will be more organized with dates and source quotes.

### **News From 2011**

In Ezekiel chapters 37-39 he tells us of a future war between Israel and the countries north of them, probably Russia, Syria and Turkey along with Persia (Iran) and a coalition of other nearby nations. This war occurs in the "latter days" the time just before Antichrist comes to power.

In 2011 we have seen the saber rattling of Iran against Israel and the alliance of Russia with Iran. The Russians have stated publicly that any attack on Iran would be viewed as an attack on Moscow.

Israel is determined to stop Iran from building nuclear weapons as Iran has stated they will use them to destroy Israel. War seems to be inevitably on the horizon. Russia has threatened to attack Israel if Israel tries to stop Iran from obtaining such weapons

The Bible already tells us of the result of this yet future war, God will destroy 5/6 of the coalition's forces leaving the 1/6 fleeing back to their various homelands. Then Israel will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem while the Arab forces are in a weakened state. With the Temple in place it is only a matter of time before Antichrist comes on the scene to desecrate it with the "Abomination of Desolation."

Antichrist will be able to take over Russia and the Moslem nations while they are weak. The European and worldwide financial crisis is setting things up for countries to fall under his spell like toppling dominoes. The financial situation of the world may lead to a single currency for the nations who submit to Antichrist's rule. China and the Kings of the East will probably remain separate because they have another role to play in Revelation.

It will be interesting to see how this all plays out concerning the United States. We are now said to be a "Post Christian Nation." Will we join with the rest of the world in submitting to the Son of Perdition or will we have enough sense left to remain independent, at least for a few years. Some of these things may be answered in 2012. Keep Watching!

Note: There is quite a bit of repetition in this work especially when covering similar or related subjects. I have included the Bible verses and other quotations in each individual section. Some of the sections are like small books in themselves. I did so to make it easier for the reader to concentrate on a particular section and have the references available without page skipping backwards. I expect that next year this year's work will be much smaller, more organized and that a new topic, whatever is in the news will dominate the discourse.

## Section Two

### The Case for a Three and One Half Year Tribulation

by R J Adams – 2012

In 2011 read a book called "Christ and Antichrist" distributed by Voice of Elijah ministries. You can obtain this book free from this link: <http://voiceofelijah.org/index.html>

The most interesting thing to me in the book was this: that all of the early Church fathers (those who were taught directly by the disciples or were taught by someone directly taught by a disciple) were unanimous in their assertion that the tribulation would only last for 3 1/2 years. (You can read the works of these men Polycarp, Ignatius, Irenaeus and Hippolytus by clicking on the "Early Christian Writings" link. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/index.html>)

Think about it; if true this would mean that there is no difference between the Pre-Tribulation and Mid-Tribulation rapture theories. Both would be in agreement. The saints would be raptured before the tribulation begins, but it would be 3 1/2 years before the physical return of Christ. Could it be that us prophecy students have been fighting and arguing over nothing for the last 200 years? Have we been saying the same thing but in different ways? I have often wondered how true men of God could disagree so vehemently on the subject. Perhaps there is no real difference in the two opinions. They would for the most part be one and the same if the duration of the Tribulation was to be 3 1/2 years.

I'm not saying that the 3 1/2 year tribulation period is absolutely true, but it does make a lot of sense. One of the early writers said that Satan would get only the same amount of time to present his false messiah as God the Father used to present the true Messiah Jesus Christ. Why should Satan get to have Antichrist reign for seven years when Jesus turned the whole world upside down with half that amount of time? Does that make sense to you? They (the early church writers) say that God is going to give Satan equal time but not more time than what Jesus had. Kind of like what our politicians here require for television time.

Oh there are some arguments that come to mind. What about the seven year pact? The early writers say that regardless of that, the tribulation does not begin until the abomination of desolation occurs. They were unanimous on that point also, quoting Jesus, Daniel and Paul. So, it would make no difference if Satan made a 100 year pact with Israel, the beginning of that peace accord does not signal the start of the tribulation period, the breaking of it and committing the Abomination of Desolation does.

### The Case for a Three and One Half Year Tribulation

Since the mid 1800's many students of biblical prophecy have accepted the view that there will be a seven year time period of great consternation and conflict on the earth immediately preceding the return of Christ. This has become the standard viewpoint for most of the churches that include the study of biblical prophecy in their doctrines.

We are going to look at an alternative opinion that was popular in the early church age but has lost its standing as the accepted view. After about 400 AD when it was seen that Christ had not

returned the study of end time's prophecy waned. It was not revived until a few hundred years after the bible had been translated into languages the common people could read.

St. Augustine who lived from 354 to 430 AD began writing his Christian classic "City of God" in 413 AD. Included in it was his viewpoint that Christ was currently ruling the world through the Church and that the world would get better and better (more Christianized) until someday when the Church had converted most of the world to Christianity, Christ would return. This became the official viewpoint of the Roman Catholic Church and the later the church world in general. Martin Luther and John Calvin, leaders of the reformation both accepted this viewpoint. Martin Luther translated the Bible into German in the 1500's and then later the King James Version made the bible available in English. Three hundred years later, in the 1800's the study of Biblical prophecy became a popular theme among Christians again, because they could read the bible for themselves. Many different prophetic theologies evolved in the time period between 1800 and 1900 with a doctrine called dispensationalism becoming the most popular and accepted.

A preacher named William Miller had another view which became the forerunner of the opinions held by Ellen White, prophetess of the Seventh Day Adventist church and Charles Taze Russell founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Many of the denominational churches held to Martin Luther and John Calvin's view that all prophecy pertaining to the return of Christ had already happened in the distant past and all we needed to do was to be ready for his return which could happen at any moment or thousands of years in the future. There would be no visible signs of his imminent return. Luther and Calvin were simply holding to the doctrine that had been commonly taught for about 1100 years prior to their lifetimes.

So, today we still have the Augustinian view which is called "amillennialism" and means no millennium and the dispensational viewpoint which expects an actual 1000 year millennium after the return of Christ. Details of prophetic schemes vary from denomination to denomination of course but basically the differences are that some believe that the Book of Revelation is an allegory concerning the battle between good and evil and others who expect there are to be literal fulfillments of the things written therein.

## **The Study of Prophecy**

Prior to the first coming of Christ many were looking for his coming. The time seemed to be near according to the scriptures. However, given the many prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah we know from the scriptures no one had the scenario one hundred percent correct. Even after years with Jesus, the disciples themselves did not understand that he was going to die, be raised from the dead to pay for the sins of mankind and then ascend to the father without restoring the Kingdom to Israel at that time.

**Acts 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"**

Even after his resurrection they were still asking what was going to happen next. If anyone should have understood future prophecy it would seem that it would be those who had just spent 3 ½ years being taught by Jesus himself.

That being the case, that even they didn't understand, are we that much smarter than they were? Have we had all of the hundreds of prophecies left to be fulfilled tied up in a neat little bundle, in perfectly correct order, since the 1850's? Are we beyond being fooled by any change in the program we have set in our minds? What if we are not 100% correct? Will some fall away and accept Antichrist because things are not going as we thought that they would pertaining to the return of Jesus Christ? Remember, the prophet Daniel said that the scriptures concerning the end times would be sealed, not understood until the time of the end was near. Portions of Revelation are (were) also sealed.

Dan. 12:9 He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.

Revelation 10:4 And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down."

Now, were the 1850's really the time of the end? It has been 162 years (in 2012) since that time and the second coming has not occurred yet. Does that not tell us something? What it says to me is that the end time's prophetic scenario began to be revealed at that time, but was not revealed in its entirety. To me 162 years does not qualify as being near enough to the time of the end for all to be unsealed because not even one person to whom understanding was given would be alive to see the fulfillment. I would say that forty years, one generation would qualify. If that viewpoint is correct then God is in the process of revealing the meaning of more Biblical prophetic truth with each passing day. This will continue until the actual fulfillments occur. Even then if the experience of the Apostles is any gauge, we can expect our understanding to increase even after the events happen. Even though we know what is going to happen we may be very surprised by the manner in which some prophecies are fulfilled.

Again, do we really think that we have it all perfectly figured out today and have had it that way for more than 150 years? To believe so in my opinion seems quite arrogant given the fact that the disciples did not really understand what all that had transpired meant until after Pentecost when the Holy Spirit enlightened them and Peter especially. Then God called the Apostle Paul and he wrote extensively explaining the Old Testament scriptures and their fulfillments. Before Paul's writings the common people and the gentiles had almost no possibility of understanding the fulfillments of the Old Testament prophecies that had recently happened pertaining to Christ.

We need to be on guard that we do not lock ourselves into a position, any position, the ones we have learned in the past or the one presented in this work or ones we have come up with ourselves. To do so will prevent us from accepting new truth as God reveals it in our day. We must learn the scriptures that are to precede his coming and be ready to say, aha, here is a fulfillment, as they happen, not being angry if they do not occur in the order or manner that we expected. Remember, prophetic study is not a salvation issue, it should be a pleasurable pastime.

There are still hundreds of scriptures left to be fulfilled. What are the odds that some book writer has put them all in the exact order? Probably slim to none. Even if he or she had done so almost no one would believe it anyway and the book could probably not even get published because it would not match the traditional scenario.

## Introduction to Prophetic Study in General

The study of biblical prophecy is an inexact science, before the prophecies are fulfilled. All of the books that have been written about future biblical prophecy, including this one are just "guesstimates" and men's opinions about how God will fulfill his word. We are in a similar position as those who recognized that it was time for God to fulfill his word when Christ was born more than 2000 years ago. No one knew the particular order of events that God would use to fulfill his word. The scriptures simply said that the Messiah would come out of Bethlehem, be called out of Egypt, and be called a Nazarene. (Nazarene comes from the Hebrew word "nazar" which is translated "branch" in English.

Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Jeremiah 33:15 "In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land.

Zechariah 3:8 "Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. (The Nazarene)

There are many ways in which God could have fulfilled these scriptures about Jesus. He could have been born in any one of the three places and lived at various times in the other two. He could also have been named or called the "Branch" or "Nazarene" and not have lived in Nazareth at all to fulfill the scriptures. Now we will look at how the verses above actually came to pass.

Matthew 2:4-6 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."

John 7:40-43 On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet." Others said, "He is the Christ." Still others asked, "How can the Christ come from Galilee? Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David's family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" Thus the people were divided because of Jesus.

Matthew 2:14-15 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Matthew 2:23 and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

The importance of studying biblical prophecy is to learn what the scriptures say will happen just before the return of Jesus Christ, so we will be able to discern the signs of the times. Even after

the Messiah had come and fulfilled many of the prophecies written about him there was still controversy about whether or not he was the Christ.

John 12:37-43 even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: "Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" For this reason they could not believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere: "He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn--and I would heal them" Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him. Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

We need to be careful when studying yet unfulfilled biblical prophecy that our opinions of how we think the Lord will fulfill his word do not prevent us from understanding the actual fulfillment when it happens. The religious leaders of Jesus' time on Earth were unable to receive the truth because they had already made up their minds and hardened their hearts to any new interpretation of God's Word that did not agree with their ancient traditions.

Luke 11:52 "Woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering."

Matthew 22:29 Jesus replied, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

Mark 7:6-8 He replied, "Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men."

Matthew 16:2-3 He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

Like Bobby Dylan sang, "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows."

Whether or not you agree with the authors' opinions in this book is not important. It is the command of Christ to his servants to watch for his appearing, and even if we die while watching and waiting for him, we will still be blessed in this life and in the life to come for obeying his word. However, we do need to do what Jesus accused the Pharisees of not doing, and that is to be able to interpret the "signs of the times."

Luke 12:37-40 It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

## Section Three

### Terminology

Before we begin look into more complicated things we need to clarify some terminology so the readers can understand what is being discussed.

#### What is the (Great) Tribulation?

Before we get deeper into this study it will probably be wise to explain what the “Great Tribulation” is for those who have not extensively studied biblical prophecy.

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

Matt. 24:21 For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again.

The term “Great Tribulation: comes from the words of Jesus as he was describing the events on earth that would precede his return. He said that there would great tribulation, which the NIV translates as great distress before his return. Notice that Jesus said that this would be a time of distress that never has happened since the beginning of the world until now, and after this would never happen again. It will be the worst time period to be alive and lost in the entire history of human existence, even worse than dying in the great flood.

Because of the terminology that Jesus used we who study biblical prophecy have come to call the events leading up to and immediately preceding his return as the “Tribulation” or “The Great Tribulation.” Some differentiate between the two with “Tribulation” pertaining to the early stages of the end times and “Great Tribulation” pertaining to the latter stages. In this book we will use the two terms interchangeably except when referring to the views of those who believe that there is a difference between the two terms.

Jer. 30:7 Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.

Jer. 30:7 How awful that day will be! None will be like it. It will be a time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.

The Great Tribulation is also called the time of “Jacob’s Trouble.” Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. The terminology “Jacob’s Trouble” means that it will be a terrible time for Nation of Israel, where at present about 50% of Jacobs Jewish descendants reside. So, the central point of conflict in the end times will be the nation of Israel, with its capital Jerusalem as the focal point.

Zech. 12:2-3 “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.”

Matt. 24:22 If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

Mark 13:20 If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.

This time period will be so horrible that if the Lord did not intervene and cut it off, put a stop to it, not one human being in the world would survive. Every last human would be dead. So, you can see why it has come to be called the "Great Tribulation."

### **What is the Millennium?**

A millennium (plural millenniums or millennia) is a period of time equal to one thousand years. It derives from the Latin mille, thousand, and annus, year.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Millennium>

Psalms 90:4 For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

Rev. 20:2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

Rev. 20:3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Rev. 20:4 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 for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Rev. 20:5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part 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.

Rev. 20:7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison.

The millennium is a one thousand year time period that those who hold to a literal view of the prophecies in Revelation expect to see fulfilled. In short, Satan will be imprisoned for 1000 years and there will be peace on earth. After the 1000 years are completed he will be released for a short time to give those who lived during his absence opportunity to rebel against Christ and exercise their freedom of choice to serve God or not. After the short rebellion the last judgment

will take place and eternity will begin. Millennialism means that one believes that there will be a literal one thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on earth before the last judgment and eternity begin. Amillennialism means that one believes that the 1000 years are not to be taken literally but are similar to a parable just meaning a long period of time or that we will go right from the return of Christ into eternity. Almost all modern day prophecy students are millennialists. In a sense, there is no reason to study prophecy if you do not believe there is any literal prophecy to be fulfilled except for the return of Christ at some unknowable time. In truth that is exactly what happens in many old time denominational churches. Roman Catholics, Orthodox believers and Lutherans do not study prophecy very often because they do not believe that there is anything left to happen other than Christ's return.

### **What is the "Rapture?"**

The rapture is a Christian catch all name for all of the verses that pertain to the "resurrection of the righteous" or the "first resurrection" in the bible.

1Cor. 15:50-52 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 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.

1Th. 4:15-17 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till 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.

Luke 14:14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, ..

Notice that the "dead in Christ" go up first followed by the living. It is a blessing to go up in the "first resurrection." We will look at how a 3 ½ year Tribulation will affect the predominant rapture theories later in this work.

### **What is Premillennial Dispensationalism?**

Premillennial dispensationalism is simply the teaching that the "rapture" which we just looked at, will occur seven years before the return of Christ, or at least some amount of time before the millennium. Premillennial simply means "before the millennium.

Dispensationalism simply means that God has divided his program up into sections. Some examples would be "innocence, conscience and law. Before mankind sinned he was in a state of innocence. They did not really understand what sin was all about. After sin entered the world their conscience was supposed to guide them. When that didn't work God destroyed all but eight people with the flood and gave Moses the law to tell people what was right and wrong. Basically dispensationalism simply gives names to the various time periods of the bible

according to whatever was the main theme in God's program for salvation at that particular time.

According to dispensationalism we are currently under the dispensation of grace because Christ died and paid for our sins. After Christ returns he will rule with a "rod of Iron" and this will be called the "Kingdom" dispensation. After one thousand years the dispensation of "eternity" will begin. Although there are numerous schemes and names by different writers dispensationalism is quite simply a way of identifying the various steps God has used in implementing his plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. Some believe that there are no steps. They view God's program for salvation as one continuous item rather than steps. (Dispensations) Some feel it is wrong to put human labels on the works of God. I think that anything that helps us understand the Bible is worthwhile, like putting in the chapter and verse numbers to make them easier to find and also little index markers for the books. If it helps me with Bible study I think it is good.

Where many denominations have a problem with dispensationalism is in the fact that almost all of the various schemes end the age of grace with the pre-tribulation rapture, which many do not agree with. Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodists to name a few. Those in favor of it are generally the Baptists, Assembly of God, the Church of God and many independent non denominational charismatic churches.

Some churches allow their members to believe whatever they want on this issue because it is a non salvation issue and is an opinion that cannot be proven or unproven. We will find out the true answer when the time comes and the first resurrection actually takes place.

### **Who is the Antichrist?**

The Antichrist is Satan's imitation of the promised Messiah. Satan's desire is to be like God.

**Isaiah 14:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.**

In Isaiah we see that Satan desires to be like the Most High God. Because of this he imitates the works of God and that will include sending a false messiah in the end times. Prophecy students call this false messiah the Antichrist because he is against or in place of the real Messiah Jesus Christ. The Apostle John also gives this imposter that name or title.

**1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.**

**2 John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.**

### **What is the Abomination of Desolation?**

**2Th. 2:3-4 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. 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.**

The Abomination of Desolation is when a man, empowered by Satan, proclaims himself to be God and announces it in the Temple of God in Jerusalem. Simply put, a human being will

declare himself to be God and with Satan's help will perform great signs and wonders and deceive the world into believing it.

2Th. 2:8-10 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

## The End of the World

The world is not going to end in a nuclear holocaust as some think nor are all of the people going to die from biological warfare or because the Mayan calendar ends. We are not looking for the end of this world but for the beginning of a new one. Jesus Christ will implement a new world system, one run in perfect fairness by He himself. In a sense, the world is never going to end, just the system will change.

Is. 9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

The Kingdom of God the Father and of Jesus Christ will never cease to expand. Contrary to popular opinion, there is no "end of the world." There will be a very bad time just before things begin to get better. It is always darkest before the dawn. There will be an end to the corrupt present world system where evil and greedy people take advantage of the less fortunate. That will come to an end.

Mic. 4:4 Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken.

God will however re-create the earth before eternity begins so everything will be pure and new untainted by sin. The old earth will be destroyed but we will be kept safely by Him as this takes place.

2 Peter 3:10-14 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

We all ought to live as if we believed we were going to get exactly what we deserve in two weeks. And even if we don't get it, we ought to. And we ought to believe we will get it, even if we don't. W. Bonner –The Daily Reckoning (Paraphrased)

## Section Four

### The End Times Scenario - Matthew 24, Luke 21 & Mark 13

Before we begin looking at the length of the Great Tribulation we will first take a look at the actual events that Jesus said would precede his second coming. These events are recorded primarily in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

2Cor. 13:1 ... “Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

The bible says to let everything be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses, so we will use the scripture references from Matthew, Mark and Luke to look at what Jesus said about the end times.

Matt. 24:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

Mark 13:3-4 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked him privately, “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are all about to be fulfilled?”

Luke 21:7 “Teacher,” they asked, “when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?”

The disciples asked him directly, what signs would precede his coming?

Matt. 24:4-5 Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

Mark 13:5-6 Jesus said to them: “Watch out that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and will deceive many.

Luke 21:8 He replied: “Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The time is near.’ Do not follow them.

Jesus said that many false prophets would come and deceive many. That has indeed been fulfilled down through the last twenty centuries. Notice that this prophecy is not specifically directed towards the time immediately preceding his coming.

Matt. 24:6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.

Luke 21:9 When you hear of wars and revolutions, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away.”

He said that there would be wars and rumors of wars, but again, these are preliminaries. He clearly says that these wars are not signs of his immediate return. Of course we have had wars and rumors of wars down through the centuries.

Matt. 24:7-8 Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.

Mark 13:7-8 When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places, and famines. These are the beginning of birth pains.

Luke 21:10-11 Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

He said that there would be wars, famines, earthquakes and pestilences in various places, but again, the end has not yet come. These things are considered to be preliminary birth pangs.

Matt. 24:9 "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.

Mark 13:9 "You must be on your guard. You will be handed over to the local councils and flogged in the synagogues. On account of me you will stand before governors and kings as witnesses to them.

Luke 21:12-13 "But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them.

Mark 13:11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

Luke 21:14-15 But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.

The unbelieving people of the world will hate those who follow Jesus Christ. They will be persecuted and murdered. The disciples were almost all executed for their faith and persecution of Christians lasted until 325 AD when Constantine became the emperor of the Roman Empire. Worldwide persecution will take place again before Jesus' return.

Matt. 24:10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other,

Mark 13:12 "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child. Children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death.

Luke 21:16-17 You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. All men will hate you because of me.

This hatred and persecution will cause many to fall away from the faith and they will betray practicing Christians. These things have happened down through the centuries and continue to take place today. Not so much in the United States at this time but in countries around the world

Christians are martyred for their faith, especially in Africa, Asia and in predominantly Moslem countries.

**Matt. 24:11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people.**

As the time of the end draws near the frequency of false prophets will increase. Not to mention that with the power of today's media false prophets can reach millions with their lying messages and deceive many in a short period of time.

**Matt. 24:12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,**

Due to the wickedness of the world, love will grow cold, love for each other and for God. This is happening today both in the church and out of it. People are becoming more and more callous and vicious all the time. Parents murder children, children murder parents and criminals kill for just a few dollars. Our society has placed almost no value on human life.

**Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him;**

We have lost respect for life because we have lost the understanding that every person is valuable and is created in the image of God. We are not just lumps of tissue and matter.

**Matt. 24:13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.**

**Mark 13:13 All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.**

**Luke 21:18-19 But not a hair of your head will perish. By standing firm you will gain life.**

But those who hold on to their faith until it is over will be saved. There is considerable difference of opinion as to when it will be over so we best prepare for the long haul and hope for a short trip. Hang on to your faith for dear life.

**Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.**

**Mark 13:10 And the gospel must first be preached to all nations.**

The gospel will be preached to all nations as a testimony and a witness before Christ returns. The great commission will be fulfilled. However, it does not look like a lot of people are going to receive the message with gladness. Most will be indifferent to it or out and out against it.

**Luke 21:20 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near.**

**Luke 21:24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

Jerusalem was surrounded by armies in 70 AD and the Temple destroyed. The Jews were scattered around the world. The Temple will be rebuilt in the future. In 1948 Israel became a nation once again and the Jews have been returning ever since then and even before.

The immediate prelude to the end times will be a repeat scenario. Jerusalem will again be surrounded by armies, but this time the end result will be different. After a time of war and persecution God will rescue Israel.

With each passing day the possibility of this re-fulfillment becomes greater and greater. Iran and the Arabs want to drive the Israeli's into the sea and take Jerusalem for themselves. Russia has vowed to support the nations against Israel when war comes. Russia would like a warm weather port in the Mediterranean as their portion of the spoils after conquering Israel. Jerusalem may very well be surrounded by armies in the near future. When that happens the return of Jesus Christ is drawing very near.

### **The Abomination of Desolation**

For the sake of not typing 'Abomination of Desolation' many times in this work we will use the abbreviation "ABD" at times to make the work more easily readable.

We have already covered what the ABD is. It is a man proclaiming himself to be God inside the Temple of God in Jerusalem. At present there is no temple in Jerusalem. It will have to be rebuilt before this sign can take place. When the Temple is rebuilt animal sacrifices will be re-instituted so that the Antichrist can put a stop to them when he declares himself to be the true God.

Matt. 24:15 "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—"

Mark 13:14 "When you see 'the abomination that causes desolation' standing where it does not belong—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

Now we are at a very important juncture in this study. This is one of the keys to what we are going to look at. Jesus verified in this verse that what is called "the Abomination that causes Desolation" spoken of by the prophet Daniel, is the signal that the end game is beginning. The "end game" for those who don't play video games is like the last suspense filled scene in a movie or a television show. It is the point that the entire story line has been waiting to arrive at. It is the beginning of the climax of the show.

The abomination of desolation is the trigger that starts the endgame. The question from here on in is "how long does the endgame last?" Is it seven years, 3 ½ years or another duration entirely? That is what we will examine later in this study.

Really though, for most people the answer is not really that important. The majority of the world is on the wide road that leads to destruction and doesn't give a hoot about Bible prophecy. Even if they knew it were true, some are too busy with the enjoyment of the things of this world to allow it to change their lifestyles. That is why I already know that only a very few people will be interested in this book. I am writing it for those few, not for the many.

Matt. 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it."

Only the few on the narrow road may be interested in this study. Even many of those on the narrow road will not be interested. Some have great faith and are not concerned about prophecy

in the least, and that is OK. The Holy Spirit will take care of them. Some have little faith and knowledge and the Lord will take care of them also. Some of us though are just plain curious as a cat about how God is going to do things in the end times and we want to analyze all of the clues he has given us in the bible and make an educated guess as to what will happen when. If that is your opinion then you are reading the right book.

Psa. 119:97 Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

Psa. 119:99 I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes.

2Tim. 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

I personally have fun studying prophecy. I read the newspapers and watch the news and try to guess what will happen next. Its fun, it's free and it's pleasing to God. What could be better than that?

Amos 3:7 Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

Prov. 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

God doesn't mind if we try to figure it out, even if we are not kings. He always reveals things to his servants before he does them. That way we know He is the one who is in power. I don't know of any modern day prophets on the scene now, but there will be later according to the Book of Revelation. (The Two Witnesses) So, for those few who may be interested in figuring out what is going to happen before they arrive on the scene and tell us in plain English (or Hebrew) what is going to happen, we will study it now and make some educated guesses. Some people take it too seriously though. Try not to do that yourself. Sometimes one can mention in church that the Tribulation might only last for 3 ½ years and the uproar is so great you would think that one was questioning salvation through Jesus. Some Churches would almost brand anyone a heretic who does not hold to their personal or denominational prophetic scheme.

2Tim. 2:23 Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.

The Bible says not to argue about minor points of doctrine. Discussion is OK but not arguing. If someone wants to argue I just drop the subject and never bring it up again with that person. I like to study God's Word, not argue about it. The bible says that iron sharpens iron.

Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

What that means is that two intelligent people can cause each other to become smarter. Two people who just want to argue are just wasting each others time.

## After the Abomination

Matt. 24:16-20 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let no one on the roof of his house go down to take anything out of the house. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that your flight will not take place in winter or on the Sabbath.

Mark 13:15-18 Let no one on the roof of his house go down or enter the house to take anything out. Let no one in the field go back to get his cloak. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! Pray that this will not take place in winter,

Luke 21:21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city.

After that comes the part that we started this study with, the fact that what follows the ABD will be the worst time of trouble that the earth has ever experienced.

Matt. 24:21-22 For then there will be great distress, unequalled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.

Mark 13:19-20 because those will be days of distress unequalled from the beginning, when God created the world, until now—and never to be equaled again. If the Lord had not cut short those days, no one would survive. But for the sake of the elect, whom he has chosen, he has shortened them.

Luke 21:22-23 For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people.

The Lord will put an end to the trouble before it destroys all of mankind. We will look at more of Matthew 24 later. Notice that this time is described as a time of wrath. That ties in well with Revelation 16:1.

Rev. 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go, pour out the seven bowls of God’s wrath on the earth.”

The reason that this is important is because Christians have been promised that they will never suffer God’s wrath. The persecutions of Satan and evil people, yes we may experience that, but his wrath during the Great Tribulation or being cast into the lake of Fire, Never!

1Th. 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

## The Prophetic Theology of the 1800’s and 1900’s

John Nelson Darby, C. I. Scofield and Clarence Larkin championed the study of prophecy and popularized the theory of premillennial dispensationalism in the Christian church. In the Appendix

at the end of this book there is a short biography on each of these three men and links to more information if you are interested.

One of the most common tenets of premillennial dispensationalism is that the “rapture” of the church will take place seven years before the return of Christ and that during those seven years immediately after the rapture the “Great Tribulation” would take place. In the early sections of this study the timing of the rapture is not our focus. We are more interested right now in the duration of the Tribulation. We will look at the timing of the rapture in a later section.

We have no idea if everything that Jesus spoke about in Matthew 24 and the other verses is in chronological order, although most of it seems to be. We know that the book of Revelation is not written in chronological order. However, the next few verses in our Bible study do pertain to Christ’s return.

In speaking of the time period shortly after the Abomination of Desolation Jesus warns people not to be alarmed or deceived by reported sightings of Him.

**Matt. 24:23-27** At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time. “So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the desert,’ do not go out; or, ‘Here he is, in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it. For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

**Mark 13:21-22** At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, there he is!’ do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform signs and miracles to deceive the elect—if that were possible.

He goes on to say that the deception will be so strong at that time that even the elect would be deceived if that were possible. He states that he has told us about these things ahead of time so we are not to be taken in by impostors, false Christs and false prophets. It certainly does seem that he is warning people to be ready for his coming after the ABD.

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

This verse is a reference to the armies of the world being gathered to Armageddon to be destroyed at his coming. In Revelation we see that this gathering happens near the end of the tribulation, but the gathering period could take quite some time. We will cover this later in Jesus’ discourse.

**Matt. 24:29-30** “Immediately after the distress of those days “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’ “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.

**Mark 13:24-24** “But in those days, following that distress, “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

Luke 21:25-26 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.

Luke 21:27-28 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things **begin** to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

After the ABD and the things that follow there will be signs in the heavens. The unbelievers on the earth will mourn because they see the signs that Jesus Christ is returning and they have not repented, are not saved and have not worshipped Him but instead chose to align themselves against Him and with the Antichrist. Once they have taken his mark they will be unable to repent. Read about that in "countdown to 6000" available at: <http://www.countdownto6000.info/>

Matt. 24:31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Mark 13:27 And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

According to Christ's discourse, if it is in chronological order, he will at that time send his angels to gather his elect from the four corners of the earth.

Mark 13:26 "At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

### **The Sign of the Fig Tree**

Matt. 24:32-34 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Mark 13:28-31 "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Luke 21:29-33 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near. "I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

We who study prophecy have taken this verse to pertain to the re-founding of the state of Israel. There is indeed a lot of evidence to support that interpretation, but another simpler explanation is that those who are alive and see the things that take place immediately after the ABD will (if they continue to live to a normal age) live to see the return of Christ.

Those who study this little book about prophecy will probably know more about the subject than ninety nine percent of the people in the world after finishing it. Not because I'm a great writer but because Jesus is the greatest teacher and his words are eternal truth. Notice what he says "my words will never pass away." When we learn something that Jesus said it will hold us in good stead throughout all eternity.

Matt. 24:36 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Mark 13:32-33 "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.

No one will ever be able to guess the exact day and hour of either the rapture or his return. We will know when it is near though by watching for the signs that Jesus told us about. Based on current world events it seems to be getting very near now to the time just before the ABD. About all we are missing is the Temple in Jerusalem.

Mark 13:23 So be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time.

Luke 21:34-36 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

1Th. 5:2 & 4 for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.

"Whatever is going to happen will happen, just don't let it happen to you." In other words - position yourself in a way that you are protected from whatever is around the bend. W. Bonner -The Daily Reckoning (Paraphrased)

### **The Days of Noah**

Matt. 24:37-39 As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

Luke 17:28-30 "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Jude 1:7 NIV In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

Gen. 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

In some ways life will be going on as normal with the general population oblivious to the fact that the return of Christ is near. They will continue in their evil ways as if there will never be a judgment day. Just like today, everyone knows that both the United States and Europe are in grave financial danger but everyone is going about their business as if nothing is happening. Even though there will be great catastrophes striking the earth the world will ignore it and refuse to repent. Of course, we cannot as individuals do anything about the world's financial situation, but we can do something about following Jesus. We can repent and be saved.

Rev. 9:20-21 The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

## Section Five

### The Two Witnesses

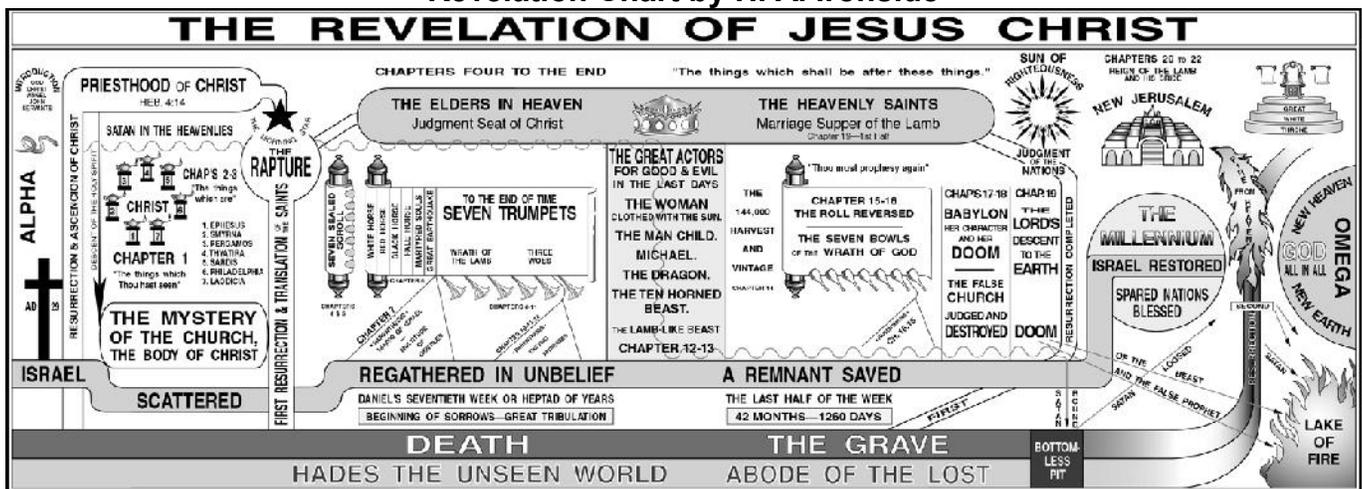
From earliest times in the Christian church 100-300 AD the belief has been that the “Two Witnesses” of Revelation would be the two men who according to the Bible have never died, Enoch and Elijah. Enoch was a prophet during the antediluvian period in human history.

You may wonder why we are going to spend so much time studying the Two Witnesses. It is because in a sense, almost the entire weight of the seven year Tribulation theory rests on the ministry of the Two Witnesses being included in the first half by most premillennial dispensationalists. Nothing else but their doings is considered to be in the first 3 ½ years except for the Seven Seals, for which there is no timeline given in the Bible. Without them (The Two Witnesses) ministering in the first half, the whole scenario falls apart. How so you may ask? Well, for a number of reasons. One, if the first half consists of the Seven Seals for 3 ½ years, followed by the Two Witnesses for 3 ½ years, followed by all of the other 3 ½ year prophecies, that’s a 10 ½ year Tribulation.

You may say, OK, then let’s put the Two Witnesses ministry in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half and get it back down to seven years. Well, OK, but if we do that then where is the scriptural justification for assigning 3 ½ years to the first half? All you have left is just the thread of a guess that the Seven Seals might take 3 ½ years to execute with no scriptural proof as to their duration whatsoever. Do you see my point? If the Two Witnesses do not minister in the first half, then there probably is no first half. There is just one 3 ½ year period that covers everything. There is some proof though that their ministry does take place at the same time as other things in what is called the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. We will look at that later. If there is only a 2<sup>nd</sup> half then really, there is only one 3 ½ year Tribulation.

Most of the schemes or charts I have seen in 30 plus years puts I have been studying prophecy put only that one item in the first half along with the Seven Seals. Most charts and explanations have the two witnesses being killed near the time when Antichrist executes the ABD. Nowhere does it say that the Seven Seals are 3 ½ years.

**Revelation Chart by H. A. Ironside**



In the chart above although it is difficult to see, the ministry of the “Two Witnesses” is listed as occurring in the first half of the Tribulation right above the word “unbelief.” Mr. Ironside correctly recognizes that the Two Witnesses execute the “Seven Trumpet Judgments” so he also places those judgments in the first half of the Tribulation on his chart. You can view a full page version of this chart at: [http://www.blueletterbible.org/images/charts/bible/revelation\\_chart.cfm](http://www.blueletterbible.org/images/charts/bible/revelation_chart.cfm)

Let’s look at the ministry of the Two Witnesses beginning with the prophecies about them from the Old Testament.

Zechariah 4:11 & 13-14 Then I asked the angel, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" He replied, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my Lord," I said. So he said, "These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the Earth."

Revelation 11:3-6 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the Earth. If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the Earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

God is going to send Two Witnesses to preach to the world and to warn mankind to repent, and to stand against the Antichrist. They have power to work miracles by the Spirit of the Lord.

Zechariah 4:3-6 Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my Lord?" He answered, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my Lord," I replied. So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty.

The commonly quoted verse above, "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," is actually a reference to the power God will give to his Two Witnesses during the Tribulation period. Again as we said earlier, these Two Witnesses will most likely be the two men in the bible who have never died, Enoch and Elijah.

## Enoch

Enoch the Bible says was taken up before the flood.

Gen. 5:21-23 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years.

Gen. 5:24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Heb. 11:5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.

Jude 1:4 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones

Enoch was the first person in the bible who was given the opportunity to see heaven without experiencing death.

## Elijah

Elijah will be our main focus in this study rather than Enoch because we have a lot more Biblical information about him.

1 Kings 17:1 "Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, `As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

James 5:17-18 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the Earth produced its crops.

Elijah prayed that there would be no rain in Israel for 3 1/2 years, and God answered his prayer. Elijah will still have this power when God sends him back to Earth to withstand the Antichrist and the False Prophet.

1 Kings 18:36-39 At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again." Then the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, "The LORD--he is God! The LORD--he is God!"

The king and Queen were so angered by the drought and later the destruction of the prophets of Baal, that they sent fifty men to capture or kill him. The King was angry at the wrong person. He should have been angry with himself and the queen. Elijah was simply doing God's will inflicting punishment on the King and people of Israel because of their disobedience. Elijah had no power of his own apart from God to either withhold the rain or call fire down from heaven. How could the King think that any human had these powers apart from a supreme being?

2 Kings 1:9-10 Then he sent to Elijah a captain with his company of fifty men. The captain went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "Man of God, the king says, 'Come down!'" Elijah answered the captain, "If I am a man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!" Then fire fell from heaven and consumed the captain and his men.

2 Kings 1:11-12 At this the king sent to Elijah another captain with his fifty men. The captain said to him, "Man of God, this is what the king says, 'Come down at once!'" "If I am a man of God," Elijah replied, "may fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty men!" Then the fire of God fell from heaven and consumed him and his fifty men.

2 Kings 1:13-15 So the king sent a third captain with his fifty men. This third captain went up and fell on his knees before Elijah. "Man of God," he begged, "please have respect for my life and the lives of these fifty men, your servants! See, fire has fallen from heaven and consumed the

first two captains and all their men. But now have respect for my life!" The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, "Go down with him; do not be afraid of him." So Elijah got up and went down with him to the king.

The story of Elijah is very interesting and you may want to read the whole thing for yourself from the book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings. The point of putting in this episode in the life of Elijah was to show that God gave him the ability to call down fire from the heavens. Elijah will return and have the same powers when he stands against another evil king, the Antichrist.

Malachi 4:5-6 "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse."

One word here about John the Baptist. He did indeed come as a forerunner to Jesus Christ's first advent. John came in the "Spirit and Power" of Elijah and even dressed like him.

2 Kings 1:8 They replied, "He was a man with a garment of hair and with a leather belt around his waist." The king said, "That was Elijah the Tishbite."

Matt. 3:4 John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.

Matt. 17:10 The disciples asked him, "Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?"

Matt. 17:11-12 Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands."

John the Baptist came as a forerunner to the Messiah, Jesus Christ and he was murdered. His head was chopped off and brought to the king who gave it to the daughter of his unlawful wife.

Matt. 14:6-12 On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced for them and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The king was distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he ordered that her request be granted and had John beheaded in the prison. His head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl, who carried it to her mother. John's disciples came and took his body and buried it. Then they went and told Jesus.

Both Jesus and John were killed before they could usher in Kingdom of God on earth. Of course, this was no surprise to God who knows the end from the beginning. It was all a part of his plan. Great Bible scholars like Augustine, Luther and Calvin concluded from these prophecies and others that all that was to be fulfilled was fulfilled, except for the return of Christ.

However, to those who would say that John the Baptist fulfilled everything that Elijah was prophesied to do I would like to point out one thing that would make that doctrine false. Jesus came the first time as a lamb to be sacrificed, a man of peace.

1Cor. 5:7 ...For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

He came to heal, to preach the gospel, to make disciples and to give his life as a ransom for many.

This is not the coming that Elijah is said in the scriptures to be the forerunner of. Notice in Malachi 4:5 that Elijah is coming before “The Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord.” That is the second coming of Christ. The second coming ushers in the Heavenly Sabbath, called in scriptures “The Day of the Lord.”

**Mal. 4:5 “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.”**

So, John the Baptist did not fulfill all of the future predictions for Elijah’s ministry and Jesus did not usher in the literal Kingdom of God at that time, although in a spiritual sense he did. The “Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord” that Jesus talked about in his discourse about the end times is yet to come. Along with that is included the reappearance of Elijah followed by Jesus’ return.

Now, the ministry of the original Elijah pertaining to the withholding of the rain lasted for 3 ½ years. Likewise the ministry of Jesus lasted for the same amount of time before he was “cut off” from the earth by his crucifixion. We are now getting to the whole point of this study. It has been assumed for many years that the tribulation would last for seven years primarily based upon the ministry of the Two witnesses and a few verses from the book of Daniel, which we will look at in a moment.

### **The Departure of Elijah**

**2 Kings 2:1 & 11 When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha were on their way from Gilgal. As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.**

Elijah was the second person in the bible to temporarily escape death and see heaven before he died. The Jews have been waiting for him to return and announce the coming of the Messiah for almost 2400 years. Devout Jews set a plate for Elijah every year at the Passover meal. The Two Witnesses will appear on the world scene in some future year in the spring, about the time of the Passover. We know they will appear in the spring because their ministry will last for 3 1/2 years, and it will end in the fall, near the time of the feast of the trumpets. There has been some discussion among prophecy students over the years as to whether the Two Witnesses might be someone other than Enoch and Elijah.

**Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**

**Deuteronomy 17:6 On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.**

God will send the Two Witnesses before he pours out his wrath on the world, and they must die in order for him to be faithful to his own word. He decreed in the Old Testament that no one should be put to death except by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Moses cannot be one

of the Two Witnesses because he has already died and to die again would be against God's word. In a sense it would be verifying reincarnation if Moses was to be one of them.

Revelation 11:7-12 Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. "Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. For three and half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. The inhabitants of the Earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the Earth." But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck 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, while their enemies looked on.

When the Antichrist and those in agreement with him have killed the Two Witnesses, the world will celebrate, thinking that they have won a great victory. Three and one half days later the first resurrection will occur and take the Two Witnesses and the saints out of the world. Then God will pour out his wrath upon the Earth. During this time of wrath being poured out, the church, the bride of Christ, will be in heaven celebrating the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. They will return with him one year later and watch him destroy the armies of the world at Armageddon.

Note: According to some ancient documents there will be a short delay, perhaps about forty days, between the raising of the Two Witnesses and the catching away of the living believers, so even after knowing the date of the death of the Two Witnesses no one will be able to calculate the day or the hour of the first resurrection, but it will be very close, as Christ said, right at the door.

(Mat 24:33 NIV) Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.

### **The Two Witnesses - Non Biblical References**

Neither Enoch nor Elijah has ever died, and they do not belong to the sign of the fig tree generation, the people who have been promised that some of them will live to see the coming of the Lord. Therefore, they both must return and die at the hand of the Antichrist before the first resurrection can take place. The early church writers were all in agreement that the Two Witnesses would be Enoch and Elijah.

The Apocalypse of Peter

Verily I say unto you, when the twigs have sprouted forth in the last days, then shall false christs arise and arouse false hopes, saying: I am the Christ, that has now come into the world. But, this deceiver is not the Christ. And those who reject him he shall slay with the sword, and there shall be many martyrs. Enoch and Elijah shall be sent to teach them that this is the Deceiver, which must come into the world, and do signs and wonders to deceive. And therefore, those who die by his hand shall be martyrs, and shall be reckoned among the good and righteous martyrs who have pleased God in their life."

### The Gospel of Bartholomew (Greek Text)

"And Satan said: Look carefully at who it is that is coming down, for it is Elijah, or Enoch, or one of the prophets that this man seems to be. But he answered and said: Not yet are the six thousand years accomplished, for the sum of the number is in my hands."

Notice that according to the document above the Two Witnesses do not die and come down to Sheol until the time when 6000 years from the creation of Adam is completed. This means that their death occurs when we are on the verge or at the beginning of the Heavenly Sabbath, "The Day of the Lord."

### The Gospel of Nicodemus 20:1-4

"Then the Lord after his resurrection, delivered the saints to Michael the archangel; and he led them into paradise. And two very ancient men met them and were asked by the saints, who are you, who have not been with us in Sheol, and have had your bodies placed in Paradise? One of them answering said, I am Enoch, who was translated by the word of God: and this man who is with me, is Elijah the Tishbite, who was translated in a fiery chariot. Here we have been, and have not tasted death, but we are now about to return at the coming of Antichrist, being armed with divine signs and miracles, to engage with him in battle, and to be slain by him at Jerusalem, and to be taken up alive again into the clouds, after three days and a half."

### The Apocalypse of Elijah - Paraphrased From the Apocalypse of Elijah

Then when you hear that there is security in Jerusalem, tear your garments O priests of the land, because the Son of Perdition will soon come. In those days the Lawless One will appear in the holy places. He will say to the sun, "fall," and it will fall. He will say, "shine," and it will do it. He will say, "darken," and it will do it. He will say to the moon, "become bloody," and it will do it. He will go forth with them from the sky. He will walk upon the sea and the rivers as upon dry land. He will cause the lame to walk, he will cause the deaf to hear, He will cause the dumb to speak. He will cause the blind to see, the lepers he will cleanse. The ill he will heal, the demons he will cast out. He will multiply his signs and his wonders in the presence of everyone. He will do the works which Christ did, except for the raising of the dead alone. In this you will know that he is the Son of Lawlessness, because he is unable to give life.

When Enoch and Elijah hear that the shameless one has revealed himself in the Holy Places they will come down and fight with him saying, are you indeed not ashamed? You have been hostile to those who belong to heaven. You have acted against those belonging to the Earth. You have been hostile to the thrones. You have acted against the angels. You are always a stranger. You have fallen from heaven like the morning stars. You were changed and your nature became dark. But you are not ashamed when you stand firmly against God. You are a devil.

Notice in the paragraph above that it was the opinion of this early church writer that Enoch and Elijah would not come down after the Antichrist had revealed himself in the "Holy Places" which would seem to mean after the ABD, the holiest place being the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Shameless One will hear and he will be angry, and he will fight with them in the market place of the great city. He will spend seven days fighting with them and they will spend three and one half days in the market place dead, while all the people see them. Then they will rise up and they will scold him saying, "O Shameless One, O Son of Lawlessness, Are you indeed not ashamed of yourself since you are leading astray the people of God? Do you not know that we

live in the Lord. On that day they will shout up to heaven as they shine, and all the world will see them.

The Son of Lawlessness will persecute the saints and the priests, but Christ will pity those who are his own. He will send from heaven his angels, and the sound will move heaven and Earth when they give praise and glorify. Now those upon whose forehead the name of Christ is written and upon whose hand is the seal, both the small and the great, will be taken up upon their wings and lifted up before his wrath. Then Gabriel and Uriel will lead them into the Holy Land. They will eat from the tree of life. They will wear white garments, they will not thirst. The angels will watch over them and the Son of Lawlessness will not be able to prevail over them.

Then sinners will groan upon the Earth saying, what have you done to us O Son of Lawlessness, saying I am the Christ when you are a devil. You are unable to save yourself, so how can you save us? Woe to us because we listened to you.

In the time when these documents were written (100-300 AD) the common belief was that the Two Witnesses who would withstand the Antichrist and later be slain by him would be Enoch and Elijah. It was also the common belief that Enoch and Elijah would not arrive on the scene and begin preaching until Antichrist was there first and had committed the ABD. While this is not iron clad proof it certainly seems to make sense that the Two Witnesses would not preach for 3 ½ years before Antichrist was revealed as the son of Perdition. Elijah did not preach for three year before Ahab became King. How can the Two Witnesses refute what Antichrist and his partner the False Prophet are saying and doing if they are not even in full power yet? (The Antichrist and the False Prophet) Remember, Antichrist does not get his power until the ten kings give him their allegiance and then he commits the ABD. (Or he may commit the ABD and then they swear allegiance to him shortly thereafter.)

Some may say that God is going to give people the 3 ½ year warning before Antichrist comes to power, but that does not seem to fit with the scriptures, past Biblical history or the beliefs of the Early Church writers.

## Section Six

### The Seventy Sevens

Dan. 9:24 “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.”

Seventy sevens has been interpreted to mean 490 years. Some have calculated or by inductive reasoning reckoned that Jesus must have been crucified after 483 years from the time of this prophecy had passed. They surmised this because if the tribulation is going to last for seven years then there must be seven years left of the 490 for everything listed to be accomplished.

Dan. 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:

Another verse says that the Messiah will be cut off after 62 weeks. (434 years) This is complicated by the fact that there was a previous period of seven weeks (49 years) that was to be fulfilled before the 62 weeks started. Simply put the argument is that 62 weeks plus 7 weeks equals 69 weeks (483 years) after which the messiah was to be cut off. This then leaves one week, which would be seven years for the Tribulation to take place and then Christ would return at the end. Many hold to that opinion and I myself did for many years. I am not yet positive that it is even incorrect. I am just looking at other alternatives as we approach the time of the end and God reveals to us more information and opens people’s minds to consider other interpretations. There have been many, many more ways of calculating Daniel 8:24 and I have studied most of them. I have never been totally convinced that any of them were able to be confirmed as biblically correct. It is indeed a very difficult subject because so little information is available and because our calendar has changed so many times down through the centuries that our dating methods are unreliable. There is another view that would make all of these end times calculations unnecessary. Again, let’s look at what was to be accomplished in 490 years if that is the correct interpretation.

Dan. 9:24 “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.”

1. To finish the transgression,
2. To make an end of sins,
3. To make reconciliation for iniquity,
4. To bring in everlasting righteousness,
5. To seal up vision
6. and prophecy,
7. To anoint the Most Holy.

Now, have all of these been done? In a sense, yes. Jesus took care of the first four, at least in a spiritual sense at his first coming. Then sealing up the vision and the prophecy. That has been done because the understanding of prophecy has been lost until now, the end times. Now, some take the last prophecy (to anoint the Most Holy) to mean the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ, when he is crowned King of the World.” But, what if that prophecy simply means that he was anointed

to preach the gospel to the poor as Isaiah says or anointed for burial by Mary Magdalene as is recorded in Luke?

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

Luke 7:38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

John 11:2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

The anointing was the last thing in this prophecy to be done, so if it actually referred to Jesus being anointed by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel or to the anointing with oil by Mary for his burial, then all has been accomplished.

Some may say, what about the last “seven’ where a covenant is made? Well, the sacrifice was cut off and the Romans destroyed Jerusalem after Jesus’ ascension. What if that constituted the fulfillment of the first half of the last week (seven year period) and only 3 ½ years are left? Some may say that is not a viable explanation, but is it really any less plausible than any other? We have heard other opinions repeated for most of our lives so they are easy to accept. What if we had been hearing this one and the common interpretation was brand new? Then how would we react? I’m not saying that this interpretation is correct, only that many interpretations are possible, so why hang our hats on one just because it is popular? Popular is usually wrong when it comes to biblical truth.

Many Bible students have erred in the last two hundred years in predicting the return of Christ by making calculations based on some new theory about the numerical prophecies of Daniel. Every prediction has come and gone and been proven wrong. Basing an entire prophetic scheme on interpreting the seventy weeks prophecy is a very dangerous thing to do. From William Miller in the 1850’s to Harold Camping in 2011 every theory has been wrong because Christ did not return when they said he would. If any had been correct we would already be living in the millennium.

My point here is that we cannot base a seven year tribulation period on only the supposition that there are now seven years left out of the 490 years predicted in Daniel. Putting all of that on one verse is not sound biblical interpretation. We need two or three verses to prove something to be true. I personally have not found more than just this one.

Many say that the first 483 years were completed on Palm Sunday, when Christ entered Jerusalem to the cheers of the general population. Where is that in scripture? They surmise that his triumphal entry was the coronation of the anointed one, Jesus. It makes some sense, I agree, but there is not even one verse of scripture to back it up.

Dan. 9:26 After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off 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

It seems that a lot of biblical prophecy interpreters have not laid down a scriptural foundation for their theories. Are they wrong? I have no idea; I just say they cannot be proven right without the evidence of two or three witnesses to their veracity. Two or three scriptures will do, but not just one. If we only have one verse to prove a point, then we need to be open minded to other interpretations. While having only one verse to back up a scriptural theory does not make it wrong, it does make its foundation tenuous at best.

I will say that there is one verse that is very difficult to understand if their theory is not true and that is Daniel 9:26-27. Even though we said that this may have been fulfilled during the time between Jesus' ascension and the destruction of Jerusalem, we have no historical record of any tyrant making a seven year pact with Israel.

**Daniel 9:26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off 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.**

Another problem with this verse is that Daniel goes right from talking about the Messiah to the Antichrist without explaining it. Of course, it is not Daniel's fault. He wrote it down in the manner that the angel of God gave it to him. God chose not to give Daniel enough information about this verse for him to understand it at that time. It does not make sense that Antichrist will destroy Jerusalem and the sanctuary (temple) and then desecrate it in the very next verse. How can he do that if he just destroyed it? It makes more sense and fits historically that there will be 2000 years between the fulfillments these two verse. It makes more sense that verse 26 pertains to Christ's crucifixion, the destruction of the Temple afterwards and that verse 27 pertains only to the Antichrist in the end times.

**Dan. 9:27 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 on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."**

Our only clue that the subject has changed from the Messiah to the Anti-Messiah is the reference to the ABD. It seems like we do not have all of the information we need available here. How did the switch come from speaking of Christ to Antichrist without even one hint or clue except the words "the ruler who will come?" Remember, there were no chapters and verses when the prophecy was originally written. It flows right together as if he is talking about one and the same person or one and the same time period. This is a tough verse to decipher. Some decipher it to mean that Christ made the promise to return in seven years and then Antichrist impersonates the Messiah and appears to break Jesus' covenant. That is followed by Jesus returning and destroying the Antichrist. I'm not saying I agree with that opinion either but it does need to be considered, and there are others that differ besides that one.

It does appear though from this verse that the Antichrist will set up the ABD in the Middle of a seven year period, whether his or someone else's. It appears that he will stop the Jewish Temple sacrifice and declare himself to be God as is explained in Thessalonians and Jesus gave us that indication also.

However, even if that is the case, it does not make a seven year Tribulation period a sure thing nor does it place the ministries of the Two Witnesses in the first half of said seven year Tribulation. That is where the standard reasoning from the 1800's is faulty.

Not only that, If the Antichrist is in power for 3 ½ years, 10 years or an undetermined amount of years before the ABD, that still does not make it a part of the time of Tribulation. Jesus said that the Great Tribulation started with the sign of the ABD. Antichrist may very possibly be on the scene for many years as a politician before he commits the ABD. What if he arrives on the scene in 2018 and doesn't commit the ABD until 2029? Does that make it a nine year Tribulation plus 3 ½ more years for the "Great Tribulation part? That would be a 12 ½ year period.

For the sake of not arguing about Daniel, let's just accept the fact that Antichrist, the Beast of Revelation will be in power for a minimum of 3 ½ years before he commits the Big ABD. That's solves that problem in a sense. Let the reader determine in his or her own mind how long you think Antichrist will be in power before desecrating the Temple. As you will see, it makes no difference to this study. All we are trying to figure out is that since (or if) the ABD is the event that marks the beginning of the Tribulation, how do all of the events predicted to happen during the Tribulation line up during that 3 ½ year period? In what order do they occur and what is their duration, if we can tell? That is the purpose of this study.

So actually, we have no problem with a 3 ½ year lead in to the Tribulation. Our only contention is that the lead in is not a part of the Tribulation. It is only a prelude to it, and again the length of the lead in period has absolutely no effect on the length of the Tribulation. It is still 3 ½ years long even if the lead in period for the Antichrist was to be three and a half, seven, ten, twenty or thirty three and a half years.

One more point is that Satan has no power to keep his promises, nor does he even want to. He is a liar and the father of it.

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Let's say this about the seven year pact if it indeed occurs and is made by Antichrist. Satan has no intention of keeping it even if he could. The second point is that even if he wanted to keep it he cannot unless God permits it, and we see from Revelation that God is not going to allow it to be kept because after 3 ½ years all hell breaks loose, even according to the 1800's interpretation.

1 Thessalonians 5:3 While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

Satan through his Antichrist guarantees peace, safety and prosperity for the duration of his rulership, but God is going to pour out his wrath on the Beast, his Kingdom and the world during the time of the agreement. So, it will not be kept not only because Satan himself will intentionally break it, but because God will bring all of Satan's plans to naught.

### **The "Cutting Off" As Spoken of in Isaiah**

Is. 53:8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

Is. 53:7 He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

Acts 8:32 The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth.

There is no doubt that the Messiah was "cut off." The big question is when as far as the Daniel scenario is concerned? Look at Isaiah 53:7 above and then notice that Isaiah 53:8 above it is speaking of Christ being "cut off." It certainly does look like the time of the Messiah's being cut off is the crucifixion. Again, if that is the case and somehow if the Messiah is cut off in the midst of the week, then only 3 ½ years remain of the seven.

Again to summarize, what if the seven year period to complete all of the things Jesus was to do includes the time used up by his first appearance? What I mean is what if the seven year period to "bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy" includes the 3 ½ years he was already on earth?

Let me ask another question. In the common scenario what does the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation have to do with any of these things that are left to be accomplished? All that is left to happen is vengeance and comforting. How does the first 3 ½ years of Antichrist's reign accomplish any of that?

Is. 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,

Luke 4:18-21 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

Jesus verified that he had fulfilled by that day everything that he had read from Isaiah's prophecy. Although they are worded a little differently, it seems that Jesus had completed most of both Daniels's prophecy and Isaiah's. The exception from Isaiah is executing the vengeance of God and comforting all who mourn. The exception from Daniel is the rewarding of the saints who will shine like the brightness of the stars. Those things will be done later. The three things left to be accomplished are (1) executing God's vengeance with the seven bowls of God's Wrath just before his (Christ's) return and (2) comforting those who mourn after his return, and from Daniel (3) rewards (shining like stars) for the saints at the judgment seat of Christ.

Let's look at it again and go through it step by step. Do you see what Jesus did after reading part of Isaiah 61? He quit reading just before the "vengeance of our God" portion and rolled up the scroll. Then he proclaimed that the first part of Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled. So, we know for an absolute fact by the testimony of Jesus that most of Isaiah 61:1-2 have been accomplished.

Look at both prophecies again. Isn't Isaiah's prophecy somewhat similar to Daniel's? If they are one and the same then Jesus already fulfilled 3 ½ years of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. If that were to be so then only 3 ½ years are left for the Tribulation period. That would explain how the seventieth week could be fulfilled without violating Daniel's prophecy. It seems to make more sense that the 2<sup>nd</sup> half on Daniel's week would be fulfilled by Jesus initiating and pouring out God's wrath against the Antichrist, rather than Antichrist fulfilling the prophecies beginning with a time of peace and prosperity, later followed by God's Wrath. My point is what business does the devil have in fulfilling the prophecies concerning Jesus through his (the Devil's) man on the throne of the world? It seems somewhat contradictory that the prophecy begins with telling about the things that the Messiah will do and then Satan finishes things up for him, doesn't it? It to me to be more likely that Jesus will complete all of the prophecies concerning Daniels seventieth week, 3 ½ years at his first coming and 3 ½ years just before his 2<sup>nd</sup> coming.

Prophecy Students, ask yourself this question. How does the first half of the tribulation fulfill the execution of the vengeance of God when the scriptures do not indicate that he is pouring out his wrath until what is called the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the tribulation, just before Armageddon? Doesn't it make more sense that Jesus fulfilled one half of the seventieth week at his first coming (the peaceful half) and will fulfill the 2<sup>nd</sup> half pouring out the vengeance of God on the Antichrist and his kingdom and then return to destroy the armies of the world at Armageddon? There is of course the possibility that one could call the entire last seven years the "Wrath of God" but it is not really scriptural and it seems to be giving Satan half of Jesus' time for the redemption program.

One more look at Daniel from a slightly different perspective. This is the explanation I now temporarily hold to until I find a better one. If we consider that Jesus the Messiah arrived on the scene in Israel 483 years after the prophecy was given then there would be seven years left to be fulfilled. Now remember, this is when the Messiah arrived, not when he departed. So, if we add 3 ½ years, the time of Jesus' ministry until he was "cut off," rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven, to the 483 we have 486 ½, years used up. So, that would make it perfectly clear that 486 ½ of the 490 years have been completed, leaving Jesus 3 ½ years to pour out God's Wrath and vengeance on an unbelieving world in the end times. This explanation makes everything clear and simple, easy to understand. It also gives Jesus the lead role in the last seven years of the 490 weeks prophecy, not Satan. Jesus fulfills all of it, the first half almost 2000 years ago with the last half coming soon. To me this makes perfect Biblical sense with no contradictions. It sets things up for a 3 ½ year tribulation period. Satan's lead in time is flexible, being whatever God allows him and Jesus fulfills the entire seven years.

Again, I'm not sure this scenario is correct, but the one concocted in the 1800's doesn't seem very secure either. Perhaps every interpretation that we have available now is wrong. We will find out the true interpretation for sure when the Two Witnesses arrive on the scene.

## Section Seven

### The Trumpet Judgments

After the world has rejected the message of the Two Witnesses, to repent and worship the Lord, they (the Two Witnesses) will begin to call down the trumpet judgments. Remember, they will have the ability to withhold the rain and call down fire from heaven, along with the ability to predict the future. (They will predict the withholding the rain, the time of the judgments falling, the lies of Antichrist, the coming return of Christ, etc.) The False Prophet will duplicate many of the miracles of the Two Witnesses, and most of the world will continue to be deceived.

Revelation 8:2-6 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. Another angel, who had a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense to offer, with the prayers of all the saints, on the golden altar before the throne. The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God from the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and hurled it on the Earth; and there came peals of thunder, rumblings, flashes of lightning and an earthquake. Then the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared to sound them.

The prayers of the persecuted saints have come before the Lord like incense on an altar of worship. If their prayers are coming up, then the saints are still on earth at this time. God will empower the Two Witnesses and they will withhold the rain for three and one half years, and call down fire from heaven.

Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Even though they are still suffering persecution, the saints will rejoice in the fact that time of their redemption is drawing near.

Luke 21:25-28 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the Earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

The plagues of the Two Witnesses, the wars of the Antichrist, and the martyrdom of the saints, will destroy one third of the Earth's population. This time period is called in Revelation, the time of the seven trumpet judgments. The redemption (resurrection/rescue/rapture) of the saints is drawing near.

### The Trumpets Sound

Revelation 8:7 "The first angel sounded his trumpet, and there came hail and fire mixed with blood, and it was hurled down upon the Earth. A third of the Earth was burned up, a third of the trees were burned up, and all the green grass was burned up."

When the first trumpet is sounded, fire will scorch one third of the Earth. These plagues will, for the most part, appear to be events that are the normal effects of war, or some other catastrophe. Men will not believe that these events are happening because of their sins. They will harden their hearts like the Pharaoh did when Moses and Aaron called down the plagues on Egypt. If you noticed, calling down fire from heaven is one thing that the Two Witnesses have power to do.

**Revelation 8:8-9 "The second angel sounded his trumpet, and something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, was thrown into the sea. A third of the sea turned into blood, a third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed."**

The second plague will turn one third of the oceans red like blood, similar to what Moses and Aaron did to the Nile River. One third of the marine life will die; one third of the world's ships will be destroyed. Some of the effects of this plague could be caused by the wars of Antichrist against believers and against the Two Witnesses. Again, Moses and Aaron executed a similar plague against Pharaoh and Egypt so it is likely that the Two Witnesses will actuate this one.

**Revelation 8:10-11 The third angel sounded his trumpet, and a great star, blazing like a torch, fell from the sky on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water; the name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters turned bitter, and many people died from the waters that had become bitter.**

When the third trumpet is sounded the plague on the waters will spread to the freshwater sources and good drinking water will become scarce. Many people will become sick and some will die from drinking the tainted water. Again, Moses and Aaron did the same thing. The importance of Moses and Aaron having done a similar thing in Egypt is that what happened in Egypt is a representation of the Tribulation but on a smaller scale. God rescued his people from Egypt with plagues called down by Moses and Aaron. God will again rescue his people this time from the hand of Antichrist with very similar plagues, except that the disasters are called down by the Two Witnesses. I have read that the word "Chernobyl" means wormwood. Chernobyl is the name of the city in Russia where the worst nuclear meltdown in a power plant has ever occurred. Perhaps this is a tip off that a nuclear device will be detonated during this judgment and one third of the world's fresh water will be polluted by radioactivity. Time will tell.

**Exodus 7:17-19 This is what the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD: With the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water of the Nile, and it will be changed into blood. The fish in the Nile will die, and the river will stink; the Egyptians will not be able to drink its water." The LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt--over the streams and canals, over the ponds and all the reservoirs'--and they will turn to blood. Blood will be everywhere in Egypt, even in the wooden buckets and stone jars."**

### **The Fourth Trumpet**

**Revelation 8:12 "The fourth angel sounded his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them turned dark. A third of the day was without light, and also a third of the night."**

The smoke and debris from the first three plagues will now be floating in the atmosphere and cut off one third of the light to the Earth. Again, Antichrist and the people of the world may have a

natural explanation for this event. They will use any excuse to avoid acknowledging the true God and repenting.

Exodus 10:20-23 But the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let the Israelites go. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt--darkness that can be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.

### The Three Woes

Revelation 8:13 As I watched, I heard an eagle that was flying in midair call out in a loud voice: "Woe! Woe! Woe to the inhabitants of the Earth, because of the trumpet blasts about to be sounded by the other three angels!"

The next three plagues, five, six and seven are called woes, because they will be even worse than those that came before them. The reference to an eagle in this verse may be a hint that this is the time when the Antichrist will attack the United States, as the eagle is one of our national symbols.

Revelation 9:1-11 The fifth angel sounded his trumpet, and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the Earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss. When he opened the Abyss, smoke rose from it like the smoke from a gigantic furnace. The sun and sky were darkened by the smoke from the Abyss. And out of the smoke locusts came down upon the Earth and were given power like that of scorpions of the Earth. They were told not to harm the grass of the Earth or any plant or tree, but only those people who did not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were not given power to kill them, but only to torture them for five months. And the agony they suffered was like that of the sting of a scorpion when it strikes a man. During those days men will seek death, but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will elude them. The locusts looked like horses prepared for battle. On their heads they wore something like crowns of gold, and their faces resembled human faces. Their hair was like women's hair, and their teeth were like lions' teeth. They had breastplates like breastplates of iron, and the sound of their wings was like the thundering of many horses and chariots rushing into battle. They had tails and stings like scorpions, and in their tails they had power to torment people for five months. They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.

The star that has fallen to Earth from heaven is Satan. Now that he is no longer restrained by Michael the Archangel, he is free to release from the abyss, fallen angels, demons, and strange creatures, some of which may have been imprisoned before the flood. Notice in the verse below that Satan's goal is to be like the "Most High." He wants to be God Almighty. That is his whole purpose in promoting his Antichrist to become king of the world.

Isaiah 14:12-15 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

There is a city in Iran that is located where the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers meet named

Abadan, and there is a large oil refinery there. The destruction of that refinery would certainly send clouds of smoke pouring skyward. Persia (Iran) has for thousands of years been a hotbed of demonic activity, and it would not be surprising if imprisoned demons were released from Abadan (Abaddon?) during the tribulation period. Iran is currently becoming the most warlike nation in that part of the world and they are close to having nuclear weapons. It would not be surprising to me if they accidentally detonated a weapon hidden underground at Abadan and caused this disaster.

Two other opinions concerning these verses are that this plague is caused by one of mankind's genetic experiments on animals and insects that has gone awry, or that these strange creatures are some future type of airborne attack vehicle that looks similar to a scorpion. A company in England is producing a new attack helicopter called "the sting," that bears an amazing resemblance to the description given in Revelation. It even has a curled back tail that looks like a scorpions.

Regardless of what these things are, notice that they can only inflict their pain on those who do not have the seal of God on their forehead. The saints will be protected from this plague just like the Israelites were protected from the last three plagues before their deliverance from Egypt. The Lord makes a distinction between the righteous and the wicked.

Exodus 8:22-23 "But on that day I will deal differently with the land of Goshen, where my people live; no swarms of flies will be there, so that you will know that I, the LORD, am in this land. I will make a distinction between my people and your people. This miraculous sign will occur tomorrow."

Exodus 9:4 "But the LORD will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and that of Egypt, so that no animal belonging to the Israelites will die."

Exodus 11:5 & 7 Every firstborn son in Egypt will die, from the firstborn son of Pharaoh, who sits on the throne, to the firstborn son of the slave girl, who is at her hand mill, and all the firstborn of the cattle as well. But among the Israelites not a dog will bark at any man or animal. Then you will know that the LORD makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.

Concerning the time of the end, God promises in Malachi that he will again make a distinction between those who serve the Lord and the wicked. Egypt in scripture represents the heathen nations of the world. Egypt persecuted Israel and the unsaved world will persecute Christians.

Malachi 3:16-18 Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name. "They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not."

In the same manner that the Lord protected the Israelites from the grievous plagues he brought upon Egypt, just before the exodus, so too, he will protect his church from the last three trumpet judgments, before their exodus out of the world, when the first resurrection takes place.

Revelation 9:12-19 The first woe is past; two other woes are yet to come. The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is

before God. It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates." And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind. The number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. I heard their number. The horses and riders I saw in my vision looked like this: Their breastplates were fiery red, dark blue, and yellow as sulfur. The heads of the horses resembled the heads of lions, and out of their mouths came fire, smoke and sulfur. A third of mankind was killed by the three plagues of fire, smoke and sulfur that came out of their mouths. The power of the horses was in their mouths and in their tails; for their tails were like snakes, having heads with which they inflict injury.

The four angels that are released by Satan incite the "Kings of the East," China, Japan, and their allies to enter the war. China, with their population being over one billion people can easily conscript a two hundred million man army by themselves. The description John gives of the weapons of this army sounds like some type of futuristic tank type of vehicle shooting out fire, smoke and sulfur out of the barrels of its guns. We will have to wait and see before we find out for sure what they are.

Revelation 9:20-21 The rest of mankind that were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshipping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood--idols that cannot see or hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

Even after all of these plagues have struck the Earth, mankind will still refuse to repent and worship the one true God.

### **The Seventh Trumpet**

Revelation 10:1-7 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. He was holding a little scroll, which lay open in his hand. He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion. When he shouted, the voices of the seven thunders spoke. And when the seven thunders spoke, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven say, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said and do not write it down." Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the Earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

The verses above have been shrouded in mystery for centuries, because immediately after them God changes the subject completely. The rest of chapter ten and part of chapter eleven gives the description of the ministry of the Two Witnesses. They must die before the archangel shouts, and the seventh trumpet sounds, so they can be raised from the dead when the first resurrection takes place. Revelation picks up with the seventh trumpet again after the 1,260 days of their testimony is finished. The 1,260 days of their ministry is not just beginning now when the narrative about them begins. John the Revelator is simply bringing us up to date on what is going on with them just as he has brought us up to date on the seven trumpets. In actuality the sounding of the seventh trumpet occurs after they have been dead and lying in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days. Their ministry started almost 3 ½ years ago at this point as it

started with the commission of the ABD. Their mission is now only a few days from being completed and they will die at the hands of Antichrist. Notice also that in the verse above that the mighty angel gives a loud shout. Compare this to the verse below. It certainly looks like they are speaking about the same moment.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

Revelation 11:15-18 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever." And the twenty-four elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshipped God, saying: "We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great; and for destroying those who destroy the Earth."

When the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, the mystery of God that was announced to his servants the prophets will occur. The mystery is that when the seventh angel blows his trumpet the "first resurrection" will take place. It is the time for rewarding the prophets and the saints, and everyone who has served the Lord down through the centuries. While the saints are being rewarded in heaven, the Lord will pour out his wrath below and destroy those who are destroying the Earth. The Two Witnesses will be the first to go up followed by the rest of the dead. Then the living will go up. Look at all of the clues in the verses above. On top of that it is now time for God's wrath to poured out on an evil world. It could not be poured out while his saints were still alive on the earth. They are now safe beyond the reach of Antichrist and protected from God's Wrath. They are safe at the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb."

1 Corinthians 15:51-52 "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."

We are the generation for whom the book of Revelation was given. Today we can put together all of the bits and pieces of information that God has given us in the bible and lay them out in order as the Spirit of God reveals them to us. Notice, the resurrection occurs "at the last trumpet" which would be the seventh trumpet.

The victory over death and the receiving of a new immortal body is also a part of the mystery. The sounding of the seventh trumpet is also a reference to a Jewish festival celebrated every year in the fall called "the Feast of the Trumpets."

### **The Feast of the Trumpets**

The Feast of the Trumpets is a fall harvest festival. It is celebrated on the first day of the seventh Jewish month, which is in late September or early October on the Roman calendar.

Leviticus 23:24-25 "Say to the Israelites: 'On the first day of the seventh month you are to have a day of rest, a sacred assembly commemorated with trumpet blasts. Do no regular work, but present an offering made to the LORD by fire.'"

The offering made by fire represents those who came through the fire of the tribulation.

Numbers 29:1 "On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. It is a day for you to sound the trumpets."

Matthew 24:31 And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

1 Corinthians 15:52 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.

1 Thessalonians 4:16 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.

Revelation 10:7 "But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

Revelation 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

Revelation 20:4 & 6 And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part 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 mystery of God concerning the feast of the trumpets, the seventh trumpet, and the first resurrection can finally be understood when one lets the bible explain itself by reading the verses concerning the subject in order from Leviticus to Revelation. Also notice that the Feast of the Trumpets begins on the first day of the seventh month. According to the calendar that God gave to Moses, April is the first month of the year, so the seventh month on the Jewish calendar occurs in mid September or early October on our calendar. If God follows his past practice we can expect the first resurrection to take place in the fall during harvest time in Israel. That ties right in with the fact that in other places the resurrection is compared to a harvest.

The feast of the trumpets is the fifth feast on the Lord's calendar. There are two more feasts to be fulfilled after the first resurrection takes place, the feast of Atonement and the feast of the Tabernacles. Atonement represents the punishment and affliction of the Wrath of God being poured out and the repentance of the Jewish people and Tabernacles represents the millennium and eternity when God (Jesus) will dwell with men.

Notice that the souls of those who were beheaded by Antichrist came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The tribulation Saints are certainly included in the rapture or first resurrection.

"The New Year can be said to begin on the 1st of Nisan (Leviticus 23:5) or on Rosh Hashana, the 1st of Tishri (Leviticus 23:24). The Jews have two New Year's dates, basically one in the spring and one in the fall. If the Two Witnesses appear on the spring new years around Passover (which is when the Rabbi's say Elijah will come) then their ministry would be over three years and six months later, about the time of the Feast of the Trumpets in the fall. So, perhaps they would go up and begin the first resurrection on the actual date of the Feast of the Trumpets.

### **A Closer Look at the 3 ½ Year Time Period**

I recently viewed at church a presentation of the old Clarence Larkin type chart outlining the seven year Tribulation period. This has been the standard for years in the Pre-Tribulation prophetic world for explaining the end times. The speaker himself said that his chart was more than 50 years old. Has God revealed anything else to us about the end times since then? Remember the Lord said in Daniel that the end time's prophetic scenario would be sealed until the time of the end. The Larkin material is over 75 years old. Larkin was no doubt one of the greatest biblical prophetic scholars that ever lived. However, he did not live in these, the end times so his reckonings cannot be completely correct. God had not unsealed all of the prophecies then and still has not today or we would not even be undertaking this study. Everyone assumes that the Tribulation will last seven years. This is due in part to Daniel's writings and to the numerous references to 3 ½ years in Revelation.

Again, what if there is only one 3 1/2 year period, and that all references refer to the same time period, that are just describing what different people are doing during that period? That changes things quite a bit. What if all of the references to that period are like watching a television show that keeps switching back and forth from scene to scene showing what each of the characters in the show are doing? By that I mean things that they are doing at the same time in different places. The Antichrist, the Two Witnesses and the Saints, are really the only major players in this drama, until Jesus takes over. Revelation seems to me to be showing us the individual accounts of what the major players in the end times drama are doing simultaneously.

Almost all of the ancient commentaries and allegories of apocryphal end times literature say that there is only one 3 ½ year period for the Tribulation.

### **Bible Verses that Pertain to 3 ½ years**

**Dan. 7:25 He will speak against the Most High and oppress his saints and try to change the set times and the laws. The saints will be handed over to him for a time, times and half a time.**

Unlike some numerical prophecies this one is relatively easy to solve because we have other biblical references.

**Rev. 12:6 The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.**

**Rev. 12:14 The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.**

Revelation refers to an event with the exact same time period and in one place says a time, times and a half a time and in another place 1,260 days. Simple, not complex math tells us that these both refer to a time period of 3 ½ years.

Rev. 11:2 But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.

Rev. 13:5 The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.

The time of Antichrist and his supporters trampling down and ruling is given in Revelation as forty two months.

Rev. 11:3 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

James 5:17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.

Elijah, one of the Two Witnesses has already done exactly what he will do again only on a smaller scale. He withheld the rain by God's command for 3 ½ years in Israel. He also called down fire from heaven on the army of Ahab and Jezebel. Jezebel is a symbol of false religion in Revelation.

Rev. 11:5-6 If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want.

Dan. 12:11-12 "From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.

At first glance the verses from Daniel above could be read to indicate that there are two time periods there. One could take it to mean that there would be 1290 days from the stopping of the sacrifice to the setting up of the ABD and then another 1,335 days until the return of Christ, for a total of 2625 days. That doesn't seem right because it is more than 1,260 days x 2. (2520) Upon looking at it a little closer it would seem that when the daily sacrifice is abolished, immediately thereafter the ABD is set up. Then that situation will continue for 1,290 days before God puts a stop to Antichrist and his desecrations. Following God putting a stop to the ABD it would seem that there are from 30 to 75 more days from the end of the ministry of the Two Witnesses until the rapture is finished. Perhaps God is going to do it slowly so that we can never know the exact time of our own translation to heaven. The dead will probably go up in reverse order of dying with the Two Witnesses going up first all the way back to Abel, then the living will be caught up, oldest to youngest or vice versa. God could easily take 75 days for all of this to transpire to fulfill his word that no one will ever know the "day and hour" of the First Resurrection."

Dan. 8:13-14 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled—the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?" He said to me, "It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated."

In Daniel chapter 8 we have another verse that specifies 2300 days for basically everything that will happen after the ABD until God steps in and puts an end to it. Look at what is to be fulfilled. First it concerns the daily sacrifice which Daniel was told would be stopped by the evil king. Second the rebellion and the ABD, thirdly the trampling of the saints under the foot of the Antichrist. This appears to be the time for what is commonly called the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the tribulation.

At first glance it appears that this refers to a much longer time period than the 1,260 days allotted for the Tribulation. However, that is only if you take it to mean 2300 of each, mornings and evenings. If you read it with a different emphasis, one taking it to mean that there is one evening and one morning added together then the number is exactly double the total number of complete days. You may ask, why would God use such terminology? We may find a clue in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 28:67 In the morning you will say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening, "If only it were morning!"--because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see.

This time period will be the worst ever for Israel, as prophesied throughout the Bible. It is the time of Jacob's trouble. In the morning the persecuted will be able to see the terrible things happening and perhaps see their enemies coming and try to hide. In the evening the darkness comes and they will huddle in their homes in terror, fearful that at any moment a knock may sound at the door followed by the man of the house being dragged off to be killed and the women left in the hands of evil soldiers to be raped. There is no relief either in the morning or the evening. Every 24 hour period will seem like two days of misery.

Zechariah 14:2-3 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses looted and the women raped; half the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

Zechariah 14:4 On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which 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 withdraw northward, and the other half southward.

Acts 1:11-12 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

The prophecies above definitely pertain to the return of Christ whose feet will stand on the Mount of Olives at his return. The point here is that in Daniel 8:14 God may simply be using the mornings and evenings terminology to refer to how both mornings and evenings will be a fearful time for those in that situation in the end times.

Since it takes an evening and a morning to comprise a complete day then you have to divide 2300 by 2 to find out how many days this verse is talking about.  $2300 / 2 = 1,150$ . That could be how long the saints will be fully persecuted by Antichrist after the ABD. Remember, it will take a little time, perhaps 30 to 90 days to allow those who will voluntarily submit to Antichrist to receive their mark on the forehead or on the hand so they may buy or sell. You may wonder why refusing the mark will be such a crime at that time. Two reasons, one Satan through Antichrist wants everyone who will receive it to swear allegiance to him and that is in effect worship. Two, Antichrist's policy to save the world's economic system will probably entail collecting a tax (A tithe, 10%?) from every financial transaction made in the world to fund his program. Anyone who refuses to participate, take the mark and pay the tax will be considered a traitor to the empire.

Lost and deceived people will gladly report anyone without the mark so that they can be executed and their property confiscated to fund the world system for everyone else. Those who report someone will probably be financially rewarded as well. Anyone who refuses the mark will be branded a tax cheat, a traitor and an enemy of the New World Order with the punishment being death, preferably by being publicly beheaded.

These verses may be a tipoff that the worst of the persecution will last for 1,150 days out of the 1,260. The persecution will end when the Two Witnesses are killed as the world will believe that they have won and will be too busy celebrating to worry about killing a few more Christians. With the Christian's leaders dead the unsaved masses will probably think that most of those who were resisting will now fall in line and take the mark. 3 ½ days later the Two Witnesses will rise from the dead followed by the rest of the dead and then the living. Then God's seven bowls of Wrath will begin to be poured out on the world. Satan says check and God says checkmate.

So, we have 1260 days minus 1,150 days which is 110. Those 110 days may be the days allotted for the initial registration period for taking the mark at the beginning and those for the first resurrection at the end. Christian's who are alive at that time can expect a minimum of 1,150 days of persecution, but prepare for 1,260 just in case I am wrong. Although it is confusing now it will all become clear when the Two Witnesses begin preaching and explain to us exactly what will happen.

Dan. 12:7-8 The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed." I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?"

Dan. 12:9 He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end.

Dan. 12:10 Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand.

According to Daniel 12:10 once the vision is unsealed the wise will understand. Since it is still so difficult to understand I would say that either we are all wicked or the prophecy is not unsealed yet. Some might say "you are just stupid because you don't completely accept the explanation given in the 1800's." That could be true, I won't deny it. However, I will keep an open mind until I see the things Jesus talked about coming to pass. If I do not understand it then, I will begin to

get really worried because we will certainly be in the time of the end then and if I do not understand it at that time then I am surely either stupid or wicked. How about you? Where do you fit in?

## Section Eight

### One Will be Taken, the Other Left....

Some people down through the years have mistakenly thought that the next verses pertain to the rapture.

Matt. 24:40-41 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

Luke 17:34-35 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left."

Luke 17:37 "Where, Lord?" they asked. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather."

Jesus answers the question of the disciples in Luke. They will be taken to where the vultures will gather over the dead bodies, to Armageddon.

Rev. 19:17 & 21 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Rev. 16:16 Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

So then, this verse is not talking about the first resurrection, commonly called the "rapture." Some might say, so what? Even if this verse is not talking about the rapture it is a nice picture of it. What is the danger in using it as such?

There is a popular biblical prophecy series called "Left Behind" that is based on a popular interpretation of Matthew chapter 24 and Luke chapter 17. The theory is that the verses above mean that when the resurrection occurs the believers will be taken up to heaven and those left behind will have to face a time of "Great Tribulation." While that may be partially true as those left behind will face the "Wrath of God" the verses above do not pertain to what is commonly called "the rapture." Some may think, why make an issue of it? If the general teaching is correct what difference does it make if some are using scriptures that do not really apply as proof texts?

We will answer the 2nd question first. The church has down through the centuries allowed doctrine to be taught using non biblical terms and sometimes twisting scripture to justify it. After having done so, other people discover the errors and form new denominations and cults to correct the errors. Often the new churches contain more errors (pertaining to other subjects) than the former ones.

One example is the Jehovah's Witnesses. They correctly recognized that the words "Christmas," "Easter," and "Trinity" are not in the Bible. So, they formed a new organization to "correct" those errors, but some of the doctrines of their new church, if it can be called that, are much worse than the errors they wished to correct. How much better it would have been if the early church

would have just used the Biblical terms Tabernacles, (When Christ was tabernacled (tented) in human flesh), Passover (which is incorrectly translated “Easter” in the KJV) and Father, Son and Holy Spirit instead of “Trinity.” By using non biblical terms the church leaders of the fourth century actually caused the cults to come into existence. The cults throw out the baby with the bathwater. They find an error caused by human stupidity and then reject all of the truth contained by an organization. They fix one error only to create a new organization with many more in it. But again, the blame lies with those who put the error into church doctrine in the first place.

Today many people are using the word “rapture” instead of “resurrection” causing great confusion for some. God is not the author of confusion, Satan is. Satan causes confusion to come into the Church and then when someone recognizes the error in the doctrine he (Satan) says to them, (in their mind) “see, that can’t possibly be the right church, they have error in their doctrine” when he (Satan and his demons) are the ones responsible for putting the false doctrine there in the first place. So the wheat is mixed with the tares and many people cannot tell the difference between the two. The bottom line is that we need to use biblical terms and interpret all verses properly if we are going to be teachers. We who teach must do so prayerfully and carefully because we will be judged more strictly.

1Cor. 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

Titus 2:1 You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine.

James 3:1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

The Christian Churches should never use anything but biblical terms and proper Biblical interpretation when setting doctrine to writing. This would eliminate much confusion. The word “rapture” should never be used instead of “resurrection” except in personal conversation. You may ask, why shouldn’t we use the word “rapture” instead of resurrection? For one thing, that term is not one that the old time churches understand. How can you witness to Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Lutherans, Methodists, Episcopalians, etc. when they have no idea what you are talking about? They have all heard the word “resurrection” in their churches, but how many know what the “rapture” is? Not only that, but the word “rapture” comes from the root word “rapio” from which is derived the word “rape.” Christ is not coming to rape the church but to marry his beloved bride.

Latin [Rapio] Verb present active rapiō 1. snatch, grab, carry off to do violence. Descendants: English: rape, raptor, rapture Italian: rapire

The bible uses “resurrection” many times, but “rapture” not even once. Here are only a few examples.

Matt. 22:23 That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.

Matt. 22:28 Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?”

Matt. 22:30 At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be

like the angels in heaven.

Matt. 22:31 But about the resurrection of the dead — have you not read what God said to you,

Luke 14:14 and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Luke 20:35-36 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in that age and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection.

John 11:24-25 Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;

Acts 1:22 beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

Acts 2:31 Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

Acts 4:2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

Acts 4:33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

Acts 17:18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babbler trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.

Acts 17:32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.”

Acts 24:15 and I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Rom. 1:4 and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom. 6:5 If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

1Cor. 15:12 But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?

1Cor. 15:13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised.

1Cor. 15:21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also

through a man.

1Cor. 15:42 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

2Tim. 2:18 who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some.

Heb. 6:2 instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

Rev. 20:5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part 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.

This is what is commonly called “the rapture.” The bible calls it the “First Resurrection or the Resurrection of the righteous.”

Some may ask, why are you using the term “rapture” then in this book? Good question. The reason is because I am writing this book primarily for people who are experts in studying Biblical prophecy, not for novices or unbelievers. I expect that my reading audience is knowledgeable in all aspects of prophetic study. Also notice that at the beginning of this work I included explanation of terminology that would be used in the book including the term “rapture.” Besides that, I am not a Church leader establishing doctrine in official documents. As I said, in personal conversation any words may be used but for publishing a church doctrinal statement only Biblical terms should be used. That would prevent much confusion and arguments.

Now, back to the first verses we began this study with. Once you know that the rapture is just a wrong word substituted for resurrection, it is easy to see that the verses in Matthew 24 and Luke 17 so often quoted in the “Left Behind” series are not resurrection verses at all. In fact, no one in their right mind wants to go where these people who are being taken are going.

Before we continue we will do a brief study on the creatures that God forbade the Israelites to eat.

Lev. 11:13 “These are the birds you are to detest and not eat because they are detestable: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture,

Deut. 14:12 But these you may not eat: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture,

Ex. 22:31 “You are to be my holy people. So do not eat the meat of an animal torn by wild beasts; throw it to the dogs.

Deut. 14:3 Do not eat any detestable thing.

Deut. 14:7 However, of those that chew the cud or that have a split hoof completely divided you may not eat the camel, the rabbit or the coney. Although they chew the cud, they do not have a

split hoof; they are ceremonially unclean for you.

Deut. 14:10 But anything that does not have fins and scales you may not eat; for you it is unclean.

Deut. 14:19 All flying insects that swarm are unclean to you; do not eat them.

Deut. 14:21 Do not eat anything you find already dead. You may give it to an alien living in any of your towns, and he may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner. But you are a people holy to the LORD your God.

Vultures are detestable birds in the bible because they eat things that die of themselves by disease or accident. Buzzards eat road kill. God created all creatures and this is not to say that they are bad animals, their work is to clean the earth. God has made certain animals to represent various themes. Vultures and buzzards eat diseased and rotting flesh. They represent detestable people. Pigs wallow in the mud, representing people wallowing in sin. Rabbits multiply swiftly representing immoral behavior. (That's why playboy uses the rabbit as a symbol) Fish without scales are primarily bottom feeders, representing lazy greedy underhanded people. The hyena laughs at everything representing fools who mock God and have no piety. Swarming insects follow the crowd, wide is the path that leads to destruction. Following the crowd will get you there, to destruction and hell.

All animals in the bible that were forbidden to be used for food in the Old Testament represent a form of sin. Again, this does not mean that they are bad animals; they simply follow the instincts that God gave them. The Israelites were not to eat them though because their (the animals) natural instincts represented behavior that was not right for a human being, a servant of God, who has the capacity to choose between good and evil. We as Christians are not to be led by our natural fleshly desires but by God's Holy Spirit and his Word. Let's look at the verses from Luke again.

Luke 17:34-35 I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left."

Luke 17:37 "Where, Lord?" they asked. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather."

Verse 17:37 explains the previous verses. When asked where they would be taken, Jesus replies that those taken will be going to where the vultures gather, to where there are dead bodies. Where is that? To Armageddon, of course! Those who are left where they are will have the opportunity to live into the millennium and perhaps be saved. Those taken will be killed. Everyone who is taken will be killed at the return of Christ. None will be saved. Every one that is taken will die at Armageddon and be destined for the Lake of Fire. They are headed for eternity in Hell! Who would want to go there?

By the time Armageddon happens the saved will have already been raised from the dead and have been celebrating the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in heaven. The verses in Matthew and Luke about being taken and left pertain to a time after the "First Resurrection" (the rapture) has already taken place. To teach otherwise just causes confusion. When you use these verses to teach the "rapture" it makes it look like it occurs at or after Armageddon, just exactly the

opposite of the point they are trying to get across, that believers will be spared from the “Wrath of God.”

So, on the one hand some people teach that the rapture will take place seven years before the return of Christ. Then they use the “vultures” verse as proof of it which actually would prove that Christians would suffer the Wrath of God and not be taken up until just before Armageddon takes place. They are causing complete confusion by using the wrong verses to substantiate their position. This is how unsaved but intelligent people come to believe that the Bible contradicts itself and therefore do not accept any of what it says. It is not the Bible that is in error, but some of the people who try to interpret it.

**1Th. 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,**

If you read Matthew 24 from verse three onward you will find that the verses used to represent the resurrection occur at the very end of the tribulation period, but before the Wrath of God.” We have already looked closely at the Olivet Discourse in Matthew, Mark and Luke but let’s review again a few verses this time as they pertain to the first resurrection.

**Matt. 24:3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. “Tell us,” they said, “when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”**

First of all the disciples want to know about his (2nd) coming and the end of the age. We looked earlier at all of the verses leading up to the ABD so we will fast forward to Matthew 24:14.

**Matt. 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.**

Those who stand firm in their faith until the end will be saved, and the gospel will be preached to all nations before the end comes. The end can mean the end of ones life or the end of this present world system, in other words when the first resurrection takes place.

**Matt. 24:15 “So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—**

Then the Abomination of Desolation will take place, which Paul describes as Antichrist declaring himself to be God while sitting in the Jewish temple.

**Matt. 24:21-22 For then there will be great distress, unequaled from the beginning of the world until now—and never to be equaled again. If those days had not been cut short, no one would survive, but for the sake of the elect those days will be shortened.**

Unless Christ stepped in and put a stop to mankind’s madness, he would destroy himself and the planet, at Satan’s inspiration no doubt.

**Luke 17:22-25 Then he said to his disciples, “The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. Men will tell you, ‘There he is!’ or ‘Here he is!’ Do not go running off after them. For the Son of Man in his day will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. But first he must suffer many**

things and be rejected by this generation.

False Christ's, especially one false Christ, the Antichrist, will be prevalent in the end times.

Matt. 24:29-31 "Immediately after the distress of those days" "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken." "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

Matthew 24:31 is where the first resurrection takes place. The angels will gather all the righteous from one end of heaven to the other. It will occur just as Paul and John wrote, with a loud trumpet call. The dead will rise first and then the living will be caught up to meet the Lord Jesus Christ in the air.

1Th. 4:16-17 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.

1Cor. 15:52 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.

Rev. 10:7 But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

Rev. 11:15 The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."

Rev. 11:18 The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth."

When the seventh angel sounds the last (seventh) trumpet referred to in the book of Revelation, the first resurrection will take place. Jesus, Paul and John all express this view in the scriptures. Following the first resurrection i.e. "the rapture" God will gather the most evil people of the world, those who destroy the earth and persecuted the saints and took the mark of Antichrist, to Armageddon. There they will be destroyed at his return. These are the people who will be taken in Matt 24:40-41. Those who are destroying the earth will be destroyed and later cast into the Lake of Fire.

In the previous verses Jesus took the believers up in the first resurrection. Now he reviews things and follows with what will happen to the unjust before his actual return.

Now is the time when the people who are "Left Behind," those who missed the first resurrection will face the "Wrath of God and Armageddon, and later the Lake of Fire."

Luke 17:26 "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man.

Luke 17:28-30 “It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. “It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

Not even one person was saved after Noah entered the ark. All died in the flood in unbelief. Everyone who takes the Mark of the Beast will be gathered to Armageddon and die. Physical death will not be the worst of their problems though, it is what comes afterwards. That does not mean everyone on earth will be killed. Some who did not take the “Mark of the Beast” will remain alive at the return of Christ. You may ask, why would some people not take the mark if they were not Christians? Well, some people just don’t like the governments of the world or anyone telling them what to do. They refused to take the mark because they were anti-government not because they were Pro-Christian. Some may be survivalists hiding in the mountains and underground sanctuaries.

Matt. 10:28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Rev. 14:9-11 A third angel followed them and said in a loud voice: “If anyone worships the beast and his image and receives his mark on the forehead or on the hand, he, too, will drink of the wine of God’s fury, which has been poured full strength into the cup of his wrath. He will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.”

Let’s look at some verses about Armageddon and the great feast for the birds.

Zeph. 3:8 Therefore wait for me,” declares the LORD, “for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them—all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed.

Rev. 19:17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God,

Rev. 16:16 Then they gathered the kings together to the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

Rev. 19:19-21 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Those who are taken per the verses in Matthew and Luke will be taken to a great supper that God almighty is preparing for his servants, the birds. Almost like something out of an Alfred Hitchcock movie. These are really, really angry birds, but soon they will be drunk and happy as they are stuffed from eating the flesh and drinking the blood of both kings and commoners, all those who have taken the “Mark of the Beast.”

Jesus follows up in Matthew with a warning to believers to watch for his return. This warning pertains to watching for all of the signs that occur before the first resurrection, not after it. The first resurrection took place when the angels gathered his elect from one end of heaven to the other. You don't have to watch for the first resurrection after it has already taken place. Some may have gotten confused by not comparing the verses in Matthew with those in Luke where Jesus explains where those who are taken are going, to the bird feast, and they are the delicacies. Jesus follows up the entire chapter of Luke 24 with a command to watch for the signs of the end times. We are seeing them now.

Matt. 24:42-44 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Matt. 24:45-47 "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Matt. 24:48-51 But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, 'My master is staying away a long time,' and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus also gives an explanation concerning the gatherings of the righteous and the wicked at the end of the age in Matthew chapter 13.

Matt. 13:36-42 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matt. 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

The bottom line is this: Make sure you go up in the first resurrection. Don't wait, take the mark so you can have money to eat, and be one of those taken to be killed and eaten yourself by detestable flesh eating birds of prey as outlined in Matt 24 and Luke 17, and then cast into hell after that. What a horrible ending for a person's life that would be. Killed at the return of Christ, having ones body eaten by birds and then being cast into the Lake of Fire. Millions will suffer this fate by their own choice. The gospel will have been preached to all nations before this happens and the Two Witnesses will have performed miracles proving that Jesus is the true Messiah. Anyone cast into the "Lake of Fire" will have chosen of their own free will to be there. Sad but true.

Luke 19:27 But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.”

Rev. 19:21 The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

Now nearing the end of his discourse the Lord warns his people again to keep watch.

Matt. 24:42 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

Luke 21:36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

Matt. 24:44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

There will be rewards for those who are watching for the Master’s return and faithfully doing his work while he was away.

Matt. 25:23 “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

Matt. 24:45-47 “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Mark 13:34-37 It’s like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. “Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: ‘Watch!’”

So, Jesus outlined many good reasons for watching for his return and for being a faithful and wise servant in his absence.

## Section Nine

### Jezebel

What does the name Jezebel mean?

Answer: The name Jezebel means "Baal exalts" or "Baal is husband to" or "unchaste." (Strong #348) [http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What\\_does\\_the\\_name\\_Jezebel\\_mean](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_does_the_name_Jezebel_mean)

Rev. 2:20 Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.

So, we have already seen in the Old Testament a picture of what the Two Witnesses will do. Ahab and Jezebel represent the Antichrist and the False Prophet whom Elijah and his partner Enoch will prophesy against in the end times. Jezebel in particular represents false religion as it was she who was the propagator of the religion of Baal during the time she was queen of Israel. She was named after Baal her name meaning Jez-Baal or Baal Exalts. This could be a tip off that Antichrist will claim that he is Baal, the God who created the heavens and the earth. The false god Baal was obviously an invention of Satan who is sometimes called Baal-Zebub or Beelzebub.

Matthew 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."

Luke 11:18 If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub.

Beelzebub is also sometimes called Satan's most powerful fallen angel and the keeper of hell. I have read that his name means Lord of the Flies or "Keeper of the Dung."

1 Kings 16:30 Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him.

1 Kings 16:31 He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him.

(1 Kings 18:4 NIV) While Jezebel was killing off the Lord's prophets, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them in two caves, fifty in each, and had supplied them with food and water.)

Jezebel murdered the Lord's prophets. This is similar to what the Antichrist and the False Prophet will do when they kill the Two Witnesses and persecute and martyr believers.

1 Kings 19:1-3 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of

them." Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there,

1 Kings 21:23 "And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: 'Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.'

1 Kings 21:24 "Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds of the air will feed on those who die in the country."

1 Kings 21:25 NIV There was never a man like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife.

(1 Kings 21:26 NIV) He behaved in the vilest manner by going after idols, like the Amorites the LORD drove out before Israel.)

(2 Kings 9:10 NIV) As for Jezebel, dogs will devour her on the plot of ground at Jezreel, and no one will bury her.'" Then he opened the door and ran.

Here is another tip or at least a similarity. Jezebel met her end at Jezreel and the Antichrist and the False Prophet will meet their end at the same place along with millions of their followers. The armies of the world will someday gather at the site shown in the picture below and be destroyed at the coming of Jesus Christ. The millions of dead bodies there will then be eaten by birds.

The valley or plain of Megiddo is part of the plain of Esdraelon (also known as the valley of Jezreel), which is the great battlefield of Palestine. Many decisive battles in ancient times, such as the battle of Megiddo where Egypt's army fought and killed Judah's King Josiah (2Kings 23:29-30, 2Chronicles 35:20-35), have been fought in Megiddo.

The word Armageddon, which means "Mount of Megiddo" occurs only once in the Bible. In the sixteenth chapter of Revelation this word is used to designate the place of the final conflict between Jesus Christ and the Antichrist. The Plain of Jezreel is also called Armageddon

<http://www.biblestudy.org/biblepic/megiddo.html>

## Section Ten

### The Three and One Half Years Summary



Picture: The Valley of Jezreel

Now, we have looked at every biblical verse I can find that pertain to the 3 ½ year time period. If you know of any I missed please email me at: [countdownto6000@aol.com](mailto:countdownto6000@aol.com)

Do you see anywhere where there is a clue that the Tribulation consists of two halves? Well, if you don't you are in good company. It sounds to me as if both the Two Witnesses and the saints are being persecuted at the same time. It also sounds as if a remnant of Israeli believers (The Woman) will be protected during the time of this same persecution. This might be the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel who will live to greet Christ at his return. Therefore they are sealed so that they cannot be killed. God has placed them off limits to Satan, so he attacks their spiritual cousins, the Christians. This too will become clear as the time nears.

In all we have six direct references to the 3 ½ year time period as it pertains to the end times. We have one other reference that pertains to ancient Israel. We have one from Daniel in the Old Testament pertaining to Antichrist persecuting the saints for a time, times and a half a time. We have one in Revelation pertaining to the gentiles ruling over Jerusalem for forty two months. We have one reference in Revelation stating that Antichrist will rule for forty two months. We have two References in Revelation pertaining to the protection of Jewish believers for a time times and a half a time and 1,260 days. We have one in Revelation pertaining to the 1,260 day Ministry of the Two Witnesses. We also have the reference in James that tells us Elijah withheld the rain in ancient Israel for 3 ½ years which we connect to him re-doing if he is one of the Two Witnesses. We also have two references from Daniel to a longer time period, 1,290 days and 1,335 days.

So, in all there are seven references to a 3 ½ year time period in the Bible, nine counting the two from Daniel. I have them all listed in section seven. Check and see, do you find anywhere where it might indicate that those yet unfulfilled are not speaking of the same time period?

I do not see it. I see the City of Jerusalem ruled by gentiles for forty two months. I see Antichrist ruling over Jerusalem and the gentiles for forty two months. I see him persecuting Israeli's and chasing them out of Israel for 1,260 days. Then I see him intensifying his persecution of the Christian saints because he is so angry that the Israeli's escaped. These things all seem to be happening in one 1,260 day time period. Where is the indication of two halves? If there are two halves how is it that Antichrist is trampling down Jerusalem, desecrating the Temple, persecuting the Israelis and the saints, before he ever comes to full power? How would this be possible before he made his move to become dictator of the world with the ABD?

Do you get what I am saying? How could Antichrist persecute the saints of God before he had the political and military authority to do so? And if he is not doing it in the first half then he must be doing all of them in what is commonly called the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Whichever half you delete first or second it amounts to the same thing, only one 3 ½ year time period for everything prophesied to take place.

**Rev. 17:12-13 & 17 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.**

Antichrist, the Beast, cannot begin his reign of terror on a worldwide basis until he has received the power from the ten kings who rule over the majority of the earth. When he receives that power he persecutes Israel and the Christians and the Two Witnesses appear on the scene and expose him as a fraud with their testimony and Miracles.

I'm talking only about the three different events that the bible states are 3 ½ years in duration. Of them, only the two can reasonably occur in what is called the first half. Generally only Mid-Tribulation or Pre-Wrath people put the Two Witnesses ministry in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half. Many realize though that the Two Witnesses will call down at God's command the Seven Trumpets. As we have seen from the text it is actually the angels of God who are causing the plagues to happen working invisibly behind the scenes. In a sense the two prophets are merely revealing and reporting what God is doing to the world. Not much different than an anchor person on a television news channel.

Without the Two Witnesses or the Seven Trumpets occurring in the first half there is nothing left to substantiate its existence. The entire scenario would need to be rewritten. What could be placed there? Certainly not any of the other 3 ½ year periods as they are clearly identified as belonging to the later stages of the Tribulation. So someone would have to find some as yet unfulfilled prophetic events that have no timeline and place them in there and say here is what is going to happen in the first half of the Tribulation and those events will last for 3 ½ years. That is why the time of the ministry of the Two Witnesses is so important. They and the trumpets are the key to understanding the timeline of the Tribulation.

At any rate it certainly seems as if all of the references to a 3 ½ year time period refer to the same one.

So, what exactly does that mean to Christians? It just means that if true, things are going to get a lot worse than we previously thought before the rapture takes place. Given a seven year

Tribulation period Biblical Scholars thought that Christians would get away sort of scot-free and only the Israeli's would be persecuted. That theory would prove untrue if the seven year period was really only 3 ½ years. It means that things will be a lot worse before Christians are removed from the earth than previously thought and taught.

That does not make the rapture Post Tribulation or even Mid Tribulation. If the Tribulation doesn't start until 3 ½ years before the return of Christ then Pre-Tribulation is 3 ½ years away from his return. That means that a lot more bad things need to be in place before a Pre-Tribulation rapture could take place so Antichrist would start his madness immediately upon coming to power, his first act would be the ABD. His last act before God sends his wrath would be the execution of the Two Witnesses.

So, how does all of this affect the timing of the rapture? For now, those opinions would remain the same but applied to a shortened time period, but I have a new idea to show you later. Pre-Tribulation would be just before Antichrist commits the ABD. Mid-Tribulation would be 21 months into it, (half of forty two months and post-tribulation would be right after the return of Christ, Nothing at all has changed there. Only the length of the Tribulation period has changed. There is also a Pre-Wrath theory that surmises that believers will be removed just before God pours out the seven bowls or vials of his wrath. When would that happen? Sometime near the end it would seem. You may still hold to any opinion you like in that department. All that changes is that the Tribulation lasts for 3 ½ years instead of seven.

Now, am I claiming that this is absolutely true? That some angel came down and told me about it. Absolutely not. Perhaps the old way is the correct way. I merely put it out here because I have been studying the early documents of the church for more than thirty years and that is what they all seem to indicate. Almost everything that was written Pre-Augustine was of the opinion that the Tribulation lasts for only 3 ½ years. I think we have to give at least a little bit of credibility to those who lived so close to the time of the Apostles, some who were taught prophetic truth directly by the Apostles John and Paul. (Polycarp and Barnabas)

I have found that in doctrinal matters other than prophecy the church was in pretty good shape until about 325 AD when Christianity was legalized in the Roman Empire. What happened after Constantine claimed to have become a Christian is that all kinds of unspiritual people joined the church to curry the favor of the Emperor. They brought with them their pagan baggage. They joined the Church but were not truly converted, and soon pure doctrine and also true prophetic teaching was going out the window. As long as there was persecution many of the corrupt people stayed out of the church. As soon as it became a political badge of honor to be a Christian everybody wanted to get in on the act to please the Emperor and get promoted to a better job.

Not much different than today. Politicians cater to whatever group they think will support their election. Right wing, left wing, Christian, gay, male, female, Hispanic or any other majority or minority group a politician thinks will help him or her get elected and stay in power. That is what happened to the Christian Church as well as the Greek, Roman and American governments. So, did prophetic teaching get corrupted or not? You can be the judge of that for now, but soon we will all find out. If we live long enough we will find out in this life, if not I'm sure we will know soon after we die.

It is best in my opinion to be somewhat open minded on the topic of prophecy lest we teach others falsehood and lose some of our rewards at the judgment seat of Christ.

Personally I'm just waiting and watching. It doesn't make any difference to me except that I would like to know and teach true doctrine and prophetic interpretation before the return of Christ. I couldn't care less about being right, I just want to know what the truth is and share it with others.

We have looked at the biblical and non biblical references to these things from the first 400 years of the Church age. If you desire to do so you can read these documents for yourself in their entirety at: [www.earlychristianwritings.com](http://www.earlychristianwritings.com)

## Section Eleven

### The Resurrection per Daniel Chapter 12

At this time along with continuing to see how the entire set of end times Bible prophecies fit together to show a 3 ½ year Tribulation we are going to begin to take a look at the verses that indicate when the first resurrection might take place. So, we are going to look now at the timing of the first resurrection. We are going to look at all of the verses we can find about it and try to see where it fits in the prophetic scenario.

As you read the verse below, doesn't it sound a lot like what Jesus said about the time of distress? Then notice, right after the distress everyone whose name is in the book (of life) will be delivered. In order to be with the Lord the living must be lifted off of the earth and the dead must be raised.

**Daniel 12:1** "At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people--everyone whose name is found written in the book--will be delivered.

**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.**

There will be a time of distress like has never happened before in the history of the world. I think it is safe to say here that Daniel and Jesus are talking about the same time period. They are both talking about the "Great Tribulation."

One of the jobs of Michael the Archangel in the Bible is to be the protector of Israel. We are told in Daniel 12:1 that at some future time he will arise. This means at some time prior to this he stopped holding back Satan from persecuting Israel, which was his job for thousands of years. When God commands him to do so he will once again resume his role as protector of the territory of the Holy Land.

**1 Corinthians 5:5** **hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.**

God at times turns us over to Satan because we have refused to obey his word and walk in his ways. God will turn Israel over to Satan until they realize that they crucified the Jewish Messiah and repent.

**(Daniel 12:2 NIV)** **Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.**

Daniel in his writings does not differentiate between the first resurrection and the resurrection of the wicked 1000 years later. This is common in the Old Testament similar to the prophecies in Isaiah that do not separate the first and second comings of Christ. God gave minimal information in some cases to the Old Testament prophets. Later when the Holy Spirit inspired the New Testament writers he gave us more detailed information. The important point here is that the first resurrection follows the arising of Michael to rescue Israel.

Some may say wait a minute; the rapture is separate from the first resurrection. To that I would say there is not even one verse of biblical evidence to substantiate such a thing. According to Revelation there are only two general resurrections left to occur, the first one and another one 1000 years later. So far there has only been one, the resurrection of Jesus Christ where the one raised from the dead stayed alive permanently. The bible says Christ was the firstfruits, not a rapture occurring seven years before the first general resurrection. Some claim that the rapture is going to fulfill the firstfruits prophecy, not Jesus. The scriptures refute that idea as Jesus has already fulfilled that prophecy.

1 Corinthians 15:20 But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

Christ is the firstfruits and the next resurrection call it whatever you will is for all those who belong to Christ. There is only one resurrection coming before the thousand years are ended and that is the first one. That is the one that is the one Daniel, Jesus, Paul and John in Revelation are talking about.

Revelation 20:5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part 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 Bible is clear, there are two general resurrections left to happen. Whenever the rapture happens there will be no more general resurrections until one thousand years later. If you put the rapture before the martyrdom of the Israeli's and the Saints then they must stay dead for 1000 years. However, that cannot be the case because God promises them that they only have to wait just a little bit longer for their fellow servants to be killed and then they will be avenged and the implication is that they will then receive their new bodies.

Revelation 6:9-11 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, "How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?" Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been was completed.

Those who are martyred during the Tribulation have to wait for the first resurrection to take place to get out from underneath the figurative altar which will then be followed by the Wrath of God being poured out upon the inhabitants of the earth. They are conscious but are waiting to receive their new spiritual bodies.

Daniel 12:3 Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

Daniel goes on to say that those who are wise will shine like the stars throughout all eternity. This will be a part of the inheritance of the servants of God. Their badge of righteousness throughout all eternity will be the glow, halo or aura that surrounds them.

Daniel 12:7 The man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, lifted his right hand and his left hand toward heaven, and I heard him swear by him who lives forever, saying, "It will be for a time, times and half a time. When the power of the holy people has been finally broken, all these things will be completed."

Daniel is told by the angel that it would take a time, times and a half a time to complete the things he had visualized. This is a double prophecy. It will take 3 ½ years for the Tribulation to be completed but Daniel also lived at the midpoint of human history, through the year 3500 from the creation of Adam. Daniel saw future history up until the year 7000 and then beyond out into eternity. 3500 years is a time, times and a half a time multiplied by 1000. We see half of a seven being used for days, (the time the two witnesses lie in the streets of Jerusalem) we see it used for the tribulation, 3 ½ years and we see it used by the 1000's, 3500 years. God seems to love the number seven and also half of seven.

Daniel 12:8-10 I heard, but I did not understand. So I asked, "My lord, what will the outcome of all this be?" He replied, "Go your way, Daniel, because the words are closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand."

Will you understand?

Daniel 12:11 "From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days.

Daniel 12:12 Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days.

There is a blessing here for those who make it to the 1,335 days. Could this be the same blessing that awaits those who live to and go up in the first resurrection?

Daniel 12:13 "As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance."

Daniel is promised that he is one of the saved and will rise from the dead at the time of the end and will receive his reward. Do you see it? Daniel must be included in the first resurrection, the one he has seen in his vision. God has promised him that. What that means is simply this: Daniel and the Old Testament saints are all going up together. Now, the verses below prove that they will go up before the living are raptured.

### **The Pre-Wrath First Resurrection, The Dead in Christ Shall Rise First...**

1Th. 4:13-14 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

1Th. 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain

unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep.

1Th. 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

1Th. 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

1Th. 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The verses above are the primary scriptures that people think of when they discuss the “rapture” of the church, especially verse 14:17. However, in discussing the subject with most people it seems that they brush right over the resurrection of the dead saints at the time of the rapture, before the living saints. Everyone seems to envision Jesus taking the living believers off of the earth seven years prior to his return and then the rest of the dead being raised at another special resurrection at the end of the tribulation period. This viewpoint is not scriptural. The dead saints must go first according to Paul’s writing to the Thessalonians. You may ask, what difference does it make when the dead go up? Well, it makes a lot of difference if we want find out when the rapture takes place. If we can find out when the dead go up, then we know that the living will immediately follow, and that will be the time of the rapture of the living that everyone is looking for and desiring to partake in! Revelation 11:18 tells us that the Old Testament prophets and saints will be raised at the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Since we just read in Thessalonians that the dead precede the living I cannot understand how anyone can come up with any scriptural opinion that places the rapture before the seventh trumpet. If you think so I challenge you to find even one verse that has the living saints going up before the dead saints.

So, our question is, when will the righteous dead be raised? We cannot base our conclusion on just one verse. We must search the scriptures and find many verses that say the same thing in order to establish sure doctrine. If we can answer the question of when the righteous dead will be raised then question we can pinpoint the timing of the rapture in the course of the prophetic scenario. Luckily, we don’t have to guess. The scriptures tell us when the resurrection of the righteous dead will happen and also the unrighteous dead.

### **The Dead Will Be Raised at “The Last Day”**

John 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

John 6:40 For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:44 “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:24 Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” (Lazarus, one of the righteous dead will go up in the rapture at the beginning of the “Last Day.”)

John 12:48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. (The wicked will also rise on the "Last Day" but at the very end of the 1000 years. More on that later.)

The resurrection of the dead will take place at "the last day." Some may think that "the last day" is just a euphemism or a metaphor meaning "the end of time." For those of us who believe in the 7000 year theory of God's program for mankind it means much, much more than that. It also meant much more than that to the early church fathers, such as Barnabas.

Paul had a partner in preaching the gospel named Barnabas. He also wrote a book known as "the Epistle of Barnabas." This book was read in the early churches and used as a tool to assist in understanding the scriptures. Although this book is not a part of the bible, it is useful because it takes us back to the early days of the church and shows us what was being taught about prophecy while the apostles were still alive. Barnabas no doubt received his teaching from Paul who received it directly from the Lord by divine revelation

Gen. 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

**Barnabas 23:1-6** "Furthermore, it is written concerning the Sabbath, in the Ten Commandments, which God spoke on Mount Sinai to Moses, face to face; Sanctify the Sabbath of the Lord with pure hands and a clean heart. And elsewhere he said; If your children shall keep my Sabbaths, then will I put my mercy upon them. And even in the beginning of creation he makes mention of the Sabbath. And God made in six days the works of his hands; and he finished them on the seventh day, and he rested on the seventh day, and he sanctified it. Consider, my children, what that signifies. He finished them in six days. The meaning of it is this; that in six thousand years the Lord God will bring all things to an end. For with him one day is as a thousand years; as he himself testifies, saying, Behold this day shall be as a thousand years. Therefore, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished. And what is it that he said, and he rested the seventh day: he means this; that when his Son shall come, and abolish the season of the Wicked One, and judge the ungodly; and shall change the sun and the moon, and the stars; then he shall gloriously rest in that seventh day."

Barnabas goes on to say in his book, that following the one thousand year heavenly Sabbath, the eighth day, the new world will begin, a time without time.

Throughout the bible, God gives us clues that the present world as we know it, will last for seven thousand years. The last one thousand years will be the heavenly Sabbath day, one thousand years of peace under the rule of Jesus Christ, followed by the eighth day, the new creation.

Psalms 90:4 KJV For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.

2 Peter 3:2-4 & 8-9 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.

Notice the clue that Peter gives us, that a day is to the Lord like a thousand years. These scoffers today and in the future will forget that we are counting time on the Roman calendar, which is about 30 years ahead of God's calendar as best we can calculate. God's calendar for human events began on the day and the hour that he created Adam. We don't know exactly when that was, but we can come pretty close to calculating when 4000 years were completed.

Note: many thought that the 6000 years would be completed in about the year 2000, but they forgot that the Roman calendar is at least 30 years in error. The year 2000 on the Roman calendar was only about 1,970 years from the end of the first 4000 years, which occurred at either the baptism or ascension of Jesus Christ. If our calendar and the 6000 year theory were both correct Christ would have already returned, so we know for certain that something is incorrect.

**Gen. 2:17** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

**Gen. 5:5** Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

The bible states that Adam lived 930 years, but it also states that Adam would die on the day he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and Eve along with him. Did God make a mistake, or did he mean something else.

The book of Jubilees also states that one day in heaven is like a thousand years. (Jubilees is an ancient Jewish rabbinical history book)

**Jubilees 4:28-29** And Adam died, and he lacked seventy years from one thousand years, for a thousand years are like one day in the testimony of heaven. And therefore it was written concerning the tree of knowledge: "On the day which you eat of it you will die." And for this reason he did not complete the years of this day, for in it he died.

God also gives us another clue in the bible that the world will go on as normal for six thousand years when he states that the punishment of the Jews for rejecting Christ will last for two thousand years.

**Hosea 5:14-15** "For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a great lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces and go away; I will carry them off, with no one to rescue them. Then I will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me."

The preceding verses are referring to God's dealings with the Jews after they rejected Christ. Notice in Hosea 5:15 he says that he will go back to his place. This happened when Christ ascended to sit at the right hand of the father after being raised from the dead, he went back to his place, heaven, in approximately 30 AD according to our best estimates.

**Mark 16:19** After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God.

He will not return until the time comes when the Jews admit their guilt in rejecting their Messiah, and seek Christ.

Hosea 6:1 & 2 "Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days, he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence."

This may require some thinking here. We note in verse 2 above that a countdown started when Jesus Christ ascended into heaven. The countdown is this; that Christ will revive and restore Israel 2000 years (2 days) after he left and ascended to heaven. We know it wasn't 48 hours after he left (two 24 hour days) or none of us living today would have been born before the return of Christ. So, this verse must be referring to two heavenly days of one thousand years each. Notice also that it says that on the third day they will live in his presence. This is a reference to the Millennium, when Christ will reign on Earth.

The thinking part comes here; if the 7000 year theory is correct, then when Jesus ascended 4000 years must have been completed. Why? Because if you add 2000 more years to 4000 you get 6000. If the theory is correct then based on our best estimates of time from the day Jesus ascended into heaven, allowing 30 years of error in our calendar, (+ or - 15) then the 6000 years will be completed sometime between 2015 and 2045.

So, all we have to do is wait and watch and we will see if this theory is true or not. If it is not true, that is no reflection on God being true to his word. We or I have simply misinterpreted the scriptures. If it is true many alive today will live until the rapture takes place and be a part of the generation that never sees death.

1Cor. 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

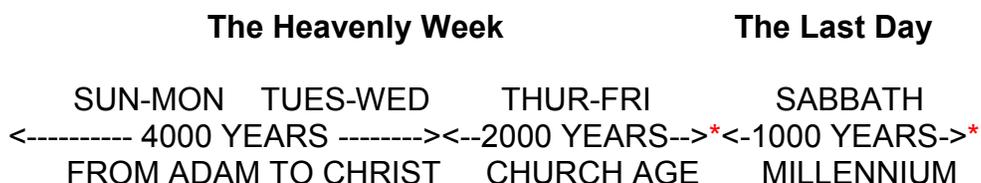
1Cor. 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

When our earthly body falls off and is replaced with a new body, the old one is technically dead, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God in Heaven.

God cannot lie, and he will keep every jot and tittle, (similar to every comma and apostrophe) of his word.

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Matt. 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.



The red asterisks in the diagram above signify where the two general resurrections mentioned in the bible are said to take place. One at the beginning of the last day (the rapture) and one near the end of the last day. (The resurrection before the "last judgment," sometimes called the great white throne judgment or the judgment of the wicked.) We can be sure that is quite correct

because we have more scripture from the book of Revelation that gives us more details. The diagram below simplifies the two resurrections as far as timing goes.

Rapture - 1000 years - 2nd Resurrection

Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy are those who have part 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."

Rev. 20:5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) (2nd resurrection)

Revelation states clearly that there will be 1000 years between the two resurrections, the first being the resurrection of the righteous commonly called the rapture and the second being the resurrection of the wicked and of the righteous who died after the first resurrection took place. Take a look at the chart again and you will see clearly where the two resurrections take place in the prophetic scenario.

Now, at last, if you have read this far, we are getting back to the rapture. We see from scripture that there are only two general resurrections left to occur, at least that is all that we are told about. If there are any more than these two they are pure speculation because there is no scriptural evidence, at least none that I have ever seen to indicate a third general resurrection seven years before the return of Christ. There have been individual resurrections in the scriptures, one being Lazarus, but other than Jesus Christ, who received his new spiritual body after his resurrection, they have all died again. Jesus is the only one alive who currently has his immortal body.

So, if there is another general (meaning large and comprehensive) resurrection other than the two mentioned in Revelation, there is nothing about it in the bible. If there is another one, Paul didn't know about it or didn't tell us about it. In the verse below he was only speaking about the believer's resurrection, not the last judgment. If you read 1st Corinthians chapter fifteen you will see that clearly.

1Cor. 15:23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

So, now comes the question? If there are only two general resurrections left to happen, (and the rapture has to be a general one, not a special one because it includes all of the dead saints) when will it happen? By that I do not mean in what year will it happen, but when will it happen in the sequence of other prophetic events? We know where the resurrections happen now in relation to the millennium, but how about in relation to the tribulation period? The answer to that is that it must take place before God's Wrath is poured out, which we will look at next. So, the rapture will take place after the ABD but before God's Wrath and Christ's return. (Christ returns with his saints so they must be raised before he comes back) So, now we have a general idea of where the rapture fits in on the prophetic timeline, after the ABD but before the Wrath.

Here is the timeline: The ABD followed by the rapture, followed by Wrath, the return of Christ, and the Millennium. Let's look at the Wrath of God next.

## Section Twelve

### The Wrath of God

Those who rejected the gospel and God's mercy must now suffer his wrath.

Luke 17:26-30 KJV And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

The same day that Noah entered the ark, the rain began to fall on the Earth, and he was in the ark for one year. The same day that lot left Sodom fire and brimstone began to fall from heaven and destroy those cities. Likewise, the same day that the first resurrection takes place, and the Lord has taken his people to safety, his wrath will begin to fall on the world. On that day fire and brimstone will rain on the great cities of the Earth. As horrible as that is, it is only the very beginning of the terrible calamities that will come upon the Earth before Christ returns with his saints.

After the harvest of the righteous at the first resurrection, the armies of the nations of the world that hate God and his son, Jesus Christ, will begin to prepare themselves to gather at Armageddon. They will have about one year to accomplish this and to bring their best weapons of war with them, to do battle with the Lord when he returns.

Revelation 14:17-20 Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the Earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the Earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia. (180 miles)

The harvesting of the grapes and throwing them into the winepress is referring to the gathering together of the armies of the world to the Mid-East, to Armageddon. 180 miles is the distance from Armageddon, down the Jordan River and into the aptly named Red Sea.

Joel 3:9 Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men draw near and attack. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, 'I am strong!' Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, O LORD! Let the nations be roused; let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side. (The valley of Jehoshaphat is the same place as Armageddon)

Zephaniah 1:14-15 & 2:1-3 & 8 The great day of the LORD is near-near and coming quickly. Listen! The cry on the day of the LORD will be bitter, the shouting of the warrior there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. I will bring distress on the people and they

will walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them; all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger.

Jeremiah the prophet also wrote about day of the Lords anger and compared it to cups or bowls filled with the wine of God's wrath. He prophesied that God would make all the nations of the world drink of it. This is very similar to the prophecies in Revelation.

Jeremiah 25:15-17 & 30-33 This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this cup filled with the wine of my wrath and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it. When they drink it, they will stagger and go mad because of the sword I will send among them. "So I took the cup from the Lord's hand and made all the nations to whom he sent me drink it: All the kingdoms on the face of the Earth. "The LORD will roar from on high; he will thunder from his holy dwelling and roar mightily against his land. He will shout like those who tread the grapes, shout against all who live on the Earth. The tumult will resound to the ends of the Earth, for the LORD will bring charges against the nations; he will bring judgment on all mankind and put the wicked to the sword," declares the LORD. This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation; a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the Earth. "At that time those slain by the LORD will be everywhere; from one end of the Earth to the other. They will not be mourned or gathered up or buried, but will be like refuse lying on the ground.

Notice that those slain by the Lord will be found from one end of the Earth to the other. Those who have taken the mark of the Beast will die when Christ returns even if they do not go to Armageddon to fight against Christ.

### **The Seven Bowls of God's Wrath**

We are going back in time now pre-Armageddon to take a closer look at the seven bowls of God's Wrath which culminate with Armageddon.

Revelation 15:1 KJV And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.

The seven last plagues are described as seven bowls, filled with the wrath of God, which are about to be poured out upon the Earth.

Revelation 15:5-8 & 16:1 "After this I looked and in heaven the temple, that is, the tabernacle of the Testimony, was opened. Out of the temple came the seven angels with the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean, shining linen and wore golden sashes around their chests. Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls filled with the wrath of God, who lives for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power, and no one could enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were completed. Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, "Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the Earth."

The whole world is now filled with people who know of God but hate him. They rejected the gospel when it was preached to them by the Two Witnesses. The first resurrection has taken place before their eyes, and still they refuse to repent. Since they have rejected the Lord, they will now experience his Wrath. The only exception being those people whom God has sealed to

live through the time of Wrath until his return. Even those survivalist's who did not take the mark will suffer under the horrible pounding the earth and it's inhabitants will undergo.

Revelation 16:2 The first angel went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly and painful sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshipped his image.

All of those who have taken the mark of the beast will now break out with ugly and painful sores. It would have been better for them to have died at the hands of Antichrist, than to have accepted his mark and suffer these plagues from God.

Revelation 16:3-7 The second angel poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died. The third angel poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. Then I heard the angel in charge of the waters say: "You are just in these judgments, you who are and who were, the Holy One, because you have so judged; for they have shed the blood of your saints and prophets, and you have given them blood to drink as they deserve." And I heard the altar respond: "Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments."

Earlier, during the time of the second and third trumpet judgments, one third of the world's water was poisoned. Drinking water was scarce, but still available. Now, during the time of the second and third bowl judgments, all of the world's water is polluted. But, as Gods word says, it is only fitting that the false church, the False Prophet, and the people who supported them and shed the blood of the saints should be given blood like water to drink.

Revelation 16:8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was given power to scorch people with fire. They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify him.

The ozone layer protecting the Earth is now destroyed because of weapons used during the wars of Antichrist. The intense heat from the sun will now scorch those dwelling upon the Earth.

Revelation 16:10-11 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness. Men gnawed their tongues in agony and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but they refused to repent of what they had done.

Even after all of this, the world still refuses to repent. After the plague of scorching, some other effect will happen that will prevent the suns light from reaching the Earth, plunging the Antichrist's kingdom into darkness.

Exodus 10:21-23 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky so that darkness will spread over Egypt; darkness that can be felt." So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and total darkness covered all Egypt for three days. No one could see anyone else or leave his place for three days. Yet all the Israelites had light in the places where they lived.

By specifying that the Antichrist's kingdom will be in darkness, it may mean that there will be some light in Israel and perhaps in those countries that fought against the Antichrist. This was the case at the time when God instructed Moses to call for a plague of darkness on Egypt.

Revelation 16:12 "The sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its

water was dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East."

The Kings of the East, China, Japan, Korea, and all of the oriental countries will now begin to move the 200 million man army that they mustered earlier, at the sounding of the sixth trumpet, toward Jerusalem. They will march across the Euphrates River which will be dried up for them. Turkey has already built a dam on the Euphrates River that is capable of shutting off the flow of water to the south of them at any time they choose to do so. The reuniting of the kings of the East is already in progress today. The British gave Hong Kong back to China in 1997. In 1992 the United States removed its military bases from the Philippine islands. As china gains economic power more Eastern nations will obviously join with them.

Revelation 16:13-14 "Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the False Prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous 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."

It appears that the Antichrist and the False Prophet will deceive the world one more time. They will probably say that the way to rid themselves of these plagues is to gather all of their armies to Jerusalem, and kill the Lord Jesus Christ, who will soon be returning there. God, through David, prophesied of this event in the Psalms. Notice that the miraculous signs initiated by Satan to deceive the world come through the workings of demons.

Psalms 2:1-3 "Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain. The kings of the Earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One. 'Let us break their chains,' they say, 'and throw off their fetters.' The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them."

God, it says in the Psalms, laughs at these people who actually believe that they can destroy Christ with man made weapons of war. The kings of the Earth and their armies will gather together in Israel and the surrounding areas, awaiting the return of Christ.

Revelation 17:14 They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of Lords and King of kings--and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.

Isaiah 34:2-3 The LORD is angry with all nations; his wrath is upon all their armies. He will totally destroy them, he will give them over to slaughter. Their slain will be thrown out, their dead bodies will send up a stench; the mountains will be soaked with their blood.

Joel 3:13-14 Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, trample the grapes, for the winepress is full and the vats overflow--so great is their wickedness! Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.

When the armies of the world are gathered together at Armageddon, the day of the Lord will be very near.

Before we continue on with a review of all we have learned and some charts on how all of these things will change the commonly accepted prophetic scenario we will do a short book review on the book "Christ and Antichrist" by L. D. Harper.

## Section Thirteen

### Christ and Antichrist - L D Harper, Mesquite, TX

Larry D. Harper has made a great study of the ancient documents of the church tracing them through the Apostle John and his disciples. John taught Polycarp who taught Irenaeus who disciplined Hippolytus. These men were in agreement with each other in interpreting the scriptures in all aspects including prophecy. Get the free book at the link below.

<http://voiceofelijah.org/index.html>

Excerpt from "Christ and Antichrist" by L D Harper

The very basis of Irenaeus' five volume *Against Heresies* is that the leaders of the Church knew but one oral tradition, and that oral tradition had been delivered to them by the Apostles. He vehemently argued that anyone who disagreed with the oral tradition of the Church was, by definition, a heretic. Irenaeus was a disciple of Polycarp, who had been a disciple of the Apostle John.

### The End Times Scenario of the Early Church Fathers

(Compiled by Larry D. Harper)

1. Satan will appear as a man in the person of the Antichrist because he seeks to reign as king over mankind and desires to focus the worship of God on himself.
2. The Antichrist will be a Jew, and will achieve his stated objectives by being accepted as the Christ, the messianic king of the Jews, taking his seat in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, pretending to be God Himself, and thereby becoming the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by the prophet Daniel and mentioned also by Jesus.
3. The Antichrist is the "little horn" of the fourth beast mentioned in Daniel 7. He will slay three of the other horns and reign as an eighth with the remaining seven.
4. The Antichrist will achieve his objectives in the middle of the final seven-year period of this age. At that time he will be proclaimed the messianic king of the Jews and will take his seat as God in the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. He will reign for three and one-half years.
5. The Antichrist, during his reign, will deceive the majority of people living on the Earth at the time into believing he is God. However, he will persecute those who refuse to worship him because they are able to see through his delusion.
6. Jesus Christ will return to Earth at the end of the three and one-half year reign of the Antichrist, destroying Satan's kingdom. The resurrection of the just will occur at that time. The Antichrist will be Satan in human form. And his purpose in becoming the Antichrist is to fulfill his longing to reign as king over men and be worshipped as God. Notice that Satan sets himself forth as not just any god, but as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He will accomplish that by sitting in the temple of God in Jerusalem.

Note what Irenaeus is saying. He says the Apostle Paul was speaking concerning the temple in Jerusalem when he says the Antichrist would take his seat “in the temple.” Yet when Irenaeus wrote this, the temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed for over a century. Therefore, he knew the temple had to be rebuilt. The same circumstance remains true today.

And Daniel says, “And they shall place the abomination of desolation a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand two hundred and ninety-five days.” (Daniel 12:11–12)116

A second significant element in Irenaeus’ discussion is the fact that he understands the Antichrist will appear in the middle of the final week and will reign for just three and one-half years. He will suddenly manifest himself while many (in the Church?) are proclaiming “peace and safety.”

The persecution of True Believers will last for the last half of the final week, “the one thousand two hundred and threescore days (the half of the week) during which the tyrant is to reign and persecute the Church, which flees from city to city, and seeks concealment in the wilderness.

This has been a short summary of what Larry D. Harper found when he researched the ancient documents of the Church in search of prophetic truth.

Now, some of the Early Church Fathers did believe in a seven year time period before the return of Christ. However, they were unanimous in their belief that the first 3 ½ years were not a part of the Tribulation period, just a prelude to it. That is still very much a distinct possibility. Once again the point is no matter how long the prelude is it cannot be counted as a part of the Tribulation. Only those things that occur after the ABD, after Antichrist comes into his full power are a part of it.

## Section Fourteen

### The New Prophetic Scenario

It is indicated in the bible that the history of the descendants of Adam living on the Earth will last for six thousand years, followed by 1000 years of peace under the rule of Jesus Christ. Through the calculation of the ages of the biblical patriarch's we can determine that there were 2000 years from the creation of Adam to the call of Abraham, and 2000 years from the call of Abraham until somewhere between the time that Jesus began his ministry and his ascension, a difference of 3 ½ years. This indicates that there will be another period of 2000 years from the time of the ministry of Jesus until his second coming. The sum of the three 2000 year time periods will be 6000 years. When we neared the year 2000 on the Roman calendar many preachers and prophecy students were teaching that the 6000 years were almost finished and that Christ would return on or before the year 2000. They overlooked the fact that our calendar is in error by about 30 years because it was set back to zero on the year that Christ was born, rather than on either the year that he began his ministry or the time of his ascension.

Jesus was about thirty years old when he was baptized by John the Baptist. God has not told us for certain when the first 4000 years were completed, but either the baptism of Christ or his ascension seem to be good possibilities. Pentecost would seem to be the third option. For now lets assume that the 4000 years were completed when Jesus was baptized but keep in mind that there could be a 3 ½ year error there.

Luke 3:21-23 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry.

Thirty is the age that God has determined as the time when a man is both learned and experienced enough to enter into the service of the Lord as a priest or a king.

Genesis 41:46 Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

2 Samuel 5:4 David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years.

If the first 4000 years were not completed until the moment that Christ was baptized by John at thirty years of age, then our calendar is off by about 30 years due to it being reset by the Popes to "0" at the estimated time that the birth of Christ took place. If that is correct then our year 2030 or thereabouts, will complete the first 6000 years, not the year 2000. Of course there can certainly be more errors in our calendar so it is only sensible not to stick to a hard and fast date. We must allow at least a plus or minus seven years plus a few more to be on the safe side. Let's just make it fifteen years to make it easy and say that the 6000 years should be completed sometime between 2015 and 2045 if our 6000 year theory is correct. Now if Christ does not return between 2025 and 2045 then God's word is not wrong, this theory is wrong.

One of the keys to understanding the bible in general, and prophecy in particular, is to understand that God is a mathematical God. Throughout the bible he constantly uses the same numbers and number combinations to symbolize various themes. The numbers six, seven, and

eight are frequently used by God to represent prophetic themes.

The number seven, in the bible, symbolizes completeness and perfection. This is the reason why seven has been considered a lucky number for thousands of years. Seven days makes a complete week, and seven thousand years will complete one heavenly week, a week made up of seven one thousand year days. There are more occurrences of the number seven in the bible than any other number.

The number six is the number that symbolizes imperfection and incompleteness, because it is one less than the perfect number, seven. Man was created on the sixth day, and his history before the return of Christ will last for six thousand years, if our theory is correct.

The number eight in the bible symbolizes new beginnings. After the heavenly week of seven thousand years is completed, the eighth day will begin, which will be eternity. God started over with eight people after the flood.

At some time in the future, after two heavenly days, two thousand years have passed from the time of the first coming of Christ, God will open the eyes of the Jews and they will recognize Jesus Christ as their Messiah. God has decreed in his word that the Jews punishment for rejecting Christ will last for two thousand years. They will not see Christ again until they say, "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

Luke 13:34-35 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.'"

Many Christian churches have taught down through the centuries that God has rejected the Jews forever. The Bible declares that the time of their punishment is only temporary, and that someday God will renew his dealings with the Jews.

Luke 21:24 "They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."

Romans 11:25 "I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in."

Paul doesn't want anyone to be ignorant on this subject, so he states it clearly, part of Israel, the Jews in particular, have had their hearts hardened, until God is finished dealing with the gentiles. Paul understood clearly that the times of the gentiles would eventually come to and end, and he warns the gentiles not to become conceited because God was at the present time dealing with them like he had dealt with the Jews for the previous two thousand years.

Romans 11:17-22 "If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say, 'the branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.' Granted, but they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare

you either. Consider, therefore, the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

The time period known in the scriptures as the "times of the gentiles" is commonly called the "church age" by those who study prophecy. According to the book of Revelation, there will be one thousand years, a heavenly Sabbath day, when the "church age" ends, after the first resurrection.

**Revelation 20:6 "Blessed and holy are those who have part 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."**

God clearly states that there will be a special one thousand year time period after the first resurrection. This again ties in perfectly with the teaching that there will be six thousand years of peace under the rule of Jesus Christ, and this will be followed by the eighth day, eternity, and the new creation of heaven and Earth. This one thousand year time period is commonly known as the "Millennium."

Seven is the number God uses to signify "completeness. Seven thousand years will complete one heavenly week. When the seven thousand years are completed, the eighth day will begin, which is eternity.

Additional note: The 7000 year theory of God's program for mankind does not mean that the Earth and the universe are only 6000 years old. The Earth and the universe may be millions or billions of years old, as they were created "in the beginning." The Lord created and placed human life, descended from Adam and his wife, on Earth about 6000 years ago.

Also, When the Apostle Paul and all of the New Testament writers proclaimed that they were in "The Last Days" during those times, they were not exaggerating or lying. When Christ was baptized, after 4000 years of human history had transpired, we truly were in the "last Days," the last days being the last two days, Thursday and Friday of the heavenly week, to be followed by the heavenly Sabbath, known as "The Millennium." That the term "Last Days" means more than one day is evident by the fact that it is plural, "days" instead of "day." So, the term "Last Days" when we read it in the bible pertains to the entire 2000 year time period from the beginning of Jesus' ministry until he returns and the Millennium begins. Once that is clearly understood it assists us in understanding the scriptures.

### **The Day of the Lord**

**Revelation 1:10 On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."**

The Apostle John is not telling us that one Saturday (Sabbath) he was fishing on the beach at Patmos and had a vision. He was in the Spirit and Jesus showed him what was going to transpire when "The Day of the Lord" arrives. That is the whole theme of the Book of Revelation. It tells us of how the transition from the first 6000 years, the first six days of the heavenly week will morph into the seventh day, the heavenly Sabbath, the Lord's Day. John is seeing mankind go from normal everyday life, to and through the Tribulation period and finally he sees the

resurrection and the beginning of the year 6000. What he actually sees is the world going from year 5996 ½ to 6001. Oh, but they won't be partying like it's 5999 for long.

The time period known as the Day of the Lord or the Lord's Day is the heavenly Sabbath, the beginning of the seventh one thousand year day. It is the time when Christ returns and sets up his kingdom. When the Day of the Lord is near, the people of the world will be filled with terror.

Isaiah 13:6-8 "Wail, for the day of the Lord is near; it will come like destruction from the Almighty. Because of this, all hands will go limp, every man's heart will melt. Terror will seize them, pain and anguish will grip them; they will writhe like a woman in labor. They will look aghast at each other, their faces aflame."

When the day of the Lord is near the mighty men of the Earth will be in pain like a woman in labor. There will be physical pain because of the sores they received for taking the Mark of the Beast. They will also be in mental anguish because they know that the Wrath of God has begun to come upon them, and there is no hope for escape.

Isaiah 13:9-13 See, the day of the LORD is coming; a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the Earth will shake from its place at the wrath of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger.

Zechariah 13:8 & 14:3 & 5 In the whole land, declares the LORD, two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

The Lord will destroy two thirds of the people of the Earth with the seven last plagues. This is in addition to the one fourth and one third of the people who were killed during the seven seals and the seven trumpet judgments. Add in all the people that are martyred by the Antichrist and then those that go up in the first resurrection and we will not have to worry about overpopulation for the next 1000 years.

Jude 1:14 KJV And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

Notice in Zechariah and in the verse above that when Jesus returns his holy ones will be with him. That's us, if we are in Christ. We will come with him if we went up at the rapture. It is the unsaved Israelites who underwent the time of wrath and now they are finally ready to say "blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." Also notice that it was to Enoch that God gave this prophecy concerning the return of Christ. Could it be because he was going to be one who would be one of the Two Witnesses in the end times?

Note: Ten thousands above does not mean ten thousand as if that is all that will be saved. It is the ancient way of saying ten thousands (plural) times ten thousands, or an innumerable or uncountable number.

Isaiah 24:1 & 5-6 & 19-20 See, the LORD is going to lay waste the Earth and devastate it; he will ruin its face and scatter its inhabitants. The Earth is defiled by its people; they have disobeyed the laws, violated the statutes and broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse consumes the Earth; its people must bear their guilt. Therefore Earth's inhabitants are burned up, and very few are left. The floodgates of the heavens are opened, the foundations of the Earth shake. The Earth is broken up, the Earth is split asunder, the Earth is thoroughly shaken. The Earth reels like a drunkard,

Many of the Earth's inhabitants will be burned up, and there will be very few people left alive after God finishes pouring out his wrath on the Earth. Isaiah goes on to say that the Earth will suffer cataclysmic events which will leave it reeling like a drunkard. There may be a collision with a large asteroid just before the return of Christ that will knock the Earth off of its axis and cause this effect.

To the remnant of Israel and anyone who has not taken the Mark of the Beast but was not taken up in the first resurrection, God has some good advice.

Isaiah 26:20 Go, my people, enter your rooms and shut the doors behind you; hide yourselves for a little while until his wrath has passed by. See, the LORD is coming out of his dwelling to punish the people of the Earth for their sins.

Zephaniah 2:1-3 Gather together, gather together, O shameful nation, before the appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the Lord's wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger.

There will be people from all nations who did not take the mark, but were not Christians at the time of the first resurrection, and so they remained on Earth while the Wrath of God was being poured out. Some of these people will survive the time of God's Wrath, and remain alive to repopulate the Earth during the Millennium. If you are one of those who miss the first resurrection, take the advice given in the scriptures above, stay in your house and pray. Perhaps the Lord will let you live through his Wrath and into the Millennium. I don't want to give anyone false hope, but that is the best chance you will have available at that time, and don't forget to repent and ask Christ to save you.

### **The Seventh Bowl**

Revelation 16:17-21 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!" Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since man has been on Earth, so tremendous was the quake. 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. From the sky huge hailstones of about a hundred pounds each fell upon men. And they cursed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

Great earthquakes will strike the Earth when the seventh bowl is poured out. Notice here that the judgment God is giving Babylon is the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. This is

similar to the terminology that Jeremiah used. The huge hailstones could be chunks of debris thrown into the air by the earthquake, or perhaps they will be actual giant ice chunks that have formed because of the drastic changes to the Earth's atmosphere from the previous plagues.

### **The Return of Jesus Christ**

Revelation 19:11-13 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 makes war. 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. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

Isaiah 63:2-3 & 6 Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? "I have trodden the winepress alone; from the nations no one was with me. I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing. I trampled the nations in my anger; in my wrath I made them drunk and poured their blood on the ground."

The Lord Jesus Christ, the word who became flesh and dwelt among us, will return to Earth and fulfill the prophecies in Isaiah and Revelation. He needs no help to accomplish these tasks, but we will accompany him and be witnesses of his power.

Revelation 19:14-16 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes 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. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Christ will return to Earth with the armies of heaven following him. This army includes both the angels, and the saints, (the church) and the saved of all ages that were raised from the dead at the first resurrection.

The angels of God and the demons who were released from the river Euphrates have gathered the armies of the world to Armageddon. They did the gathering, but now Christ will do the treading and will crush the armies of the world in the winepress of God's wrath.

Revelation 19:17-18 And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great."

God is going to make another great feast for the birds. Seven or more years earlier they feasted after the Ezekiel war, and now they will feast again.

Every year in the fall, the birds of prey from Europe and Russia migrate to Africa. At least seven hundred thousand of them fly over Israel each year. The feast of the tabernacles, which signifies the return of Christ, is celebrated in October, the same time of the year when the buzzards, the storks, and other large birds of prey fly over Israel. The saved will have celebrated with Christ in heaven at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now the Lord will provide a great supper for the birds, at the return of Jesus Christ. If there are still any Israelites who doubt that Jesus is the Messiah, they will doubt no more after the Lord destroys the armies of the world that have

gathered in Israel.

Revelation 19:19-21 Then I saw the beast and the kings of the Earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the False Prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshipped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

The Antichrist and the False Prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire. The birds will enjoy much feasting and celebration before they continue on with their journey to Africa. The armies of the Antichrist will be killed with the sword of the spirit that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Apparently after defeating his enemies Christ will dismount and descend from the sky unto the Mount of Olives, fulfilling the prophecy that he would return to Earth in the same manner as when he left.

Acts 1:10-12 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city.

Zechariah 14:1-5 & 12-16 A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day 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. You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other. Judah too will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected-- great quantities of gold and silver and clothing. A similar plague will strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps. Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

### **Satan Imprisoned**

Revelation 20:1-3 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years

were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Satan will be imprisoned for one thousand years, and the Millennium will begin.

## Section Fifteen

### The First Resurrection (Rapture) Timeline Review

The problem with the rapture happening too early is that it leaves a lot of people out of experiencing the millennium, because after it happens no one can be raised from the dead for 1000 years. So, it has to include as many people as possible because that is God's will. It has to include all to whom God has promised participation in the millennium.

First of all it has to include all of the dead believers from Adam to the last person to die before it takes place. Why? Because the Old Testament saints such as Abraham and David were given promises by God that can only be fulfilled in the millennium. The Old Testament saints must go up before those alive in the end times. So, after the Old Testament saints go up, we go up. (As we have read, the dead rise first)

Who else needs to be included? Well, of course Lazarus, the Apostles and all of the dead New Testament saints. So, the living cannot go up until after they too go up. Lastly it has to include both those called the "Tribulation Saints," and it has to include the "Two Witnesses." Then, after that, all of the living believers go up, and that would be us if we live that long and make it that far.

**Rev. 6:9** When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained.

You may ask "why do those called the "Tribulation Saints" have to go up in the rapture? Can't they have their own special resurrection at the end of the tribulation? Well, yes they could if God wanted it that way, but that won't be necessary because the verses pertaining to the "Tribulation Saints" occurs in Revelation chapters six and seven and the first resurrection doesn't occur until chapter eleven. So, there is no need for a special resurrection just for them. They are going up in the first resurrection anyway, so no special one is necessary. Not only that but God has said in his word that there will only be one resurrection before the millennium, and that is the first one.

**Isaiah 14:24** The LORD Almighty has sworn, "Surely, as I have planned, so it will be, and as I have purposed, so it will stand.

**Isaiah 45:18-19** For this is what the LORD says-- he who created the heavens, he is God; he who fashioned and made the earth, he founded it; he did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited-- he says: "I am the LORD, and there is no other. I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in vain.' I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right.

**Isaiah 45:20-22** "Gather together and come; assemble, you fugitives from the nations. Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood, who pray to gods that cannot save. Declare what is to be, present it-- let them take counsel together. Who foretold this long ago, who declared it from the distant past? Was it not I, the LORD? And there is no God apart from me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none but me. "Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.

**Isaiah 45:23-24** By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. They will say of me,

'In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.' All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame.

God can do anything he wants, but he has bound himself to be true to his own word, so he must do what he has said that he will do. He could have set the end times scenario up any way he desired, but once he has stated what he will do through his servants the prophets, he must stand by it, even more so than Tammy Wynette.

Rev. 7:9-10 After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

Rev. 7:13-14 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

If you read Revelation chapters six and seven you will see that they are in heaven, a great multitude of them, before the end of the millennium, so they have to go up at the rapture. They cannot be left behind for a thousand years. Chapters six and seven are showing the history of the martyred saints from beginning to end, so it is not implying here that the rapture took place earlier than that. It is simply showing that they (the martyred saints) will be a part of it when it happens and will be in heaven praising God immediately afterwards.

It will be clear to you when you see what God is doing in chapter seven. Let's look at it.

Rev. 7:1-4 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

In chapter seven God sends angels to seal 144,000 Israelites. Why is he sealing them? He is sealing them so that they cannot be killed during the rest of the time that remains before the physical return of Jesus Christ to earth. (His 2nd coming, not the rapture)

Luke 13:35 Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

God is here sealing the people who will live to greet him when he returns to fulfill the scripture, "you will not see me again until you say; "blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."" The sealed 144,000 Israelites will live through "the Wrath of God" and greet Jesus at his 2nd coming when he returns to Israel, when his feet touch the Mount of Olives. They will fulfill prophecy.

So, are there any scriptures that tell us when all of the saints and the prophets go up. Yes, there is. We don't have to guess.

Anyone who misses the rapture and gets saved and dies before the return of Jesus Christ will not live again until the 1000 years are completed. They will not participate in the millennium because they will not be raised from the dead until after the millennium is over.

That brings us to the "Two Witnesses." They are the two men who have never died, Enoch and Elijah. They must die and be raised up with the rest of the Old Testament prophets at the rapture so that they can participate in the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb" and in the Millennium." This was the unanimous position of the early Church fathers as near as I can tell.

**Hebrews 9:27** And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Neither Enoch or Elijah has ever died, and they do not belong to the sign of the fig tree generation, the people who have been promised that some of them will live to see the coming of the Lord. Therefore, they both must return and die at the hand of the Antichrist before the first resurrection can take place.

**Revelation 11:7-12** Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them. "Their bodies will lie in the street of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified. For three and half days men from every people, tribe, language and nation will gaze on their bodies and refuse them burial. The inhabitants of the Earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on the Earth." But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck 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, while their enemies looked on.

When they are raised the first resurrection or the rapture begins. They go up first, having been the last to die. The last shall be first, and the first last. After the dead are raised going all the way back to Abel, then the living (the saved) will begin to go up, starting with the oldest and ending with the youngest.

**Matt. 20:16** "So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

When will it happen? When will the Two Witnesses be killed? As it says above, "when they have finished their testimony." What is their testimony and their job? I believe it is to call the world to repentance by initiating six of the seven trumpet judgments. God through the angels initiates the seventh. Their job is to give the world one last chance to repent before the rapture takes place. This is why the church is so confused on prophecy, because the traditional viewpoint has been that the seven seals and the seven trumpets are a part of God's wrath. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Seven Seals show the Antichrist beginning to come to power, which God permits Satan to do when his time is short. The trumpet judgments are an act of mercy, not wrath. The preaching and miracles of the Two Witnesses are the epitome of the mercy of God, doing everything possible to bring men to repentance before his Wrath is poured out so they can escape from it by being included in the first resurrection.

Once the two witnesses have finished their mission, God allows them to be killed. 3 ½ days later

they are raised from the dead when the rapture begins to take place. As previously stated it appears that it will not be an instantaneous thing that all of the dead are raised at the same moment. When it is our turn to go up we will be changed “in the twinkling of an eye” but we will not all be changed at exactly the same time. The rapture will be a process. The two witnesses first, then the rest of the dead, then the living. God will do this so that even when we see the two witnesses lying in the streets of Jerusalem we will not be able to calculate the day or hour of the rapture. Some documents indicate that the entire process may take up to 40 days, so don’t bother trying to figure out what moment you are going up, even if you see the two witnesses laying in the streets of Jerusalem.

Now, back to Revelation. When the two witnesses have finished calling down six of the trumpet judgments and are dead, The seventh angel will sound his trumpet and they will go up to heaven in a cloud.

Rev. 10:7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, **the mystery of God** should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

1Cor. 15:51 **Behold, I shew you a mystery;** We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

1Cor. 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised** incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

The great mystery of God spoken of here is the resurrection of the dead. We will see that clearly in verse 18.

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

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

Rev. 11:18 The nations were angry; **and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth.**”

It is the time for rewarding the old testament prophets, the new testament saints, all who have ever revered God’s name, and both the small and the great.

While some of your reading this may think, boy, if this is all true, things really look bleak. Maybe I just ought to pray to die before all of these things come to pass, I don’t think I can take living through the tribulation until Revelation chapter 11. Take heart, don’t give up! You don’t have to live through the “Wrath” part of the “Great Tribulation.”

At this point in time God has not even begun to pour out his wrath. Oh, there has been a little trouble from Satan and his crowd persecuting the saints, but God hasn’t even begun to come on the scene yet. That doesn’t happen until after the rapture. Notice in the verse above, AFTER the saints are in heaven the time comes for destroying those who are destroying the earth.

1Th. 5:9 **For God hath not appointed us to wrath,** but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus

Christ,

Rev. 11:18 And the nations were angry, **and thy wrath is come,....**

Rev. 15:7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever.

Rev. 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

Rev. 16:17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

When we go up, the wrath begins to come down. God will not pour out his Wrath on his own blood bought people who have obtained salvation through Jesus Christ. Where a lot of people make a mistake in interpreting prophecy is that they confuse the acts of Satan and his Antichrist with the Wrath of God. Satan has been tormenting the saved with every weapon at his disposal since he deceived Adam and Eve. We won't get away from that until we go up, but we will go up before God steps in and pours out His Wrath on the world. It just won't happen in the 4th chapter of Revelation as some have taught, it happens during the 11th chapter, when the 7th angel sounds his trumpet.

After the rapture, anyone who is saved and dies will not live again until the thousand years are finished. They remain disembodied spirits for 1000 years. That is why God waits until the last second for the rapture, not because he wants to torture us with Satan's attacks, but because he wants to include as many people as possible in the millennium. Let's see what Peter says.

2Pet. 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God wants to give everyone the opportunity to be saved, and many will be by the preaching of the Two Witnesses, before the rapture takes place. God is Love, and wants no one to experience his Wrath unless even after the most convincing proof by preaching and miracles, they absolutely refuse to repent and reject him.

When the Antichrist and those in agreement with him have killed the Two Witnesses, the world will celebrate, thinking that they have won a great victory. Three and one half days later the first resurrection will occur and take the Two Witnesses and the saints out of the world. Then God will pour out his Wrath upon the Earth. During this time of Wrath being poured out, the church, the bride of Christ, will be in heaven celebrating the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. They will return with him one year later and watch him destroy the armies of the world at Armageddon.

(Mat 24:33 NIV) Even so, when you see all these things, you know that it is near, right at the door.

## What about the Wrath Mentioned in Revelation Chapter Six

Rev. 6:16-17 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?

This is a good and legitimate question. The answer is that the Seven Seals are both actual events that affect ¼ of the earth and overview of an overview of the entire tribulation period. The events outlined in the Seven Seals are repeated three times, first in the Seven Seals affecting as previously stated ¼ of the earth. Then when the Seven Trumpets are initiated by the Two Witnesses the events are said to affect 1/3 of the earth's population. When the seven vials are poured out (God's Wrath) they affect 2/3 of the earth. Each judgment is more severe than the previous one, but only the third is categorized as God's wrath. The first set is Satan's wrath, which God permits, the second set is the Two Witnesses giving the world one last opportunity to repent and make the rapture, the third set is God's wrath after the rapture. So, the wrath mentioned in chapter six is simply looking forward to the time of the outpouring of the seven vials. For any unsaved person smart enough to recognize what is happening during the time of chapter six, they need to repent and get ready for the rapture. They still have a little time left to do so.

Zeph. 2:1-3 Gather together, gather together, O shameful nation, before the appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD'S wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD'S anger.

Prov. 22:3 A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it.

Prov. 27:12 A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.

Some may think that if we live into the beginning of the tribulation period that we have to go out and taunt the Antichrist and his henchmen until they chop off our heads. That is not what the scriptures say to do. Paul escaped those who wanted to kill him by being lowered out of a house in a basket. Peter was rescued from prison by angels. Other apostles were ordered to shake the dust off of their feet and go to another town when people rejected the gospel. Of course we should always be ready to give testimony to our faith, but we don't have to go out looking for trouble, as Proverbs instructs us in the verses above. We are promised in Luke 21:32 that some who are living when the signs of the end are taking place will not die before the return of Christ. Why shouldn't you be one of them?

## The Saints and the Tribulation

The teaching that the saints would suffer persecution by Antichrist and then the first resurrection would take place has been around since the beginning of Christianity. The teaching that the first resurrection will occur seven years before the return of Christ and the Church will never see or suffer the wrath of Satan through his imitation messiah has only been around since the 1800's. As for me, I'm siding with the early church fathers until proven otherwise by scripture.

Here is another way of looking at it. If one is prepared to fight against the devil if necessary but it never happens, then great! Rewards will be earned just for the effort of preparing mentally to do so. But, if one fails to prepare for the possibility that hard times may come before the return of Christ, and that we are just going to be raptured out of our Beamers and Mc Mansions while we party like its 1999, he or she may be sadly disappointed. It's better to prepare for something that may not happen than to fail to prepare for something that has a high probability of happening. If we mentally prepare for hard times and they don't come, we will still earn rewards just for watching for Christ's return and being ready like the wise virgins. God commands us to pray that we might escape his wrath and the horrors of the end times.

Luke 21:36 Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

Case in Point: Times are already worse in the USA right now in 2012 than many thought it would ever get before the rapture. We in the evangelical world have preached that "perilous times would come" before the Lord's return, but now that the beginning of the perilous times is here, some of us seem shocked. We think the rapture should have taken place already. Believe me, it can and will get much worse than it is now before the first resurrection.

Zeph. 2:3 Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. **Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD'S anger.**

Some advice: Seek righteousness, seek humility, get out of debt, be thankful to have the necessities of life and count anything beyond that as a special blessing, study the word of God continuously, and meet for fellowship and prayer often with other believers. By doing these things you will be preparing for the things that are to come, and if the rapture happens seven years before the return of Christ, Wonderful! Amen! Praise God!

**Rev. 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

### **The Dead Will Be Raised at or on "The Last Day" Review**

We have looked at this topic once already. This will be primarily a review with some new commentary added.

John 6:39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, **but raise them up at the last day.**

John 6:40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, **and I will raise him up at the last day."**

The resurrection of the dead will take place at "the Last Day."

The timeline for the Tribulation begins with the year 5,996 ½ from the creation of Adam. How do you figure that you may ask? Because of this; if the first resurrection occurs on the last day, meaning the beginning of the year 6000, then a 3 ½ year Tribulation and the ministry of the Two Witnesses must begin 3 ½ years earlier.

This may be a little hard to understand so let me put it in simpler modern day terminology. If we knew that there was going to be a great celebration that was going to end on January first 2015, and it was going to last for three years, when would it have to begin? Obviously it would have to begin on January first 2012.

We are using the same reasoning here. If the rapture must take place in the year 6000 and there will be 3 ½ years of Tribulation before it takes place, when must the Tribulation and preaching by the Two Witnesses begin? To find out we simply subtract 3 ½ from 6000 which leaves us with the year 5996 ½. So, let's look at our list of events.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Duration</b>
1. ABD	5,996 ½	42 months
2. The Two Witnesses begin to preach	5,996 ½	1,260 days
3. Persecution of Israeli's and Christians	5,996 ½	1,260 days
4. The Two Witnesses die	5999, 361 ½	3 ½ days

**The “Day of the Lord” Begins, “The Heavenly Sabbath”  
The Year 6000, The Millennium**

5. The First Resurrection takes place	6000 day 1	1-75 days?
6. The Wrath of God begins to be poured out	6000 after rapture	1 year
7. Jesus Christ returns	6001 day 1	999 years
8. 2 <sup>nd</sup> resurrection – Last judgment	6999 day 364	A few days
9. Last Judgment-Eternity Begins	7000	Forever

**Rapture - 1000 years - 2nd Resurrection**

Do you see how this scenario makes all of the prophecies line up and fit together without contradicting each other? The Day of the Lord is the Heavenly Sabbath, the time of rest for God's people and it begins exactly when it should, the second the clock strikes 6000. At that moment the rapture begins to take place. This also makes the first resurrection take place on the “Last Day” just as the scriptures say it will.

Remember the Biblical calendar does not start on January first. The biblical year starts over in the spring of every year in the March/April time frame. Also remember that the Feast of the Trumpets is in the seventh Biblical month, in the September/October time frame. The list of events above does not take into account the Biblical calendar. The amounts of years are correct but they will not line up with our calendar. So, even if you knew when it would be the 6000<sup>th</sup> year from the creation of Adam on our calendar you could still not calculate the day or the hour. You might be able to guess the year plus or minus one. Our point is not to even try to guess or figure out when the prophecies will take place. The point is to show how perfectly organized God is and how exactly he has plan laid out. We will never know the day or hour but if we at least get the order of events correct we will at least know what to look for next. An example would be that

we know that the Temple has to be rebuilt before Antichrist can desecrate it. It's that type of simple reasoning we are looking for not some complicated scheme based on guessing at ancient historical dates.

One more thing to remember is that God's prophetic calendar is normally based on a 360 day year. Every so often he had the Israelites add an extra 30 day month to bring the calendar back in line with a 365 ¼ day year. God has a lot of flexibility built into his program. He has time built into his millennium to permit Satan to be released for a short season, the 2<sup>nd</sup> resurrection, the last judgment and anything else he wants to do. He has a dual stopwatch running. One with a 360 day year and one with 365 ¼. After one thousand years he will have more than 14 years to play with. That is another reason why we can never figure out exactly when any prophetic event is going to happen, because we don't know what calendar God is using. The best we can do is know when something is near by the prophecies around an event being fulfilled. When Jerusalem is surrounded by armies we will know that the ABD is near.

Now, if someone wanted to do so they could line up all the prophecies of Jesus, Daniel, Paul and John in Revelation on either side of the "Day of the Lord" and make a nice chart of where all of the prophecies left to be fulfilled are placed on God's timeline of history. Oh, what a marvelous job Clarence Larkin could do with this. If I was a little younger I would attempt it. How about you young Christian? Why don't you try it? If you do, please send me one. I have made a short list at the end of this book. Feel free to use it as a starting point for your own research.

So, all we have to do is wait and watch and we will see if this theory is true or not. If it is not true, that is no reflection on God being true to his word. I have simply misinterpreted the scriptures. If it is true many alive today will live until the rapture takes place and be a part of the generation that never sees death.

1Cor. 15:50-51 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

When our earthly body falls off and is replaced with a new body, the old one is technically dead, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God in Heaven.

God cannot lie, and he will keep every jot and tittle, (similar to every comma and apostrophe) of his word.

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

Matt. 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

### **Review: Reasons Why the Antichrist Must be in Power Before the Two Witnesses Arrive on the Scene**

Antichrist must be in power to confront his adversaries the Two Witnesses as the scripture says he will do.

The Two Witnesses according to ancient documents die when the 6000 years are completed, not before.

The first resurrection does not take place until the last day, the beginning of year 6000.

The “Day of the Lord” begins with the beginning of the year 6000.

Admittedly we are on thin ice or a slippery slope here but at least in this scenario there are absolutely no contradictions with any scriptures. Now God can have many ways of doing things with no contradictions and this is only one scenario and by no means the only one that will work. However, I think is more correct than the one invented in the 1800’s simply because more time has passed and we have more history and understanding to work with now. We have seen the restoration of the nation of Israel. Remember, in the 1800’s there was still ongoing debate as to whether or not that was ever going to happen. Everything that becomes a fulfillment helps us to put some prediction in its proper place and leaves less outstanding prophecies to put in an order. Therefore we cannot help but to get more accurate as time goes on. A future example is that when the temple is rebuilt we can quit guessing about where that one fits. That is one reason why no theory from the 1800’s can be entirely correct.

There may be many things going on leading up to the end times period. We the saved may come a lot closer to the end times events described in Revelation than previously thought. Some things that are or were thought to be part of the Tribulation may not be part of it at all. They may just be preliminaries to it.

So, Here is another way of charting it to aid those who still may not quite grasp the whole thing. I realize that after years of being trained to think of the end times in one way it is very difficult to visualize it another way. So, the chart below will not help us find out what year it will happen on the roman calendar but will only show us where it will happen in God’s Biblical timeline in relation to the tribulation period.

### **The 6000th Year First Resurrection**

**(5996 ½)<--3 1/2 Yrs. of Trib.-->(F\*R-6000)<--1 Yr. of Wrath-->Return(6001)**

This viewpoint is based on the scriptures that show how God will begin a new program at the beginning of the heavenly Sabbath, the year 6000. The Old Testament also indicates that the Marriage Celebration of the Lamb will last for one year and I expect the Wrath of God will be poured out on earth while the saints are celebrating in heaven, perhaps watching it on the big screen while feasting with Jesus. You will see why the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will probably last for one year in a moment.

This opinion appears to be the only one that permits all scriptures concerning the Great Tribulation, the first resurrection, and the wrath of God, to be fulfilled without any contradictions. The saints will endure much tribulation and persecution, but they will be spared from the Wrath of God.

Some may ask; doesn’t the fact that the rapture occurs at the moment the 6000<sup>th</sup> year begins cause the time of the saints being with Christ for 1000 years become only 999 years after a one year Marriage Supper celebration? Not at all.

**Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection... ..but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.**

The one year in heaven at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb counts as a part of the ruling and reigning with Christ for 1000 years. Just because God's Wrath is being poured out on earth at the same time in no way invalidates the 1000 year time period of the millennium.

Not only that but as we said earlier, God has more than one calendar. The prophetic calendar (1,260 days / 3 ½ years) is a 360 day year. That leaves 5.25 extra days each year. After 1000 years God has 5,250 days of flexibility between the prophetic year and the solar year. That leaves a lot of time for the Wrath of God to be poured out at the beginning of the 6000<sup>th</sup> year and for Satan to be released at the end of the millennium without encroaching on the eighth day, eternity. Again, as I stated earlier, we can never know the day or hour of any of God's prophecies because he is running multiple programs and tasks at the same time. God is doing more multi tasking than a fast food employee.

### **The Escape from the Hour of Temptation**

The Church of Philadelphia has been promised by Christ that they will be spared from the "hour of temptation" that will try them that dwell upon the Earth. The "hour of temptation" seems to be another name for the "Wrath of God"

Revelation 3:10-12 KJV "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the Earth."

To find out when the Church of Philadelphia will be rescued we have to go back to the Old Testament and find out how long the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will last, or, how much of our time will elapse from the time the first resurrection takes place until the return of Jesus Christ to Earth with his saints. Before examining that topic though we will look at one other possibility of escape.

### **Escape by Death**

Luke 21:36 NKJV "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

There is another way that one can escape the Tribulation and that is through death. You may be shocked at this but from ancient times the Jewish Rabbi's believed that Isaiah 57:1-2 pertained to the flood. They believed that not one righteous person suffered God's Wrath when the flood took place. If this is true and the time of the end is similar to the "Days of Noah" is it not possible that God could do this same thing again? Some who are sick, physically or spiritually weak or just plain old may be better off dying and entering into peace and rest before Antichrist comes to power. In these cases death would be a blessing.

Isaiah 57:1-2 The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.

The Book of Jasher also explains the pre-flood deaths of the righteous saints in the same manner as the Rabbi's. The Rabbi's also say that Methuselah who lived to be 969 years old was the last righteous person on earth (besides Noah and his family) and that Methuselah died seven days before the flood began. His great age before judgment fell shows the mercy of God.

Jasher 5:5 And all who followed the Lord died in those days, before they saw the evil which God declared to do upon earth.

As it says in Luke 21:36 we must pray that we will be counted worthy to escape the things that will come upon the earth in the last days. Whether through the rapture or death, either one is preferable to suffering the "Wrath of God." That is why it is so important for every individual to make sure that they are saved. The saved will be counted worthy to escape these things by whatever means God chooses for each person. (Some though may desire to be martyrs for Jesus at the hands of Antichrist) The real point here is that God does not need a rapture seven years before Christ's return to protect the righteous. Whether we go up, or are buried or if God has another plan, he will most certainly spare his people from suffering his wrath. We just have to make 100% sure that we are counted in the number of the saints who are worthy to be spared from it. That is our most important job in this life.

Philippians 2:12 KJV Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

### **Make Sure You are Saved**

Of course, it's easy to deny reality. Not so easy as Ayn Rand once quipped, to deny the consequences of denying reality. The consequences will come true soon enough.

Don't shortchange yourself by not facing this issue head on and making your own choice about where you spend eternity. Don't let some other human being make this choice for you, after all, it is you who will have to live with the choice you make, forever.

Luke 18:9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

Luke 18:10-14 "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Romans 10:8-11 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

If you have decided to follow Jesus Christ then continue on by reading the gospel of John, then the entire New Testament and then the whole Bible. Also find a place to worship, get baptized and fellowship with other Christians.

## Old Testament Rules for Marriage

Deuteronomy 24:5 KJV When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

Deuteronomy 20:7 KJV And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? Let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

In the Old Testament God decreed that a newly married man could not be sent out to war during the first year of his marriage. God must be faithful to his own word, so therefore Christ must celebrate with his new bride for a minimum of one year before he can return and go to war and destroy the armies of the world at Armageddon. He could wait more than one year without violating his word, but in most cases God fulfills his word exactly as he has written it. While there is no danger of Christ dying in the battle and not being able to marry the wife he is engaged to, he still must fulfill this law because God has bound himself to keep his own word. This law is a spiritual precept, a mystery, which Christ himself being perfect, will keep when he marries his bride, the Church, Israel and the saved of all ages.

Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and Earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

Luke 24:44-46 He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

Jesus said that everything written about him in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, must be fulfilled. In order to fulfill the law concerning marriage, Christ must wait for at least one year after the first resurrection, when he marries the church, before he goes out to war with the armies of the world at Armageddon.

Ephesians 5:31-32 KJV For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Paul also uses marriage as an example, and says that it is a great mystery. Human marriage symbolizes Christ's relationship with his future bride, the church.

Deuteronomy 20:5 KJV And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

God also made another law stating that a man who had built a new house was not to go to war until he had dedicated it.

John 14:2-3 KJV In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again,

and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

Christ is preparing a new mansion for his bride, and he will dedicate it with her before returning to the Earth to do battle.

Revelation 21:2 And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

"The New Jerusalem", is the name of the city that the mansions are being prepared in, and it too is compared to a bride adorned for her husband. We will celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb with Christ in the New Jerusalem and dedicate the new dwelling places that Christ has prepared for us.

Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place.

We, (the saved) are at present the servants of Christ, and in the future we will become his bride.

### **The Borrower is the Servant to the Lender**

Proverbs 22:7 KJV The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

We are or should be the servants of Christ, not servants to Caesar's financial institutions. The sooner you are out of debt in life the less enslaved and happier you will be.

Psalms 37:16 A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.

Proverbs 15:16 Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

Besides those reasons if we are here when the Antichrist is in power he will make all who desire to buy and sell take his mark. We may have to decide whether to serve God and lose our possessions or keep them and take the mark.

Revelation 13:16-17 He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead, so that no one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

Revelation 14:11 ...There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name."

If everything is paid for we may be able to hold out a little longer than otherwise, at least until property tax time rolls around. Even then it takes a little time for eviction if we can't pay our taxes because we have not accepted Antichrist's program. This is just common sense, a word to the wise. It's better to live in a paid for \$5000.00 trailer in the end times than a \$350,000.00 home with only half equity.

Hebrews 13:5 Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

## Owe No Man

Romans 13:8 KJV Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

Romans 13:8 NIV Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

In preparing for the end times it is wise to get out of debt as much as possible. Even if the Tribulation does not occur in our lifetimes it is a great thing to do in preparing for retirement. Don't get stuck with so many bills after age 65 that you can't even afford to travel to see your grandchildren. It's better to live in a small house than to be forced to work until the day you die. Notice I said "forced." Some of us enjoy working, but for ourselves, not to make some politician or banker rich.

## The Two Harvests of Revelation

Matthew 13:36-43 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age." The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

The real harvest of the Earth is when God raises the dead and also calls up those believers who are still living into his kingdom. God's past dealings with mankind indicate that we can expect to be taken out of the world after six years of hard times, six years of persecution during the reign of Antichrist, but, we will not be touched by the wrath of God. We will be taken out of the world before his wrath is poured out

Revelation 14:14-16 I looked, and there before me was a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one "like a son of man" with a crown of gold on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the temple and called in a loud voice to him who was sitting on the cloud, "Take your sickle and reap, because the time to reap has come, for the harvest of the Earth is ripe." So he who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the Earth, and the Earth was harvested.

The book of Revelation gives us the order of the harvest of the Earth. The harvest of the saints comes first, when both the living and the dead are called up to meet Christ in the air. The one like a son of man sitting on a cloud is of course Christ. The harvest described above is the first resurrection. This harvest is followed by a second harvest, the gathering of the armies of the world together to be destroyed at Armageddon, like grapes being crushed in a winepress.

The comparison to wine and grapes being crushed is the reason why the wrath of God is pictured as being poured out of cups or bowls. The wine symbolizes the blood that will be shed

during this time period. Those who reject the free salvation offered through Christ's blood do so at the risk of having to endure the shedding of their own blood, whether real or symbolic during the outpouring of the wrath of God.

Revelation 14:17-20 Another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Still another angel, who had charge of the fire, came from the altar and called in a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, "Take your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the Earth's vine, because its grapes are ripe." The angel swung his sickle on the Earth, gathered its grapes and threw them into the great winepress of God's wrath. They were trampled in the winepress outside the city, and blood flowed out of the press, rising as high as the horses' bridles for a distance of 1,600 stadia. (180 miles)

The sounding of the seventh trumpet is a time for joy for God's people, but it is the harbinger of doom for those who are left on the Earth. It is the signal for "the wrath of God" to be poured out on the world. Blood will flow from Armageddon into the Jordan river for 180 miles, and exit at the gulf of Aquaba, which empties into the appropriately named, "Red Sea."

### **The End Times Doctrine of the Early Greek Church**

A document known as the Didache in Greek, or "the teaching of the twelve apostles," was being circulated in the church between 60 and 150 AD, and is the oldest Christian document that we have preserved from the first century church. This document contains the rules of the early church concerning baptism, the Lord's Supper, Christian living, and a section about future prophecy.

### **The Future According to the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles"**

Watch over your life: do not let your lamps go out, and do not be unprepared, but be ready, for you do not know the hour when our Lord is coming. Gather together frequently, seeking the things that benefit your souls, for all the time you have believed will be of no use to you if you are not found perfect in the last time. For in the last days the False Prophets and corrupters will abound, and the sheep will be turned into wolves, and love will be turned into hate. For as lawlessness increases, they will hate and persecute and betray one another.

And then the "Deceiver of the World" will appear as a son of God and will perform signs and wonders, and the Earth will be delivered into his hands, and he will commit abominations the likes of which have never happened before. Then all humankind will come to the fiery test, and many will fall away, and perish; but those who endure to the end in their faith will be saved.

And then there will appear the signs of the truth: First the sign of an opening in heaven, then the sign of the sound of a trumpet, and third, the resurrection of the dead, but not all of the dead, rather as it has been said, "the Lord will come, and all his saints with him."

The teaching contained in the document above appears to agree with the position that the church will have to endure the fiery test of persecution by the Antichrist before the sounding of the seventh trumpet initiates the first resurrection and delivers them from his hand.

### **The Feast of Atonement**

After the feast of the trumpets comes the feast of atonement. For the Jews this feast represents

a time of self examination and mourning. They will mourn over the fact that they rejected Jesus Christ as their Messiah, and that they missed the first resurrection. It will be a time of sadness for them and for all of the people who are left alive in the world. The opportunity to repent and escape the wrath of God that will be poured out upon the Earth has slipped through their hands. Now they will have to pass through it like an offering made to the Lord by fire.

Leviticus 23:27 & 29-30 "The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the LORD by fire. Anyone who does not deny himself on that day must be cut off from his people."

The words that were spoken by the prophets Jeremiah and Zechariah will be fulfilled by the Jewish nation.

Jeremiah 8:20 "The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved."

Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.

The words of Jeremiah will echo in their ears, the harvest (the first resurrection) has past, and we were not saved. Don't let it happen to you.

(Rev 19:7-9 NKJV) "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' "And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Even so, come Lord Jesus.

Revelation 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

## Rapture Charts

The charts below represent how the various rapture theories would unfold given a 3 ½ year Tribulation.

**Pre-Trib**  
R\*T\*-----3 ½ years-----M\*E

**Mid-Trib**  
T\*-----21 months-----R\*-----21 months-----M\*E

**Pre-Wrath**  
R\*-----3 ½ years-----7\*B-----M\*E

**Post-Trib**  
T\*-----3 ½ years-----R\*M\*E

Abbreviations:

R\*=Rapture

R\*T\*=Rapture followed immediately by the Tribulation

T\*=Tribulation

M\*E=The Millennium followed by eternity

7\*B=The seven bowls or vials of God's wrath (Lasting for one year)

## **Appendix**

### **John Darby**

John Nelson Darby. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

John Nelson Darby (18 November 1800 – 29 April 1882) was an Anglo-Irish evangelist, and an influential figure among the original Plymouth Brethren. He is considered to be the father of modern Dispensationalism. He produced a translation of the Bible based on the Hebrew and Greek texts called *The Holy Scriptures: A New Translation from the Original Languages* by J. N. Darby.

As there was no Christian teaching of a “rapture” before Darby began preaching about it in the 1830s, he is sometimes credited with originating the "secret rapture" theory wherein Christ will suddenly remove His bride, the Church, from this world before the judgments of the tribulation. Some claim that this book was the origin of the idea of the "rapture." Dispensationalist beliefs about the fate of the Jews and the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Israel put dispensationalists at the forefront of Christian Zionism, because "God is able to graft them in again," and they believe that in His grace he will do so according to their understanding of Old Testament prophecy. They believe that, while the ways of God may change, His purposes to bless Israel will never be forgotten, just as He has shown unmerited favour to the Church, He will do so to a remnant of Israel to fulfill all the promises made to the genetic seed of Abraham. Darby is noted in the theological world as the father of "dispensationalism", later made popular in the United States by Cyrus Scofield's Scofield Reference Bible.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Darby\\_%28evangelist%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Darby_%28evangelist%29)

### **C. I. Scofield**

C. I. Scofield, From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Cyrus Ingerson Scofield (August 19, 1843 - July 24, 1921) was an American theologian, minister, and writer whose best-selling annotated Bible popularized dispensationalism among fundamentalist Christians.

Cyrus Scofield was born in Clinton Township, Lenawee County, Michigan. Abigail Scofield died three months after Cyrus's birth, and his father twice remarried during Cyrus's minority. By 1860, Scofield was living with relatives in Lebanon, Tennessee. At the beginning of the American Civil War, the 17-year-old Scofield enlisted as a private in the 7th Tennessee Infantry, C.S.A., and his regiment fought at Cheat Mountain, Seven Pines, and Antietam.

According to Scofield, he was converted to evangelical Christianity through the testimony of a lawyer acquaintance. Certainly by the late fall of 1879, Scofield was assisting in the St. Louis campaign conducted by Dwight L. Moody, and he served as the secretary of the St. Louis YMCA.

When the Scofield Reference Bible was published in 1909, it quickly became the most influential statement of dispensational premillennialism, and Scofield's popularity as Bible conference speaker increased as his health continued to decline.

Scofield left the liberalizing Congregational Church to become a Southern Presbyterian. In 1914 he founded the Philadelphia School of the Bible in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Scofield died at his home on Long Island in 1921.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus\\_Scofield](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrus_Scofield)

### **Clarence Larkin**

Rev. Clarence Larkin from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Born Clarence Larkin 28 October 1850 Chester, Pennsylvania Died 24 January 1924 (aged 73)

Occupation American Baptist pastor and Bible teacher.

Rev. Clarence Larkin (1850–1924) was an American Baptist pastor, Bible teacher and author whose writings on Dispensationalism had a great impact on conservative Protestant visual culture in the 20th century. His intricate and influential charts provided readers with a visual strategy for mapping God's action in history and for interpreting complex biblical prophecies. He experienced conversion at the age of 19. When he was converted he had become a member of the Episcopal Church, but in 1882, at the age of 32, he became a Baptist and was ordained as a Baptist minister two years later. His study of the Scriptures, with the help of some books that fell into his hands, led him to adopt many of the tenets of the premillennialist theology that was gaining favor in conservative Protestant circles. He began to make large wall charts, which he titled "Prophetic Truth," for use in the pulpit. These led to invitations to teach elsewhere. Larkin's major publication was Dispensational Truth. Dispensational Truth contains dozens of charts and hundreds of pages of descriptive matter. It is a thoroughgoing defense of premillennialist dispensationalism that draws on the major themes found in the works of figures like C.I. Scofield, William Eugene Blackstone, and John Nelson Darby.

Larkin, a kind and gentle man, deplored the tendency of writers to say uncharitable things about each other, so he earnestly sought to avoid criticisms and to satisfy himself with simply presenting his understanding of the Scriptures. During the last five years of his life, the demand for Larkin's books made it necessary for him to give up the pastorate and devote his full time to writing. He died on January 24, 1924.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence\\_Larkin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clarence_Larkin)

### **Links to Other Early Prophetic Analysts**

William Miller - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_Miller\\_%28preacher%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Miller_%28preacher%29)

Charles Taze Russell – [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_Taze\\_Russell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Taze_Russell)

Ellen White - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen\\_White](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_White)

## Future Events According To Biblical Prophecy

Abbreviations: F\*R = First Resurrection, TW = Two Witnesses, M\* = Millennium  
Anti = Antichrist, FP = False Prophet

### Already Fulfilled or In Process

2000 years (2 days) of punishment for Israel is almost over (Regrafting begins)  
The 2000 year church age is nearing completion (Times of gentiles ending)  
The restoration of the Nation of Israel – 1948 to present  
The doctrinal watering down of the Christian Church continues (Began in 1948 with WCC)  
New World Order / One World Government forming – GHW Bush & W. Clinton  
Sin is becoming normal worldwide as in the Days of Noah – Evil becomes normal  
Israel's neighbors want to drive them into the sea and take Jerusalem  
The world desires a global financial system to end recessions and depressions  
People practice the ancient religions implemented by fallen angels and demons  
Sodomy and lesbianism are becoming commonplace as they were in the time of Lot

### Events that Occur Before the Tribulation

Laodicea (Dead Church) becomes the dominant Christian religion  
Many religions unite in a false religion – Preparation for deception  
Jesus commands his people to come out of the false church  
Philadelphia (True Church) is persecuted – Truth forbidden to be taught  
True Christian Church may be taxed & harassed out of legal existence  
The True Church worships in homes and underground (not in large buildings)  
Mystery Babylon (Baal worship?) becomes the world's most popular religion  
[The Ark of the Covenant found? – Maccabees](#)  
[The staff of Aaron is in the Ark – Two Witnesses to use it later – My guess](#)  
The Ezekiel war – Persian, Arab & allies (Russia?) armies destroyed  
The Temple rebuilt  
Animal sacrifice re-instituted in Jerusalem  
[Pope named Peter elected – St. Malachy](#)  
Antichrist rules Arab Coalition – Takes over weakened nations after Ezekiel war  
Temporary peace and prosperity for those under his rule  
He (Antichrist) seeks to change times and laws  
[Food and provisions are cheap - Esdras](#)  
144,000 Israelites sealed for protection during the Great Tribulation  
A beast (Leviathan) appears from the sea, representing the coming of Antichrist  
Another beast (Behemoth) appears from the earth, representing the False Prophet

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### The Great Tribulation Begins

#### **7-Seals begin – ¼ Earth affected**

Antichrist commits Abomination of Desolation  
Antichrist claims to be the god and messiah of all religions  
The Two Witnesses appear on a future Passover  
Jerusalem becomes the capital city of the world & focal point of all mankind  
The False Prophet performs great signs & wonders to deceive

Anti & FP do all the works of Christ except raising the dead - Apocalypse of Elijah  
Antichrist's wars uproot & overpower 3 nations, Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia  
Shiite Islamic world accepts Antichrist as Moslem Messiah – Iranian Eschatology  
The Kingdom of Jordan escapes Antichrist's rule, at least temporarily  
Antichrist appears to be killed by a sword slash  
The false resurrection of Antichrist occurs  
Antichrist has a withered arm and a blinded eye from the attack  
Antichrist rules most of the world – controls powerful military  
Most nations voluntarily submit after fake resurrection  
The good times are over – disaster is spreading from nation to nation  
Death from war, famines and disease.  
The Mark of the Beast implemented – 666 – required to buy or sell  
Every transaction in Antichrist's kingdom is taxed 10%  
Israelites and Christians persecuted and martyred (for refusing mark)  
The Two Witnesses begin preaching  
**7 Trumpets begin – 1/3 Earth affected**  
Famine on earth, the Two Witnesses withhold the rain  
The judgment of America – Chastened by God for possible repentance  
United States attacked by Antichrist & China – GW vision  
Two Witnesses are martyred (killed) by Antichrist

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### At the Beginning of the 6000<sup>th</sup> Year

The Day of the Lord begins – The heavenly Sabbath  
The Seventh Trumpet sounds  
Two Witnesses raised 3 ½ days after their deaths  
**The rapture / first resurrection takes place**  
The dead go up - Then the living  
The Destruction of False Church by the deceived governments of the world  
The city of Rome destroyed – St. Malachy  
The Jews realize Jesus is the Messiah when they missed the first resurrection  
**7 Vials (Bowls) of Wrath – 2/3 of Earth Affected**  
The Wrath of God begins to be poured out for one year  
The Marriage Supper of the Lamb begins in Heaven  
The Church and OT saints celebrate in heaven  
Wrath & Marriage Supper last one year  
The Earth is pounded per prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah & O.T. & Jesus  
Jews and Israel pray for Jesus to return and rescue them  
Demonic powers gather world's armies to Armageddon  
Damascus will become a heap of ruins  
**Christ returns to Earth, Mount of Olives, with saints**  
Armageddon – Armies of world destroyed by Jesus Christ  
Antichrist & False Prophet thrown in the lake of Fire  
Satan bound for 1000 years  
The Millennium begins  
Jesus makes Jerusalem his capital and reigns on the throne of David  
The resurrected Saints rule and reign with Christ over world's cities  
The Feasts of the Lord are re-implemented during the Millennium

No rain for nations who do not celebrate Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem  
The restoration of Sodom in Millennium (Showing God's mercy)  
Long life restored – Death at 100 is considered death as a child  
Everyone is rewarded fairly for their labor – No more crooked stock market deals  
The golden age for mankind is here, utopia

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### **At the End of the 6000<sup>th</sup> Year**

Satan released from prison to test those born during the Millennium  
Satan instigates rebellion against Christ's rule  
Satan gathers those who hate God & Christ to Armageddon again  
Satan's armies destroyed again by fire / Uprising quelled  
Satan cast into Lake of Fire where Antichrist and False Prophet are  
The 2nd resurrection takes place  
The Great White Throne judgment  
Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord  
The lost, all whose names are not in the book of life are cast into the Lake of Fire  
Heaven and Hell (Lake of Fire) inhabitants finalized  
New heaven and new earth created – sin eradicated – New Jerusalem comes down  
Eternity begins / Perfection is the standard  
God has new projects forever – We help and are like the angels

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This is a simple outline of the future. All of the biblical events listed will occur someday, those from other sources are questionable. The order of their occurrence is an educated guess on the author's part. This list is flexible. No one can deduce the right order of all these events at the present time. By next year I expect that the order of events will have changed and will change every year until Christ returns. Feel free to cut and paste these events into a word processor and rearrange them yourself as things change and fulfillments are completed. This list is also only partial. Feel free to add those biblical prophecies not included to your own personal list.